

Mesob Ethiopian Restaurant Introduces QR Codes to Enhance Customer Experience

Mesob Ethiopian Restaurant of Montclair, NJ introduces QR code program to enhance the diner's experience with immediate "self-serve" digital access. QR codes are readily available In Japan and Europe and beginning to show up in the U.S. on business cards, product packaging and print ads. The restaurant is the first in the area to use them as part of its décor and signage.

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Mesob Ethiopian Restaurant, a local ethnic restaurant in Montclair, NJ, introduces QR codes, also called a "2D barcode" or "smart tag." When a user scans a QR code, they gain access to rich multimedia on their smartphone. QR codes are square, patterned, black and white symbols which are actually bits of information which can be scanned using a free bar code scanner app readily available on smartphones. Tech-savvy Marketing Manager for Mesob Ethiopian Restaurant of Montclair, NJ, Vickie Smith-Siculiano is enriching the customer experience with them.

"Restaurants have to stay on the cutting edge of technology. At Mesob, we are all about experience, and we are taking the traditional authentic Ethiopian experience to the next level with the use of QR codes. A lot of our restaurant customers are already tech-savvy, integrating mobile technology into their everyday lives. Customers check in on Yelp, Foursquare and Facebook Places. Restaurants cannot ignore the power of mobile technology, as people will use mobile more and more to find restaurants in their local area. They can tweet about their meal while they are enjoying it and take

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Customers can scan QR Codes to learn more about Ethiopian coffee at Mesob Ethiopian Restaurant

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pictures of their dishes to share with others on sites like Urbanspoon and Foodspotting.”

The restaurant enjoys communications with fans on their Facebook fan page which Smith-Siculiano moderates. She discovered that customers are hungry not only for the savory Ethiopian cuisine but for knowledge about Ethiopian culture.

One of the first QR codes to debut is found at each table. When scanned, the diner will be connected to a video taped behind-the-scenes, showing the process of making the traditional Ethiopian injera, a crepe-like spongy bread used to scoop up the selection of stews and vegetable dishes. The footage was produced by video journalist and blogger Melody Kettle, whose show Hot From the Kettle is featured on Montclair TV Channel 34.

Customers can also scan these new QR codes to connect with Mesob in social media on Facebook and Twitter. The restaurant openly shares its customer reviews with everyone and a passerby can scan a QR code in its window, directing them to Google Places or Yelp or Mesob’s website. Geo-location fans can check in on Yelp, and customers can sign up immediately for the restaurant’s email club, powered by Fishbowl. QR codes will be refreshed with new content regularly, to keep the restaurant experience fresh.

The restaurant has long been acclaimed for its interior design noted for displaying Ethiopian art and crafts on its walls to educate their diners. The addition of these Quick Response codes throughout now enables those with smartphones to immediately view videos and articles about traditional Ethiopian culture, such as the process of growing, harvesting and processing Ethiopian coffee beans, and also a video with footage of a traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony. Content also includes features about the mesob, the traditional Ethiopian woven table, and Ethiopian fashion.

Smith-Siculiano ensures that Mesob restaurant owner, Berekti Mengistu, and staff are up to date on technology their customers are engaging with and marketing communications that she creates regularly, such as current check-in offers, important Facebook comments that need a response and e-mail announcements that are sent out. A new menu insert also alerts customers that there are new QR codes for them to discover throughout the restaurant.

Says Mengistu, “When we opened Mesob, we wanted it to be a blending of ancient cuisine with modern attitude. It is exciting for us to immerse ourselves in technology and social media, and by having online conversations with our customers, we have learned more about them than we ever imagined. We want to create the best restaurant experience for them, and QR codes were a natural progression to engage our patrons with content they regularly ask for.”

Mesob Ethiopian Restaurant is located at 515 Bloomfield Avenue, in Montclair, NJ. For reservations or more information, call 973-655-9000 or visit Mesob online at <http://www.mesobrestaurant.com>.

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