

The Sustainable Pizzeria Playbook

Practical Systems That Reduce Waste
and Protect Profits



LESS WASTE



STRONGER TEAMS



HIGHER PROFITS

Chef Junnie Lai, PhD, MBA
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SUSTAINABILITY SHOULD STRENGTHEN YOUR BOTTOM LINE.

Better
Pizza
Brighter
Tomorrow

GOOD FOOD

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

A BRIGHTER TOMORROW



Sustainability in a Pizzeria

Good for the Planet. Good for Profits. Responsible stewardship in every detail.

1 RECYCLING STATION

- Keeps waste out of landfills
- Reduces disposal costs

2 COMPOSTABLE PIZZA BOXES

- Made from renewable resources
- Lower packaging costs over time

3 ENERGY-EFFICIENT OVENS

- Uses less energy, lower emissions
- Lowers utility bills, boosts savings

4 LOCALLY SOURCED INGREDIENTS

- Supports local farmers, reduces transport impact
- Stronger community, loyal customers

5 REDUCING FOOD WASTE

- Divert scraps to compost, use ingredients mindfully
- Saves on food costs, improves profitability

LOCAL INGREDIENTS.
— BETTER PIZZA. —
STRONGER COMMUNITY.

LOCAL
FARMS
LOCAL
FLAVOR

EVERY SCRAP
HAS A PURPOSE



BETTER FOR
THE PLANET



BETTER FOR
YOUR BOTTOM LINE

SUSTAINABLE CHOICES.
STRONGER BUSINESS.

FOOD-DRIVEN FOOD INNOVATION
FOOD SCRAP COMPOST
Global Cuisine Consulting

Sustainability Should Strengthen Your Bottom Line

Three practical systems. One stronger pizzeria.



SIGNATURE MENU SYSTEM FOCUS THE MENU

Do more with less. Great food, less waste.



ROLE & ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM OWN THE WORK

The right people. Clear roles. Better results.



OPPORTUNITY CALENDAR SYSTEM PLAN THE MOMENT

Be ready. Capture demand. Drive profit.



Protect food



Use labor well



Capture opportunity

REDUCE WASTE → PROTECT PROFIT

Start with one weak link.

Simplify one item • Assign one responsibility • Plan one opportunity



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FOOD IDEAS FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

The Signature Menu System

Purpose: Focus the menu around what your pizzeria does best.

*Great Food
Drives
Great Business*



1 Review performance



Sales • profitability • prep time • ingredient use • consistency

2 Choose 3 signature pizzas



Craveable • profitable • distinctive • repeatable

3 Evaluate the rest



Keep • improve • make seasonal • remove

4 Remove complexity



Slow sellers • single-use ingredients • excessive preparation

5 Build around the winners



Standardize recipes • purchasing • prep • training • menu placement

6 Review quarterly



Keep the menu aligned with customer demand and production capacity

DECISION RULE

Low sales + high prep + single-use ingredients → Redesign • Make Seasonal • Remove



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FOOD IDEAS FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

*Know what defines you. Remove what distracts you.
Build around what customers return for.*

FOCUS IS THE GOAL.
THE SIGNATURE MENU SYSTEM IS HOW YOU ACHIEVE IT.

Example: From Menu Complexity to Signature Strength

A simpler, smarter menu can reduce waste, streamline operations, and increase profit.



BEFORE A COMPLEX MENU



28 specialty pizzas



7 single-use ingredients



Bottom 8 = only 6% of sales



APPLY THE SYSTEM FOCUS AND SIMPLIFY



Feature the strongest 3



Remove 4 low sellers



Make 2 seasonal



Redesign 2 to share ingredients



BUSINESS RESULT A STRONGER PIZZERIA



Less prep and spoilage



Easier ordering and training



Clearer identity



More consistent production



**The goal is not simply a smaller menu.
It is a more intentional menu.**

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The Role & Accountability System

Purpose: Turn paid labor hours into completed work—and protect management time.

*Great People
Great Pizza
Great Results*



Three areas of responsibility



FRONT OF HOUSE | Own the guest experience

- Guest service, phone & online orders
- Dining room and packaging readiness
- Order accuracy and handoff
- Opening, closing, cleaning & restocking



BACK OF HOUSE | Own preparation and production

- Receiving, storage, prep & labeling
- Dough, sauce and pizza production
- Dishwashing and sanitation
- Equipment and station closing



MANAGEMENT | Own performance and profit

- Scheduling, labor control & training
- Purchasing, inventory, pricing & cost
- Sales analysis and maintenance
- Marketing, relationships and growth

 The goal is not rigid walls. It is clear ownership + reliable handoffs. 

Every employee needs five things

-   What they own
-   What they complete
-   When it is due
-   The standard
-   Who verifies

Assign by shift: Open • Prep • Service • Restock • Close • Weekly maintenance

**“If you spend all your time working in the pizzeria,
you have no time to work on the pizzeria.”**

A job description explains the position. A task list makes the position operational.

FOOD IDEAS
FOR A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW

Example: Turn “Get Ready for Dinner” Into an Accountable Task

Clear ownership. Clear expectations. A smoother shift.



THE VAGUE INSTRUCTION

“Everyone, make sure the takeout station is ready.”

No owner • No deadline • No standard • No verification



People
Process
Pizza
Profit

MAKE THE ASSIGNMENT OPERATIONAL

1

WHO OWNS IT



Front-of-house
shift lead

2

WHAT THEY COMPLETE



Prepare the takeout
and packaging station

3

WHEN IT IS DUE



Ready by 4:30 PM
Recheck at 7:00 PM

4

THE STANDARD



- Boxes folded
- Bags + condiments stocked
- Labels + printer working

5

WHO VERIFIES



Manager during the
pre-shift walkthrough



Accountability is not more supervision. It is less ambiguity.

Fewer missing supplies • Faster handoffs • Fewer order errors • More management time



The Opportunity Calendar System

Purpose: Spot demand moments early—then prepare the offer, people, ingredients and capacity.

Plan Today
Fill Tomorrow

! OPPORTUNITY WASTE
The sale that never happened: no offer • understaffed • stockout • kitchen overload • margin lost to discounting

Build a 90-day opportunity calendar



-  Holidays, sports and food occasions
-  School, community and office events
-  Weather, seasons and local traditions
-  Predictably slow days and dayparts



GAME-DAY EXAMPLE

Signature pizza • profitable bundle • advance orders • capacity limit

Use the same promotion process every time

- 1 Identify the moment**
Event, season or need

- 2 Select the offer**
Pizza, bundle or LTO

- 3 Confirm profit**
Food, labor, package, discount

- 4 Check capacity**
Ovens, staff, prep, orders

- 5 Assign responsibility**
Prepare, promote, track

- 6 Launch early**
Build awareness + advance orders

- 7 Measure results**
Sales, profit, repeat, issues




“What will give customers a reason to order from us during this specific moment?”



A successful promotion does not simply create more orders.
It creates profitable orders your operation is prepared to deliver.

Example: Festa della Repubblica

Turn an Italian celebration into planned, profitable demand.

*Celebrate
Local Culture
Grow Together*



THE OFFER

Three Regions of Italy Tasting Box

Margherita • Prosciutto & arugula • Mushroom & rosemary



OPPORTUNITY WASTE

The sale that never happened: no offer • understaffed • stockout • kitchen overload • margin lost to discounting

Apply the seven-step process

1



IDENTIFY THE MOMENT

June 2: Italian Republic Day

Event, season or need

2



SELECT THE OFFER

Three Regions tasting box

Pizza, bundle or LTO

3



CONFIRM PROFIT

Build mostly from ingredients already in use

Food, labor, package, discount

4



CHECK CAPACITY

Set a box limit and pickup windows

Ovens, staff, prep, orders

5



ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITY

BOH prepares • FOH handles preorders • Manager tracks margin

Prepare, promote, track

6



LAUNCH EARLY

Promote 7–10 days ahead

Build awareness + advance orders

7



MEASURE RESULTS

Boxes sold • average check • food cost • new and repeat guests

Sales, profit, repeat, issues



“What will give customers a reason to order from us during this specific moment?”



A successful promotion does not simply create more orders.
It creates profitable orders your operation is prepared to deliver.

BETTER
PIZZA
BRIGHTER
TOMORROW

BUILD TO LAST

— ONE SLICE AT A TIME —

Protect the basics. Perfect every bite.
Master the details. Keep the future bright.
Serve with purpose. Let every slice show:
Quality, care — and a business built to grow.

*Good Pizza
Brighter Days*



Thank You!

For Being Part of the Conversation

BETTER PIZZA • STRONGER BUSINESSES • A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

*Good Pizza
Creates a
Brighter Tomorrow*



DOWNLOAD PLAYBOOK



LESS WASTE



STRONGER TEAMS



HIGHER PROFITS