

Hungry Customers Are Trying To Find You

Dear Gahanna Restaurateur,

Did you know that, on average the four hotels in Gahanna are **sold-out** at least three days during the week? With a total of 408 rooms at these select service hotels (don't have a restaurant on site), that means, on average **500** guests are looking for a place to dine for lunch and dinner. What are you doing to make sure that you are seeing your share of these customers?

To start, get to know the front desk, concierge and management staff at nearby hotels and help them get to know you. There are four hotels in Gahanna and seven more within a five mile radius. Put yourself in the hotel guest's shoes, where would you turn for a recommendation for a bite to eat? These friendly hotel associates are your lifelines to these eager customers. Inform them, engage them, and appreciate them. How? Here are a few no or low cost ways to ensure that these guests are "delivered" to your door:



Visit the hotel properties, introduce yourself and share information about your restaurant. This is the first step, as you are building a relationship (it is more than simply dropping off flyers).

Invite the hotel staff to dine at your establishment, compliments of you.



Getting away from the hotel may be challenging, so bring food to them – a variety of it, on a consistent basis. Let them taste your new appetizer, entrée or dessert creation. Nothing helps sell a restaurant better than a first-hand experience.



Provide free parking. A guest is naturally going to choose a dining establishment where parking is free over one where they have to pay to park. The competition is just too

fierce. If you are a downtown restaurateur, the voucher program with the Creek-

side parking garage provides a simple solution.

Show your appreciation to hotel customers by offering them discounts. Try this "silver bullet" promotion: offer a "show your room key" discount. With this, there's nothing to create on your part and it provides flexibility to change the promotion to suit you and your guests needs.

Bring food on a regular basis to the hotel **guests**. A Gahanna hotel general manager shared that at a former property, restaurants provided complimentary appetizers on a specific day of the week, every week for guests. They would bring an assortment to the lobby along with coupons, menus, etc. Guess who got the lion's share of the dining business?



Have a daily special? Tell the hotel front line staff! Send a fax or call and share the news. You'll remain top of mind and they'll appreciate being informed.

Call the hotel staff (at least the four in Gahanna) to inquire about their occupancy (how busy they are for a given day/evening, week or month) and consider asking about the type of business they have booked at their property. Armed with this information, you will be able to provide exceptional service, as you can then staff accordingly. For example, a sold out weekend with a soccer tournament may make you rethink your plans for a lean day crew.



Did you know that most of the hotels in Gahanna (and the airport properties) provide complimentary shuttle service for their guests? Getting to know the hotel staff can literally mean guests are delivered to your door. Don't forget about the shuttle van driver. He or she has a captive audience for the drive from the hotel to your establishment, so help them be natural sales person.



Take "baby steps" and start with a few of tips and build as the business grows. You'll find that your "hotel friends" are one of the most valuable partners you'll have in your business. To help you get started, contact the four Gahanna hotel general managers below:

Gelinda Sorrell, Candlewood Suites, 590 Taylor Rd., (614) 863-4033
Anis Qarni, Holiday Inn Express, 460 Waterbury Ct., (614) 428-8678
Janet Rushton, SpringHill Suites, 665 Taylor Rd., (614) 501-4770
Janet Rushton, TownePlace Suites, 695 Taylor Rd., (614) 861-1400

Sincerely,
Karen Eylon
Executive Director
Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau


Gahanna
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU