

HOW TO MAKE A GRAND APPEARANCE!

Hard or soft? There are many opinions about whether a restaurant should have a hard Grand Opening or soft one. It is my opinion that there should be a **hard** grand opening with all the hoopla you can muster. Grand openings are critical to all restaurants for these reasons:

- They create awareness and drive traffic.
- Some of the highest sales figures are around grand openings.
- It's not easy to maintain those high sales figures, but it is much better than starting slow and taking a long time to build up your sales.

Grand openings are designed to generate excitement in your staff and the community. Sometimes there are lines of customers around the block in anticipation of a grand opening. One restaurant brand gives away a free sandwich every week for a year and the next 99 get a free sandwich once a month for a year!

It generates enthusiasm from the staff and management. It creates excitement for the employees to know that there is all these people lined up waiting to get in and be waited on.

Tips for promoting your Grand Opening:

1. Send an email to all potential visitors you can collect. Also, for schools sent to all parents, teachers, and community partners asking for their support.
2. Utilize all types of social media. For example, ask members to add your flyer to their page and create a Facebook event – invite all your friends!
3. Distribute flyers around the community.

Grand opening events needs to be carefully planned and coordinated. Some franchises will begin holding planning meets 12 weeks in advance. Many franchises have developed programs to follow to insure quality, consistency, and brand identity.

You want to make the local folks to feel it is a big deal and that we appreciate them getting involved.