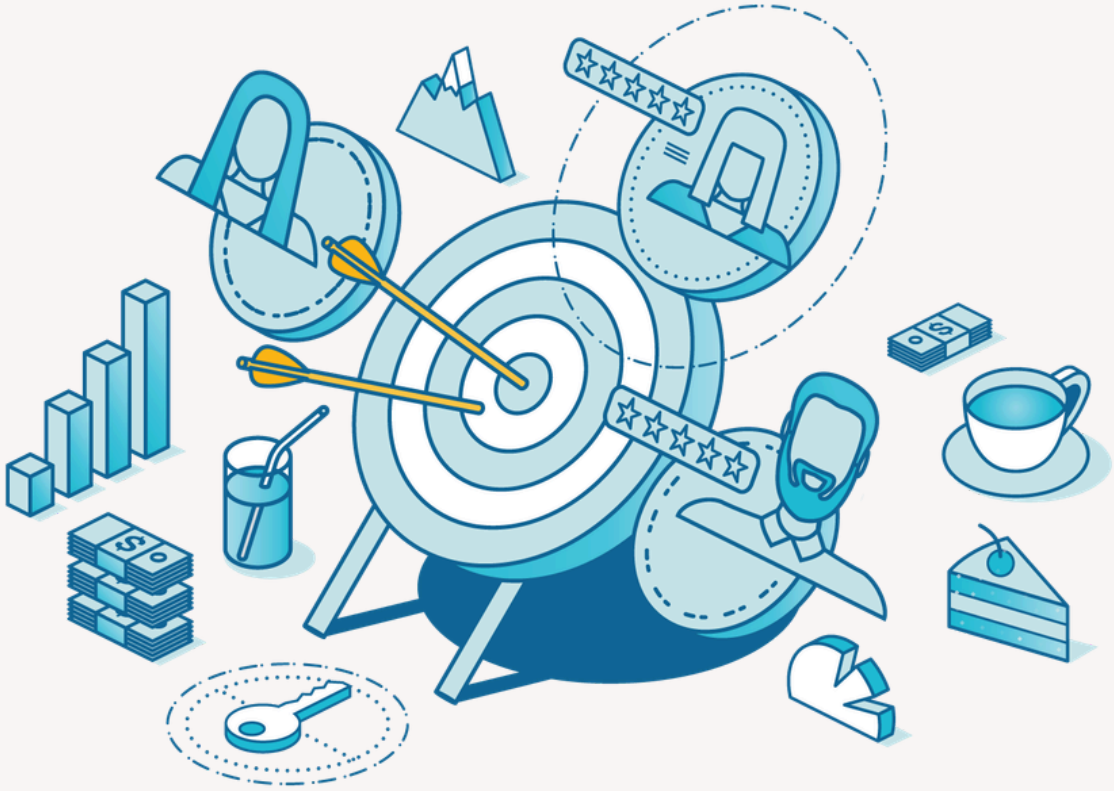
How to *win* your competitor's crowd



Have you noticed a few more empty seats around your gaming lounge, bar or bistro than a few months ago?

It's time to take action and fill those seats.

Here is a cheat sheet to help get that crowd back to your place in two easy stages: **laying the foundations** and **action stations.**

Stage 1

Laying the Foundations

Like buildings, businesses need strong foundations. It might be time to go back to the start and clearly define what your business is about.
Here's our checklist to help you:

1. Know what you are up against

This means understanding the competition deeply. The best way to understand this is visiting during peak and off peak times to really understand what they are doing to bring in a crowd (or not, which is also important to understand).

- [ ] **What do they have that you don't?**

- [ ] **When are they busy?**

- [ ] **How are they marketing to their customers?**

2. Learn from the best

Join the loyalty programs and databases of those who are doing it well. Obviously your close competitors too, but also whenever you are out and about join other loyalty programs, you never know what insights you might find. This will give you a constant flow of clues on how other businesses are marketing to their customers, and this will no doubt spark a few ideas.

- [ ] **Joined at least 3 databases**

3. Put your best digital foot forward

We know every journey starts with Google.

- [ ] **So how is your business portrayed across search and social?**

- [ ] **Is your branding up to date?**

- [ ] **Are your open hours correct?**

- [ ] **Are you getting good reviews?** Check out our NPS article here.
(If not it might be time to bring in the professionals)

4. Look through the lens of your customer

Get someone, or better a couple of people, who haven't been to your venue in a while, to walk the floor with you and give you their detailed views on what they see.

5. Get the basics right

These are the things that people complain about most after food and service so take the time to get them right.

- [ ] **Are your toilets spotless?**

- [ ] **Is your coffee drinkable?**

- [ ] **Is the lighting right?**

- [ ] **Critically, how are patrons welcomed into your venue?**

6. Look seriously at your menu

Armed with what you know your customers love, it's time to cast a critical eye over you menu and make sure you are maximising your profit and reducing the labour required for food and drinks. This may be a good one to get professional help from someone like Cooking the Books.

- [ ] **Menu up to date**

7. Finish that list of jobs

We all have one, that list of jobs we never get to that would just make your venue a tiny bit better. Time to stop procrastinating and either finish the list or get some professionals in to do it for you.

- [ ] **To Do list done**

8. Invest in your people

Hospitality is a service business, are you staff skilled enough to deliver the right level of service for your venue? If not train them up and if they are work hard to keep them, because they will be a target for other venues.

- [ ] **Training program reviewed**

9. Keep your staff informed

A great tip is to load them into your loyalty program as a specific tag or segment and make sure you send them all your promotions first.

Use technology like Tanda or HumanForce to effectively manage your rosters so you know you have the right number of staff on.

- [ ] **Staff updated in database**

10. Ask your customers

Understand what brings your customers back by asking for feedback and using that to clearly understand your point of difference.

Then use it in your marketing and ask permission for their testimonials to be featured in your communications.

Remember that we buy services (like dining out) based on recommendations and the recommendations of strangers are highly valued in reducing tension about trying something or somewhere new.

- [ ] **Updated testimonials**

Bonus tip

11. Is your tech stack fit for growth

Now that you have laid all this groundwork for success, will your technology support it?

- [ ] **Are your systems integrated?** If not, submit a ticket here and we'll get you going.

- [ ] **How many places do you need to update your menu, hours and other info?**

- [ ] **Do you have a loyalty program that can automate retaining your customers?**

- [ ] **Are you risking potential data breaches by moving customer information manually between systems?**

Stage 2

Action Stations

Now that you have a business that's fit for growth, it's time to get those customers flocking to your venue. Get ready to take action and realise the benefits of all the work you have done.

1. Tell your story

Create a dedicated communication plan to keep customers up to date with what's going on in your business.

- [ ] **Are your Welcome communications activated?**

- [ ] **Are your Net Promoter Scores communications activated?** If not, here is how you set it up.

- [ ] **Are your Birthday communications activated?** Here is how.

- [ ] **Are your Trending away communications activated?**

Email, SMS and socials are the keys in your control, use them. And don't forget to try and get some PR in the local press and consider local advertising options or sponsorships.

2. Put your best foot foward...

...With a front of house team that clearly understand what you are trying to achieve and make sure they can sell the story to guests. Give them all the tools they need (necessary to create a memorable impression):



Tip top training
to be alert & attentive



Presentation skills
for a polished image



Ability to give freebies
or a small treat for the kids

3. Don't have a database? Then it's time to build one

Have a look at all your customer facing technology:

- [ ] **Point of Sale**
- [ ] **Reservations**
- [ ] **Order at Table**
- [ ] **Your Website**

Connect them to your TalkBox account to build your database quickly.

4. Got entertainment? Shout about it

If you are running trivia, poker or even a kids club for the school holidays, don't wait until customers are on premise to tell them. Make sure your website, socials and digital marketing keep customers updated.

Also talk to your supplier about what promotion they can offer and what they do to build a crowd.

If you aren't running entertainment it might be worth considering.

Chat to the experts at **Full House Group** who can supply you with the right events for your venue.

5. Create a sense of FOMO

One of the simplest and most effective ways to create Fear Of Missing Out is a good old fashioned **member draw**. Whether it's a meat (or mushroom) tray or even a jackpot then it will only work if you let customers know about it.

Schedule a regular SMS to infrequent customers so they don't miss out.

6. Reactivate your lost customers

Chances are there will be a percentage of your database that has stopped visiting regularly. Reach out to them with a hot offer to get them back to see all the changes you have made.

If you need help getting this automated, reach out to **support@impactdata.com.au** who can get this working for you.

7. Go after function business

Functions are not only great business, they introduce new people to your business. Have you got a function space that can really create a special event for weddings or baby showers? Whatever it is, make sure to get a professional photographer for the lasting memories in your venue; and make sure your menu leaves people impressed.

8. Celebrate birthdays and milestone birthdays

Once you have a database invite customers to celebrate their special day at your venue.

Not capturing DOB? No problem, the **TalkBox by Impact Data** team can work with you on our **Celebrate Me Date** where we fix a date to acknowledge customers and invite them in for a treat.

- [ ] **Birthday program sorted**

9. Elevate the trends

At the moment one of the hottest trends is **Bottomless Brunches**, why not step it up a notch with a signature cocktail and seasonal menu.

- [ ] **My hot trend is**

10. Think of your venue in time zones

Can you attract:

- [ ] **The business crowd for corporate breakfasts?**

- [ ] **The stay at home parents for a mid-morning coffee and snack?**

- [ ] **The tradie lunch?**

10. Think of your venue in time zones continued...

Can you attract:

- [ ] **The after work wind-down?**
- [ ] **Build a marketing plan for your key segments**
- [ ] **The lunch crowd ?**
- [ ] **The dinner crowd ?**
- [ ] **And the late night revellers?**
- [ ] **Can you manage multiple service periods across the day and set your venue accordingly?**

Once you have organised your plan then you need to target them accordingly. Work with the team at **TalkBox by Impact Data** to understand how we can use service periods, day of week and customer frequency calculations to drive business from these groups.

Bonus tip

11. Connect with local organisations

Like Traders Associations, Rotary and other community groups and offer them free use of your space for meetings during off peak times and give them a bounce back offer for another visit. This can be a lucrative group of influential business people that can help you build slower periods.

- [ ] **Top 3 groups in my area**

Let's wrap it up

Hopefully this **Cheat Sheet** has given you plenty of ammunition to create the venue that crowds will flock to.

If you need a Health Check for your TalkBox account submit a ticket here to our support team.



For assistance in getting your TalkBox account doing more of the heavy lifting for your customer attraction, engagement and retention contact us:

Get in touch

Visit our website

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