

A GUIDE TO MAINTAINING AN EDGE OVER THE COMPETITION

10 Best Practices for Improving Guest Retention

TableUp



Stay competitive by increasing guest retention.

New diner options spring up everyday in the restaurant industry. A major key to staying competitive is guest retention.



Up to **70%** of a restaurant's revenue is generated from repeat customers



and marketing to repeat guests costs **80%** less than acquiring new ones.

How restaurants can improve guest retention

- 1 Create a highly engaging loyalty program
- 2 Streamline guest services
- 3 Capture guest preferences
- 4 Offer convenient dining options
- 5 Collect meaningful feedback in real-time
- 6 Quickly identify VIPs
- 7 Optimize server and seating with powerful FOH management
- 8 Aggregate data across multiple channels
- 9 Use tools to track server & bartender performance
- 10 Get involved in the local community

Create a highly engaging loyalty program

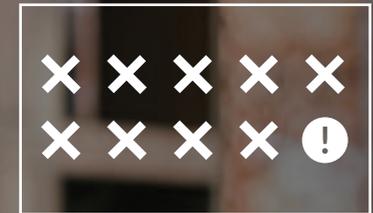
We're not talking about buying nine sandwiches and getting the tenth free.

Not all loyalty programs have to be discount based. The most successful loyalty programs are frictionless and tap into what guests actually want.

Switching from a card-based loyalty program to a digital one allows restaurants to hone in on menu items that individual customers are interested in. Offering those customers a unique loyalty program tailored specifically to their dining habits will be far more effective than traditional mass marketing. For example, for guests who enjoy wine, a loyalty wine club should be created that notifies them when new bottles they might enjoy arrive at the restaurant.



Traditional mass marketing



All customers are incentivized to buy nine sandwiches in order to get tenth free.

Customized loyalty programs



Guests who enjoy wine are added to a loyalty wine club that notifies them when new bottles they might enjoy arrive at the restaurant.

Streamlining guest services

Simple and convenient services can improve customer experience as well as create faster turnover.



Digital wait lists

Parties constantly check where they are on the wait list at host stands and otherwise waiting customers stare at their phones. Offering digital wait lists to guests keeps them informed of their position in line and therefore reduces their anxiety and decreases drop-outs.



Pre-ordering

While guests are engaged with the digital wait list on their phones, they can easily pre-order their meal. A bottle of wine they preselected can be waiting for them at their table when sit down. Not only is that great service, it's also moving them closer to their check.



At-table pay

Offering at-table pay expedites the dining process while eliminating the frustration customers feel while attempting to get a server's attention for the check.

Capture guest preferences

What do customers want? Restaurants may have a broad sense based on sales numbers, but most are unable to break data down on a micro level to know what one specific guest orders.

Guest preferences, whether obtained through check-in, online ordering, or a loyalty program, allow a fully realized sense of who that particular guest is.

Knowing the days and times guests tend to come in, the food they order, and the drinks they prefer enables restaurants to create a dining experience tailored just for them, and with that kind of service, why go anywhere else?

Guest preferences



Tailored dining experiences



Offer convenient dining options

Customers today are used to having what they want when they want it—and that certainly includes food.

Providing guests with multiple ways to enjoy the menu is crucial for obtaining new guests as well as retaining existing ones.

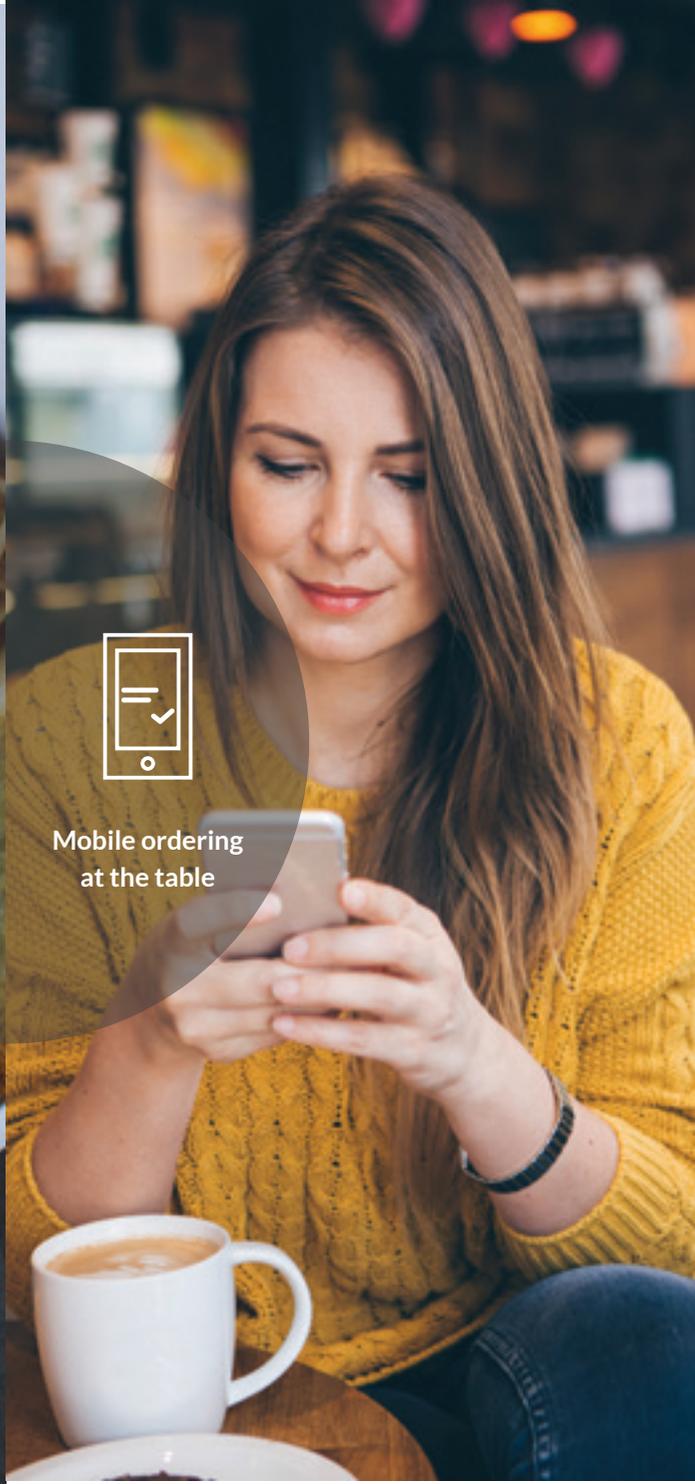
Convenience is often a deciding factor when it comes to dining decisions. Offering online ordering for takeout and mobile ordering at the table are ways that restaurants can get and keep guests' attention.



Online ordering for takeout



Mobile ordering at the table



Collect meaningful feedback in real-time

As it stands now, most guests post their feelings toward a restaurant after their meal on public review sites.

Why not use the guest's desire to share information proactively instead of addressing it after the fact in damage control mode?

If the customer can leave feedback directly and in real-time, imagine the actions that can be taken. If they felt customer service was outstanding, it can be a good time to praise staff members for their dedication. If they felt that today's special was lacking in taste, the seasoning can potentially be tweaked to ensure everything comes out perfectly the next time. Taking control of dialogue increases the likelihood that customer feedback is useful.



Quickly identify VIPs

Making guests feel important keeps them coming back, especially those who typically have large checks or tend to bring in new clientele.

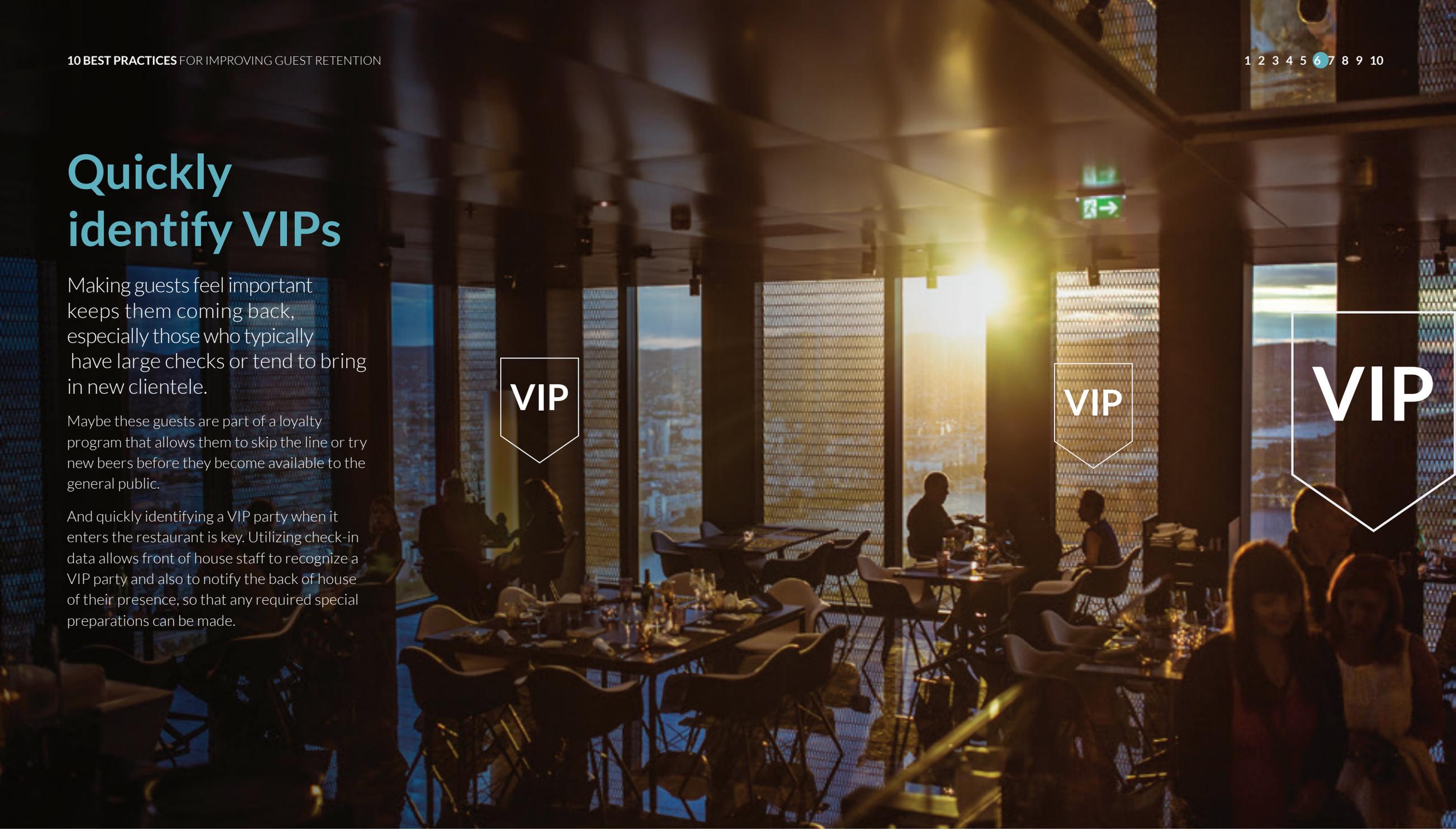
Maybe these guests are part of a loyalty program that allows them to skip the line or try new beers before they become available to the general public.

And quickly identifying a VIP party when it enters the restaurant is key. Utilizing check-in data allows front of house staff to recognize a VIP party and also to notify the back of house of their presence, so that any required special preparations can be made.

VIP

VIP

VIP



Optimize server and seating with powerful front-of-house management

Front-of-house staff are faces of the restaurant.

Give them the tools to succeed. Front-of-house (FOH) efficiency can be dramatically increased by providing staff access to wait list, reservation, server, and seating management integrated into the existing POS via an iPad.

Regardless of size, employing the right operations system can increase table turnover, employee efficiency, and, most importantly, increase revenue.



Aggregate data across multiple channels

Every time customers interact with a restaurant, they are providing information.

Takeout, dine-in, mobile ordering, what they order, days they place orders—all of this is valuable information that should be collected and utilized. So when reaching out to customers, restaurants are engaging them with specific, targeted information that would interest them.



The last thing a customer wants is a generic email. Not only do they not respond, but they may feel alienated if the email seems like spam.

Instead, for example, restaurants can target individual customers who drink Pinot Noir but haven't been to the restaurant in 90 days. A specific email marketing campaign promoting a free glass of Pinot Noir with any food purchase can be sent to the customers.

Use tools that track server & bartender performance

Attract repeat customers through top notch service, which can be increased through accountability.

Customer engagement and data collection enable restaurants to better understand the type of service being provided to their guests.

If there is consistent feedback about service from guests, management can more easily address any issues to ensure that future customers only have the best experiences.



Get involved in the local community

A great way for any business, especially a restaurant, to ingratiate itself into a community is by donating to local charities.

Highly customizable loyalty programs make it possible to give guests the option of redeeming \$10 off their check or donating \$15 to the local charity of their choice. The charity wins, the guest feels great about their contribution, and the restaurant gains a positive reputation and becomes more ingrained in the community.



How TableUp can help

The TableUp guest retention platform empowers restaurants of all sizes to deliver a convenient and personalized dining experience, increasing customer engagement, advocacy, and spend.

Integrated into existing POS, TableUp offers loyalty programs, online ordering and front-of-house operations to drive the creation of a unified customer profile. This profile includes insights into behavior and spend across all channels that can later be leveraged to drive highly customized campaigns through a built-in marketing solution.

Unlike individual solutions that create complexity and friction, TableUp delivers an all-in-one customizable and scalable platform built to support the needs of the modern diner.

Learn more at tableup.com



TableUp is headquartered in Boston and works with partners across the globe.

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