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A Critical Analysis: Infusion of Social Media and Traditional Media Strategies and Tactics in the Recipe for Success for Local, Main Street USA Restaurants

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A Critical Analysis: Infusion of social media and traditional media strategies and tactics in the recipe for success for local, Main Street USA restaurants

Tori Partykevich

Introduction

Behind every successful restaurant is a group of talented and creative people. A strong plan and a committed integration of both traditional and new media strategies will help advance any restaurant in terms of getting new customers and generating revenue. A carefully constructed social media plan, community involvement & sponsorships, local newspaper/TV advertisements, special offers, public events, newsletters and loyalty programs are all extremely valuable tactics for restaurants to embrace. Looking at case studies, interviewing professionals, doing online research and creating, distributing and analyzing a survey has helped me evaluate just how beneficial a public relations plan can be for a restaurant.

Case Study #2

BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse recognized the crowded chain-restaurant market surrounding their upcoming new location and hired Innerwest Advertising and Public Relations to help them. The new location would be their 55th restaurant and make them the largest in-house brewery and west coast distribution outlet.

What They Did

- Decided to use all media outlets: print, TV, radio, internet
- Direct outreach with media
- Organized publicity worthy events for client and media
- Partnered with local charity
- Full advertising campaign with 30 radio spots and print ads

Results

- Measured through direct media coverage in all outlets both locally and regionally
- Restaurant opened with seeing 3+ hour wait list throughout first month
- Large number of banquets and parties booked continuously
- Media coverage in several local outlets
- Received award winning campaign that year

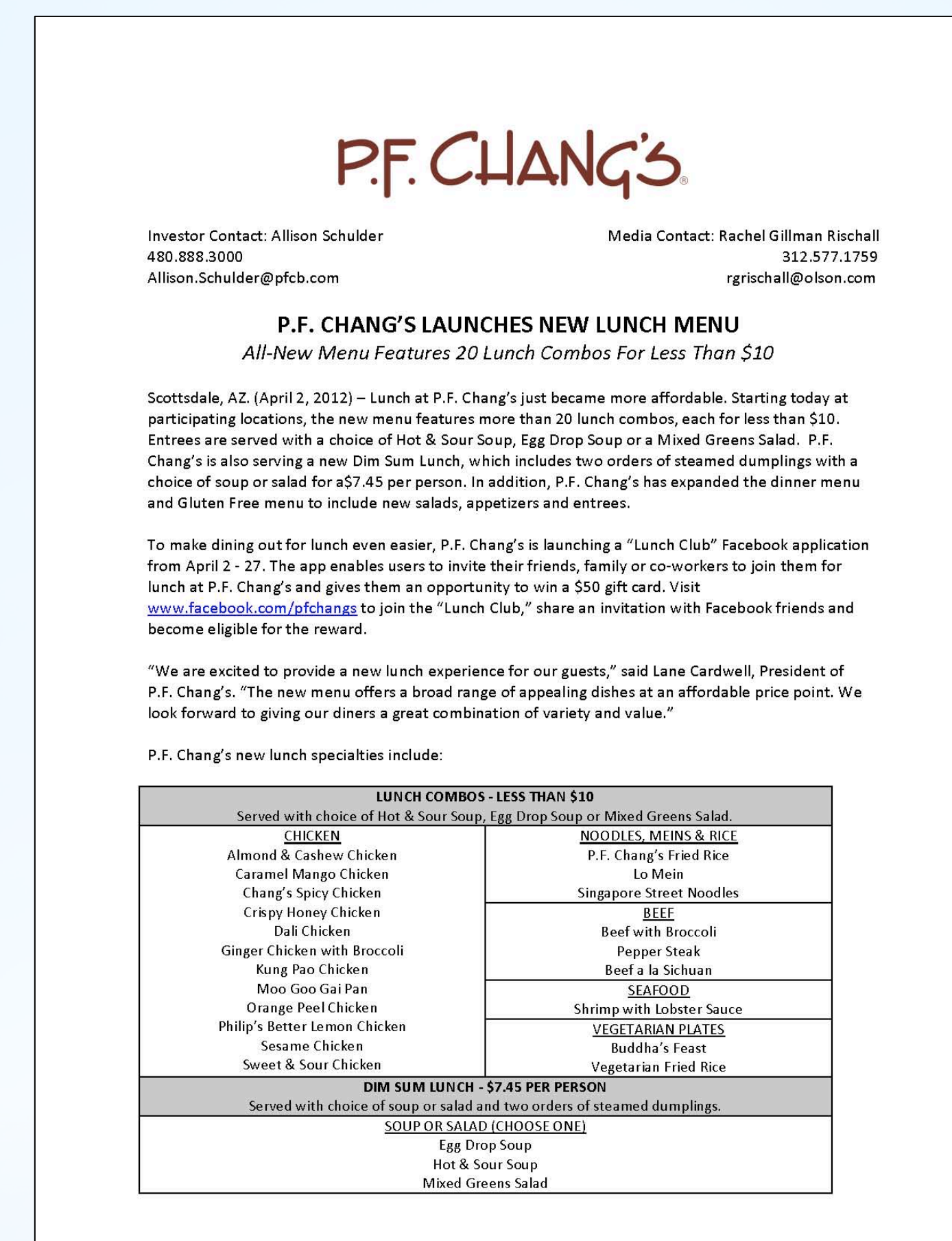


Image Source: <http://uchri.org/cfp/public-partnerships-in-the-humanities-community-partnerships/>



Image Source: <http://yipi.com/business/olive-garden-free-appetizer-or-dessert-with-purchase-of-2-adult-entrees-w-coupon/>

Case Study #3

Stonewood, a Florida restaurant group called upon Axis Public Relations to help grow their customer base. The restaurant group had not engaged in any sort of self promotion or media relations in three years. Axia recommended a six month program to help bring attention to the restaurant's image and brand.

What They Did

- Built and grew relationships with local and national food editors, bloggers and writers
- Engaged with restaurant business writers who wrote about the menu, new loyalty program and revamped website
- Developed social media and news media campaigns and policy

Results

- Coverage in major news outlets
- Restaurant group saw more than \$3.7 million in measured earned media coverage generated by Axia
- 245 media mentions with an audience growth to 146 million consumers
- Company-wide sales increase of 15%

What, if any, of these strategies does your restaurant participate in to attract & retain customers and generate revenue?

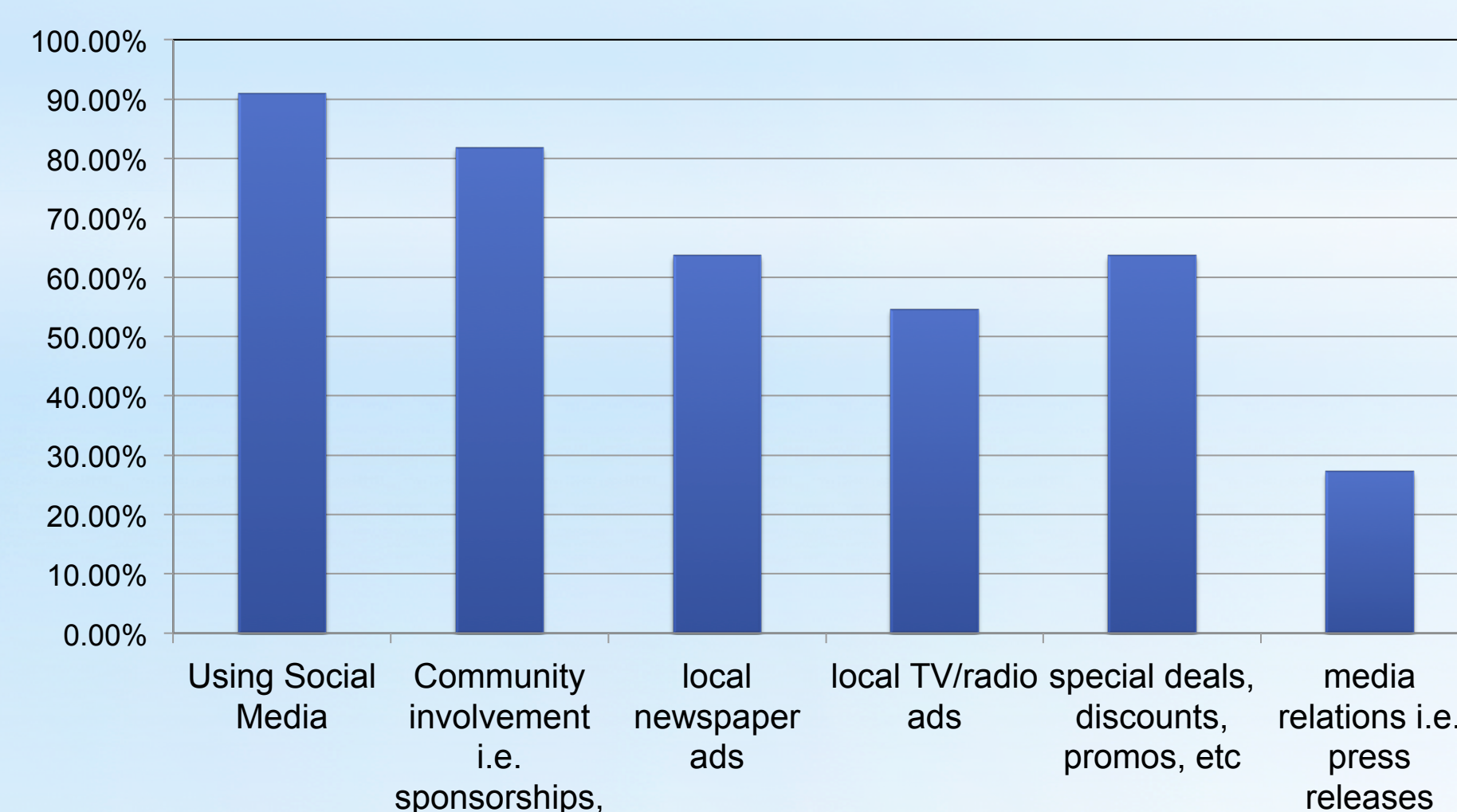


Image Source: <http://www.globalindiahealthnetwork.com/GIHN-press-releases>



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Image Source: <http://beatcreativemarketing.com/services/social-media/>



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Case Study #1

Itihaas restaurant decided they wanted to make a greater impact with the local 'foodie' community they had heard so much about in their area. The restaurant already prided themselves on their authentic Indian cuisine.

What They Did

- Commissioned local artists to create a giant Indian flag using basmati rice, turmeric and coriander and released a photo of it with a press release on Indian Independence Day
- Shifted social media activity focus to showcasing chefs, food and ingredients including detailed descriptions of preparation and ingredients to highlight the creativity and artistry involved in the work
- Hosted a dining and entertainment event for food bloggers
- Hosted consumer event to showcase redesigned dining experience: a 7-course whisky and Indian cuisine tasting menu

Results

- 8 successful reviews from food bloggers with 100% positive coverage
- 24 coverage mentions/pieces in 3 months
- Tasting event brought out more than 60 guests
- 30% growth in Facebook audience, double Facebook engagement rate from 1.9% to 3.7%
- 26% organic growth for Twitter audience

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