

## HOW TO **START** A RESTAURANT

Photo courtesy of Texas Roadhouse



### WHILE STAYING TRUE TO YOURSELF

**T**he opening of a new restaurant is the culmination of years of planning and hard work toward an entrepreneur's dream. While the oft-quoted statistic that only 5-10% of new restaurants succeed each year is more myth than fact (the success rate is closer to 40% after three years), opening a new eatery is, nonetheless, an intimidating venture for many new businesspeople. But, as those who've opened their own operations will tell you, sometimes it's about much more than a bottom line; a new restaurant takes time, money, and energy — *and* a lot of heart and dedication. With the combination of all those things, the final product *can* serve up a restaurateur's dream come true!

#### A Chef's Recipe for Success

According to Chef Chris Nugent, of Chicago's Goosefoot restaurant, one of the most important ingredients for a successful foodservice operation is an honest and thorough business plan: "The plan you write up when you begin is much more than just something you show the bank for the sake of a loan — it's your personal philosophy, your experience and knowledge, and your goals for the business, all wrapped up in one. And without a plan for where you want to be, how will you know when you succeed?"

**spotlight**

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### "Making it" by making it

**T**he play, "Death of a Salesman," Arthur Miller's 1949 drama concerning the dispirited and delusional last days of Willy Loman (the "salesman" of the title), opened to great critical acclaim and quickly achieved — in both play and film form — a wide audience. Though hailed as a classic of the American theatre, the drama produced an unintentional, and regrettable, side effect. For a decade and more after its opening, it alienated many bright young people from pursuing a career in sales. In an effort to recruit, businesses were forced to literally adopt a new vocabulary, and the salesman soon became an account executive, a customer representative, or any one of a number of other titles.

**food for thought**

by David Rolston  
President and CEO

Unfortunately, much the same thing has happened in manufacturing. Starting in the 1970s, as imported cars, steel and other products gained an increasing share of the American market, the media savaged the methods, motives and capabilities of our industrial base. Despite a record of tremendous achievement in technology, organization and marketing, the Big Three

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# Serving Up Social Media

For over 40 years, Technomic has been one of the leading fact-based research and consulting firms of the foodservice industry. Always on the cutting edge of knowing what the latest trends and technologies are in our industry, the company has individuals dedicated to every aspect of foodservice, up to and including the most recent developments in social media. For answers about how restaurants are making themselves known among social circles online, we spoke with Technomic's Erik Thoresen — a Director of Research and Consulting, and author of such white papers as “Five Social Media Strategies for Restaurants” and “Defining the Social Media Opportunity for Foodservice Suppliers.”

## Learning the Landscape of Social Media

“The first question any business entering social media must ask itself,” according to Thoresen, “is which platforms would work best?” According to Technomic's research, the top platforms for overall business-to-customer contact are Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn. For the foodservice industry specifically, one might also include Yelp and FourSquare. Among these, Facebook and Yelp seem the most well-adapted for use by a food-service business. As Thoresen notes, “Facebook and Yelp offer the best opportunities for real time interaction, and for cross-promotion. At the very least, customers are likely to expect that any business active in the social sphere has pages on these platforms.”

## TECHNOMIC

Both services provide a place for restaurants and other foodservice operations to create an online presence apart from their website — somewhere where basic location and contact information can be displayed, and pictures of the establishment, employees, and products can be made readily accessible. This is especially important as the Internet becomes an increasingly visual medium. Thoresen suggests, “Text alone doesn't really cut it when your success is measured in the number of

views you get. Studies show that a Facebook status posting, for example, that includes a *related* picture is significantly more effective in generating reaction and overall impact with readers.”



## Opening a Digital Storefront

Even if you know where you want to begin spreading your business's message, it can be a real challenge knowing the best way to “log on” to social media. For this, Thoresen suggests “tap[ping] into some of the best resources you have — employees already on your payroll. Not surprisingly, we've found that younger people have greater fluency in the tools and language of online interaction, so consider asking some of your junior employees to play a part in your forays onto Facebook, Twitter, and the like.”

By assigning supervised social media responsibilities to some of the fresher faces in your organization, you not only generate goodwill among the staff and an increased sense of investment in their work, you are also safeguarding against one of the dangers of the social media business: pretending to be something you're not. “It's important to stay genuine, and to let your online presence reflect what your business is really about,” warns Thoresen. “If you try to be something you're not, your savvy customers will likely be able to see through it quickly. Ultimately, that can hurt your overall brand.”

The accent can and should, however, be on cooperation. By putting their brand in the hands of someone outside management, businesses can run the risk of sending the wrong message. “Social media is a tool that should help your business connect with customers about your products and services. Measures should be in place to



ensure that employees are being responsible and accurate in their postings to your social media sites. Monitor the interactions — not only what your operation posts, but also what's being said about it by your customers,” Thoresen says.

## What's New in the Social Sphere

Those customer responses are coming faster than ever. Increasingly, users who interact with businesses do so in up-to-the-minute, so-called “real time.” Based on Thoresen and Technomic's research surveys, “The biggest change we're seeing now is the growth in mobile device penetration. Not only can someone on a street corner find your business on their phone — they're also more likely to comment on your products as they're enjoying them.” Location-based and other real-time applications, such as Yelp and FourSquare, offer businesses interesting new opportunities for generating feedback, tying into loyalty programs, and generally increasing online visibility.

Social media has quickly become the “new norm” for many businesses, and foodservice is no exception. This can be intimidating to those who are new to this online environment, but as Thoresen reminds us, “The contact that social media offers is really just an extension of the old-fashioned, face-to-face customer service you already provide. And, keep in mind that it runs both ways. Just as your customer may be typing something about you as we speak, you have the ability to respond to them just as quickly — whether it's offering a quick thanks for a compliment, or quickly responding to a complaint.” For reasons such as this, social media can provide a win-win situation for both parties. The only question left is, when will you be logging on? ■

# the big tickets



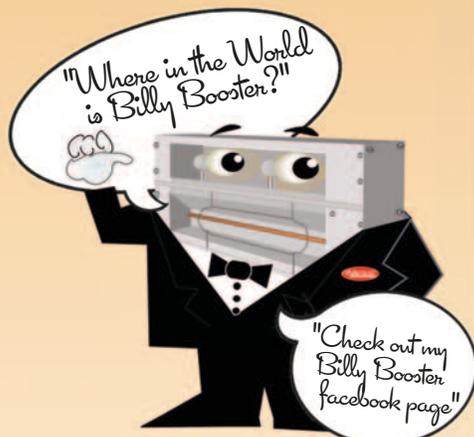
## TRADE EXHIBITIONS

### October 2012

- NACS Show  
October 7 - 10  
Las Vegas Convention Center  
Las Vegas, NV, USA  
Booth #3067
- Hostelco  
October 17 - 21  
Barcelona, Spain  
Pavilion 3, Level 0, D436 & D442

### November 2012

- IH/M&RS  
November 10 - 13  
Javits Center  
New York, NY, USA
- Equip'Hotel  
November 11 - 15  
Paris, France
- Food & Hotel China  
November 14 - 16  
Shanghai New International Expo Center  
Shanghai, China  
Booth #6N21



**MAXWELL WATT**  
HATCO'S SECRET AGENT IN FOODWARMING

## Fine Dining Fit for Everyone

Photo courtesy of Steven Johnson of Steven Johnson Photography



Photo courtesy of Anthony Tahlier of Anthony Tahlier Photography



Photo courtesy of Anna Knott of Anna Knott Photography

specialty  
of the house

**goosefoot** Chicago, Illinois, USA

**C**hef Chris Nugent and his wife, Nina, both have experience working in Chicago's fast-paced downtown Loop — he at Les Nomades (a “Windy City” institution for nearly 35 years), and she in an executive position at a major hotel. When they opened their restaurant, Goosefoot, on the city's far north side, they were doing more than getting away from the hustle and bustle of Michigan Avenue: “We wanted to bring high quality fine dining to a local neighborhood, and to a more varied audience,” says Chef Nugent.

Trying to take an “everyman” approach to a seasonal, 8-course, prix fixe menu is about more than geography though. For Chef Nugent, this means refining the familiar. When talking about his goal for Goosefoot's food, Chef Nugent describes his menu as “innovative dishes made from comfortable ingredients — scallop and lobster, beef with carrots, grilled goat cheese — and with a BYOB wine policy, we're able to keep the price tag relatively low.”

The menu also offers contemporary twists on ingredients one would expect in any modern American cuisine, such as the truffle foam atop sunchoke\* soup (see Recipe), or the powdered olive oil that accompanies this season's cheese course. But according to Chef Nugent, “Food is more important than flash. I'd rather have a dish pop with great flavor — that's what people take away from a great meal.”

As proof of the popularity of Chef's memorable flavors, since being named “Best New Restaurant 2012” by *Chicago Magazine*, reservations in the sleek and modern, 32-seat dining room have become a hot commodity. “I think it just goes to show,” remarks Chef Nugent, “that you can bring fine-quality dining to any part of the city. It's not just for downtown. Familiar foods, served by an approachable and informed staff, is always a recipe for success.”

\*Sunchoke is the root of the sunflower.

For more information or to make a reservation, go to [www.goosefoot.net](http://www.goosefoot.net). ■

### Sunchoke Soup with White Truffle Froth

Makes 6 servings.



#### Ingredients:

##### Soup

1 lb (454 g) sunchoke (peeled and sliced ¼" thick)  
1 ½ cups (227 g) Spanish onion (diced to ½" thickness)  
1 shallot (sliced thin)  
4 cloves garlic (sliced)  
6 tbsp (89 ml) canola oil  
8 cups (1.9 L) chicken or vegetable stock  
2 sprigs fresh thyme  
¼ cup (59 ml) heavy cream  
1 cup (237 ml) whole milk  
6 tbsp (86 g) whole butter

salt and white pepper, to taste  
4 tbsp (59 ml) white truffle oil (optional)

#### Optional additional ingredients:

¼ cup poached lobster, crab meat, shrimp, or bay scallops (cut into ½ inch pieces)  
1 cup potato (¼ inch diced and blanched until tender)  
White Truffle Froth  
3 cups 2% milk  
1 tsp white truffle oil

#### Instructions:

**Soup:** Place peeled and sliced sunchoke in a bowl of cold water to prevent discoloring. In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat canola oil over medium-low heat. Add onions, and sweat them for 4 minutes. Stir in garlic, shallots and thyme, and continue cooking for 6 minutes, until vegetables are soft. Add chicken or vegetable stock and drained sunchoke, simmering slowly for twenty minutes. Finally, add cream and milk at room temperature.

Using a blender, purée the soup, whole butter and white truffle oil in small batches (fill the blender up half way and place a towel over the top to cover the blender), then pass through a fine strainer. Season with salt and white pepper, to taste.

**White Truffle Froth:** Place 2% milk, white truffle oil and salt in a small saucepan, heating to 160 degrees (or almost a simmer). Use a handheld blender to create a froth on top of the milk. Allow froth to stand and stabilize for three minutes.

**To Serve:** Place additional ingredients in the bottom of six soup cups, pour soup over top and garnish with skimmed truffle froth. This soup can also be garnished with English peas, sugar snap peas, cauliflower and scallions.

Note: In the absence of sunchoke, peeled white asparagus may be substituted.

Chef Nugent places a strong emphasis on mining one’s past experience, pointing out, “There’s no need to reinvent yourself.



Photo courtesy of Anna Knott of Anna Knott Photography

Writers are told to write what they know, and businesses should sell what their owners know. For me, I have a background in fine dining. When we opened our restaurant, I knew it would be about multiple smaller courses, elegantly plated and served, using the best market-fresh ingredients.” True to form, Chef Nugent and his wife, Nina, followed the restaurant business plan they had carefully honed for years (and rewritten nearly ten times) when they opened Goosefoot last December. It features a stylishly modern dining room and an eight-course tasting menu. While still a young restaurant, Goosefoot is already earning high accolades, such as the top spot on *Chicago Magazine’s* list of the “Best New Restaurants of 2012.” [See Specialty of the House]

### The Fast Track of Franchising

For those who have an enthusiasm for food but little experience in the industry, franchise restaurants offer useful planning tools to get them



Photo courtesy of Culver’s

started. Tom Goldsmith is just such a “man with a plan.” As Director of Development for Culver’s restaurants, a Midwestern chain of fast casual eateries, he helps guide franchisees in the “ins and outs” of starting up new locations.



Like Chef Nugent, Goldsmith has found that a passion for the product is key: “Nearly all of the people who contact us about franchise opportunities know our brand and like what they see. Once we determine that they’re Culver’s material, we provide them with a full menu of resources to help transition them from ‘Culver’s fans’ to ‘Culver’s owner/operators.’” Some of the help Goldsmith and Culver’s provide include recommending preferred lenders for business loans, sample floor plans for restaurants, and ready-made menus and products to serve up

to eager locals. Goldsmith notes, “Many of our franchisees find that the communities they enter welcome them with open arms.



Photo courtesy of Culver’s

### Red Tape as a Resource

Since a new restaurant frequently means employment opportunities and economic incentive for the area, Goldsmith and Chef Nugent agree that the process of opening is actually facilitated by the local government agencies in charge of overseeing things like health codes and construction permits. “The City of Chicago was a tremendous resource,” says Nugent in his journey toward opening day: “Some people think of local bureaucracy as a hindrance — always looking for a ‘gotcha’ moment during inspection. In fact, they have so much experience with past businesses that they can tell you what to watch out for when you’re doing your remodeling and getting ready to open your doors.”

Philip Diderrich has found similar situations in his own experiences with both independent restaurants and major chains. Having helped open the Wells Street Tavern in Delafield, Wisconsin, Diderrich is now Service Manager at a Texas Roadhouse location. “Once you’re a part of a community,” he notes, “that community always wants you to succeed. After all, local guests will be the ones enjoying the fruits of your labor and deciding how long you will continue to serve them. In essence, your location is your business, so choose carefully.”



### Meeting – and Exceeding – Expectations

So just who will those locals — and hopefully regulars — be, once you’re off the ground? That depends on you — and the style of restaurant you may choose to open. Diderrich believes it’s important to realize “it’s not about who you want to come eat at your restaurant — your product will determine who will come.” At Texas Roadhouse, the target diner even has a nickname: “Bubba” — so-called for the founder and CEO’s own nickname. Diderrich explains, “Most of the Texas Roadhouse locations — and there are more than 300 now — can be found not in large cities or small towns, but in the places where Bubba lives. The Roadhouses gravitate toward suburban areas so we can, as we say, ‘take it to the rooftops.’ Eighty percent of our diners go home before they join us for dinner, so we try to meet them halfway there. We’re offering Bubba a place where he can get a comfortable and reliable meal close to home.”



Photo courtesy of Texas Roadhouse

To Culver’s franchisees, Goldsmith offers demographic studies the company has done in advance, determining the viability of a number of prospective locations. Franchises, of course, bring to their locations not just a well-known name but a consistent product. “From the food,” explains Goldsmith, “to the layout of the restaurant, to the décor — guests know what to expect when they come to a franchise. It takes some of the risk out of opening a new place if people are already familiar with your menu and your food.”

Chef Nugent hastens to point out that consistency can be just as important to independent restaurants — and especially in fine dining. “You’re starting from scratch with each new customer. You have to be interested in offering *every* guest, with *every* plate, the best dining experience you can. Whether it’s a busy Saturday night or a slow Tuesday, these people have come to enjoy your food and be a part of your dream. If you’re just seeing them as dollar signs, you’re getting into the wrong business.” Diderrich calls the foodservice business “a labor of love. It’s certainly no get-rich-quick scheme — just ask any restaurant operator.”



The process begins with just an idea and a lot of passion — and it doesn’t end, even when you have a steady stream of customers. Diderrich cautions, “Between equipping, staffing, and cooking, you’re actually an operating restaurant before you even open the doors — and well beyond that, you need to treat each day as if it’s

the first day of your business. Always look for a better way to do what you’re doing, even years into it. You started with a plan and some very specific goals — part of being true to who you are is not revising those goals. If anything, revise the plan to better meet them.”

No matter whether you’re just starting out or a seasoned veteran, Nugent, Diderrich and Goldsmith all agree: it takes a lot of one’s own *heart* to please other people’s *stomachs*.

For more information on the restaurants mentioned, see [goosefoot.net](http://goosefoot.net), [culvers.com](http://culvers.com), and [texasroadhouse.com](http://texasroadhouse.com). ■

### “food for thought” from page 1

automakers were held up to ridicule. The industrial machine that had secured the Allied victory in the Second World War was now compared unfavorably with the products of the very nations they had defeated. In truth, some of the criticism was justified. Caught between union demands for ever-increasing salaries and benefits and stock analysts’ insistence on quarterly profit performance, some of our largest industries had not kept pace with the latest in technology and continued to function using outmoded tools in obsolete facilities. As whole sectors of American industries — especially such basic staples as steel and machine tools — fell in the face of foreign competition, manufacturing emerged as an exceptionally poor career choice.

As time has passed, the “Miracle of Japan” has evaporated in a stagnant economy. Much of Europe stands on the brink of economic ruin, and the stronger countries may well be stymied by a need to support the weak ones. Now it is China that is looked on (in the popular media at least) as the world’s emerging industrial leader. So, what has happened to American manufacturing and why would anyone wish to join its ranks?

The fact is that the new American manufacturing is doing very well. The ingenuity, the inventiveness, and the economic system that brought about our initial and ongoing accomplishments has succeeded in reinventing what it is and how it works. The explosion in technology that is so visible to the public in electronics and communications has had no less an effect in

revolutionizing the way products are made. The assembly lines and mass production methods of the past that proved so successful in duplicating the same parts and products made from a limited range of materials have given way to new demands for so-called “high value parts” crafted in a wide range of exotic materials. The grimy factories in which men clad in overalls performed repetitive tasks now resemble laboratories and research facilities in which men — and women — in lab coats use Computer Aided Design (CAD) to envision parts produced through Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM).

Processes that formerly took days or even weeks and involved transfers to several machines are now produced on highly sophisticated systems that combine operations to save time and money and virtually eliminate scrap.

The limited range of materials has been vastly expanded, and iron and steel have been complemented by multiple alloys, ceramics, glass, composites and — thanks to the miracle of nanotechnology — custom created formulas.

Just as the methods, machines and materials have changed, so have the individuals operating them. Most of the jobs that could be handled by unskilled or semiskilled labor have gone to Third World countries offering lower costs. More still have been eliminated entirely by technological advances. The individuals who populate manufacturing today are professionals trained in engineering, design, factory logistics, specialized tooling, and multiple other disciplines rarely heard of a short time ago.

And the world has noticed. Our new manufacturing infrastructure has resulted in multiple products formerly outsourced now being returned to these shores. We have become a major source for complex part production, even among the Asian nations, and despite their low labor rates. The fast and constant evolution of products assures us that there will be high demand for what we make in the near- to long-term future.

The disadvantage we now face is a shortage of qualified people. Recent surveys have indicated that manufacturers wanting to hire cannot find the engineers, technicians, designers, or even skilled trades people — such as welders — to fill the jobs that are open. It is past time for us to revise our educational system so as to expose our young people to the career opportunities available to them and to provide the means by which they can become qualified participants in what will someday be known as the Second Industrial Revolution. When our own people — especially the young — finally come to realize what our international customers (and competitors) have already seen, I believe they’ll be motivated to explore the satisfaction that comes with “making it.”

Sincerely,

David Rolston  
[drolston@hatcocorp.com](mailto:drolston@hatcocorp.com)



# Lights the Way to a Great Display

NLL-30



NLX-36

product profile



HL-24-2

Your most delicious-looking foods deserve to be seen in their best light — and Hatco's quality Food Display Lights can help! Their range of customizable "brightening" solutions include:

HL Series **Glo-Rite® Food Display Lights**: the high-quality, durable way to enlighten your salad bars and other display areas. Glo-Rites are available from 18" up to 6' (457-1829 mm), with optional additional lamp assemblies for greater illumination, and adjustable angle brackets for mounting, making them versatile enough for your most unique display needs.

NLL Series **Narrow LED Display Lights** are ideal for when you need to light tight spaces. In widths from 30" to 60" (720-1524 mm), these LEDs offer long-lasting bulbs, low energy consumption, and all around reliability! They're also available in *Designer* powdercoated colors, gloss and plated finishes, or with stainless steel housing, to match any décor.

Other bright alternatives in tight places are Hatco's NLX Series **Narrow Xenon Display Lights**. Their slim design of 2-1/8" (55 mm) height by 4" (102 mm) depth, available in widths from 18" to 72" (610-1829 mm), provide a great way to light your buffet lines and other serving areas!

For more information on how Hatco can help you light your way to more sales, contact your representative or visit [www.hatcocorp.com](http://www.hatcocorp.com) today! ■