

WEBSITE BEST PRACTICES

A Guide for Restaurant Operators





SPEED. CUSTOMIZATION. DELIVERY. CONVENIENCE.

Pizza fans want it all. Can they get it from you, on your website?

Simply having an online presence is no longer enough to compete in the pizza space. Your website is a tool for growth — provided you leverage it. That can sound intimidating in an era where big chains are leaning into advanced technologies such as drones to capture customers' hearts and minds. Rest assured there are plenty of smaller, more economical and logical steps you can take to make your website engaging and robust.

Follow these best practices to ensure your website is working for you and your customers alike.

Use your website to gather **customer feedback**

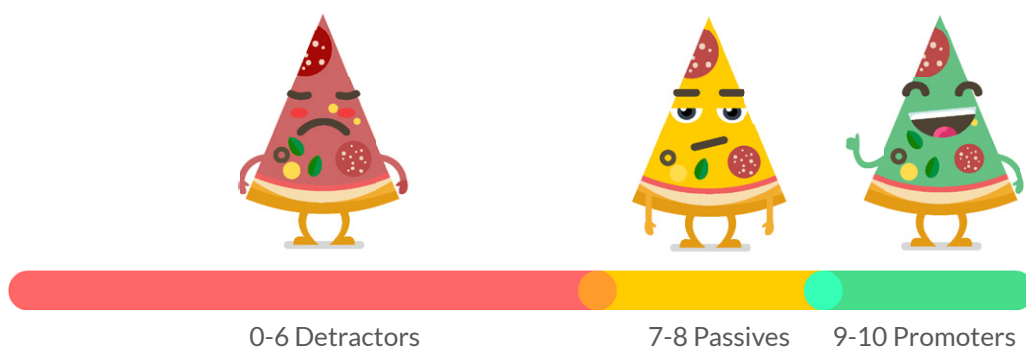
Your customers appreciate being heard. Demonstrate that you value their opinions by asking for their feedback via a homepage popup.

A direct and popular way to do so is to use the Net Promoter Score (NPS). NPS measures customer experience and gauges potential business growth based on one simple question:

“How likely are you to recommend this restaurant to your friends and family?”

Customers answer using a 0-10 scale, as follows:

- 0-6 are Detractors, or unhappy customers who could potentially damage your reputation through negative word-of-mouth
- 7-8 are Passives, or satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who are likely to dine at other restaurants
- 9-10 are Promoters, or loyal customers who regularly dine with you and refer your restaurant to friends and family



You may also consider providing a blank field where customers can explain their NPS score should they wish to do so.

While you're at it...

Gathering feedback about your website is a quick and easy barometer to gauge next steps. You may also want to consider a quick survey about your operation in general.

PMQ's 2018 Pizza Industry Census revealed customers have very specific “deal breakers” that could cause them not to return to a restaurant:

- Poor service
- Noisy environment
- Inattentive servers
- Long wait to order and/or get their check

Customer feedback in these areas is a great tool for helping your front of house staff brush up on skills and consistently providing the experience customers want and deserve.



Include the **essentials**.

Ramping up your website doesn't mean you should abandon the basics. Inform and engage customers by continuing to include:

- Location address(es) and contact information
- Hours
- Menu and specials
- About Us/History page
- Social media icons and corresponding links

Don't stop there! Since a large number of people will likely search online using “pizza near me” or another general search query, it's critical that your pizzeria shows up in local search results, especially on Google. Make sure your restaurant is listed in as many online directories as possible, and that those listings provide accurate information. To help you optimize and manage this aspect of your website, consider using one of the many online services or software tools that specialize in this area.

It boils down to this: If customers can't easily find or contact you, they will quickly move on to a competitor.



Keep it **fresh**.

Old, stale pizza is a turnoff. So is an old, stale website.

Keep your website fresh and up-to-date by regularly posting specials and coupons on your homepage. To encourage even more repeat traffic to your site and reward frequent visitors, occasionally add in a “website exclusive” deal that’s only advertised online.

Specials and coupons are a great way to let your brand personality shine, but don’t inadvertently omit clear, simple instructions on how to redeem the offers. Not being able to access fantastic deals will frustrate customers — especially since **47% of them choose a restaurant based on reasonably priced food.**

Get With The (Loyalty) Program

Pizza chains have long leveraged the power of loyalty programs. According to PMQ’s 2018 Pizza Industry Census, doing so is one of the top reasons for their sustained growth — and independent operators are taking notice.

Technology has taken loyalty programs from punch cards to a truly custom experience. POS systems can track an individual’s ordering habits, meaning you could tailor rewards to fit the type of pizza a customer prefers or order frequency. Your customers feel special, and you build loyal relationships. Win-win!

Promote your loyalty program on your website with a visible and simple online form that captures contact information. Position the invitation to join on your homepage and periodically throughout your website to facilitate sign-up.



Provide a **menu**.

Just like dine-in customers, those visiting your website know they want pizza. But, they may not know what type of pizza they want from your restaurant. The obvious solution? Provide a menu.

As simple as it is to include a menu on your website, it’s important not to just upload it and

forget it. Every time you make changes to your physical menus — food additions or deletions, price changes, seasonal offerings, etc. — they must also be reflected on your online menu. Not having an accurate food list or prices will disappoint customers, and could be an embarrassment to your staff and brand.

Customers Eat With Their Eyes.

It's an old adage in the restaurant industry because it's true. Customers partially set their expectations about how food will taste based on how it looks.

Does your menu include high-quality images of your pizza? How about your website? Does it feature photos that will convince customers to dig in?

It pays to invest in a professional food photographer to capture every delicious aspect of your pizza. Why spend the several hundred dollars on a photo session instead

of grabbing cheaper stock images of pizza? Authenticity. Your customers want to know exactly what they're ordering and may feel duped if what they see isn't what they get.



Add **online ordering.**

More than half of pizzeria operators currently offer online ordering, attributing an estimated 5-15% of sales exclusively to the feature.



A large part of the customer appeal is how online ordering provides convenience, accessibility and information regardless of how they want to order — pickup, delivery or dine-in.

There's also your profit margin to consider. Compared to phone ordering and some dine-in experiences, customers ordering online simply get more food and spend up to 4% more money. Add to it the server time saved by not having to accommodate undecided customers or rectifying mistakes resulting from ordering miscommunication, and you could easily pocket a tidy sum.

4 Things To Look For In An Online Ordering System

There is no shortage of companies who specialize in helping restaurant operators add online ordering to their websites. Use these four factors to compare and narrow your options to find the best fit:

- 1. CUSTOMIZATION.** Look for an online ordering system that can be customized and branded to be in sync with your website. That way, you'll provide a seamless customer experience. Plus, determine how easy it is for customers to sign-up, order and pay. Customization and convenience need to work hand-in-hand.
- 2. INTEGRATION.** Check with your POS provider to see which systems their software is compatible with, and don't shy away from asking for their recommendations on ordering systems.
- 3. FEES AND COSTS.** All online ordering systems come with a cost. The structure may vary, with some requiring an up-front setup fee and a flat monthly fee; others charge for hardware and software setups and may have a per-order fee attached. Align the cost structure with your target ROI for best results.
- 4. MARKETING SUPPORT.** Talking up your new online ordering feature is essential for success. How do the online ordering system providers stack up in terms of marketing support to help you spread the word?

Optimize your website for **mobile devices**.

Depending on where you are in embracing technology, adding a mobile app may seem light years away. It's okay not to be quite "there" yet, but **your website needs to be optimized for mobile devices now**. Why? A good share of the 69% of customers

ordering food online are doing it using their smartphones or tablet. Therefore, your website needs to deliver the same experience on these devices as it would if customers were using a desktop or laptop. Mobile optimization ensures a seamless transition.



Your website is a dynamic piece of your sales, marketing and customer retention strategy. Use it to your best advantage and you'll always meet — and exceed — customer expectations, just like when you use convenient and delicious products from Alive & Kickin' Pizza Crust. For our newest innovations in dough, crusts and sauces visit akcrust.com.



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