

## Food & Beverage - Back to Basics: 4 Simple Sales & Cost Improvements - By Ken Burgin

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When you're a tourist, you see the industry with different eyes: all the strengths and weaknesses.

I'm travelling in Central Australia, a long, long way from big city life and the ease of broadband, mobile connections etc. While everyone is crying about the loss of easy sales, there are so many opportunities waiting if you're ready to go 'back to basics' - here are four that I noticed over the last week:

1. **Access for seniors.** How easy are your bathrooms to access, and how much climbing is needed to get around? I'm travelling with my 82 year-old mother whose brain is sharp but feet are slow. It's humbling to see what a challenge it is for lively seniors trying to negotiate facilities in places that want their business, but make it hard for them. Ask some elderly relatives for feedback on how to make your place easier to use. Think about the music volume, the menu print size, handrails beside steps etc. Not your demographic? OK, but the future belongs to the over 50's - someone will make money by doing it right...

2. **What's your Apple Turnover?** When our coach stopped at the Mt Ebenezer Roadhouse (200 km from anywhere), everyone bought, and talked about, their famous Apple Turnover. Instead of the dreary packaged food at most tourist locations, these are genuinely home-made, and piled up invitingly on the counter. My trained eye saw a very simple recipe using frozen pastry sheets, tinned pie apple and sultanas. What's your version of this - simple, delicious and memorable? This is how word-of-mouth is created.

3. **Count the Items.** Back to basics also applies to recipe costing. A chef I met at one resort told me that most of the recipe errors in his kitchen were made in the weighing process (he has a mostly unskilled workforce). He's now changed the recipes so items can be counted eg 6 cups of sugar, 12 cans of coconut milk, 5 black olives (on a salad) or 2 spoons of syrup. He's backed this up by using coloured measuring cups and containers, with examples on the wall. Sound like pre-school? Maybe, but mistakes have almost disappeared, his blood-pressure is down, and his staff now understand the cost of every single item. How much does a lemon wedge cost this week? Another nice example of how Profitable Recipe Manager can simplify life and reduce waste.

4. **Stop Shouting at your Customers.** Is your email newsletter interesting, or just advertising? Most people don't want to hear how great you are, and don't care about the next lucky prize. More engaging are short 'human interest' stories, or examples of how the business is changing: simple and real. Here are a few ideas from 65 Interesting Topics for your Email Newsletter:

Tell us about the dessert the the apprentice made to win her 'best in class' competition.

Describe the challenges of implementing a recycling scheme - what was easy, hard or impossible.

A quick report from Kate the bartender on her recent trip to London.

The chef's two favourite cookbooks, and why he chose them.

A funny story from back-of-house - disaster averted, crazy customer request or a strange piece of new equipment.

You get the idea - adapt to your situation.

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