

PRODUCING RESTAURANT PLACEMATS AS AN ADVERTISING MEDIUM

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PRODUCING RESTAURANT PLACEMATS AS AN ADVERTISING MEDIUM

The concept is simple: Give free paper placemats to restaurants in your area with either a prominent color ad or their menu in the middle, and two-inch by two-inch ads around the edge. These ads will make so much profit for you that if you run up against a stubborn restaurant owner, you can even pay him or her to take your placemats and come out way ahead. They'd be a fool to refuse!

The first step is to contact printers in your area and find out what kind of blank or ready-made paper placemats they can either print or have printed for you.

Get a quote on at least 5,000, including at least two-color printing. Compare your quotes and find the printer that will do the best job for the best price. Make sure this is a printer that will work with you on the layout of the placemats, if this is new to you.

Once you have your printing costs, which will be your primary costs, you can figure out how much profit can be made. Your profit will depend, in part, on how many ads you can put around the perimeter of the placemat.

For example, if the placemat is 11 x 15, you can put a total of 20 ads around the sheet, leaving a one inch margin around the edge for the printer. Divide the printing cost, together with your other estimated costs (phone, postage, travel) by the number of ads, and you have your cost per ad.

For example, suppose your estimated expenses will be \$600. Divide that by 20 ads and you have \$30. This is how much each ad contributes to covering the cost of the placemat. Now, figure a target profit margin. In my area, an ad that will be seen by 5,000 people over an extended period of time could go for \$90. This would be a \$1,200 profit!

Now, make a list of restaurants that would be likely prospects for this service. The best prospects will be locally-owned family-oriented restaurants that are visited by residents of the area. Small, family-owned, restaurants will be your best bet.

GETTING THE RESTAURANTS: Offer to provide the restaurant 5,000 free paper placemats with either a large color ad or a color menu printed in the middle of the placemat. Local advertisers will be featured in small ads around the outside. When you say the words "5,000 free paper placemats," you probably won't even have to go any further! If the owner's a hard case, offer to pay them to take your placemats! Offer \$50 and 5,000 placemats. This breaks down more barriers than you can imagine!

If the restaurant owner has a pre-made ad or menu available, this can be reduced or enlarged by your printer to fit the center area of the placemat. Be sure the restaurant's section dominates the placemat.

Now, contact businesses that are in the immediate area surrounding the restaurant. Good prospects will be video stores, dry cleaners, grocery stores, book stores, any business that is frequented by families. Tell them that you have an advertising opportunity which will put their name and offer in front of 5,000 people for an extended period of time.

Contact as many possible advertisers as you can. The more you contact, the more ads you'll sell. If your prices are competitive and you deliver honest facts, you should have an easy time selling the placemat ads.

Now, take the ads to your printer and layout the placemat. Put the restaurant's ad/menu in the center, and the other ads around the perimeter. Have the printer print the requested quantity, and deliver them to the restaurant. It's that simple!

This whole process can be done easily in less than a month. But, even if it takes you a month, the example above cleared \$1,200 profit (or \$1,150, if you actually had to pay the \$50).

Once you've done your first one or two and know what you're doing, you will find that you can run more than one at a time. If you run four placemats per month, you could clear over \$55,000 per year!

This is just an example, and your profits could be higher or lower, depending on your area.

But, it should be fairly obvious that this can be an easy-to-run, profitable business that you can start part-time and quickly move into a full-time business!