



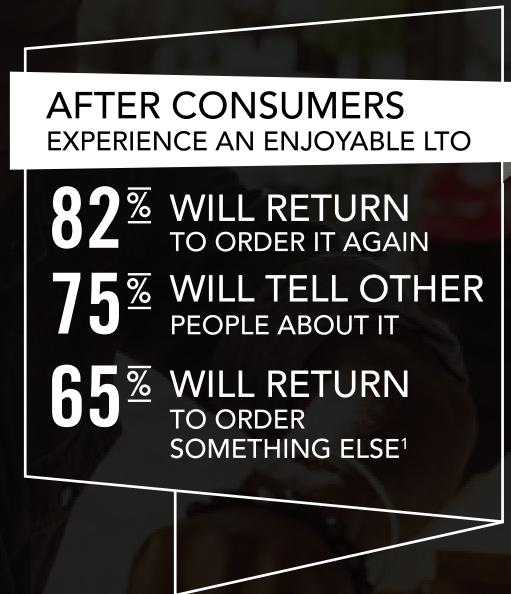
THE POWER OF LIMITED-TIME OFFERS

How Operators Are Turning
Urgency Into Profit



AN OFFER YOU JUST **CAN'T BEAT**

Why should you care about mastering limited-time offers (LTOs)?



Use this e-book to prepare yourself with the trends and tips you need to create the next great LTO for your operation. For personalized help developing your LTOs, please contact your local Simplot representative or visit simplotfoods.com.

www.simplotfoods.com

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1:

A Little Something Special: Harnessing novelty and urgency to drive traffic and sales

CHAPTER 2:

What's Selling: Seasonal and value-priced LTOs hold the most appeal for consumers

CHAPTER 3:

What Makes LTOs Great: More about the basic components of a successful LTO

CHAPTER 4:

How to LTO: Tips and advice for creating a better LTO development process

CHAPTER 5:

The Golden LTO: How to create a popular and profitable LTO with loaded fries

CHAPTER 6:

Marketing Your LTO: How to promote your delicious new invention

CONCLUSION:

Things to Remember: 6 takeaways that added up to better LTOs

A LITTLE SOMETHING SPECIAL

Harnessing novelty and urgency to drive traffic and sales

It's only human nature—as much as patrons like to order their old favorites, they're always ready to change it up if there's good reason. More and more, a great limited-time offer is proving to be all the reason they need.

By definition, an LTO in foodservice is a food or beverage that you can only get for a limited time. From premium burgers to seasonal drinks, FOMO (fear of missing out) can tip the scales in your favor and differentiate you from competitors.

An effective LTO can create a cascade of benefits, advancing both your menu and marketing strategies through repeat traffic and word-of-mouth enthusiasm.

According to consumers, a good LTO inspires them to:¹



If you're not offering LTOs yet, chances are you will be soon.

What motivates consumers to try an LTO?¹

40%

"I wanted to try something new."

37% "The item looks good in the photos in the store."

33% "The item looked good in advertisements I had seen."

30% "It was a better value, less expensive."

28% "It made sense for that time of year."

24%

"It was a particularly indulgent option."

WHAT'S SELLING

Seasonal and value-priced LTOs hold the most appeal for consumers

Research shows consumers are enthusiastic about LTOs in general, but hold a special place for seasonal and value-priced LTOs. Conveniently, recurring seasonal LTOs lend themselves well to menu planning calendars. Today, four out of five LTOs are food items, but the number of beverage LTOs has almost doubled since 2010.



Burgers, sandwiches, desserts, and pizza are the most frequently selected types of food LTOs¹



Desserts are quickly becoming one of the more popular food LTOs—since 2010, restaurants have increased their use of dessert LTOs by 28%¹



Sweet, indulgent drinks are consumers' favorite type of beverage LTO (milkshakes or other dessert beverages are the most popular)¹

The exclusivity of an LTO increases its appeal more than any other attribute.¹

"It was something I couldn't get anywhere else." (41%)

"It was a dollar/menu item." (33%)

"I knew it would return to the menu from time to time." (28%)

Top 10 types of LTOs consumers are most interested in:¹

- Seasonal items (78%)
- Value-priced items (76%)
- New versions of regular menu items (68%)
- Premium ingredients (67%)
- Recurring LTOs (64%)
- Authentic ethnic items (64%)
- Items tied to an event or holiday (63%)
- Entire limited-time items (59%)
- Refreshed classics (59%)
- Items inspired by the local area (59%)



MENU FAVORITES

Most menued **FOOD LTO** terms and ingredients¹

Cheese	Bacon	Ice Cream	Chips
Chicken	Lettuce	Tortilla	Vanilla
Fresh	Cheddar	Egg	Salsa
Onion	Chocolate	Smoked	Rice
Tomato	Roasted	Grilled Chicken	Jalapeño Pepper
Grilled	Beef	Fries	Garlic

Most menued **BEVERAGE LTO** terms and ingredients¹

Blended	Pumpkin	Iced Coffee	Mango
Latte	Frozen	Fresh	Peppermint
Whipped Cream	Lemonade	Steamed Milk	Raspberry
Chocolate	Real	Vanilla	Coconut
Smoothie	Caramel	Cinnamon	Banana
Mocha	Strawberry	Coffee	Ginger



RAPID TRENDS

Fastest-growing **FOOD LTO** terms and ingredients¹

Sriracha	Chocolate Chip Cookie	Frozen Yogurt	Baguette
Housemade	Nacho Cheese Sauce	Gravy	Sweet Potato
Pretzel	Quinoa	Avocado	Mac & Cheese
Pulled Pork	Chive	Cole Slaw	Scone
Peanut Butter	Oreo Cookie	Scallion	Gluten Free
Habañero Pepper	Antibiotic Free	Cabbage	Peanut Butter Cup


Fastest-growing **BEVERAGE LTO** terms and ingredients¹

Iced Coffee	Cold Brew	Dark Chocolate	Crème Brûlée
Vanilla	Espresso	Chai	Truffle
Pineapple	Whipped Cream	Caramel	Sweet Tea
Almond	Coconut	Nutmeg	Blended
Chocolate Sauce	Citrus	Cinnamon	Real
Green Tea	Frozen	Blackberry	Fresh

WHAT MAKES LTOs GREAT

More about the basic components of a successful LTO

The basic formula of an LTO is well known, but there's more to creating an effective LTO than just adding pumpkin spice. Here are three main things to consider as you design your offer.



"LTOs that score high marks on purchase intent and uniqueness tend to reimagine the classics using one or two trendy ingredients in well-known dishes."¹

Nº1

A unique menu item

It could be a new take on a common ingredient, or a seasonal or premium ingredient. While your LTO needs to be unique to stand out from the crowd, don't go overboard. Make sure it's a menu item or special ingredient your patrons will be familiar with.

Nº2

The duration of your offer

Most operators offer their LTO for one to three months. This allows time for promotion and word-of-mouth enthusiasm to work their magic.

Nº3

Special pricing

You could take a value- or premium-pricing approach. If you're trying to charge a premium price, make sure you have the premium ingredients to justify it.

HOW TO LTO

Tips and advice for creating a better LTO development process

Research has shown that successful LTOs are closely aligned with an operator's brand, menu, operational capacity and the expectations of its patrons. Would it be unique for a pizza joint to offer a lobster LTO? Yes. A good idea? Probably not.

Start with what you know

One proven strategy is to add a special touch to an already-popular, existing menu item—a premium ingredient or new twist on a flavor like truffle mac & cheese. This approach ensures that your customers are familiar with the item, and your kitchen can execute it smoothly. Many of the fastest growing LTO ingredients are relatively commonplace: pretzels, peanut butter, cabbage, etc. They're just used in unexpected ways (crushed pretzels as a topping, for example).

Include your customers in the process

70% of customers say they want to contribute to the creation of LTOs. What better way to reduce the risk of a flop than by getting feedback right from the source?

Keep up with the trends

It's all too easy—and risky—to get complacent. While we counsel against pushing LTO ingredients that may be too trend-forward, it's important to keep an eye on what's generating excitement with the dining public.

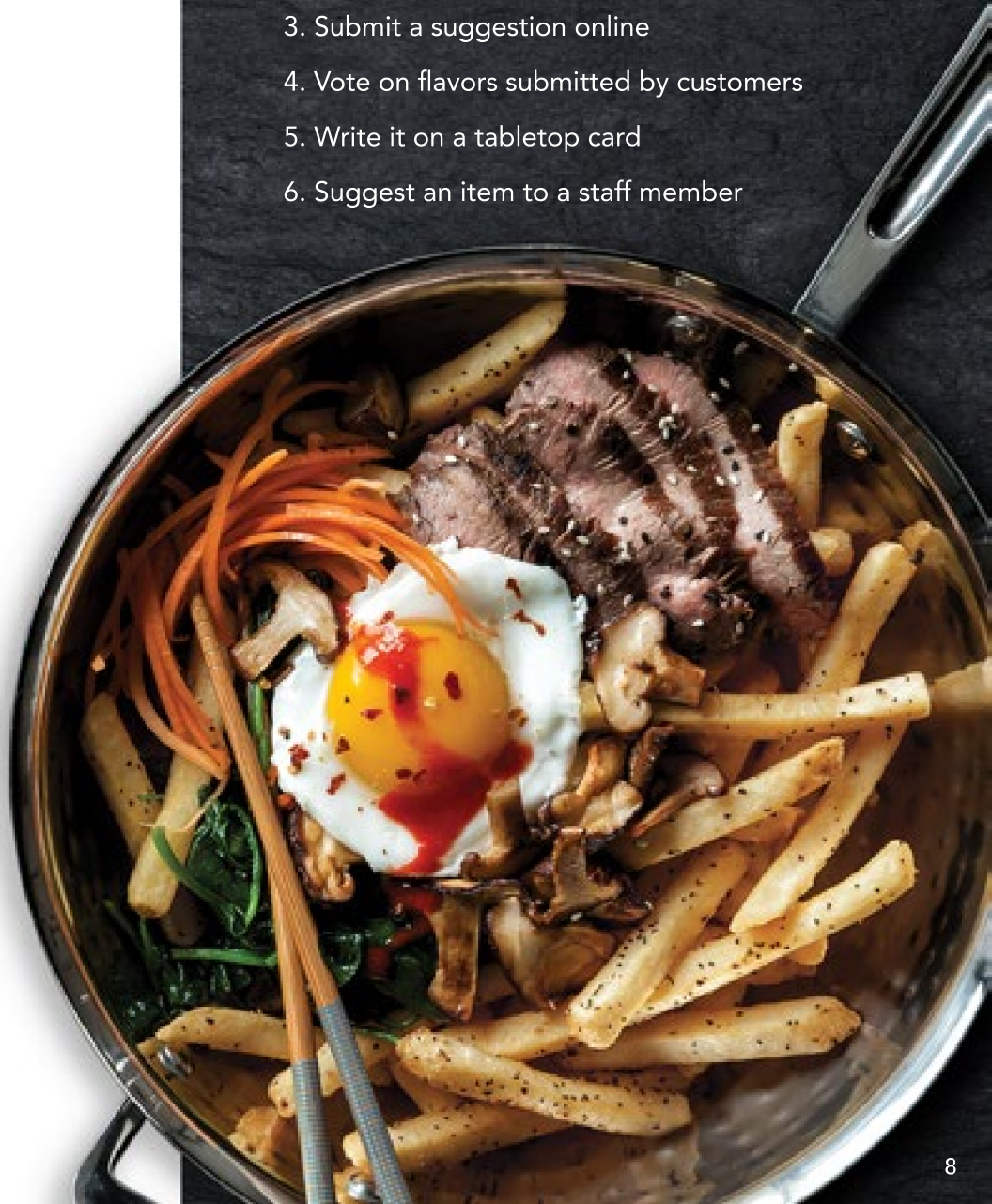


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Consumers' top preferred ways of participating in new LTOs¹

1. Vote on flavors created by the restaurant
2. Give feedback during a taste test event
3. Submit a suggestion online
4. Vote on flavors submitted by customers
5. Write it on a tabletop card
6. Suggest an item to a staff member



THE GOLDEN LTO: LOADED FRIES

How to create a popular and profitable LTO with loaded fries

Fries draw a crowd all by themselves, but they also do double-duty as an inexpensive base for crave-worthy appetizers. The trend is called Loaded Fries. The elements of a bankable loaded fry LTO are simple:

INDULGENT TOPPINGS

Americans are going one up on Canadian poutine, creating Instagram-worthy signature dishes with ingredients like crab, house-made aioli, truffle oil, parmesano reggiano and others (sometimes including the trim from their other menu items). Battered and coated fries stand up better to moist toppings and retain their crispness.

PREMIUM SAUCES AND DIPS

Premium sauces are another way operators are meeting the growing demand for customization. People love their sauce nowadays and it isn't just ketchup and ranch. They can be inexpensive to make, but very profitable if priced correctly on the menu.

For more on how to menu fries for profitability, download our **FREE** e-book, "[The Foodservice Operators' Ultimate Guide to Menuing Fries](http://www.simplotfoods.com)".



DISTINCTIVE SHAPE

Start with a unique shape to differentiate yourself from the competitor down the street. Simplot SIDEWINDERS™ Fries are a great example of a unique shape, and many operators menu them for this reason. Even super thin cuts like the julienne 3/16" can become Signature Fries.

ON-TREND SEASONINGS AND HERBS

Adding on-trend topical seasonings/herbs like rosemary, oregano, garlic and sea salt is another way we're seeing operators create signature dishes.

Loaded fries are up 56.5% on menus in the last 4 years.¹

Over 60% of consumers are interested in loaded fries.¹



MARKETING YOUR LTO

How to promote your delicious new invention

Like anything new, people can't buy it if they don't know it exists. This means promoting your LTO will be as important as the process that created it. For independents and small chains, your primary marketing channels will likely be in-store promotion and social media.

In-store promotion: All of the well-worn, in-store opportunities apply here: server mentions, table tents, posters, outdoor signage, counter cards, etc. Train your servers well on your LTO, so they're ready to sell it from Day 1.

Website: Give your LTO prominent real estate on the homepage of your website.

Email: If patrons have signed up to hear from you, by all means, let them know about your LTO, and consider offering a coupon to sweeten the deal for your best customers.

Paid media: If you have the budget, both operators and patrons report the high effectiveness of television advertising.

Social media: Most operators are already using Facebook in their marketing—85% consider it to be the most effective social medium.¹ But if you're trying to expand your reach consider adding Instagram and Snapchat to your repertoire.

For more on social media, download our **FREE** guide to digital marketing for restaurants.

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TIP The importance of good photography of your LTO cannot be overstated. Patrons are consistently drawn to great-looking food shots, so plan on investing in some tasty imagery to ensure your success.

See some DIY food photography tips here.

www.simplotfoods.com

CONCLUSION

THINGS TO REMEMBER

6 takeaways that add up to better LTOs

LTOs are an important tool that can help you drive traffic, increase revenue and generate excitement among new and existing patrons. Before you sit down to brainstorm your next LTO, be sure to keep in mind these key takeaways:

- 1 Consumers want seasonality, uniqueness, familiarity, rareness and freshness. Pull from your current menu by taking already popular items or comfort foods and giving them a new twist. Find a special ingredient that complements the current season.
- 2 Create a unique LTO, but one that's not too adventurous. Be sure to use an item name and description that your patrons can easily understand.
- 3 Invest the time or money to get great-looking photography of your LTO.
- 4 Whether you choose a value-based LTO or a premium offering, make sure your pricing strategy reflects the priorities of your customers.
- 5 Involving consumers in the creation of LTOs can reduce the risk of a flop. 70% of consumers want to be involved, and giving them a voice can bring them closer to your brand.
- 6 Start with in-store and social media tactics to promote your LTO. If you have a bigger budget, consider broadcast advertising.

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"Compared to a month without a promotion, successful LTOs drive increases of at least 10% in both traffic and revenue for nearly half of operators."¹

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For personalized assistance developing your LTOs using our products, please contact your local Simplot representative or visit **[simplotfoods.com](https://www.simplotfoods.com)**.



SIDEWINDERS™ Fries is a trademark of the J.R. Simplot Company. Our unique SIDEWINDERS™ Fries are proprietary and patented under one or more patents and pending patent applications. See www.simplotfoods.com/patents for more details.

Simplot potatoes | avocados | fruits | vegetables | grains

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