

REOPENING WITH FOOD-TRAK

Many of you are now entering the reopening phase. Some of you have already opened. Others are working towards reopening when comfortable. The ability to get back to business is great news! Based on the questions we're getting at HQ, we thought we'd share some insights in ways you can use your FOOD-TRAK System to increase cash flow, reduce expenses and give you the information you need to obtain maximum cost control during these critically lean times.

The following questions and answers are geared towards reducing expenses, optimizing margins and trying to get as close to perfect food costs as possible using your FOOD-TRAK System.



REOPENING Q & A

Q: As it relates to inventory, how do I maximize cash flow?

A: If you think of inventory as cash on the shelf, the best way to maximize cash flow is to minimize inventory. We have two reports you can use to see how much excess inventory you have. The Inventory Level Control Report uses a perpetual inventory approach (estimated inventory level) to calculate average usage and compare that to how much stock is on the shelf. The new Inventory Level Management Report (available mid-June 2020) uses your last two physical inventories to determine average usage and creates a ranked report showing what items are overstocked, the value of the overage and how long it will take you to deplete them. Using either of these reports, you can isolate items you could use in a special, come up with other ways to use the excess, or at the very least adjust procurement practices to purchase less at a time (i.e., split cases).

Q: What's the best way to monitor price fluctuations with raw materials?

A: The Price Exception Report will alert you when prices have fluctuated outside the designated variances you have set up. For example, you could get a report showing you every item that has increased by 10%, or whatever your preset tolerance percentage is. This information could lead you to substitute something else, increase the selling price or decrease the portion size.

Q: How can I quickly and efficiently determine if I'm getting the best price from my vendors without spending all my time on the phone with them?

A: If you set up vendor bids utilizing the Bid Sheet Entry Form, you can use the Bid Price Comparison Report to easily compare pricing (the system adjusts pricing to be able to compare in common units). Using this information you can cherry pick between vendors or let preferred vendors know when their prices are not competitive.

Q: How can I be alerted when my margins on popular menu items fall below the margins I've set?

A: The Red Flag Report will identify menu items that are increasing in cost. The Product Contribution Ranking Report will show your menu ranked by contribution – gross margin times quantity sold – in order to help you decide whether to adjust pricing as a result.

Q: How can I feel better about how my stock is being used, wasted, spoiled or even stolen?

A: The Management Summary Report is the perfect answer – it will rank by dollar value the top overused items in your inventory. You can laser focus on these costly overused items instead of trying blanket approaches, providing the best bang for the buck.

Q: I need to be as efficient as possible with my labor expenses. Any idea how FOOD-TRAK can help me with reducing labor costs?

A: Automate! By using mobile scanning devices and FOOD-TRAK interfaces for vendors, accounting systems, catering systems and POS systems, you will save SO much time and actually eliminate steps in the process and be more accurate. BIG WIN!

Q: What are other FOOD-TRAKers doing during the COVID crisis?

A: Many are cleaning up their databases during the lull in action using the tips we have been providing. Some are expanding into new areas of FOOD-TRAK usage by training their staff to do requisitions, shopping lists, and purchase orders. Clients who didn't have recipes in their system are adding them now. Clients are now using their FOOD-TRAK mobile devices for additional functionality, such as receiving or transfers to maximize the use of the hardware. Of those, many are saying they'll continue to use their devices on a daily basis – no more just once a month for inventory counting!