

# Tips for Success

## **Be Reliable.**

Customers will depend on you for lunch. Be there regularly. Become part of their routine. This will build a loyal regular customer base.

## **Be Friendly.**

Greet each customer. Be cheerful and smile. It costs nothing but makes a huge difference.

Get to know your regulars by name. That builds loyalty. They will spread the word about you and draw more customers to your business. The best advertising is by word of mouth and it costs nothing.

## **Keep a Clean, Tidy Shop.**

People are turned off by mess especially where they buy their food. Clean your cart daily before and after use. Clean all the equipment including condiment trays and bottles. Keep your garments and personal appearance clean and neat.

[Click here](#) for more info on the daily function of a hot dog cart, a daily supply check list, a supply reorder form, hot dog cart routine maintenance, a suggested dress code, and an employee department policy .

## **Maintain Quality.**

A good reputation is priceless. Don't scrimp. Don't risk it by cutting corners using old product.

## **Be a Good Neighbor.**

Don't let your business interfere with theirs – make it compliment and augment their business.

This may include simple things such as providing a trash can for your customers and picking up litter at days end.

## **Know Local Eating Habits.**

Hot dogs are subject to regional differences. This may require condiments that reflect your local culture such as grated cheese, chili, hot mustard, etc. Even within a city, one neighborhood may be more health conscious, reflect a unique cultural flavor ie: require Kosher food, or prefer Red Onion Sauce on their dog. Ask. Listen. Learn. Adapt. Serve those needs. Advertise it. It means business.

### **Post a Simple Menu and Price List.**

Many people won't buy unless they first know the price.

Prominently displaying what you sell will save you time explaining especially during a busy lunch hour. It enables your customers to decide before they order.

Attach your Menu / Price List to your cart with Velcro under a plexiglass cover (to protect it from dirt, rain, and facilitate easy cleaning and changing). Get it made professionally at a local vinyl graphics sign shop. It won't cost much and will look pro.

See the Operations Manual section J for a [Sample Menu](#) .

### **Take Phone Orders.**

Post your cell phone number on your cart and keep a phone order log sheet. Have business cards made up that you can give to customers for them to have so they can call their orders in ahead of time. Print off some simple ½ page menu sheets like take-out restaurants do.

Many workers are so busy that they prefer to call their food orders in ahead of time and just pick them up. Often one person will pick up lunch for many. They save time not having to wait. You avoid long line ups and generate more business. It's another way to adapt to your customers needs and develop a loyal customer base.

### **Introduce Yourself to a New Area.**

When you set up your cart in a new area advertise yourself. This will get your new location off to a running start.

Print up some quality flyers and take them around to the businesses in the area so they will be familiar you. Maybe include a nice picture of you and your quality cart.

Drop them off in business mailboxes. Post them on information boards. Hand them directly to business owners, managers, receptionists, and other employees. Dress neat and professionally while doing this as you are making that all important first impression of your quality food service vending cart!

The flyer should include your hours of business, location, menu, and cell number for phone orders. It should show that your cart is licensed and meets all the Health Code requirements.

Keep it to one page in length and one sided so it can easily be posted in a lunch room.

Include introductory discount coupons at the bottom of your flyer to encourage first time customers.

See the [Marketing and Selling](#) section for further details.

