

FRIDAYS AT FOUR
Volume One Issue 13

We start this issue with news from research being done at Texas A and M in Galveston, Texas. An oceanographer there is studying old restaurant menus to seek hints of changes in fish and shellfish populations and popularity before good records were kept. The New York Public Library has a collection of over 25,000 menus in its Buttolph Collection. 400 boxes of menus were examined by DR. Jones. Such menus according to Jones provide an indirect measure of scarcity, says Jones. New York Times

A new study on Convenience Packaging finds that the old words such as 'easy to open' and 'quick to serve' and now generic. The new terms in convenience advertising are features such as 'put direct to wok' or 'two minutes from cupboard to mouth'... Findings from the study predict that evening meals will be the most important meal occasion for convenience products over the next five years. According to these findings, the traditional meal occasions are changing. The average number of meal occasions is growing as consumers snack between meals. Pr newswire 10/26

Heres a bit of advice from Harry Beckwith in his book Selling the Invisible... Don't overestimate yourself. "Assume your service is bad. It can't hurt and it will force you to improve". Another tip from this book.. Don't only get better—get different. "Real success only comes from continuous innovation, not just continuous improvement".
-Selling The Invisible by Harry Beckwith

Food Management Magazine recently gave out their annual awards for best concepts. The best of show was given to the University of Washington food service for their redesign of the Husky Den food service area. Food service director Paul Brown had some interesting comments about the new look. "We wanted a branded food court to compete with the best of them". We wanted a model something like a food court on the TRANSACTION SIDE But with a comfortable, residential ambience on the EXPERIENTIAL SIDE"... very interesting to note the effort to give each customer and experience along with the basic transaction... Think about that as you design or layout your food service areas at your venue. -Food Management Magazine April 2005

The latest in the ability to do marketing to your customers is being called "Dialogue Marketing". Two researchers writing in Harvard Business Review talk about Dialogue Marketing as the "highest rung on the evolutionary ladder that has gone from database marketing to relationship marketing to one-to-one marketing. The article goes on to say that at different times companies will need to talk people into a commitment or out of defecting from your product or service. "Once a transition triggers a dialogue, that dialogue often moves the customer to another transition at which point a new dialogue with a different goal kicks in" Harvard Business Review October 2005

Another hot term in the marketing world is “aggregated customization”. According to David Freedman who writes the Whats Next column for Inc Magazine, technology now allows you to identify and cater to sudden shifts in customer needs, on the fly”. Aggregated customization for example will allow a retailer to offer individual discount offers to each customer based on their buying habits, how often they buy, what they buy. –Inc Nov 2005

WE all get the phone treatment...where we are asked to push a number to get to a live voice.. A recent survey shows that even with the move to online customer service, two thirds of those who try to get customer service online, give up and use the phone instead. A company called ClickFox is working to make that better for the customer. Another study shows that 37 percent of us when we reach a voice mail press numbers, just push zero immediately. Inc Oct 2005.

We close this edition with a quote to think about...”its kind of fun to do the impossible” - Walt Disney

Remember for your needs on food service planning or increasing your revenues from Food Service, give us a call

WE also appreciate those of you who report passing along Fridays at Four to your other workers.

Let us know what you think at greg@gfstrategies..