

# Restaurant Business

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STREET SMARTS FOR THE ENTREPRENEUR

## THE GREEN WAY

A hands-on guide  
for the environmentally  
conscious capitalist

The **rise**, fall and  
rise of **junk mail**

**10** do-it-yourself  
**PR strategies**

**Pasta**, how do  
I love thee?



## Technologies worth entertaining

**M**ANY DINERS NOW OPT FOR A SINGLE, all-encompassing eating and entertainment experience in one locale. And bars and restaurants are stepping up to the plate, equipping their spaces with sophisticated, hi-tech entertainment systems. Today's digital media technology makes offering the latest in music, music video, high definition TV and 24/7 programming both easier and more complex.

### More than music...

Music can serve as white noise, create a romantic atmosphere, generate a buzz with the party crowd and spike drink business at restaurant bars. Music systems can be simple or quite complicated, with dozens of speakers and associated wiring. Even the classic jukebox has come of age with the advent of the video jukebox.

The Zymeta Video Jukebox ([www.zymeta.com](http://www.zymeta.com)) is a coin-operated system that lets patrons choose songs and their accompanying music videos. A restaurateur can control audio/visual content, set free-play or pay-for-play, program special theme nights (country and western, for example) and even use the system to promote events.

### Video walls shrink

There was a time when a few TVs, cable or satellite access and a bartender with a remote put you at the cutting edge. Sports bars upped the ante with more and bigger televisions and more sports programming. Today, flat LCD and plasma screen monitors rule and "video walls" can provide multi-image sensory overload. Most restaurants don't have the room for a huge video wall, so a company called RGB Spectrum ([www.rgb.com](http://www.rgb.com)) has developed a multiple window display processor that provides a variety of images on the same screen. This system

can process and control up to 10 input sources, including TV programming and PowerPoint images through a single ceiling mounted projector. The result is all the creativity, motion and madness of a video wall system in less space for less money.

### Making connections

Staying connected in a restaurant used to mean installing a pay phone by the restrooms. Today, staying "connected" is entertainment for some and a necessity for many. Providing free wireless Internet access or Wi-Fi is a trend with QSR and fast-casual operators. While casual and fine-dining concepts probably want to keep their clientele unplugged, restaurants

can process and control up to 10 input sources, including TV programming and PowerPoint images through a single ceiling mounted projector. The result is all the creativity, motion and madness of a video wall system in less space for less money. Advanced acoustic technology can come to the rescue. Experts such as Professional Audio Designs, Inc. ([www.proaudiodesigns.com](http://www.proaudiodesigns.com)) can program a digital sound system to modify the volume and frequency of mid-range vocals to deliver better, full-range music reproduction and allow for more comfortable conversation.

### Satellite system solutions

If you're competing to offer the most HD content, movies, sports, local channels, pay-for-view and special events programming, DirecTV ([www.directv.com](http://www.directv.com))



RGB SPECTRUM SUPERVIEW DISPLAYS MULTIPLE IMAGES ON A SINGLE MONITOR

fighting for repeat lunch business can lure busy workers or weary road warriors with the offer of free Internet access. Companies such as eWireless ([www.ewireless.net](http://www.ewireless.net)) can help restaurants establish Wi-Fi zones in their space.

### Some sound advice!

The objective of a powerful, multi-speaker sound system is often at odds with a patron's desire to talk or place an order without having to shout. In a crowded bar, customers' voices can actually mask the

may be the best solution. This provider offers hundreds of channels, special programming and reliable service—all with 100 percent digital-quality picture and sound. The DirecTV HD System requires an HD or HD DVR Receiver and a 3- or 5-LNB multi-satellite dish, hooked up to your choice of HD-ready, CRT, rear projection, LCD, Plasma or DLP TVs. DirecTV has national pricing packages for multi-unit operators, provides free installation with equipment lease and offers 24/7 support.