



MIX

FOOD | FLAVORS | IDEAS | 2013

The Big Event

Holidays, Catering, and Game Days



It's Event Time!

Sales-building Opportunities with Catering, Holidays, and Sports Promotions



Gluten Free Salmon Asparagus Basil Pasta featuring MINOR'S® Natural Gluten Free Chicken Base

Looking for a great source of new incremental sales? Look no further than the triple play of adapting your menu so that you can get in on catering, holiday offerings, and sporting event promotions. Each of these categories represent an opportunity to build sales, often through the use of existing or easily adapted menu items.



Brownies featuring WONKA® NERDS®, BUTTERFINGER®, and NESTLÉ® CRUNCH® Candy Pieces

Catering for Dollars

Patrons are looking for easy, cost-effective solutions to social and business occasions that require food and beverages, and many would rather not reach out to a catering specialist—they'd rather deal with someone they already know, such as their favorite local restaurant or the folks that operate the employee cafeteria.

According to a recent report from Technomic, consumers' use of restaurants for catering is expected to grow at annual rates of 5% or more, with fast casual players positioned to gain the biggest share (projected growth at 12%),

followed by quick-service sandwich concepts (8%). As a group, restaurants are now capturing four times the revenue of retailers for catering occasions, at \$19.3 billion versus \$4.0 billion.

Self-Service Catering: Platters and More

While you weren't looking, the neighborhood grocery store has been putting a lot of muscle behind this easy-to-execute source of incremental sales.

If you have sandwich ingredients on hand, you can put together custom platters that your patrons can pick up for their next family party or onsite business meeting. Box lunches, containers of soup, individual- or group-size salads, trays of cupcakes or cookies, or large-batch hot foods like meat or vegetarian lasagna, jambalaya, and other casseroles, are also easy to integrate into existing dine-in operations with just an investment in packaging. Customers can even bring in their own serving ware for your kitchen to fill.

Drop-offs of food, paper goods, and beverages are another possibility, particularly if you already have a delivery program in place. Some operators even offer set up.

Gluten free, vegetarian, vegan, or better-for-you foods represent an added opportunity for sales, since many customers may feel ill-equipped to deal with guests and family members who have dietary restrictions.



TIP

LEAN CUISINE® provides better-for-you products, including Grilled Vegetable Lasagna pasta made with whole grains. And MINOR'S® flavor solutions include 27 tested gluten free products, from bases to sauces.

Another area with significant growth potential is breakfast meetings; ever since the recession, businesses as well as groups such as committees and clubs have sought to reduce costs by meeting in the morning, when food and beverages typically carry a lower price point. Egg sandwiches, breakfast baked goods, granola, and other portable items are all great for these occasions (don't forget coffee service and items like juice and fruit), or perhaps you have a function space or can accommodate a group on premise in the morning, before your usual service.

leancuisine

Lasagna Stuffed Mushrooms featuring LEAN CUISINE® Grilled Vegetable Lasagna pasta made with whole grains



Custom Bars and Action Stations.

Attended service components like carving stations and made-to-order omelets have long been popular options for dynamic catered events, but there are many other ways to ramp up the drama while allowing guests to customize their own experiences. The following ideas can also be good for food and labor costs, with less waste and better cross-utilization, as well as providing a solution in locations where back-of-the-house cooking and production facilities are limited.

- **Sundae Bar:** Ice cream and frozen yogurt can be scooped from tubs or dispensed from a machine into dishes or cones, to be topped or mixed with the guest's choice of hot fudge, fruit toppings, caramel or butterscotch, fresh fruit, plain and flavored whipped cream, and confections such as sprinkles, NESTLÉ® CRUNCH® and BUTTERFINGER® candy pieces, WONKA® NERDS®, crushed cookies, chopped nuts, NESTLÉ® TOLL HOUSE® Semi-Sweet Morsels, and so on.
- **Pressed Panini Station:** A selection of breads (ciabatta, Texas toast, focaccia, etc), meats and cheeses (including cured meats or cold cuts, sliced chicken, fried eggs, poached fish, and a variety of sliced or grated cheeses), and toppings and condiments (thinly sliced grilled vegetables, leaf lettuce and other greens, sliced tomatoes, olive relish, pesto, remoulade, gravy, aioli, etc) can be set out for attendees to build their dream sandwich, then watch it be pressed or griddled to order.

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How To... Make Lasagna Stuffed Mushrooms



STEP 1 Clean and stem mushroom caps; place on a sheet pan.



STEP 2 Place a portion of cooked lasagna "filling" in each cap.



STEP 3 Sprinkle each filled mushroom with bread crumbs.



STEP 4 Bake according to recipe, then transfer to a serving plate. Optional: Drizzle with STOUTER'S® Alfredo Parmigiana Sauce.

get recipe



For the entire free collection of The Big Event recipes, visit www.NestleProfessional.com/TheBigEvent by 12/31/13.

Above left: Stuffed Mushrooms, easy and delicious.

- **Yogurt Parfaits:** For a nutritious breakfast, breaks, or dessert, yogurt (such as Greek, plain, coffee, and fruit-flavored) can be spooned and layered into parfait glasses or bowls with berries, cut-up fresh fruit, raisins and other dried fruits, granola, nuts, jam or preserves, chocolate shavings, ground cinnamon, grated coconut, crisp chopped waffles, etc.
- **Mashed Potato, Mac-and-Cheese, or Risotto “Martinis”:** Set out martini glasses filled with prepared mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, or risotto, which guests can top with their choice of such mix-ins and toppings as cheese sauce, caramelized onions, crumbled bacon, hollandaise or Alfredo sauce, scallions, shaved Parmesan, cooked peas, crumbled sausage, roasted red peppers, gremolata (a mix of chopped fresh parsley, garlic and lemon peel), and more.



Grilled Chicken Fettuccini Frittata featuring STOUTER'S® Chicken Fettuccini made with whole grains



Pound Cake Parfait featuring BUTTERFINGER® Candy Pieces

TIP MINOR'S® RTU Sauces and Flavor Concentrates, such as Chile Garlic RTU or NEW Fire Roasted Poblano Flavor Concentrate, can be used as-is in a squirt bottle, or added to condiments like mayonnaise, softened butter, or sour cream.

Have a Holiday

The words “holiday season” are often equated with the period from Thanksgiving to New Year’s, and that’s a great time to boost sales with such programs as family-style meals, seasonal menu specials, and convenience-oriented takeout items for busy customers. But savvy marketers know that there are all kinds of excuses for a promotion, from Valentine’s Day to Halloween on the calendar, to events that are specific to your own operation, such as graduation week or your tenth anniversary in business.

Look to All Occasions. It’s time to expand your definition of what’s treated as a holiday. For instance, March has become a big month for special promotions, ranging from St. Patrick’s Day and Lent to major basketball sporting events and springtime celebrations. Special menus and LTOs (limited-time offerings) can be created for any of these occasions, along with marketing, theme decoration, and special services of all kinds.

According to Technomic Menu Monitor, 2012 LTOs increased 25% during the prior five years among the 250 largest U.S. chains, as operators “slice the seasons” ever more intricately in search of sales.

Other possibilities that practically cry out for special menu items and festive promotions, depending upon your circumstances and customer base:

- *Fourth of July*
- *Halloween*
- *Tax Day*
- *Back to School*
- *Patriot’s Day*
- *Flag Day*
- *Religious Observances*
- *Earth Day*
- *Mother’s, Father’s, Grandparents’, Secretary’s Days*
- *Global holidays like Cinco de Mayo or Boxing Day*
- *Food-themed opportunities like National Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day*

Creating menu items that speak to these occasions is fun for both staff and customers, boosting morale and easing the fatigue of day-to-day foodservice operations. Global and other ethnic celebrations, in particular, can be a great exercise in researching traditions and culinary specialties, and may even result in new permanent menu items.



Adobo Chicken Wings featuring NEW MINOR'S®
Red Chile Adobo Flavor Concentrate

Family-Style Meals are Perfect for Holiday Menus.

Wherever and whenever families and other groups gather for a meal, large-format menu items are appropriate. These can include large platters of existing menu items for a set number of people, or special-order items like special appetizers, a dramatic roast, tableside-carved chicken, or tossed-to-order Caesar salad, pass-and-share side dishes, and desserts like whole cakes and pies for the table. Specials like these foster a sense of community and festivity, which is perfect for a holiday occasion, and their availability is growing in restaurants and other foodservice venues.

Sports Night Specials

According to the National Chicken Council's 2013 Wing Report, "Big Game" football fans consumed an estimated 1.3 billion wing portions on that significant Sunday—not to mention a boatload of chips, dips, beer, chili, and other traditional football-watching fare. That gives you an idea of the sales potential of sporting events for the foodservice industry.



Running special promotions during various sporting seasons is a great way to attract customers and build sales—and not just in a sports bar or pub setting. From local or school team events to major professional sports events, promotions and menu items keyed to game day offer untapped sales potential. All of these represent an opportunity for your customers to get together, snack, and socialize—and for you to make some money.

Food First. The chicken wing is iconic, of course, but there are lots of other possibilities. Generally speaking, food should be simple, hearty, and preferably handheld, so as not to interrupt the action. The good news is, some of these items may already be on your menu, especially

if you have a bar or small plates menu (with items like sliders, beer pretzels, specialty fries, deviled or Scotch eggs, and so on), in which case you can simply offer a discount.

Shareables like classic nachos or stuffed potato skins, cheese and salumi plates, a tasting of different chicken wings (buffalo, jerk, vindaloo), onion rings and other fried vegetables with dipping sauces, egg rolls and dim sum, lettuce wraps, and quesadillas easily translate to game-day service and promotion.

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Marketing Special Promotions

Here are some ideas and tips for getting the word out, as appropriate.

- Use table tents, postcards with the check, and other POS materials to inform regulars of upcoming events
- Consider doing an email blast in advance of promotions, or printing up a calendar that customers can keep on-hand
- Circulate flyers to neighboring businesses, homes, and other locations
- Be sure to leverage social media—including Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare, and Pinterest, if you have them—to post details, pictures, information about menu items, and even links, such as a history of Cinco de Mayo, for instance
- Encourage staff to talk up promotions and other special programs
- Send out a press release or email to local media, campus newspapers, employee newsletter, and so on



Short Rib Crostini featuring TRIO® Au Jus

TIP

There's more to sporting events than football and baseball.

Consider piggybacking a promotion with one of the more unusual televised events, like international competitions, bowling tournaments, or even spelling bees. Or promote your own house game, such as trivia, darts, or billiards.

There's also considerable appeal to theming menu items to a specific event, such as po' boy sandwiches for a football game being held in New Orleans, or empanadas when Brazil is in the World Cup.

- **Chips and Dips:** The selection of these easy-to-eat foods that offer an entire game's worth of eating pleasure is nearly limitless: hummus, seven-layer dip, spinach-artichoke dip, guacamole, caramelized onion, shrimp or ham salad, queso or fondue, and many more. Substitute crudité's and/or pita chips for the health-conscious
- **Hearty Sandwiches:** Many sports fans will happily make a meal of a big flavorful sandwich, such as grilled cheese, pulled pork, subs, meatball grinders, steak sandwiches, French dip, Reuben, Cuban, banh mi, or BLT. Vegetarian sandwiches, like grilled vegetables on ciabatta with pesto, are always welcome, even by omnivores
- **Flatbreads:** This bar-menu darling is easy to customize with a variety of different platforms (focaccia, lavash, Swedish limpa) and toppings, from guy-food favorites like garlic butter and anchovy to sophisticated pear and Gorgonzola. Offer several different kinds, either à la carte or as part of a sampler



Build Up Those Beverage Sales

Sports promotions and beverages go hand-in-hand. Here are some ideas:

- Consider selling beer by the pitcher if it's appropriate for your market. This will represent a price break for customers and a convenience for busy staff
- Create a signature drink for your event, like a warming hot toddy for ice hockey fans or a refreshing rum drink during tennis championships; perhaps you can even name it after a key player
- Don't forget nonalcoholic specialties, like flavored iced tea or iced coffee, "virgin" cocktails, espresso-based signatures, local or artisanal sodas, and other premium non-tipples
- Though beer is an obvious choice for game day, there are also beer-based cocktails that are lower in proof and more fun, like the Michelada (beer and tomato juice) and Shandygaff (beer and lemonade); likewise, wine coolers are a welcome alternative for many sports fans

- **Hot Dogs:** Whether served buffet-style or kitchen-built, there's nothing like a frankfurter at a sporting event. Offer a selection of hot dogs and sausages, including healthier selections like chicken sausage or even veggie dogs, along with toppings like chili, cheese sauce, relish, sautéed onions and peppers, sauerkraut, and so on. You may even want to investigate renting a hot dog cart or kiosk for the special day. The same concept works with hamburgers, especially sliders

Don't Forget Takeout. Lots of folks will be watching the game at home, in their dorm lounge, or other location, but don't let that stop you from building food sales anyway. Offer a selection of easy-to-transport foods such as dips, wings, pizza, sausage and peppers, chili, super-size hero sandwiches or mini-sandwiches, meatballs, Caesar salad, or sweets such as cupcakes or cake pops, buckets of chicken, build-your-own taco "kits," and more, packaged on disposable trays for eight or more. In some locations, such as a campus c-store, these can even be made available prepackaged in grab-and-go format.

Brownies featuring WONKA® NERDS®, BUTTERFINGER®,
and NESTLÉ® CRUNCH® Candy Pieces



Brownies with Candy Pieces

Yield: 1 (half sheet) pan
Prep Time: 15 min

Servings: 48
Cook Time: 35 min

INGREDIENTS	WEIGHT	MEASURE
Brownie mix	2.5 lb	3 boxes
Chocolate frosting	3 lb	
BUTTERFINGER® Candy Pieces	4 oz	
NESTLÉ® CRUNCH® Candy Pieces	4 oz	
WONKA® NERDS® Rainbow Candy Pieces	4 oz	

PROCEDURE

1. Prepare brownie mixes according to directions on box.
2. When brownies are completely cooled, coat top generously with frosting. Sprinkle top with BUTTERFINGER®, NESTLÉ CRUNCH®, and WONKA® NERDS® Candy Pieces.

Cheddar Beer Soup

Yield: 1 gal 3 qts
Prep Time: 10 min

Servings: 28
Cook Time: 20 min

INGREDIENTS	WEIGHT
Margarine or butter	6 oz
Onions, chopped fine	12 oz
Red Bell Pepper, diced	12 oz
White pepper, ground	0.125 tsp
Garlic powder	0.25 tsp
CHEF-MATE® Sharp Cheddar Cheese Sauce	96 fl oz
Water	64 oz (1/2 gal)
MINOR'S® Natural Gluten Free Chicken Base	1.6 oz
Lager	60 oz

PROCEDURE

1. In a sauce pot, melt margarine. Sauté onions and red bell pepper until tender. Add pepper and garlic powder. Mix well.
2. Stir in Cheddar Cheese Sauce, water, lager, and Chicken Base. Bring to a boil, stirring continuously.
3. Reduce heat. Simmer 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent scorching.
4. Hold on steam table.



Cheddar Beer Soup featuring CHEF-MATE® Sharp Cheddar Cheese Sauce and MINOR'S® Natural Gluten Free Chicken Base

FREE Exclusive Recipe Offer



get recipes

Download the entire The Big Event recipe collection at:
www.NestleProfessional.com/TheBigEvent

Here's a list of the new recipes available for your enjoyment and key ingredients you can use throughout the day in recipes of your own.

RECIPE NAME	KEY INGREDIENT
Lasagna Stuffed Mushrooms	LEAN CUISINE® Grilled Vegetable Lasagna pasta made with whole grains
Grilled Chicken Fettuccini Frittata	STOUFFER'S® Chicken Fettuccini made with whole grains
Short Rib Crostini	TRIO® Au Jus
Gluten Free Salmon Asparagus Basil Pasta	MINOR'S® Natural Gluten Free Chicken Base
Adobo Chicken Wings	NEW MINOR'S® Red Chile Adobo Flavor Concentrate
Cheddar Beer Soup	CHEF-MATE® Sharp Cheddar Cheese Sauce and MINOR'S® Natural Gluten Free Chicken Base
Brownies with Candy Pieces	WONKA® NERDS®, BUTTERFINGER®, and NESTLÉ® CRUNCH® Candy Pieces
Pound Cake Parfait	BUTTERFINGER® Candy Pieces



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