



Bringing Foodservice Together

The FIA will travel to Hobart, Tasmania for the next Foodservice Forum to be held on Wednesday 22 June 2011 at the Henry Jones Art Hotel. This event is open for members and industry guests.

At this lunch event, Exec Chef Oliver Mellers from Rhubarb Catering and Bellerive Oval will be one of the speakers. Working with the likes of Heston Blumenthal at the Fat Duck in England and sous chef at Lord's, home of world cricket and the 'Ashes', this high profile Tasmanian chef has come home to start the next phase of his career. Jack Van Tatenhove from Enterprise Connect, will advise how businesses can engage with some federally funded programs to make the business more sustainable, profitable and provide continuous improvement in their internal systems.



Melbourne hosted another sold out FS Forum; Mark Cameron from Working3 discussed "Social Media" where there are many new digital and online platforms to be considered when doing B2B with chefs and the wider foodservice industry. Markus Godinho from FareShare provided an update on their communal services and the FEED Melbourne campaign. They are an amazing organisation which re-distributes food into the wider community, sourcing from foodservice manufacturers, caterers and restaurants.

Membership continues to grow and new members are most welcome to connect with the foodservice industry.

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management

Want to be the local mayor? Get working with Facebook

Using Facebook to promote your local area, not just your restaurant or cafe, will reap rewards for your business, says Ken Burgin.



'As you demonstrate how to use social media to promote the neighbourhood, they'll start to understand and join in.'

CHANCES are you use Facebook to keep up with friends, so why bring your business into it? With nine million Aussies using Facebook — almost half of them every day — there are now some major, and free marketing opportunities. Be there or be very much left out.

It's simple to start a Facebook page, sharing information and connecting with fans who 'like' your page. Once someone becomes a fan, they will randomly receive your business Page updates on their own Facebook news feed. You can also add Photo Albums and use Facebook Events to promote dinners, entertainment and functions, and don't panic about privacy, this is quite separate to a personal Facebook profile. Your privacy can be tightly protected.

But let's go further than just promoting your own business — it's also important to feature the local area. Smart operators know that promoting their location is an important way to build long-term trade, especially if you're not in a big city — for example highlighting local rural towns, tourist areas and scenic locations to help attract visitors.

The local tourist organisation will do this in an official capacity, but their job is usually to promote an entire region rather than your special neighbourhood. You can become the local 'online mayor' and use social media to reach a very large audience.

It's easy to do this. Login to Facebook, then go to an exist-

ing Facebook Business Page (not your own) and at the bottom of the left-hand column you will see a link: 'Create a Page'. Choose the option for a 'Local Business or Place'. Then choose a title and a category, and click through the options to set up the Page — it only takes a few minutes. For example if you live in beautiful Craggy Plains, set up a new Page called 'Visit Craggy Plains'. All Facebook Pages now have a row of five photos across the top, so be ready to add five photos to the photo album to be used there, and have an interesting picture in vertical format ready to use as the main image — maybe a photo of Craggy Plains at sunset, or in the morning mist.

Content is king

There are plenty of ways to add interesting content. Start with photos of the area — make this a high priority, as they are easy for people to contribute and make the Page look lively. Nominate Photo of the Month if you want to add something competitive. There are sure to be YouTube videos of local features: add one by pasting the URL of the video as a Facebook update, and it will show up automatically on the Page and be ready to play.

Promote local community groups and ask them to add events and news, and as Page owner you can also add them to the Events tab. Ask tourists and former residents to share experiences and memories — this has been very well done on the Facebook Page for Esperance in

Western Australia. There are more and more communities with vibrant pages — also check those for Dunedin in New Zealand and Young in NSW (look for ‘Visit Young’). Find a Page by using the Facebook Search Bar at the top of any page.

Add links to useful maps and directory, and be brave: share news about your competitors. If the Page is only about your business, you won't get much buy-in from others — a rising tide floats all the boats higher. Ask other local businesses to become fans of the Page so they can post their news and special offers.

Stay current

Keeping the page up-to-date is important, and while you're the official 'owner', it's great to find some 'local champions' who can contribute and monitor activity. As owner you can nominate one or two others as administrators to share the responsibility. Set up guidelines on suitable content, and aim for fresh updates at least twice a week. There should also be a friendly response to all positive comments, and spammers or unsuitable posts removed quickly (and these will be quite rare).



Social media is not going away any time soon.

Facebook is not the only game in town. Set up a special Twitter account for the area and feed content to it and to Facebook from a 'mayoral blog', where you post photos, longer news items and information

updates. It's easy to automate the process using a blogging system like Wordpress, Posterous or Tumblr — once content is added in one place, it can be pushed through to update all the other social media

services. Start by posting a photo and a short explanation as you get into the swing of blogging — it's not hard.

Location-based social media is also growing rapidly. Services such as Foursquare and Gowalla are popular with people who like to check-in on their phone when they eat or drink at a venue. Facebook's Places feature also competes in this space — 40 per cent of Facebook activity is done on mobile phones, and happy diners can check-in and tell Facebook friends about their busy social life. Clever operators put a reminder on the menu or signs, urging people to share their enjoyment on these services.

Chances are most of your business neighbours have only heard of Facebook friends. As you demonstrate how to use social media to promote the neighbourhood, they will start to understand and join in. The more they participate, the better for everyone.

Ken Burgin is a leading hospitality industry consultant. To find out more visit profitablehospitality.com or call 1800 001 353.

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