

— THE —

ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MENU DESIGN

KULTURE**KONNECT**
marketing design studio

10 Reasons Why You Should Pay Attention To Your Menu Design

By Jorge Pacheco

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The Menu as a way finding tool

Danny Meyer, the New York City restaurant legend behind Union Square Café, Shake Shack, and Maialino, among many others, says that the key to a great menu is to make “wording, pricing, font style, and layout all consistent with the experience you are already feeling.”

Your menu should be the focal point of your restaurant’s décor and ambience, where the various aspects of a restaurant’s identity speak about a single “big, fat promise,” As Danny calls it. A big, fat promise that, correctly executed, speaks to needs far deeper than those of the taste buds and the stomach: all sensorial needs!

WHY ARE YOU READING THIS?

To learn about the 10 most common Strategies applied to all types of menus to generate more revenue:

- »traditional food menus
- »wine lists
- »menu boards
- »and more

— MENU — DESIGN & ENGINEERING

To understand the importance of a restaurant menu design, we must also understand how to engineer the menu to be able to create a powerful design solution.

Menu Design & Engineering

» What is it?

Menu engineering is the study of the profitability and popularity of menu items and how they influence the placement of such items on a menu.

» Most representative contributors

- » 1971 - Albin Seaberg - Menu Design
- » 1982 - Michael L. Kasavana and Donald Smith - Matrix technique
- » 1994 - Mooney - Menu analysis vs. menu performance
- » 2012 - Sybil Yang - Eye movements on restaurant menus

Menu Design & Engineering

What is the right technique?



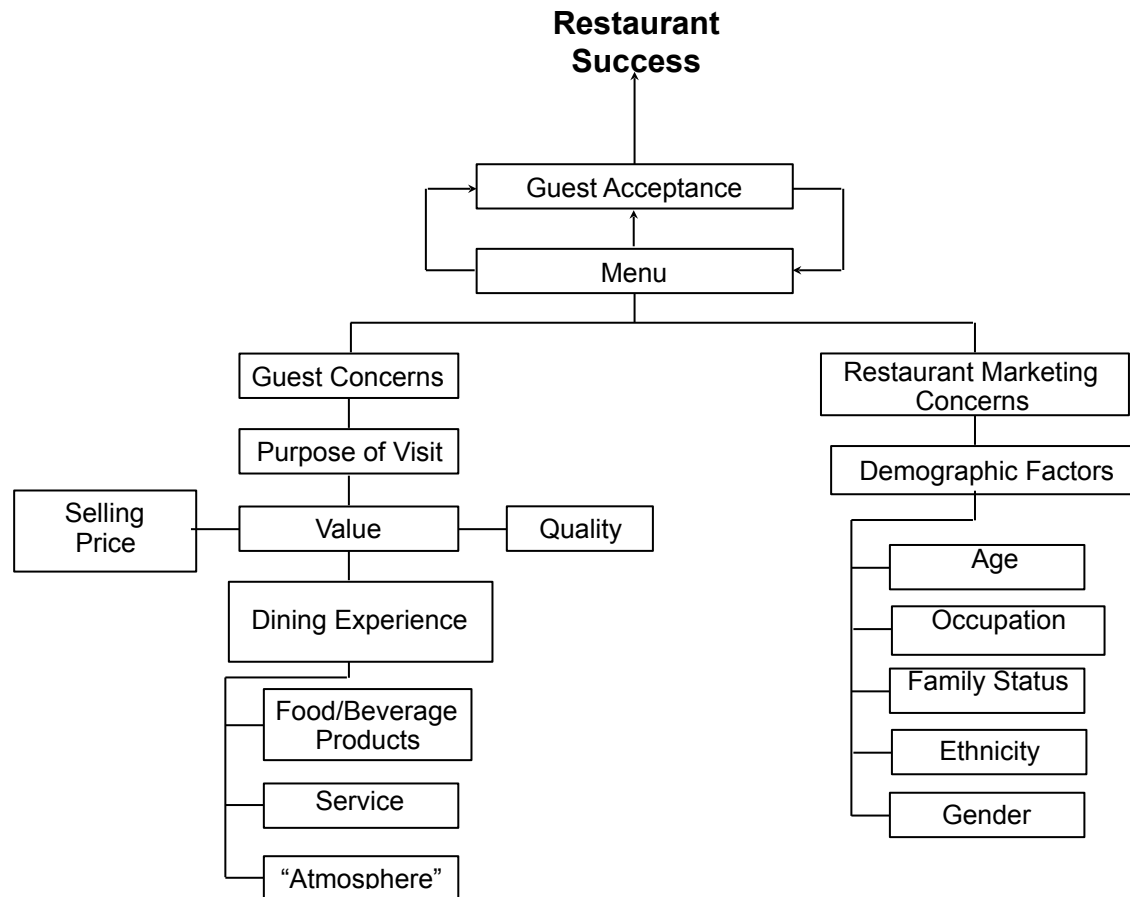
All studies advocate different tactical solutions for analyzing the menu items, performance, but they all share the same objective:

which is to improve (or to provide a solution for) the current menu items performance.

Menu engineering is not a substitute for proper purchasing, food rotation, standard recipes or any of the other basic kitchen controls that can negatively impact your costs. Rather it is a method of evaluating every item on your menu relative to its present contribution to bottom line dollars, thereby allowing managers to recognize the items they want to sell

Menu Design & Engineering

Marketing related factors to be considered by menu planners



—The— PROCESS

**Awesome! Menu engineering makes so much sense...
Now, where do you start? Well, it's a lengthy process,
but, if done correctly, it can be done in four easy steps.**



STEP 1

COST YOUR MENU

This is all about contribution margins. Here you get to breaking down every item on your menu to its individual ingredients and determining exactly how much it costs to create each of these items. It is time consuming, but there is no way around it, you need to do this if you want to know how your menu is performing.

Step 2

GROUPING & SEGMENTS

Once you have figured out how much your menu costs you, it is time to group and segment each one of your menu items.

Grouping consists in classifying your menu items into specific sections, whether they are appetizer, entrées and such.

Segmenting comes into the picture right after you've grouped your menu items. For example, under entrées you can have segments such as seafood, meat and vegetarian.

Grouping

Appetizers

Entrées

Dessert

Drinks

Segment

Soups & salads

Vegetarian, seafood, meat
alcoholic and non
alcoholic drinks

STEP 3

CATEGORIZE MENU ITEMS

Once you have categorized your menu items, the next step will be to rank them by profitability and popularity at the category level first and then at the section level

Category level view

Helps decide where to place the various sections of your menu (for example, if steak items are your Stars, you may want to work hardest to promote the Meat Entrees section).

Section level view

Enables you to determine how to place and promote menu items within each section of your menu.

STEP 4

MENU ITEMS FATES

Grouping and segmenting help you start the configuration of your menu. However, the categorization of your menu items is what really will help you realize what is working and what's not. Categorize your menu items based on the following criteria:

- » **Star** - A popular item with a high contribution margin
- » **Dog** - unpopular item with a low contribution margin
- » **Challenges** - These items are profitable but relatively unpopular. Your “challenge” is to make them more popular. How? renaming , replating, creating a new item with the basic ingredient(s)
- » **Workhorses** - low profitability and high popularity. Here is where your best opportunities lie. Your job is to re-engineer the menu item to reduce its cost while not sacrificing what makes it popular. How? Replace expensive ingredients, i.e.: Assiago cheese in a Caesar salad for Reggiano Parmesan, make emphasis on the preparation, i.e.: get a less expensive meat

MENU ENGINEERING WORKSHEET

Restaurant: _____ Date of Analysis: _____

Meal Period: ☐ Breakfast ☐ Lunch ☐ Dinner

(A) Menu Item	(B) Number Sold	(C) Sales %	(D) Food Cost	(E) Sales Price	(F) Item CM	(G) Total Food Cost	(H) Total Revenues	(I) Item CM	(P) CM Type	(R) Sales % Type	(S) Menu Item Classification
Tuna Salad Plate	270	14.3	3.25	7.25	4.00	877.50	1957.50	1080.00	Low	Low	Dog
Beef Stew	490	25.9	4.25	8.50	4.25	2082.50	4165.00	2082.50	Low	High	Plow Horse
Fried Chicken	810	42.9	5.15	9.75	4.60	4171.50	7897.50	3726.00	High	High	Star
Sirloin Steak	320	16.9	8.25	13.50	5.25	2640.00	4320.00	1680.00	High	Low	Puzzle
	N			I			J	M			
Column Total	1890					9771.50	18,341.00	8568.50			
Additional Computations:											
							K = I/J	O = M/N	Q (Popularity) = 100% ÷ No. items × 70%		
								\$4.53	17.5%		

10 Reasons

Why You Should Pay Attention — to your —

MENU DESIGN

Now that we understand how menu engineering works and how it influences menu design, let's talk about the importance of menu design and how it can make or break your overall brand experience.

cheesecakes

ORIGINAL

The One that started it All
Our Famous Creamy Cheesecake with a Graham Cracker Crust and Sour Cream Topping

FRESH STRAWBERRY

The Original Topped with Glazed Fresh Strawberries. One Must Register Here for 30 Years!

TOASTED MARSHMALLOW S'MORES GALORE!

Handy-dandy Cheesecake Topped with Housemade Marshmallows and Heavy Malt® Graham Crackers

DREAM EXTRALIME CHEESECAKE

Creamy Cheesecake Extralime with Dream Toppings, Topped with Dream® Cream

GODIVA® CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE

Chocolate Cheesecake, Topped with Godiva® Chocolate Cheesecake

MERSTREY'S CHOCOLATE BAR CHEESECAKE

Handy-dandy Cheesecake Topped with Merstrey's Chocolate Bars

ULTIMATE RED VELVET CAKE CHEESECAKE

Layers of Red Velvet Cake and Cheesecake Topped in Cream Cheese Frosting. Tasty!

REESE'S® PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE CAKE CHEESECAKE

Reese's® Peanut Butter Cups in Our Original Cheesecake with Layers of Delicious

30th ANNIVERSARY CHOCOLATE CAKE CHEESECAKE

Layers of Our Original Cheesecake, Fudge Cake and Chocolate

DU CIELLE Caramel Cheesecake

Caramel Cheesecake Topped with Caramel Sauce and Almond Brittle

WHITE CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY TRUFFLE

Creamy Cheesecake Topped with White Chocolate and Raspberry

CHRIS' OUTRAGEOUS CHEESECAKE

Chocolate Chip Caramel Cheesecake with Layers of Chocolate Cake, Brownie and

MANGO KEY LIME CHEESECAKE

Topped with Mango Mousse on a Vanilla Coconut Macaron

FRESH BANANA CREAM CHEESECAKE

Basic Cream Cheesecake Topped with Banana Cream and Fresh

ADAM'S PEANUT BUTTER CLIP FUDGE RIPP

Creamy Cheesecake Topped with Caramel, Reese's® Butterfingers and Reese's

WHITE CHOCOLATE CARAMEL MACADAMIA NUT

White Cheesecake Topped with Caramel Sauce and Macadamia Nuts

LEMON RASPBERRY CREAM CHEESECAKE

Raspberry-Vanilla Cake, Creamy Lemon Cheesecake, Raspberry Ladyfinger

TIRAMISU CHEESECAKE

Our Wonderful Cheesecake and Tiramisu Combined into one Amazing

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CHEESECAKE

Silky Chocolate Cheesecake Topped with a Layer of Belgian Chocolate

VANILLA BEAN CHEESECAKE

Creamy Vanilla Bean Cheesecake, Topped with Vanilla Mousse and Whipped

CHOCOLATE TUXEDO CREAM® CHEESECAKE

Layers of Our Fudge Cake, Chocolate Cheesecake, Vanilla Mascarpone Mousse

KAHLUA® COCOA COFFEE CHEESECAKE

A Rich Brownie, Topped with Kahlua Cheesecake, Creamy Chocolate Mousse and

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE-DOUGH CHEESECAKE

Creamy Cheesecake Loaded with Our Chocolate Chip Cookie-Dough

cheesecakes and desserts

DUTCH APPLE CARAMEL STRUSSL

Our Original Cheesecake, Baked Apples, Caramel and Brown Sugar Cheesecake Walnut Streusel

KEY LIME CHEESECAKE

Key Lime Pie in Cheesecake! Deliciously Tart and Creamy on a Vanilla Crust

CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY TRUFFLE

Layers of Chocolate Raspberry Swirl Cheesecake, Chocolate Mousse and Chocolate Ganache

LOW CARB CHEESECAKE

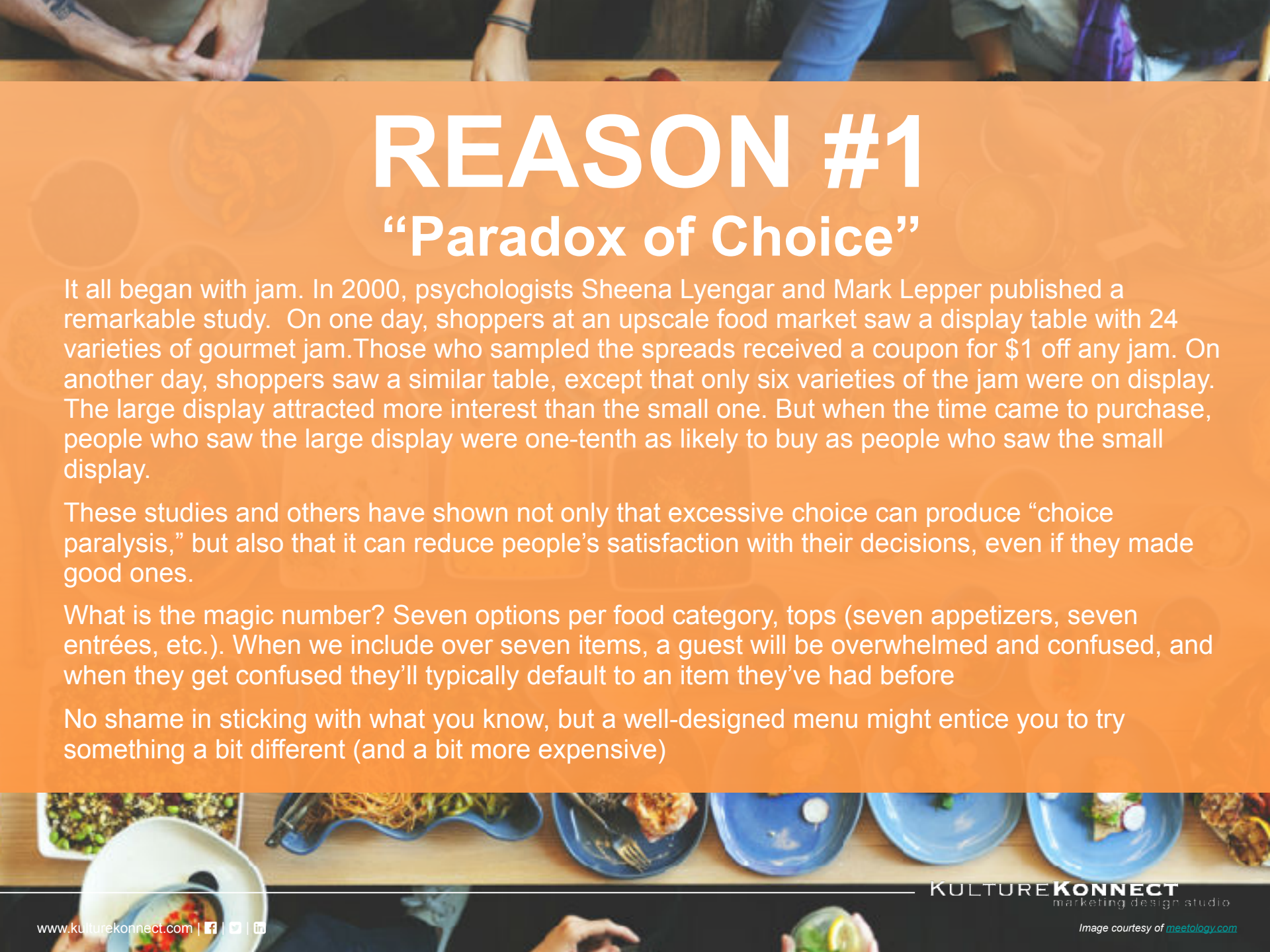
Low Carb and Creamy with a Graham Walnut Crust

REASON #1 LIMIT YOUR OPTIONS

Many restaurateurs often assume that the more options they offer, the more likely a guest will be able to find what they're looking for.

However, as we complicate menus, what we're actually doing is tormenting the guest and, if they get anything at all, they will be dissatisfied with their selection and will leave thinking they made the wrong choice.

So, what to do?



REASON #1

“Paradox of Choice”

It all began with jam. In 2000, psychologists Sheena Lyengar and Mark Lepper published a remarkable study. On one day, shoppers at an upscale food market saw a display table with 24 varieties of gourmet jam. Those who sampled the spreads received a coupon for \$1 off any jam. On another day, shoppers saw a similar table, except that only six varieties of the jam were on display. The large display attracted more interest than the small one. But when the time came to purchase, people who saw the large display were one-tenth as likely to buy as people who saw the small display.

These studies and others have shown not only that excessive choice can produce “choice paralysis,” but also that it can reduce people’s satisfaction with their decisions, even if they made good ones.

What is the magic number? Seven options per food category, tops (seven appetizers, seven entrées, etc.). When we include over seven items, a guest will be overwhelmed and confused, and when they get confused they’ll typically default to an item they’ve had before

No shame in sticking with what you know, but a well-designed menu might entice you to try something a bit different (and a bit more expensive)

REASON #2 VISUAL CUES

Use visual cues to highlight the items you want to sell most!

Highlighting items often takes up additional menu space, so please don't make the mistake we have seen many times when restaurant operators choose a menu cover that doesn't provide enough room to effectively promote their items.



REASON #3

SPACE REQUIREMENTS & FREQUENCY

As you increase the number of items that are highlighted with visual cues, the impact that these cues have on your bottom line will decline and your menu may begin to look cluttered. Try to limit yourself to one highlighted item per category.

REASON #4

PHOTOGRAPHS & ILLUSTRATIONS

Our experience indicates that using a photograph can increase sales of an item by as much as 30% when there is just one photograph on the page (again, the more visual cues you add, the lower their impact). That said, photographs on a menu also tend to cheapen the entire menu concept, so don't use this technique at a high-end eatery.

REASON #5 PRICE LISTING

Don't list your prices in a column down the right side of your menu or use dollar sign. Placing your prices in a column causes customers to focus on price, not your food, and could lead them to choose the cheapest item in the column.

SEAFOOD PLATTER

*A variety of—
Cooked and raw
seafood*

SM 45 • MED 85
LRG 150

Morelle Bronca Pro
Valdobbiano, Italy

Punta Crena Petto
Colline Savonesi, Liguria

Mas de Doumas G
Vin du Languedoc, France

Karanika Xinomavri
Macedonia, Greece

Pierre Peters Cuvée
Champagne, France

Los Bermejos Esp
Canary Islands, Spain

Peter Lauer Riesling
L'Argenti

Kaya Toast Coconut
Vietnamese-French

Wontons Cod, shrimp, corn
Fish sauce*

Fried Cauliflower
Hazelnuts, chiles

Cereal Scallops
Sea urchin roe, braised mushrooms*

Egg Custard
Dried chiles, Sichuan peppercorns

Spicy Chicken Wings
young soybeans, plum sauce*

Minced Squab and Duck
Bibb lettuce, fresh water chestnuts, clay oven bread croutons*

SALADS

Green Papaya Salad Upland cress, purslane, spiced walnuts*
Farmer's Market Little Gem Herbs, pomelo-crème fraîche vinaigrette*
Charred tomatoes, clay oven bread croutons*

RAW OYSTERS

Daily Selection
Served with lime-black
mignonette and

REASON #6

ITEM DESCRIPTION

Use menu item descriptions to your advantage - Don't list your \$40 lobster without a description and then write an entire paragraph about your \$10 hamburger. It should be the other way around.

Use descriptions to set an item apart - Don't just list the ingredients; use evocative text that can pique a guest's interest in a dish. Also, you may want to tell customers why the item is on your menu: Did your grandmother use this recipe? Was it your favorite dessert as a child? Humanizing a dish takes it out of the realm of being a commodity.

Mention brand names - If your ingredients include items (such as sauces, spices) that are made by well-known and respected brand names, include these brand names in your description; they enhance the perception of the item's quality.

BALTHAZAR RESTAURANT

REASON #7 ANCHORS & DECOYS

On menus, perspective is everything. One trick is to include an incredibly expensive item near the top of the menu, which makes everything else seem reasonably priced. Your server never expects you to actually order that \$300 lobster, but it sure makes the \$70 steak look positively thrifty, doesn't it?

Slightly more expensive items (so long as they still fall within the boundaries of what the customer is willing to pay) also suggest the food is of higher quality. This pricing structure can literally make customers feel more satisfied when they leave. For example, one study gave participants an \$8 buffet or a \$4 buffet. While the food was exactly the same, the \$8 buffet was rated as tastier.

LE BAR A HUITRES



PLATEAUX DE FRUITS DE MER LE GRAND LE BALTHAZAR 155.00

OYSTERS	SHELLFISH
Half Dozen 21.00	Little Neck Clams 16.00
P/A	Half Crab Mayonnaise 23.00
P/A	Half Lobster P/A

Shrimp Cocktail 21.00

LES SALADES

with house salad, roasted tomato and Parmesan	25.00
with house salad, roasted tomato and Parmesan	25.00
with house salad, roasted tomato and Parmesan	27.00
with house salad, roasted tomato and Parmesan	18.00

ENTRÉES

SAUTÉED SKATE with blistered corn, cherry tomatoes, marcona almonds and cauliflower purée	28.00
SEARED ORGANIC SALMON with English peas, parmesan gnocchi, piquillo peppers, mint and a lobster jus	34.00
GRILLED DORADE with green asparagus, marble potatoes, chanterelles and mustard butter	34.00
MOULES FRITES	23.00

PLATS DU JOUR



ONION RINGS
Homemade, sliced thick, and served nice and crisp. This batch is large enough to share. **5.75**

**WHAT'S GOOD ON THE MENU?
YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO ASK!**

REASON #8 TYPOGRAPHY

sasasasa

GRILLED YARDBIRD

Butterflied chicken breast, lightly seasoned and grilled to a golden brown. Served with a dinner roll and a side of rich brown gravy. Sooooo Tender! **9.75**

CHICKEN FRIED STEAK
Hand-cut and hand-dipped

OPEN FACED CHILI DOG
Two grilled links on Texas To
Jack cheese, diced onions & r

Chicken Strips and
Holly G

FRIED CATFISH

CITY GRILL

CHICKEN

Home cut, to
Served with

*The Texas Department of State Health Services would like us to remind you that consumption of undercooked meat

REASON #9

LIST ORDER

Although you may list your appetizer and entree menu items in a vertical list, one through six, the level of customer focus on each of these six positions does not follow the same order.

The first few spots enjoy levels of importance that correspond to their position in the list, but after that it is the last item in the list that gets the most attention. The items just above the last item in the list are the most ignored.

Lists should be short. Your goal is to put five or fewer items into each section, with a maximum of seven. More than seven items in a list constitutes information overload for the customer, and when this happens customers often default to ordering the most common item.

Remember that the most common menu items tend not to be the most profitable ones, so, why place them as the first one in your list?



REASON #10

EYE MOVEMENT PATTERNS

For decades, menu engineers and designers have tacitly accepted the Sweet Spots theory. This theory argues that when diners scan a menu, their eyes tend to gravitate first toward the upper right-hand corner of a menu. This is the reason why many restaurants place the menu item they want to sell most in that location. The sweet spot can vary depending on the format of the menu, and that is shown on the next page.

However, in 2012, a new study by Prof. Sybil Yang suggests that there are no sweet spots when someone is reading a menu. Her research included empirical studies with infrared retinal scanners, and argues that we all read menus the same way we would read a book: in a sequential order, from left to right and down. Yang found no evidence of a sweet spot where eyes tended to focus for the longest time, but she did notice a "sour spot" where readers focused for the least amount of time. The sour spot contained information about the restaurant and a list of salads.

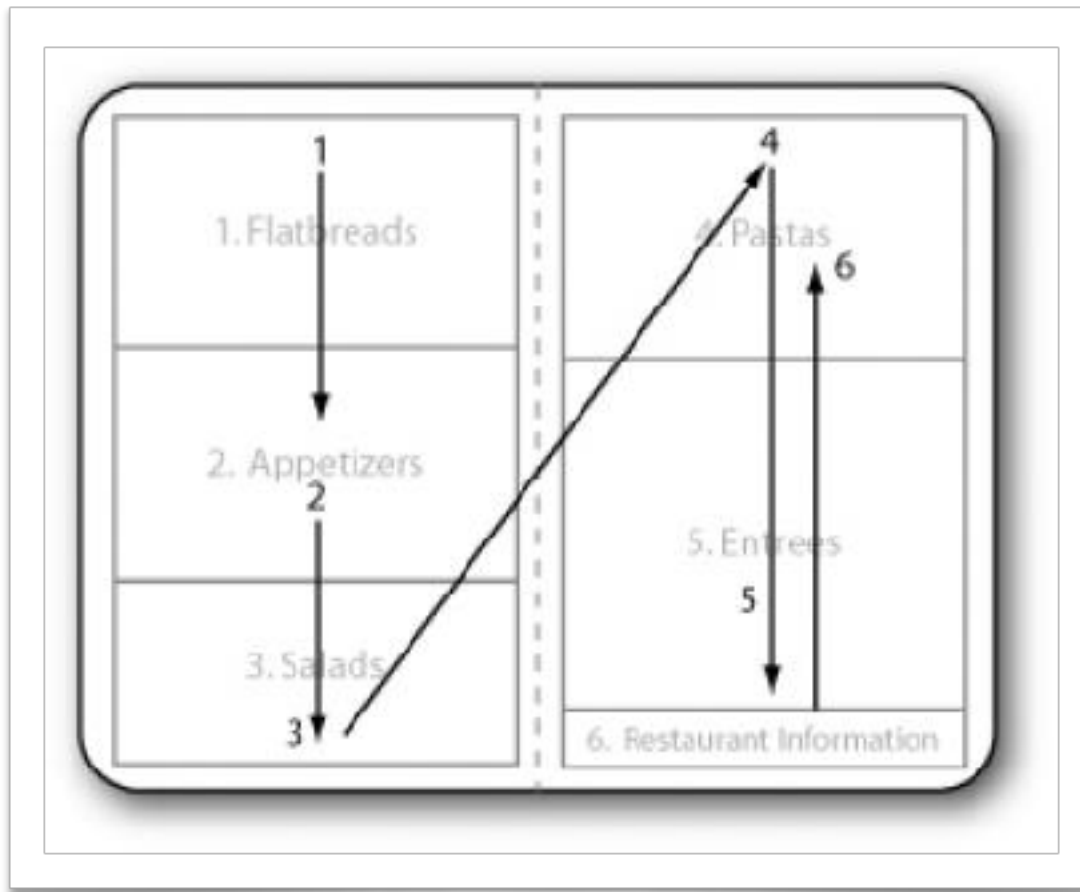
REASON #10

Eye movement patterns - Sweet Spots



REASON #10

Eye movement patterns - Sour Spots



A smiling chef in a white uniform and hat stands next to a smiling woman in a white shirt and grey vest. They are in a restaurant setting with warm lighting and blurred background.

COMMON MENU MISTAKES

As restaurateurs and business owners, we all try to manage our organization as best as we can. But, many times, we fall prey to the day-to-day operations and forget to look at the big picture. When designing your menu, always try to avoid these mistakes:

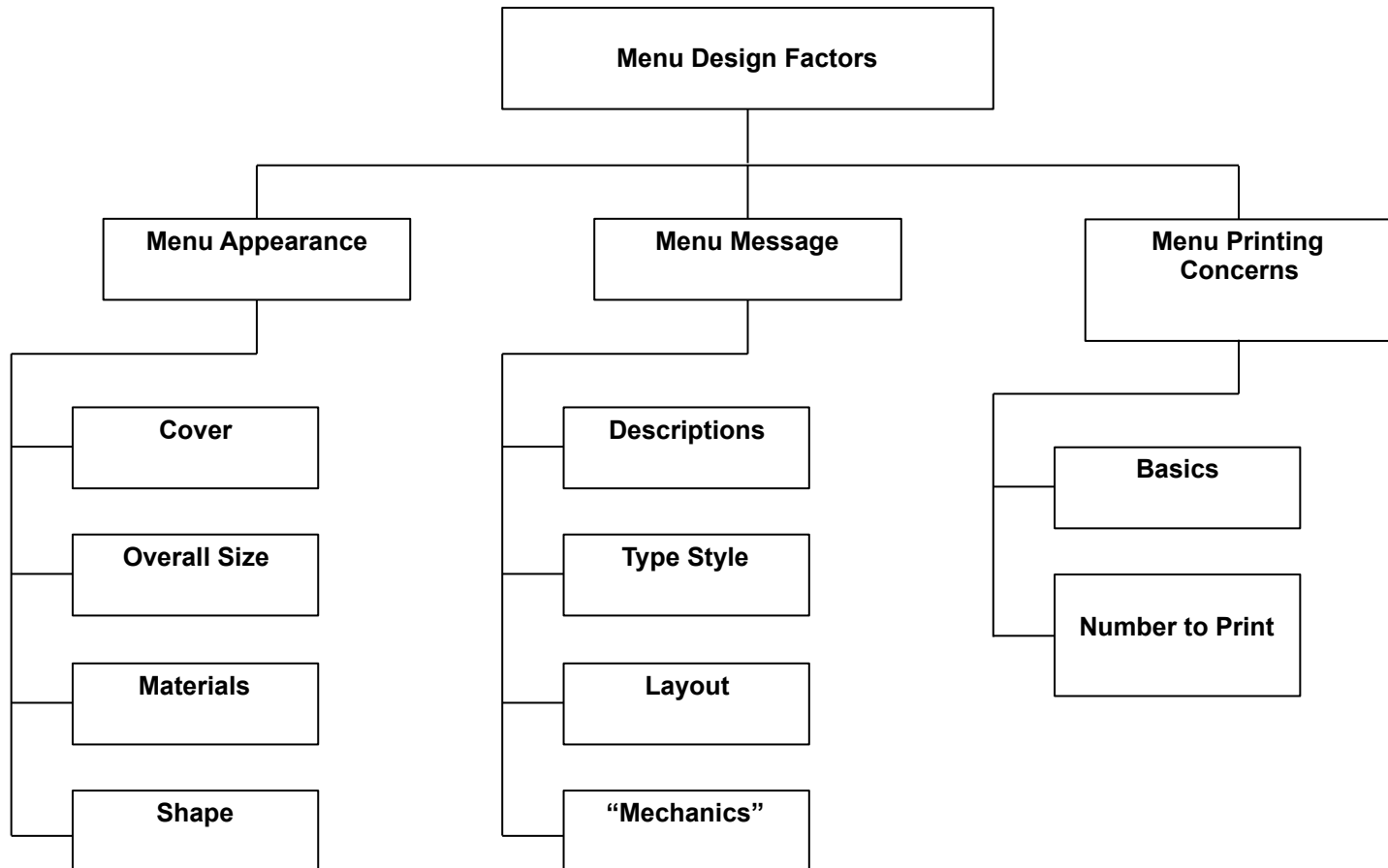
- » No management commitment
- » Hard to read
- » Overemphasizing prices
- » Monotonous design
- » Poor use of space
- » Incongruent
- » Too big or too small

Having these type of variables in mind will allow you to maximize the impact of your menu on your operations, including your staff and, ultimately, your guests.

— DON'T — FORGET

Engineering and designing a menu is not just about creating an itemized list of things. A good menu design considers a lot of different things from operations to the brand message to the appearance to final printing concerns.

IMPORTANT MENU DESIGN FACTORS





While engineering and designing your menu, make sure you:

- »train your staff
- »have your staff read your menu and understand it
- »teach them what items are priority
- »train them to push those items
- »test your menu
- »repeat the process to make any necessary adjustments

— ABOUT US —

Kulture Konnect is devoted to providing diversity through design and is committed to creating innovative graphic design and advertising for our clients. Our design is derived from what is presently going on in the world and is technologically and financially viable and affordable.

Our dynamic nature and commitment to think creatively, act responsively and solve problems in a timely manner, allow us to put together the best talent to create ground-breaking designs that will ultimately reflect our clients' needs. In order to develop long and mutually beneficial relationships, we believe our first responsibility is our clients.

Get a Menu Design Assessment Today!

Call 951 479 5411