

**Retailer Newsletter**

**March 1, 2025**

**Tom’s Business “TIPS”**

***“To Improve Profits”***

**RE: What’s In Store For The C-Store?**

**Hello,**

***The future for C-Stores is ‘fresh food’:***

**Everything I have been reading points to ‘fresh food’ being available in C-stores as the key to remaining a viable business in the future. I have met retailers who have become complacent by doing their business the same way day after day, while their business *does not* grow! In the world of retail, if your business is not moving forward (growing), then you are going backward (losing business). You can work hard and try, but no matter how impressive your location is, you will lose customers for a variety of reasons that are no fault of yours.**

**The following are examples of several boxes you need to consider and check before you take that leap into fresh food.**

 **Do you have the room (space) for this new venture?**

**If you must remove current merchandise to make room, have you calculated what the gross profit loss will be?**

 **Do you have the finances? Can you secure new financing?**

**Do you have the expertise to operate this new business or is training available?**

**Do you have experienced staff to handle the increase?**

 **Does your competition offer fresh food? If so describe:**

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**Did any of your competition attempt to offer fresh food and fail? If so, why? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **Do you currently offer food items? For example:**

* **Coffee (Varieties including flavored)/Cappuccino?**
* **Fountain beverages/frozen beverages?**
* **Pre-packaged sandwiches?**
* **Grillers?**
* **Frozen foods? Soft serve ice cream?**
* **Pizza?**

**There may be additional items to check for your situation.**

**Many retailers (me included) are not ‘experts’ in everything we do. We hire experts to help us run our business. For example: I am not a lawyer so when the need arises, I hire one. I am not an IT tech. When my computer system goes down, I hire an expert to get me up and running. If my car wash broke down, I didn’t have the time, expertise, or inventory of parts to do the repair, so I hired an expert. If you are about to venture into fresh food for the first time and you do not have the experience, find the right person. Don’t venture into a new endeavor and attempt to ‘learn’ as you go. It is vital that you get someone with experience to help you, because your risk of failure is great, and your financial loss could be devastating. How many times have you visited a new restaurant (during the first few weeks after it opened) and things just did not go right? Did you ever go back? I can tell you that personally I have gone to new restaurants and the grand opening was a disaster, and I never went back. Don’t take that chance. Here’s a recommendation: if you are going to need experienced help running your fresh food venture, start looking for that special individual now by spreading the word among your staff and customers. Let them know that you are looking for a unique person who can work with you to make fresh food options a success in your store. You might find a retired former restaurant owner who would be excited to work for you part-time to help get your business off and running.**

**If you are not sure where to locate equipment and/or where you can find the right merchandise to promote, check with your grocery wholesaler. They have the connections to help your business.**

**Another thought for you to contemplate BEFORE making the move is to ask yourself if your store is clean, I mean REALLY clean inside and out. I have stated numerous times over the years in *Tom’s Tips*, in training seminars, and during in-store consultations that your customers want *clean stores and clean rest rooms.* And speaking about restrooms, be sure you have restrooms available for your customers. I have been to many stores that post a sign on the door, “For Employee Use Only”. Who are you trying to fool? You must provide restrooms for all your customers AND employees.**

**Yes, you are correct, I did not send *Tom’s Tips* in January or February. I have received several inquiries questioning whether I was upset or had retired from the business and ceased sending out *Tips*. The answer to both is NO! The simple answer is writing, having my friend Bill Sawyer proof the newsletter, and emailing takes time. Sometimes it becomes a problem when I’m travelling, so I made the decision to send out *Tom’s Tips* once a quarter. I plan to keep future editions of *Tips* a little shorter in length and the number of topics limited. I hope you understand.**

**\* \* \* \* \* \***

***Positions are temporary. Ranks and titles are limited***

 ***but the way you treat people will always be remembered.***

**\* \* \* \* \* \***

**Don't be a victim of the 5 Dangerous Words**

***‘Maybe I’ll Do It Tomorrow’***

**Do it today because tomorrow (~~could be~~) will be too late!**

Tom
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***“Our business is making your business better!”***