

# CHAPTER 1

## Factors That Define a Menu

### INTRODUCTION

What is a menu? In the most basic sense, a menu is a list of products that may be purchased at a foodservice establishment, but a menu can and should be much more than that. A menu is a communication vehicle that describes for the clientele each dish's components. It markets food and drink to encourage sales. Used as a control mechanism, it helps to keep a business efficient, functional, and profitable. The menu can add to the dining experience by providing history, entertainment, and support of the restaurant's theme. An effective menu meets the needs of both the business and the guests.

Menu planning is the process of creating a menu that achieves all of the aforementioned goals and more. Proper menu planning does not operate in a vacuum but rather begins after a significant amount of research. After all, a menu planner cannot meet the needs of a foodservice establishment and a customer base if he does not first know what those needs are. A menu planner begins by analyzing each of the variables that impact a menu, so, too, this text opens with a study of the multiple factors that define a menu.

### CHAPTER 1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a result of successfully completing this chapter, readers will be able to:

1. List several factors that impact and define a menu.
2. Describe how a menu supports a brand.
3. Define a market using demographic and psychographic studies.
4. Describe how staff skill levels, equipment and space constraints, and product availability define a menu.
5. List all of the stakeholders commonly involved in the menu-planning process.

### CHAPTER 1 OUTLINE

#### Which Comes First, the Menu or the Market?

Demographic Studies  
Psychographic Studies  
Competitive Analyses  
Feasibility Studies  
Generating a Menu from the Data

#### Logistical Constraints on Menus

Employee Skill Level

Equipment  
Product Availability

#### The Stakeholders

#### Summary

#### Comprehension Questions

#### Discussion Questions

#### Capstone Project

### Which Comes First, the Menu or the Market?

#### Learning Objective 1

List several factors that impact and define a menu.

A menu planner does not create a menu solely out of instinct and personal preferences. There are many factors that impact and define a menu, and the menu planner must take all of them into account throughout the menu-planning process. The menu planner must consider the logistical constraints of the operation, such as employee skill levels, available

**Learning Objective 2**

Describe how a menu supports a brand.

kitchen equipment, work flow, and product availability. Stakeholder needs help define the menu as does the business's brand. Finally and equally important, the composition and desires of the market and the presence of competing businesses all impact the final menu.

Because a menu often determines which individuals from the broader market will choose to patronize an establishment, a business should begin by first analyzing the potential market and then tailoring a menu to meet the needs of one or more segments of that market. Creating the menu first can lead to a business that appeals to a market segment that does not exist in that community. For example, a chef may envision a restaurant that serves the most upscale cuisine in the world, but if his restaurant is located in a blue-collar town with an average household income of \$30,000 per year, the locals will likely not dine there.

With a new business, an owner typically identifies a target market and then attempts to envision a brand that will appeal to that customer base. A brand is a business's identity, its soul. It is the set of qualities and characteristics that people associate with the business and often the reason that they spend their money there. A foodservice operation's mission and vision, its décor and location, its style of service, and, yes, its menu all define the business's brand. While the items on a menu may change, the "feel" of the menu (price point, cuisine, types of ingredients, caliber of cooking, etc.) usually does not. For example, a restaurant that serves local, organic, from-scratch dishes at a high price point on one menu will not likely change to a low-cost, mass-produced burger and fries menu during the next round of menu revisions. The brand draws customers, and a properly constructed menu supports the brand. For existing businesses, a menu overhaul continues to support the operation's brand and the needs of the business and the market. A business may choose to modify its brand, but the menu should follow and support a carefully considered brand change, not the other way around.

**Learning Objective 3**

Define a market using demographic and psychographic studies.

A business that attempts to be all things to all people ultimately ends up appealing to no one; its undefined brand fails to fully meet the needs of any target market. Identifying a target market and determining the type of business that might meet the market's needs is no easy task. Fortunately, there are several tools available to assist a menu planner or business owner in defining the local market segments: demographic studies, psychographic studies, competitive analyses, and feasibility studies.

## Demographic Studies

A demographic study compiles certain data about the population in a given area. If a potential business owner knows exactly where he wishes to open his business, the demographic study should reflect the population of the small area around that location—a zip code, for example, rather than a large city or a state. The smaller the area studied, the more accurate the depiction of the local market will be. Menu planners can acquire demographic studies through the local chamber of commerce, local government, or Census Bureau. (Explore the website of the United States Census at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) to find demographic data for any U.S. state, county, or city.) A demographic study typically includes the following information:

*Age.* Listed as both raw numbers and percentages for a series of age ranges, age tells the menu planner whether the local customer is more likely to be older or younger. The food-service needs of teenagers, middle-aged adults, and seniors will vary greatly from each other.

*Marital Status.* Singles and married couples may visit restaurants during different hours or prefer different types of establishments.

*Housing Type and Household Size.* Larger households (families) have different dining needs that impact business decisions from table sizes to menu options. Depending on the area, the ratio of apartments to houses may suggest the level of disposable income locals have to spend in restaurants.

*Gender.* Owners may choose to adjust their business concept to meet the needs of one sex if the population is significantly tilted toward men or women.

*Ethnicity.* People from different ethnic backgrounds may prefer different kinds of cuisines, particularly ones that reflect their family's country of origin or historical roots. For

example, a significant population of Salvadoran immigrants may prefer classic dishes from El Salvador.

*Religion.* Individuals from some cultures may have religious dietary restrictions or food taboos as well. Offering fish during Lent for a Catholic community or kosher foods for an Orthodox Jewish community will appeal to that segment of the local market.

*Education.* Often, people with higher levels of education seek out healthier foods, display a greater willingness to try unfamiliar foods, and have more disposable income to spend on dining out.

*Occupation and Income.* The average income and popular occupations alert a business owner to the price point that is most likely to appeal to the local community.

*Vehicles.* When fewer locals own cars, a business should be located where people can access it easily on foot or via public transportation; otherwise, the restaurant may need to appeal to a larger audience beyond the local area.

## Psychographic Studies

Psychographic studies provide insight into the values, interests, and habits of the population studied. Such studies provide information on how people get involved in the community, what their hobbies are, where they shop, what sports they support, where they spend their free time, and what their opinions are on a range of subjects from politics to business to education.

While all of the psychographic data contributes to a more complete depiction of the average customer, the most important data for a foodservice business owner reveals where and how people spend their money on food. If most of the population eats at home except on special occasions, a restaurateur may choose to create a destination restaurant. However, all of the psychographic data must be taken in context. If the town has a huge interest in sports but has only recently grown large enough to support any restaurants at all, perhaps the time is right to open a little sports bar.

Embedded within psychographic data may be a market's receptiveness to current and emerging trends; however, menu planners may need to research the specific trends themselves. For example, in 2016, culinary trends included farm-to-table menus, environmental sustainability and local sourcing of ingredients, healthier and less meat-focused dishes, small plates (tapas, mezze, etc.), artisanal products, in-house canning and curing, and the use of social media applications in restaurants. Menu planners may discover emerging trends by reading periodicals and blogs, or they may travel to see the dining patterns in trendsetting cities. Most importantly, before deciding to factor for a trend in a menu, the smart planner confirms that the target market values the trend. A large city's restaurants may boast several of the trends mentioned earlier, but if the citizens in a nearby small community only want large, meat-heavy portions of fried food when they go out, a trendy vegetarian tapas restaurant will not draw their business. Similarly, customers may prefer to follow trends for special occasion meals but revert to comfort foods during the week. Just as a menu planner should know the current culinary trends, he should also know whether the psychographic studies of the target market depict people who are trend followers or customers more set in their ways. If the market changes its tastes in the future, the business should adjust with the next menu revision.

## Competitive Analyses

Demographic and psychographic data can be hard to interpret if the business owner or menu planner has no familiarity with the local food scene. A competitive analysis describes the foodservice competition in the area and informs a menu planner of the likely competitors to a given business concept. Such information helps a restaurateur or menu planner theorize whether a restaurant would fulfill a customer need that is currently unmet in the community or if the business concept has been so overdone in the market as to make a similar business unsustainable. Culinary entrepreneurs should investigate other businesses to see whether similar concepts might attract more customers by providing better service or cheaper prices. A little historical research may also suggest which business concepts have consistently failed in the area.

## WHO IS DOWNTOWN?

Downtowners are a diverse group of workers, residents and visitors. It is a relatively young population, with high levels of income, education, and professional accomplishment.

The LIVE segment is characterized by young (average age 38), upwardly mobile professionals, the largest proportion of whom are employed in arts and entertainment, and business, professional, educational and medical services. A majority of respondents live in South Park, The Historic Core or Bunker Hill.

The WORK segment tends to be older (average age 45), and are more likely to be employed in the fields of business, professional, finance, insurance, real estate, and government, in positions such as professional/senior staff or top level executive/managers. They are more often homeowners and work primarily in the Financial District (and to a lesser extent, Bunker Hill and South Park).

The LIVE-WORK segment is even younger (average age 37), with higher income and education, and is more likely to be self-employed or an entrepreneur/business owner.

GENDER	Live	Live/Work	Work	Visit
Male	43%	47%	31%	36%
Female	57	53	69	64

AGE	Live	Live/Work	Work	Visit
18 - 22	1%	2%	1%	3%
23 - 29	18	19	12	11
30 - 34	22	25	13	12
35 - 44	25	24	24	24
45 - 54	16	19	26	24
55 - 64	10	10	21	20
65+	6	3	3	11

KIDS	Live	Live/Work	Work	Visit
Yes	11%	17%	26%	18%
No	89	83	74	82

RELATIONSHIP	Live	Live/Work	Work	Visit
Married	32%	37%	46%	38%
Living together	20	16	12	12
Single, never married	36	35	27	33
Other	12	12	15	17

ETHNICITY	Live	Live/Work	Work	Visit
Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	47%	48%	41%	43%
Hispanic/Latino	17	19	22	24
Asian/Asian American	17	18	15	13
African/African American	8	3	8	8
Pacific Islander	2	1	1	1
Native American	1	1	--	1
Other group	3	5	3	3
Prefer not to answer	6	5	9	7

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Live	Live/Work	Work	Visit
Employed full time	61%	76%	93%	53%
Employed part time	4	4	2	6
Self-employed	7	18	3	13
Not employed	28	2	2	28

**FIGURE 1.1**

This segment of a larger demographic and psychographic study includes information on the places people visit in the area and the types of retail shops they patronize.

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<b>MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	Live	Live/ Work	Work	Visit
Under \$40,000	15%	8%	5%	19%
\$40,000 to \$74,999	18	21	24	26
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14	17	15	12
\$100,000 to \$149,999	21	20	21	15
\$150,000 to \$249,999	16	19	17	10
\$250,000 and over	5	7	7	3
Prefer not to answer	11	8	11	15

<b>EDUCATION</b>	Live	Live/ Work	Work	Visit
Less than high school completed	--	--	--	1%
High school or equivalent	11	6	8	10
Trade school/community college	13	14	20	21
Undergraduate/four-year college	42	45	46	40
Graduate or professional degree	34	35	27	29

<b>INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT</b>	Live	Live/ Work	Work	Visit
Arts & entertainment (artist, actor, writer, production, etc.)	21%	9%	2%	13%
Architecture, design	3	10	10	4
Business/professional/technical services	13	19	24	13
Educational services, health care & social assistance	13	5	5	11
Financial services and insurance	6	10	15	4
Government (including military)	5	7	14	6
Information media, telecom., Internet & data processing	4	5	4	5
Manufacturing (apparel, hard goods, etc.)	3	2	1	2
Medical/health services	10	2	2	8
Non-profit/civic/religious organizations	4	3	5	5
Real estate (e.g., development, brokerage)	4	9	8	7
Other	11	15	11	19

<b>JOB TITLE</b>	Live	Live/ Work	Work	Visit
Professional or senior staff (including educators)	41%	41%	46%	33%
Clerical or general staff	9	11	25	15
Top level executive/manager	15	13	12	9
Technical/development staff	7	5	7	5
Small business owner/entrepreneur	5	10	2	9
Independent consultant, contractor or agent	6	8	2	11
Writer, artist, entertainer	6	7	1	7
Other	12	6	6	11

FIGURE 1.1 (Continued)

## ACTIVITIES

Downtowners engage in a broad range of social, cultural, and entertainment activities, and are more likely to do them Downtown than in other parts of LA. This is especially true for sporting events, concerts, trade shows and tours. Generally, the residential and live-work populations have the highest rate of participation.

The most popular activities range from museum exhibitions and concerts to nightlife and sporting events, while the most frequented venues include “mainstream” locations such as Staples Center, high culture establishments like The Music Center, and more “niche” attractions such as ArtWalk.

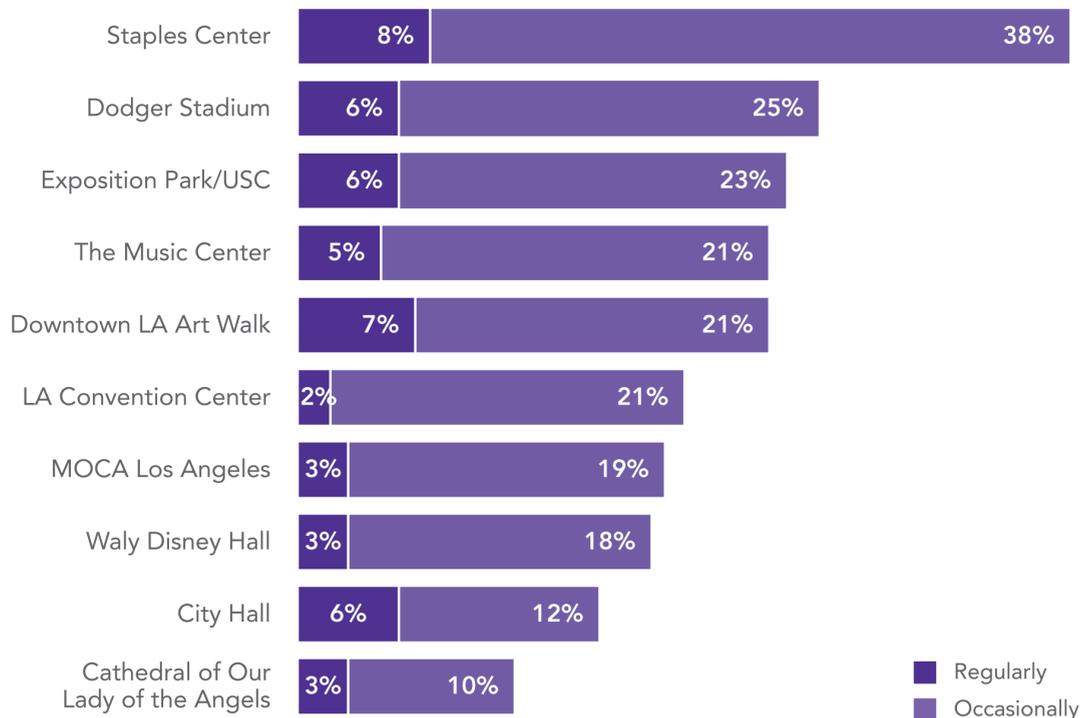
Downtowners also actively frequent retail-oriented locations such as FIGat7th, Grand Central Market and LA LIVE, and public places such as Pershing Square, Grand Park, and the Los Angeles Public Library.

Downtowners utilize a range of transportation modes, including car, Metro, bus, and increasingly, walking. They are also particularly receptive to the BikeShare concept. (See page 11)

For information about DTLA, Downtowners show their community-orientation with the highest proportion relying on word-of-mouth. L.A. Downtown News and Los Angeles Times run 2nd and 3rd. Not surprisingly, this Internet-savvy population also frequently turns to web sites such as DowntownLA.com. (See page 11)

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### MOST FREQUENTLY VISITED LANDMARK VENUES

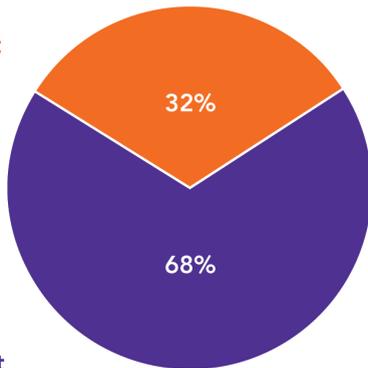


NOTE: The Broad opened on September 30 and so was not included in the survey

FIGURE 1.1 (Continued)

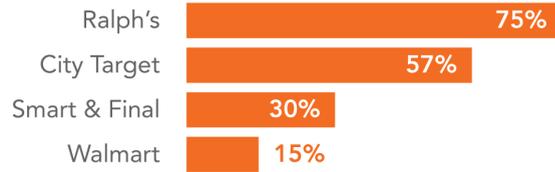
**SUPERMARKETS: AVERAGE SHARE OF TOTAL SHOPPING**

Downtown share of supermarket shopping

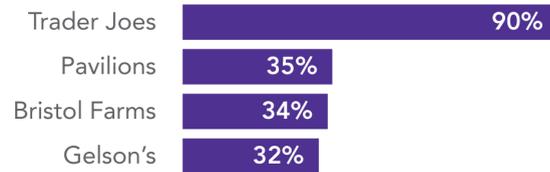


Untapped potential for Supermarket Chains

**Where they shop**



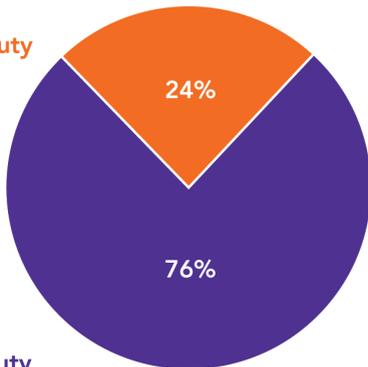
**What they want**



NOTE: Whole Foods opened on November 4 and so was not included in the survey

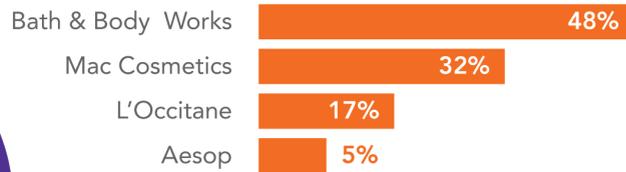
**HEALTH & BEAUTY: AVERAGE SHARE OF TOTAL SHOPPING**

Downtown share of Health & Beauty shopping



Untapped potential for Health & Beauty stores

**Where they shop**

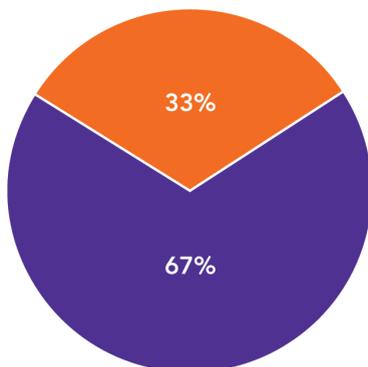


**What they want**



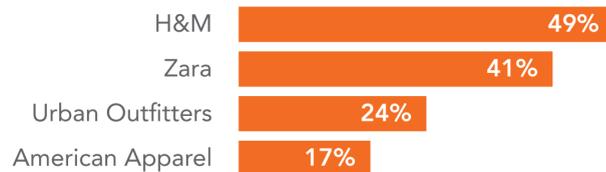
**CLOTHING/APPAREL: AVERAGE SHARE OF TOTAL SHOPPING**

Downtown share of Clothing shopping



Untapped potential for Clothing Stores

**Where they shop**



**What they want**



FIGURE 1.1 (Continued)

## Feasibility Studies

A feasibility study combines demographic, psychographic, and competitive analysis data to determine whether a business is likely to succeed. Prospective business owners should hire professionals who specialize in these types of studies to get the best results. Not only does their expertise help them to compile the study more efficiently and accurately, but because they have no emotional investment in a given business concept, their analysis is also likely to be more objective than a potential business owner's would be.

## Generating a Menu from the Data

Studies provide useful data, but generating a menu from that data requires some interpretive skill. A menu planner must hypothesize the needs of the various market segments and then see which of those market segments' needs are not being met by the competition. A restaurateur should not be put off by a similar competitor, but he should determine whether the market is large enough to support both his concept and competing businesses. If the market is already saturated (unable to sustain another similar business), the newcomer to the market may do better by targeting a different market segment. However, menu planners and entrepreneurs should always confirm that there is a large enough market to sustain a given business concept even if there is no competition. For example, a hip, loud, experimental restaurant targeted at 20-somethings will fail to find customers in a retirement community with no one under the age of 55. Sometimes, competition for a particular market segment does not exist for a reason.

Analysis of the various market studies may reveal obvious constraints to a menu. The market's average income, for example, may limit the menu's flexibility with price points. If a target market does not usually spend more than \$30 per person for dinner, then the menu's prices should permit a guest to order one or two courses with drinks for that price. A restaurant that exceeds a market's typical price point may need to focus on special occasion business, as it is unlikely to attract regular customers.

Certain menu constraints only become obvious with personal knowledge of the community. Consider a restaurant targeted toward seniors. While most older patrons prefer quieter dining rooms with sufficient lighting for menu reading, all seniors do not prefer the same limited menu selections. Some mature diners prefer the comfort foods of 1950s America, while others opt for ethnic foods reminiscent of their foreign travels. Softer foods may be a physical necessity for certain seniors, but others may prefer the variety of textures that lend interest to a typical dish. Whether seniors favor cosmopolitan or homey fare may not be obvious from a demographic or psychographic study, but some familiarity or interaction with local senior citizen groups may provide a definitive answer. Making assumptions based on stereotypes alone can lead to an underperforming and ineffective menu, but proven behaviors for a market segment allow a menu planner to design a product for a built-in audience. Fortunately, psychographic studies and competitive analyses describe the proven spending patterns of the community as a whole, if not for each individual market segment.

## Logistical Constraints on Menus

### Learning Objective 4

Describe how staff skill levels, equipment and space constraints, and product availability define a menu.

Once a business owner and menu planner have selected a business's target market and brand, they should next determine any other factors that would limit a menu's feasibility. Menu planners should avoid writing a menu that the staff cannot execute. Listing barbecue on a menu makes no sense if the restaurant cannot fit a grill or smoker into its kitchen. For a menu to be feasible and profitable, it must make efficient use of the employees' skills, the physical space, and purveyors' available products.

In a new restaurant, the menu determines the caliber of employees sought and the minimal equipment required for the kitchen. However, menu planners must keep in mind that future menu changes will be impacted by that first menu. Equipment purchases and staff skill levels should be versatile enough to support the business's brand in future menu

iterations. For established operations, the menu planner must account for the existing equipment and staff limitations in the menu-planning process.

## Employee Skill Level

Complex menus with lots of handmade components per dish typically require highly skilled labor. The same is true for menus that call for servers to perform some form of cooking or carving tableside. Since a higher-caliber workforce often necessitates higher wages, the employee skill level required to execute a menu impacts the menu's price point.

If an existing business has a kitchen team that is only capable of reheating and plating prefabricated dishes, then the menu planner must create a menu that does not exceed this skill level. While the employees could be replaced with a more highly trained staff, to do so would increase labor cost and call for significantly higher menu prices. If the business has been successful and a change in prices would undermine the brand, replacing the workers with a higher-caliber team could drive away business and erode profits. Similarly, there is no value to writing a menu that exceeds the current staff's abilities. The employees would likely put out substandard food that does not meet the menu planner's or manager's goals. If managers choose to train the employees to increase their skill level, they should confirm the training's effectiveness before the new menu is put in place.

Whereas a new restaurant does not have the skill-level constraints of an existing operation, it does have some staffing limitations that impact the menu. As mentioned above, a higher-caliber staff requires higher wages. Additionally, some communities may not possess the trained workforce envisioned by the menu planner. If none of the restaurants in a given community prepare their food from scratch, most foodservice workers in the area will have had no opportunity to practice or learn a higher level of culinary skill.

## Equipment

Equipment availability places significant constraints on menu planners and what their menus can offer. The most obvious limitation stems from cooking equipment. A kitchen that consists of nothing more than ovens and a deep fryer cannot effectively serve a la carte sautéed or grilled foods. Chefs can create a workaround for certain pieces of equipment—steaming in a pot with a basket rather than in a commercial steamer, for example—but such equipment alternatives should be kept to a minimum. In the steamer example, a pot with a basket could probably handle a single component for one dish, but it would significantly slow production if four entrées required steamed ingredients.

Refrigeration also impacts menu choices. If a kitchen only has a single-door, reach-in freezer, the number of frozen menu components offered on the menu should be limited. Because more extensive menus require larger storage capacity for ingredients, a small kitchen with little refrigeration and dry storage space will perform better with a small menu rather than with a larger set of offerings.

Work flow also comes into play when deciding upon a menu. If a kitchen is laid out with a set number of workstations, the menu should attempt to balance the amount of production coming from each station. For example, if a restaurant kitchen has only a grill station and a sauté station, it would not make sense to write a menu with six grilled items and only one sautéed dish; otherwise, the sauté cook would be fairly idle while the grill cook becomes overwhelmed. It would be better to divide the menu such that half of the dishes come from one station and the other half from the other station.

While a brand-new establishment may design its kitchen around the opening menu, the menu planner should consider whether or not the initial menu inordinately constrains future menus. If the vision for a restaurant is to serve a variety of modern American dishes cooked in a range of ways, it would not make sense to open with an all-barbecue menu that requires a large bank of smokers on the hot line. To do so would effectively force future menus to replicate the barbecue theme. That said, if a restaurant is going for a specific theme (like barbecue or fried seafood), it may make sense to design a menu that begs for a hot line of all one piece of equipment (all smokers or all fryers, for example).

## Product Availability

A menu planner must ensure that the ingredients required to execute a given menu are available during the time that the menu will be in place. Some products are available year-round while others are only in season during a short period of time. Ingredients found in one part of the country may be difficult to source elsewhere. For example, walleye, a fish native to the Great Lakes, may be easy to find in Ohio but nearly impossible to source in Louisiana. Similarly, while blood oranges may be a spectacular addition to a winter menu, they are out of season in the United States during the summer and thus would be an inappropriate component to a year-round menu. Including items on a menu that cannot be purchased during the lifetime of the menu only leads to menu shortages, unexpected substitutions, and, ultimately, dissatisfied customers.

## The Stakeholders

### Learning Objective 5

List all of the stakeholders commonly involved in the menu-planning process.

Nearly everyone involved in a foodservice business has a stake in producing an effective, quality menu. The owners and investors want a menu that will attract business and assist in the operation's profitability. Managers and employees need a menu that can be executed effectively and efficiently given the equipment, product, and employee constraints of the business. Customers want a menu that appeals to their tastes and works within their personal budgets. In short, the menu serves a lot of people, so the menu planner should involve all of these stakeholders in the menu development process.

For a new business, owners, managers, and the executive chef usually work together to generate a menu that will meet the needs of the target market. To some degree, this is a guessing game, as the customer preferences are inferred from psychographic data for the area rather than obtained by polling the customers directly. Some restaurants gather customer input by hosting a series of pre-opening meals from which managers observe which dishes are popular and which do not sell well. The more input the management collects prior to opening its doors officially, the better.

For an existing restaurant, menu changes should incorporate known data on prior sales. Slow-moving dishes should be adjusted or removed entirely. Popular and profitable ones should be retained. Menu planners should interview employees to see where problems with work flow or product sourcing exist. They should also consult customers to see whether certain changes would encourage them to return more or less frequently to the establishment.

Before a foodservice business opens its doors, a poorly researched menu will still define the market, the caliber of the staff, and the design of the kitchen, though not necessarily in the way that the menu planner had hoped. It is often better for all of the stakeholders to determine these variables first and then allow those factors to suggest a menu that supports the brand. For a foodservice operation that already exists, these factors are already in place and often are quite difficult to change simply to accommodate a new menu.

## Summary

The identity of any foodservice operation is its brand. Each brand innately appeals to a specific market. Business owners should research the potential markets in the area to see whether they are large enough to support a business and if their needs are currently being met by competing businesses. Data that defines a market comes from demographic and psychographic studies. Demographic studies describe the population's age, marital status, housing type, household size, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, education, occupations, income, and vehicles, among other information.

Psychographic studies describe the values, interests, and habits of the population. A competitive analysis provides a depiction of competing businesses in the area while a feasibility study suggests whether a potential business is likely to make a profit. A foodservice business's brand and its menu must appeal to the target market described in the studies, and they must do so in a way that does not put the business at risk of losing out to the competition. Other variables limit and define a menu as well. Employee skill level, equipment and space constraints, and product availability all impact

what a menu planner can include in a menu. As the process of creating a menu is a complex one, it is best to involve as many stakeholders as possible. For new

businesses, the stakeholders may be only the owners and managers. For existing operations, guests and frontline employees should be consulted as well.

## Comprehension Questions

- List four variables that help to define a menu.
- What role does a menu play in relation to a business's brand?
- List the two primary tools that help to define a market. What type of information does each one provide?
- If a chef wants to create a menu that exceeds his staff's ability, why can't he just hire new staff?
- How does a kitchen's space and work flow impact a menu?
- Who are the typical stakeholders who contribute to the menu-planning process in a new business? Who is normally added to the process in an existing business?

## Discussion Questions

- A demographic study shows that the largest percentage of the local population is age 30–50 with a middle-class income and an average household size of 3.7. Many of them own their own homes and at least one car. Describe a restaurant concept that would appeal to this target market. (Describe the brand and the menu, but do not write out a menu.)
- A nearby community has the demographic makeup described in question 1. A psychographic study shows that the community spends the majority of their disposable income on recreational activities for their children (sports, dance, music, movies, travel, etc.), not on food. What kind of foodservice business might you set up in this community to appeal to the local market? Describe the business's brand.
- Describe the demographic and psychographic qualities that define the target market into which you personally fall. What kinds of foodservice establishments are those in that market segment likely to patronize?
- Envision a restaurant concept and describe it. Describe the kind of employees, the kitchen layout, and the kitchen equipment you would need to support that concept across several consecutive menus.
- Imagine that you are the general manager for an existing restaurant. What kind of information would you want to know from the various stakeholders before creating a new menu?

## Capstone Project

**Overview:** Working alone or in a team, you will create a menu for a given business concept. As menu planning is not a quick, off-the-cuff process, this project will span all of the chapters of the book to allow you to work in small, manageable steps.

**Step 1:** Imagine a business concept. Describe in one to two pages the business's concept and target market, the average price point, approximate business location, and required staff skill level. You should also include, using online census or other tools, demographic

data for your desired business location. The target market should be well represented in this data. You should include in your written descriptions where in the demographic data your target market is represented and how your business concept meets the needs of that market. (Large companies often spend months on this step and might invest significant money into researching the local market, but this brief exercise will give you a taste of what the process is like while providing sufficient grounding to begin the capstone project.)