



## **EDENS PARTNER SUPPORT**

### **Creative Solutions for Retailers + Restaurants**

We at EDENS have always believed in creating places that breed a culture of togetherness and human familiarity, where people are naturally inspired to gather and communicate. This is more important now than ever. Consumer preferences continue to evolve in a post-COVID world but our role in bringing people together remains fundamentally unchanged. As we adapt to a fluid retail landscape and re-imagine ways of engaging communities, here are a few creative solutions we are tracking across the industry:

### **Communications**

Communicating regularly with your customers is critical. Whether it's supply-chain bottlenecks, staffing issues or simply a change in business hours or menu, honesty and transparency with your community about the unique post-pandemic challenges retailers and restaurant owners are still facing is an effective marketing strategy—especially during the holidays.

**The more you reinforce your unwavering commitment to serving your clientele, you will see more compassion and loyalty in return.** Through newsletters, social media and in-store signage, prompt them to plan ahead for unavoidable delays and to place orders early. In whatever way you are most comfortable, gently remind people that we are all in this together and to be patient and kind with you, your staff and each other.

### **Hiring + Retention**

According to the U.S. Department of Labor's "Job Openings and Labor Turnover" summary from April 2021, workers quitting their jobs increased to new highs of 4 million, with a record 5.6% of restaurant workers quitting their jobs in April.

Job openings increased to 9.3 million; job openings at restaurants increased the most by any industry, adding nearly 350,000 new openings since March, for a total of 1.34 million in April. A recent ZipRecruiter survey found 70% of job seekers who last worked in the leisure and hospitality industry say they are now looking for work in a different industry.

**You are not alone in this struggle to re-open.** It's been a very difficult few years for retailers and restaurants, but there are creative solutions to help with hiring and retaining employees. Here are a few industry recommendations:

1. Hourly wage increases and flexible work schedules
2. Some of our retail partners report success with job fairs and open houses
3. Interview bonuses (\$50 average) and free food (both advertised in advance)
4. Employee referral bonuses
5. Signing bonuses and other incentives like free phones after 6 months, parking vouchers, travel benefits, etc.
6. Loyalty programs with other retailers such as discounts, freebies, gift cards, etc.

According to a survey by Landed conducted in July 2021, demonstrating a commitment to diversity and inclusiveness ranks very high with job candidates; they want to see that an employer celebrates differences, leadership creates a safe place to address racism in the workplace, management is trained in diversity and inclusion practices, and a development path is in place for every employee.

As a business owner, you already know the importance of community. Be creative with your recruitment strategy: table at your local maker fair or farmers market, advertise at your local library or community center, establish apprenticeships and internships with local high schools, trade schools and universities.

## **Convenience + Experience**

“As brands vie for consumer attention in increasingly competitive digital environments, it is more important than ever to build real engagement with customers and offer real value: Social media engagement, e-commerce platforms, technology driven experiences.” – McKinsey, August 2020.

**It is more important than ever to build authentic engagement and offer real value.** Retailers must continue to experiment with new ways of doing business to re-engage customers. Here are some current trends:

1. Personalization: customers feel known before they enter the store, their needs are anticipated, and their expectations are met
2. Omnichannel purchasing, mobile e-commerce and in-store technology provide an easy, flexible, and convenient shopping experience
3. Safe, accessible, welcoming spaces and an easy-to-navigate in-store experience
4. Helpful, personable, and knowledgeable staff
5. Self-check-out, “fast zones” and BOPIS pick-up/fulfillment (buy online, pick up in-store)
6. Delivery apps, restaurant commerce technology (some of our partners use and like Go Tab), virtual tipping
7. Meal and beverage subscriptions, “how to” classes and experiences, memberships and clubs, grab + go meals, etc.

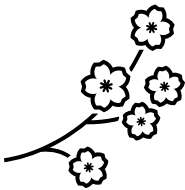
## **Transparency + Brand Activism**

Consumers—young people, in particular—care about your ideals and ethos. **They look for transparency in how you support and protect the health and well-being of your workforce.** They want to know how and whether you give back to communities in need, and if your business upholds sustainability goals and practices.

## Digital Marketing + Social Media

Email newsletters are still the most effective digital marketing tool and the best communications channel for building and maintaining relationships with your customers—if you remember to share your news in a way that is entertaining, educational and engaging. If you don't use social media, we recommend setting up an Instagram account, to start.

Use both channels to reinforce your brand while updating your customers about news, in-store events, menu specials, etc., as well as hiring announcements and business hours. **Not everyone uses social media, so remember to also update important information on your website**, such as ordering deadlines, unexpected closures and/or changing hours of business.



### Have any strategies to share?

We are open to hearing and adding them to our resources.

October 18, 2021

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Sources: "Labor Shortage is Forcing restaurants to Get Creative and Remain Complaint," *Forbes Magazine*, June 14, 2021; "Labor Shortage: The Disconnect and Possible Solutions," *The Society for Resource Management* (SRM), August 4, 2021; "4 Steps Restaurants Should Take Right Now to Attract More Workers," *QSR*, October 12, 2021; "Reinventing Restaurants with Digital Commerce," *Adweek*.