5 Counterintuitive Plays
for Restaurant Growth Post COVID-19

Presented by Wisely

In the wake of COVID-19, access to intelligent, actionable insights about customer behavior has become a necessity for all brands—especially in the hospitality sector.

Wisely bridges the gap between customer data and customer experience, giving restaurants new ways to personalize and drive profits at scale. The following analysis leverages insights captured via Wisely's waitlist/reservations, table management, marketing automation, and sentiment solutions.

Data from 2000+ locations, and accompanying strategic recommendations, reveals how to flip the script on guest insights to boost profits.

Insight #1

Everyone is Now an Earlybird



40%
Drop in peak time parties

Tues & Wed
Greatest dine-in increase

2-5 PM
Highest sales increase
(all other daypants are down)

WHAT'S THE PLAY?

Flatten the Demand Curve

Re-route guests from pre-pandemic peak times with targeted marketing (e.g. "Happy Hour is Better When it Comes Early" campaign)

6% increase
in 1-2 top parties (all other party sizes decreased)

Quick Play to Boost Throughput
Optimize seat-utilization with more two-top tables.

Insight #2

No Time to Wait...

Waitlist Conversion by Quoted Wait



21% ↑ of diners likely to **abandon the waitlist,** even if the quote's just 5 minutes (compared to 12% pre-COVID 19)

32% ↓ drop in **Waitlist** traffic

20% ↑ boost in **Reservations**

WHAT'S THE PLAY?

Swing Your Digital Front Door Open

If guests abandon the waitlist, win them back with targeted CTAs linked to your digital front door

CAMPAIGN INSPO

Reservations
You know who doesn't have to wait? Our reservation parties. Book now.

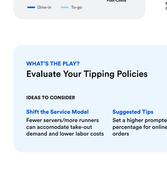
Remote Waitlist
Nice of you to swing by, next time let us pick you up (from your couch)!

Curbside Pickup
Take home a great meal without taking off your slippers.

Insight #3

...But Plenty of Time to Leave Feedback

Guests want a "return to normal"... but COVID-19 concerns are still top-of-mind



WHAT'S THE PLAY?

Build a Feedback Loop

Seek Feedback
Automate text/email feedback forms and engage guests who respond

Communicate Safety Protocol
Keep safety efforts front-and-center, online and in-store

Score and Measure
Track and address health & safety sentiment trends

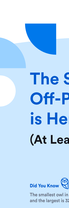
Insight #4

What's the average tip % for to-go?

15% contactless dine-in
13% curbside
8% pickup

When I Tip, You Tip, We Tip

(but less generously for to-go)

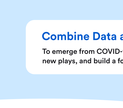


10% increase in daily tips for most servers (with 37%+ fewer servers working)

to-go orders are generating majority of tips (with dine-in down)

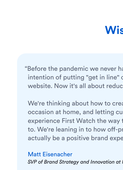
2.5% decrease in to-go tip-rate post-pandemic

Average Daily Tips



WHAT'S THE PLAY?

Evaluate Your Tipping Policies



IDEAS TO CONSIDER

Shift the Service Model
Fewer servers/more runners can accomodate take-out demand and lower labor costs

Suggested Tips
Set a higher prompted percentage for online orders

Pool Tips
Tip shares might more fairly distribute online order and peak time/day tips

Insight #5

Loyalists Welcome More Email (not Less)

Post-Covid-19, email campaigns are at an all-time high

419%
increase in emails sent

Open rates holding around industry standard ~19%-21%
pre/post-COVID-19 despite surge in volume

WHAT'S THE PLAY?

Target Engaged Segments (Even if it's Fewer People)

Wisely's data shows time and again, brands see more campaign response when targeting engaged guests (vs. every single opt-in)

Example Case Study

Campaign sent to all contacts:
10-13% open rate

Campaign sent to engaged segment:
45% open rate
3.8k more unique opens

Quick Play to Increase Marketing ROI

Focus on digital — restaurants say these are the top 3 channels driving returns:

92.3% see strong ROI with social media

69.2% see strong ROI with email

30.8% see strong ROI with streaming video

The Shift to Off-Premise Sales is Here to Stay

(At Least for Now)

Wisely's data shows overall Post-COVID-19 change:

13% ↑ increase in daily to-go revenue

49% ↓ decrease in daily dine-in revenue

Full-service restaurant brands report:

5-7% off-premise sales pre-COVID-19

20-30% off-premise sales after reopenings

Did You Know

The smallest owl in the world is 5-7 inches tall, and the largest is 30 inches tall

Combine Data and Intuition to Build Your Playbook

To emerge from COVID-19 stronger, brands will need both to strategically test new plays, and build a foundation for future growth.

Wisdom From the Industry

"Before the pandemic we never had any intention of putting "get in line" on the website. Now it's all about reducing friction.

We're thinking about how to create an occasion at home, and letting customers experience First Watch the way they want to. We're leaning in to how off-premise can actually be a positive brand experience."

Matt Eisenacher
SVP of Brand Strategy and Innovation at First Watch

"COVID-19 has put our customers in a strange universe where they're willing to try anything to have a little fun, so we get to throw spaghetti at the wall to see what sticks...

We're learning how to throttle new profit centers, how to manage our floor with a much lower labor model, and we've found that we can be profitable in this digital world."

Scott Lawton
CEO and Co-Founder of barteca

Wisely

Collect. Analyze. Act.

WAITLIST & RESERVATIONS | MARKETING AUTOMATION | SENTIMENT

getwisely.com | talktous@getwisely.com

Research Sources, Powered by Wisely Data Science

Wisely Data Data Range
Pre-Covid observations: Jan 1, 2020 to March 15, 2020
Post-Covid observations: Jun 25, 2020 to July 25, 2020

Brands/Locations Observed
B2C brands, 2000+ locations

Client Case Study, 16 July, 2020
Survey of all active users, 9-23 July, 2020
Interviews conducted 24-29 July, 2020