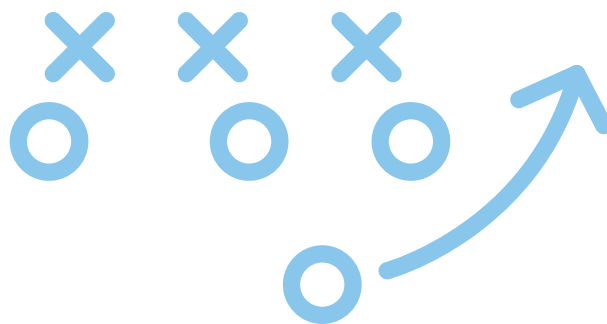


HOW TO RUN A PROMOTION FOR MAXIMUM ROI:

THE PRO PLAYBOOK

A Play-by-Play Guide for Bars and Restaurants





SAY GOODBYE TO “THROW AND HOPE” PROMOTIONS

Tired of wasting energy and marketing dollars? Throwing promos left and right hoping customers catch on?

Timeout.

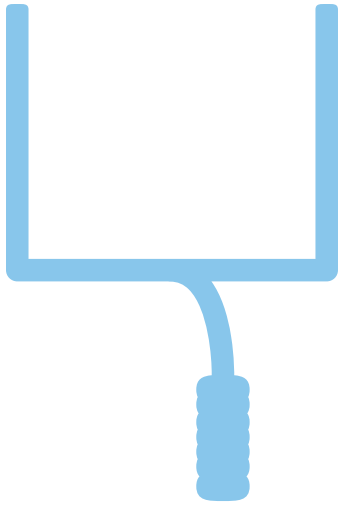
A pro quarterback doesn't hit the field without a strategic play in mind. Your bar or restaurant shouldn't either. That's why we're sharing 5 plays you need to run a successful promotion. This Playbook includes lean, efficient tactics that keep your time and bottom line in mind.

It's Game Time. What's Included in the Playbook:

- 5 Plays That Make a Winning Promotion
- The 13 Most Popular Promotional Offers and Events
- How to Pick the Best Target Audience for Your Promotion
- A Template for Building a Promotion That Works
- 7 Simple Ways to Spread the Word for \$300 Total

JOE KNOWS: FOLLOW THE REAL-TIME ACTION

See these 5 plays in action! We apply them to a fictional restaurant and bar: Joe's Pub in Anytown, USA. Joe's Pub serves classic American food and is known for a great beer selection.



PLAY #1 - WHY ARE YOU LAUNCHING A PROMOTION?

What You'll Score: Figure out the best promotion to meet your business objectives.

THE DIG DEEP TACTIC TO SET A PROMOTIONAL FOCUS + GOAL

When you decide to run a promotion, it's usually for one of two reasons (or both):

"I need more customers" or "I need more sales"

But digging deeper to uncover a more specific reason results in a promotion that best meets your most critical business needs. Question yourself until you decipher exactly why you need that promotion.

Once you know the business problem you're really trying to solve, you can set your promotional focus and goal.

NOTE: Don't be tempted to flesh out the details of your promotion just yet. Play #2 will uncover which target audience is most likely to help you meet your business needs. Then, Play #3 gives you a formula for creating a promotion aimed at the target audience.

JOE KNOWS: HOW HE USED THE “DIG DEEP” TACTIC

Problem 1) “I need more customers.”

Why is customer traffic low?

“Because weeknights are slow.”

Why are weeknights slow?

“I guess there’s not much going on at my pub.”

Promotional Focus: Launch a midweek event.

Promotional Goal: Double customer traffic one night a week.

Problem 2) “I need more sales.”

Why are sales down?

Food orders have been low on weekends.”

Why are food orders low on weekends?

“We brought in great craft beer, now people are just ordering beer.”

Promotional Focus: Food-related offer

Promotional Goal: Increase food sales by 25%.

POWER PLAY: USE YOUR PROMOTION TO “TRAIN” GUESTS

A good promotion is like a reward for guests. So, reward the behavior that will meet your business goals. Once the promotion ends, your customers should repeat the behaviors on their own.

JOE KNOWS: TAKING THE LONG VIEW OF HIS PROMOTIONS

Business Goal	The Promotion	After the Promotion
More midweek customers	Midweek Event	Guests had so much fun, they come back and bring friends
More weekend food sales	Food-Related Offer	The food was so good, guests now order food along with drinks



PRO TIP:
3 Reasons to Target Existing Customers

LAY #2 - WHO IS YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE?

What You'll Score: Discover the ideal target audience for your promotion: the ones who will take action, come in, and spend. HINT: They may be closer than you think...

WHAT IS TARGETING AND WHY IT MATTERS

A good promotion cannot be all things to all people. Plus, most independent bars and restaurants don't have the funds to advertise their promotion to every single person in a 60-mile radius! **Targeting helps you identify the type of person who is most likely to act on your promotion.**

EXISTING CUSTOMERS: LOOK WITHIN FIRST

Think attracting new customers is the best way to boost business? Don't neglect your current customers. In fact, they're the easiest – and cheapest – to reach (find out how in Play #4). They're also the most likely to act on your promotion. **When planning your promotion, think how it could encourage existing guests to...**

- Come in more often
 - Spend more when they're with you
 - Bring friends and family
 - Continue doing business with you!
-
- The probability of upselling an existing customer is 60-70% - just [5-20% for new ones!](#)
 - Existing customers are [5x more likely to try a new offering](#) than new customers
 - Increasing customer retention rates by 5% can [increase profits by 25-95%](#)

PRO TIP:
Access to 10,000,000
New Customers
(No, That's Not a Typo)

ATTRACTING NEW GUESTS: WHO SHOULD YOU TARGET?

Look back at your **promotional goal**. Which type of person is most likely to help you meet your goal? Make a list of 3 top target customers using these questions. Then, look for overlap between customers – maybe by age or location. That will be your “sweet spot” target audience.

- **Look at your existing customers** who are doing the behaviors you want to see more of: like coming in frequently or purchasing lots of food and drinks.
- **Analyze your competitors** – who are they attracting?
- **Are there businesses or a college campus nearby?** They could be frequent, loyal guests due to their proximity to your venue.
- **Does your menu or concept appeal to a certain demographic?** If you have a lot of vegetarian options, you could target a younger, health-conscious crowd.

Nearly 3,000 bars and restaurants have access to 10 million registered players in the Buzztime Nation. Plus, when venues bring in Buzztime games and trivia, most of their existing guests will register and become official Buzztime players. According to an Arbitron study, Buzztime players:

- **Spread the Word:** 74% of players recommend Buzztime locations to their friends
- **Spend More:** 62% of Buzztime players spend more money on food and drink, their table checks are 21% higher on average
- **Return Often:** 56% of Buzztime players visit more often

JOE KNOWS: DECIDING HIS TARGET AUDIENCES

Joe's Pub does decent midweek happy hour business but after 7 or 8, it slows down. He knows that he has a great beer selection due to great weekend drink sales. He thinks about the type of person who would most likely come in from 8 until close, and who would be interested in his beer selection:

- College students at the nearby community college
- Retail workers from the mall nearby
- Millennials looking to socialize

Target Audience "Sweet Spot":

Millennials 24-35 within a 5-mile radius



PLAY #3 - WHAT PROMOTION SHOULD YOU RUN?

What You'll Score: This is where promotional champions are made. Gain proven strategies for launching promotions that work.

YOU KNOW WHY YOU'RE RUNNING A PROMOTION, WHO YOU'RE TARGETING, NOW BUILD IT!

Great promotions are built on the win-win principle: give guests something of value, get more business in return. To ensure your promotion is a hit, get inside the mind of your target audience:

- How can you give them the most value, while also adding value to your bottom line?
- What does your target audience care most about? Saving money? Being entertained? Trying a new dish or drink?
- Is there a particular menu item or drink you can build the promotion around?

BUILDING A GREAT PROMOTION... EASY AS ABC!

- A) Assign an Event or Offer to Your Promotion
- B) Build Your Promotion Using This Template
- C) Consider Logistics and Staffing

A) Assign an Event or Offer to Your Promotion

Most promotions are either an event or an offer. The best ones combine both (see Joe Knows for an example). Here are 13 of the hottest bar and restaurant promotions you can select from.

Offers

BOGO (Buy One, Get One) 2-for-1 is a classic promotional offer that stands the test of time.

% or Dollar Discount When giving dollar discounts, always include the zeros. Guests subconsciously perceive higher value when they see \$2.00 off instead of \$2.

Bundle Pricing From prix fixe menus to food and drink pairings, bundling feels like a deal since the customer is paying once and getting multiple items.

Loss Leader Drastically drop the price on one item, but keep your margins on everything else. The loss leader brings 'em (yes, you'll take a loss on that item), but you boost sales of everything else.

Free Gift Free gifts are underutilized. Imagine surprising guests with a beer koozie with your logo on it...

Sign-On Bonus Useful when asking the customer to sign up for your loyalty program or email list.

Contest Make the item that can be won, something worthwhile. And always check with your state's contest rules to ensure your contest isn't a lottery. Contests are a great way to capture email addresses.

Events

Live Music Create a lively atmosphere that literally sounds like fun. Here's a tip, you can use your playlist to boost drink sales by up to 40%. [See how to do it, here.](#)

Trivia Night One of the hottest events across the country, trivia night is a must for midweek crowds – [you can even run it yourself without hiring a host.](#)

Theme Night Also essential for boosting midweek business, theme nights – like Bar Olympics or a TV show “watch party” - make great promotional events. [See 11 easy ideas here.](#)

Live Demos From cooking class to mixology 101, bars and restaurants are hosting events that teach patrons their tricks

Poker Tournament Another must-try if you need a midweek boost, you can easily [host and run a Texas Hold 'Em tournament](#)

Charity Events From guest bartenders to sponsoring a walk-a-thon wrap up event, being charitable is great for the community and attracts crowds

B) Build an Irresistible Promotion

How to build a winning promotion? Ensure that it appeals to what your target audience values. Follow this formula for success:

Name the Promotion: Give your promotion a catchy name. You want word to spread, so make it easy to say – and remember.

Value to the Customer: Your promotion must state in one phrase why it benefits the customer. Look to your target audience. What do they care about most?

Details: Include the details. Expiration. Any exclusions. Can the offer be redeemed more than once? Do you accept substitutions or combining of offers? If it's an event, instruct patrons to arrive early as space is limited.

CTA (Call to Action): Tell guests how to redeem their offer or RSVP to an event.

Joe Knows: Joe's Pub Promotion is...

Tap Out Trivia Night Tuesdays **(Name the Promotion)**

Join Joe's for live trivia on Tuesdays starting at 9pm. Each Tuesday, a different craft beer on tap will be just \$2 until the keg is tapped! **(Details)**

RSVP on Facebook **(CTA)**

To boost low customer traffic on midweek nights, Joe knew he had to **create an event** to bring in guests. He wanted the event to create an upbeat, social and lively atmosphere so he used the [Buzztime live trivia system](#). It included everything he needed to run, manage, and score the event – from the popular trivia questions to the tablets for scoring.

Since his **target audience is millennials 24-35**, he wants to introduce them to his massive selection of craft beers. To bring them in, he used **the loss leader offer**: marking down one beer to just \$2. He knows that craft beer drinkers are picky – so not everyone will drink the \$2 beer. But it will get them in the door!

PRO TIP:
Don't Fumble! How to
Launch a Promotion
the Wrong Way

C) Consider Logistics and Staffing

Ensure that you deliver on the promises of your promotion.

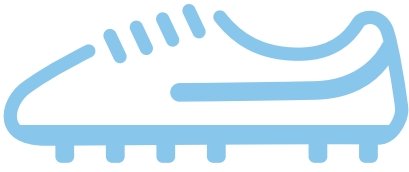
Offers

- Ensure all staff members are aware of all offers you're running
- Create protocol for redemption: if it's an online offer, is mentioning it enough? Do they need to show the ad on their phone?
- If you're running an offer for particular food or drink, do you have enough inventory?

Events

- Will you need extra staff to run an event? Who will set it up, manage it, and clean up afterwards?
- What about equipment, seating, and space?
- What is the capacity and who will ensure you're staying within fire code?

Promotions go wrong when they're not on-brand. **Always stay true to your concept.** For example, if you're a sports bar, don't launch a Paint n' Sip night. You'll attract an artsy crowd who likes to sip wine and cocktails while painting a masterpiece. Sure, you might draw in a crowd for the event, but will they come back to watch the game and order pitchers of beer? Not likely.



PLAY #4 - WHERE WILL YOU RUN YOUR PROMOTION?

What You'll Score: Low- and no-cost methods for getting the word out about your promotion.

To figure out where to run your promotion, ask yourself: where is my target audience?

- What media do they use in the average day?
- (Chances are, they use Facebook: 4 out of every 5 American adults do – and [76 percent login daily](#))
- Where do they work? What other businesses do they go to?

Then, use the power of both in-house and out-of-house marketing to spread the word!

HOUSE RULES: REMEMBER TO PROMOTE TO YOUR CURRENT CUSTOMERS!

They're a captive audience, so use what you've already got to promote your event or offer:

- Your servers and staff – make sure they let every guest know about the event or offer
- Your windows/parking lot – put up a poster of your promotion
- In-venue coupons and offers – set out flyers of your event or coupon
- In-venue digital signage – this is your secret promotional weapon! Did you know you can easily turn your [TVs into eye-catching digital signage](#)? A Nielsen study revealed that on-site digital signage can increase sales of an item by over 30%.
- Your own email list – send out an email to your existing patrons, ask them to forward the email to friends

7 SIMPLE WAYS TO SPREAD THE WORD FOR \$300 TOTAL

\$100: Print Up a Flyer/Coupon

First, print up a simple flyer or coupon for your event or offer. Use the ABC Promotion Template to create the offer, add your logo, and you're good to go!

FREE: Create a Press Release

Earned media is when you earn time in the media – but you don't pay for it. It's the best kind! When you create an event or offer so good it's newsworthy, contact local media! Create a simple one-page press release and contact the local radio, TV, and any print publications. Don't forget local bloggers, too!

\$50: Turn Your Best Customers Into Promoters

Ask 5 of your regulars to help spread the word about your event or offer by giving them a \$10 gift card.

FREE: Turn Other Businesses Into Promoters

Contact other businesses on Facebook or in-person, and ask that they share flyers or your post about the promotion. In return, offer to set out their brochures or offers at your business.

\$50: Send Your Staff to the Streets

Print up flyers for events or coupons of your offer at a copy shop, then send two staff members to the streets to hand them out. Give them a \$25 gift card each for an hour of flyering.

\$50: Run a Boosted Facebook Event or Post

It's amazing what \$50 can get you on Facebook. Create an event or post for your promotion, set your target audience, then invest just \$50.

\$100: Google Adwords Campaign

Like Facebook, you can target when your event or offer shows up based on what people are searching for on Google. You set the location and what text will display when things like "bars near me" or "events on Tuesday" are searched.

JOE KNOWS: WHERE TO RUN HIS TAP OUT TRIVIA NIGHT TUESDAYS

IN-HOUSE:

Digital Signage: Because Joe has Buzztime, he customized one of the free graphic templates to feature information about his event and set it to run [throughout the day on his TVs](#).

Servers: Joe trained his staff to mention the event to every table – with a special focus on anyone who ordered a craft beer and any millennials.

PRO TIP:
Target Existing
Facebook Followers

PRO TIP:
Promoting an Event?
Use Facebook Events for
FREE Promotional Value

OUT-OF-HOUSE:

Flyers: Joe printed up flyers and had 2 staff members hand them out on a nearby campus.

\$50: Joe set up a Facebook event for his Trivia Night and then “boosted” it to his target audience for \$50.

When you use paid Facebook advertising – like boosting a post or running an ad – you can select different audiences. One of the best ways to reach your current customers? Select “Page followers” as your target audience. The message of your promotion can be personalized: “Thanks for following us on Facebook! Mention this “secret” ad for \$5 off your next meal.”

When you set up an event on your Facebook page, guests can select “I’m Going” or “Interested.” Facebook considers that an RSVP, then does this for FREE:

- Suggests your event to friends of those who RSVPed – exposing your bar to more people
- Sends an automatic reminder about your event to all RSVPs
- Allows you to post messages to all RSVPs – use this to send your own event reminders, and to post photos or videos after the event

Like any Facebook advertising, you can boost an event by paying for it – and select exactly WHO you want to see it. Use your promotion’s target audience to set the parameters by age, location (to within 5 miles), gender, income level and interests.



PLAY #5 - HOW WILL YOU TRACK RESULTS?

What You'll Score: Simple steps you can take to determine the ROI of your promotion.

GET A BASELINE

Before launching your promotion, get a “baseline” read on your numbers. It's the only way to see if the promotion really moved the needle. Use your POS system to gather insights. Here are typical baseline readings you might want to capture first – specifically for the day and daypart you are running your event or promotion:

- What percentages of sales are coming from food versus drinks?
- What's my average table check?
- What's the average party size?
- How many people are coming in during the day and time now?
- If I am promoting a certain food/drink, what are sales of that item now?

JOE KNOWS: HOW HE TRACKED RESULTS OF TAP OUT TRIVIA NIGHT TUESDAYS

Since Joe combined an offer and an event, he has multiple ways to track his success:

Guest Head Count

- Joe ran his Trivia Tuesdays during March, so he compared Tuesdays from February
- He also compared Tuesdays during March of the previous calendar year
- Since he ran his event on Facebook, he compared actual headcount to number of RSVPs to see if Facebook was really working

Results: Joe noticed that his Tuesday night business steadily increased over the month – he believes that word of mouth is working to bring in more guests each week. Headcount is up from both the previous year and month. 90 guests had RSVPed on Facebook, and 140 showed up, so Joe believes Facebook is worth the minimal investment of \$50 per event.

Loss Leader Sales

- Joe compared how many pints of the \$2 loss leader beer he sold to how many other craft beers he sold
- He also calculated each night when the keg was tapped

Results: Using those factors, he determined that \$2 beer was bringing in crowds – but most ended up buying other beers. The keg wasn't tapped until much later than he expected.

Congratulations! You're ready to launch your next game-winning promotion. We'll be cheering you on from the sidelines.

CATCH THE BUZZTIME EFFECT.

Looking for a fresh, fun way to bring more guests to your tables – and keep them coming back? Join the Buzztime nation of 3,000 venues like yours serving up fun, games, and good times on our touchscreen tablets. Buzztime's social gaming solution brings everyone together at your place for trivia, live events, predictive sports, card tournaments, and arcade games.

WANT TO LEARN MORE? LET'S CHAT.

TALK WITH SOMEONE TODAY

