# ChowNow

# Why Customer Data is Critical to Your Restaurant's Success

Online ordering from restaurants has exploded in popularity in recent years due to customers' demand for convenience.  With 74% of consumers now ordering food through a website or mobile app, restaurants are seeing some clear benefits: more patrons, larger ticket sizes, and increased order volume.[1]

But there's a lesser-known advantage that savvy restaurateurs are leveraging: the customer insights that online ordering can provide.

Both large and small restaurants are using this information to better serve their patrons and increase their margins. Is it time for you to do the same? Take a look at this handbook to understand how customer data from your online ordering platform can take your restaurant to the next level.

1.  Hospitality Technology, 2018.
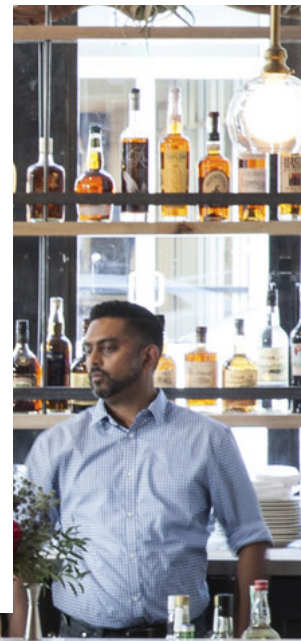
# What do you mean by customer data?

The term "customer data" can have many different connotations, so it's important to specify what it means for independent restaurants like yours. Your patrons choose to share certain information with you when they sign up for services like online ordering.

**When you work with an online ordering provider like ChowNow, you can access customer data including:**

- Email addresses
- Names
- Menu items ordered
- Channels used for ordering (e.g., your website, your custom mobile app, ChowNow Discover, etc.)
- Devices used for ordering (e.g., desktop or mobile)
- Order sizes
- If applicable, whether an order was for pick-up or delivery

It might not be obvious, but these pieces of customer information are critical for acquiring new customers, increasing order values, and guaranteeing repeat orders.

# Why is customer data valuable?

## Data helps you understand your customers

By uncovering information about your customers' ordering habits, you will see patterns in how they interact with your restaurant and ask yourself important questions about how to leverage this behavior.

Consider these examples of customer data, the trends they illustrate, and the ideas that they can spark.

- ✓ You might notice customers with business email addresses placing large orders. These are probably office orders placed on behalf of a team of people. How might you show appreciation for the office administrator who is placing the order for everyone? What tactics could you use to encourage these customers to order from your restaurant when they're not on the clock?

- ✓ Perhaps you find that a large percentage of your online orders are coming through customers' mobile devices. You might conclude that these diners are often on the go and appreciate the convenience of ordering online from your restaurant. Consider ways in which you can make their experience even easier so they reorder more frequently.

- ✓ Maybe you see a dip in returning diners one month. Think about how you could entice more customers to order again through an engaging promotion delivered straight to their inbox.

All of these scenarios show how you can use the information you collect to understand who your customers are and what they want. From there, it's simple to move into action and start increasing order frequency, ticket sizes, and your customer base.

# Data helps you make the right choices to strengthen your business.

Customer data helps you make strategic decisions for nearly every part of your business. Armed with email addresses—the most essential method for engaging your diners—you can communicate well-timed, relevant messages, informed by the other insights you have.

If you're a ChowNow restaurant partner, you can rely on the ChowNow Restaurant Success Team for help. They're eager to share personalized recommendations about how you can make the most of your data. Here are some of their proven strategies to inspire you.

## 1 ACQUIRE NEW CUSTOMERS

Take advantage of the data you have in your ChowNow Dashboard about current patrons to acquire new customers. Here are some suggestions:

- Send emails with promotional codes to your loyal customers, asking them to enjoy the discount and forward it to a friend who might like your restaurant.

- Promote your social media profiles to your current customers through targeted emails (ideally with an incentive). When you grow your audiences on social media, you generate awareness and widen your customer base

- When you're preparing a large order for catering or an office lunch, add in some postcards that advertise your online ordering. This way, everyone who enjoyed their meal will know exactly how to satisfy their craving again.
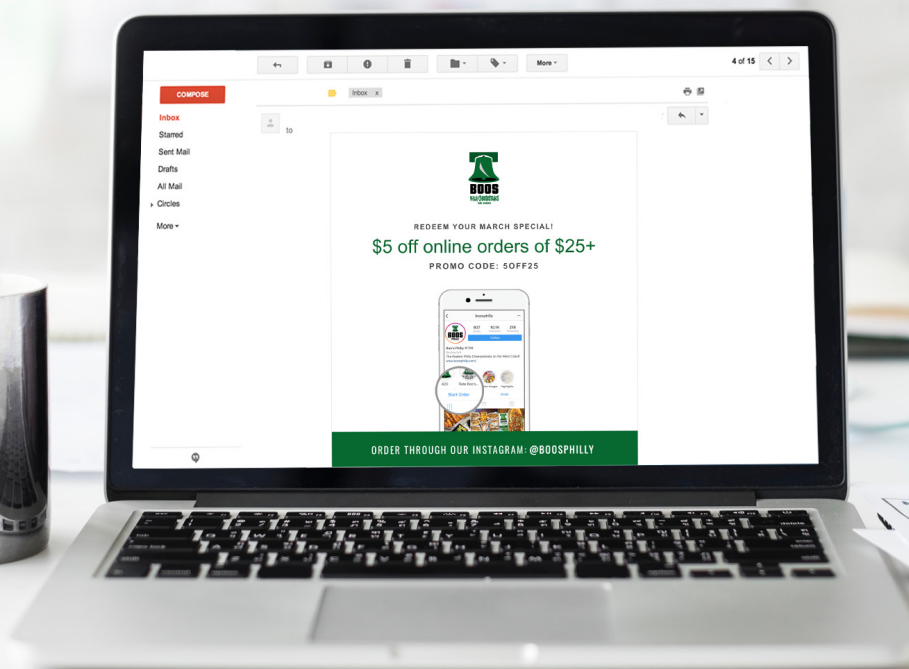
## 2 BOOST ORDER VALUES

With clear-cut knowledge of how your customers order, you can also easily adjust your offerings to boost order values.

- If a specific dish is particularly popular for takeout dinners, try creating a special 'family meal' option with some high-margin add-ons to boost its profitability.

- Do you receive a lot of requests for condiments or other special preparations? When customers are eager for jalapeños on their sandwiches or extra salad dressing, turn these options into menu add-ons with a price attached.

- Take a look at which items aren't performing as well: Maybe they have something in common, like an ingredient or the manner in which they're described on your menu. Make adjustments and see how your customers respond.
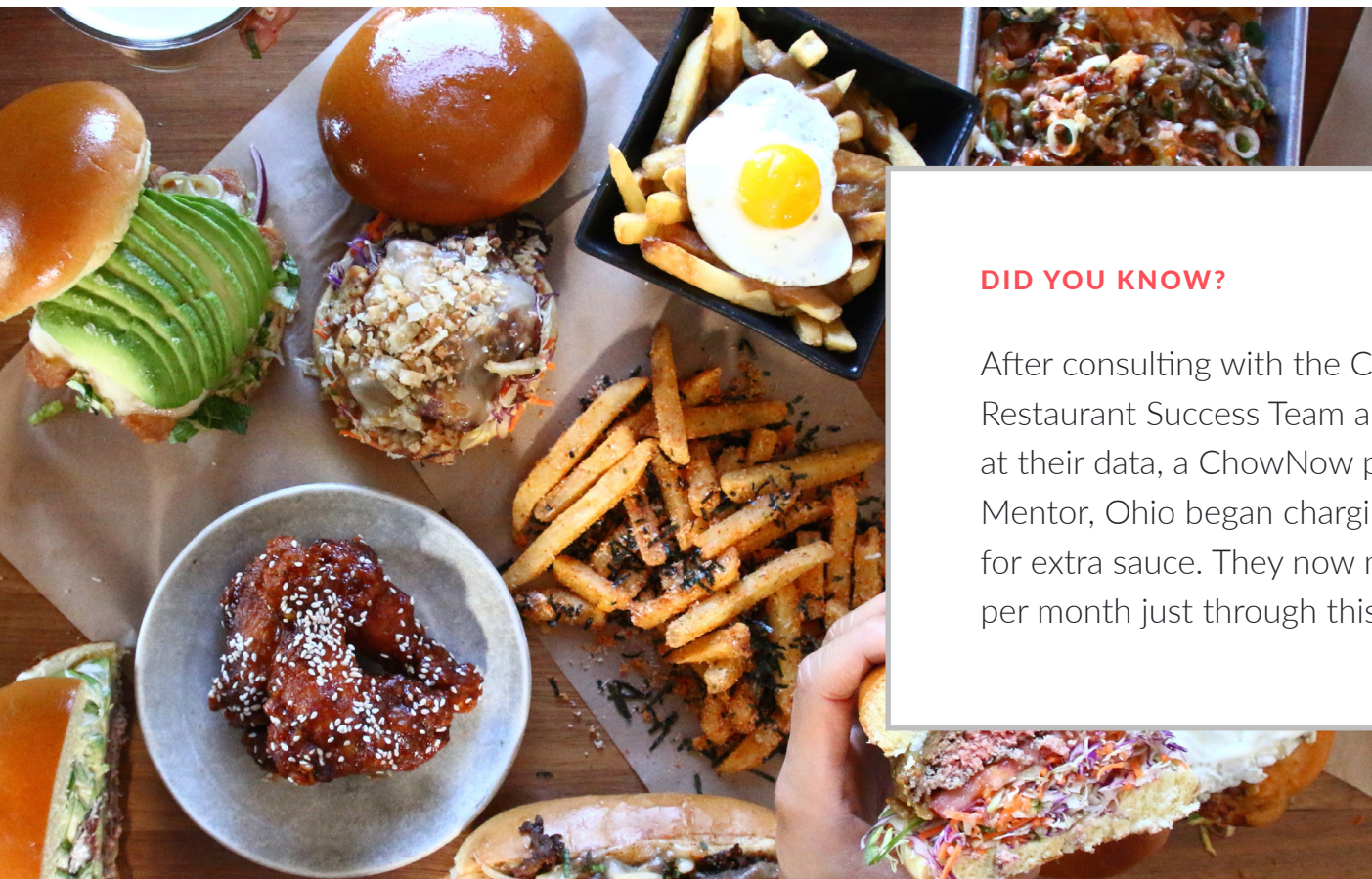


**DID YOU KNOW?**

After consulting with the ChowNow Restaurant Success Team and looking at their data, a ChowNow partner in Mentor, Ohio began charging $0.50 for extra sauce. They now make $160 per month just through this add-on.[2]

2. ChowNow, Internal Data, 2019

# 3

## INCREASE REPEAT ORDERS

Customer data gives you the keys to increase repeat orders. The following ideas will get you started:

- Send emails to different groups of customers based on their ordering behavior. Find your most loyal patrons and invite them to a VIP dinner. Pinpoint diners who haven't ordered from you recently and offer them a small incentive to dine with you again.

- Monitor how your customers are ordering and make it easier for them to order again. If you have a large amount of orders coming to your website from mobile devices, facilitate ordering on the go by getting your own branded mobile ordering app.

- Stay on customers' minds and turn them into regulars by launching a monthly email newsletter. ChowNow's restaurant partners find that this tactic produces an 8:1 return on investment. You can create and send your own newsletter, or use ChowNow's ongoing email marketing program, the Monthly Taste, to take care of the heavy lifting.

### DID YOU KNOW?

After signing up for the Monthly Taste, Gino's, an Italian gem in Brooklyn, New York, saw their orders increase by 88% while their revenue climbed by 94%.[2]

2. ChowNow, Internal Data, 2019

# How do I access my customer data?

While it may seem like a no-brainer that your restaurant should have full access to information about your own customers, most third-party online ordering marketplaces withhold this data from their restaurant partners. **They simply take a large cut of your revenue—sometimes north of 40%—on every single order, and don't even tell you who's enjoying your food**.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The typical ChowNow restaurant partner has over 2,300 customers in their database that they can market to.
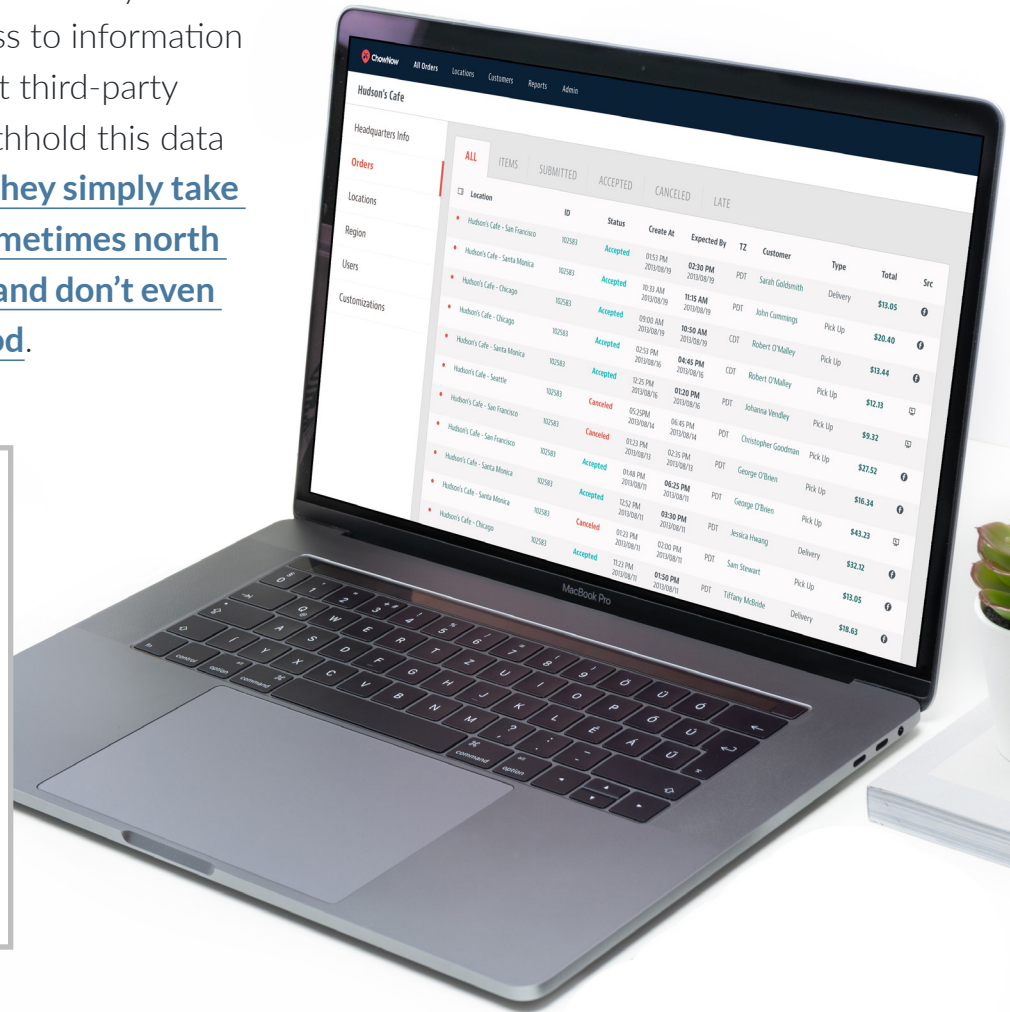
So, why do these third-party marketplaces want to keep your customer data for themselves? The answer is simple: They market other restaurants to yourcustomers— sending them to businesses that pay out higher commissions.

ChowNow is different. ChowNow puts your data in your hands. The ChowNow Dashboard stores online and mobile customer information—complete with order history, contact info, analytics and reporting capabilities—so you can easily understand and connect with those who matter most to your restaurant.

Ready to take control of your customer data?
**Talk with a ChowNow online ordering specialist to get started today**.