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## **Welcome to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food!**

Thank you for showing interest in the franchise opportunities offered by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food. You are in the unique position to jump into a growing new field of business and becoming part of one of the most well established meal delivery and Catering companies in the greater Montreal area.

### **Business History**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Food was founded in 2005 by Joseph Mantagaris, a professional chef who, after having spent numerous years traveling the globe and experiencing a wide variety of exotic settings and recipes, decided it was high time to start sharing what he discovered.

Joseph started his business in his apartment, cooking each and every meal in his kitchen, and personally delivering them to customers in the West Island. Through simple advertising and, most importantly, word of mouth recommendations from regular customers, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food soon expanded beyond a simple one man show.

The client list grew, as did the delivery zone and Joseph started hiring kitchen assistants and drivers to help with the deliveries. After a few short years, the business expanded to what it is today: one of Montreal's largest and most recognizable meal delivery and catering businesses.

Currently, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food serves hundreds of customers on a regular basis, providing them with fresh and healthy meals delivered right to their doors. As well, numerous corporations and businesses in the greater Montreal region rely on the catering services they know and trust, offered by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food.

The number of clients keeps on growing, as do the businesses, offices and industrial parks that desire great tasting food for their corporate events.

### **What is a Meal Delivery Business?**

Meal delivery businesses are a rather recent addition to the ever growing food and beverage industry in North America. In the United States alone, the meal delivery industry was estimated to be worth over \$2 billion in 2010, a figure that has been growing exponentially every year since the turn of the millennium.

While “delivery” has been an option offered by restaurants for ages, meal delivery services differ from classical restaurant style delivery in several noticeable ways.

First, meal delivery services specialize in offering both fresh and healthy food that can either be designed to help customers lose weight or stabilize their diets. Restaurants rarely pay attention to the nutritional value of their meals, choosing instead to concentrate on flavour and large portions to keep customers coming back.

At 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food we believe that flavour and nutrition go hand in hand. Every meal is prepared following strict nutritional guidelines to ensure that certain health standards are met. Meals are portion controlled by calories, though not to the point of causing someone to go hungry.

Second, menus tend to change on a weekly or monthly basis. Most restaurant businesses tend to keep a static menu, and only have a few fluctuating items, such as the soup of the day. With meal delivery businesses, in order to guarantee that the maximum freshness of the ingredients, seasonal harvest and growing periods need to be taken into account. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food deals largely with local providers and distributes, guaranteeing that the meals go that extra step towards freshness and flavour.

Third, meal delivery businesses usually offer, or encourage, customers the option of ordering the meals they wish to receive a week or more in advance. In one sense this helps the meal deliver service order

the right amount of ingredients for each day's meals, minimizing waste. As well, it also means that meals are made to order, instead of being kept in a freezer for weeks until they are ordered. Customers can taste the difference between fresh and frozen, and going that extra step towards quality is a sure way to keep them coming back for more.

## **Business Model**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Food is everything that a business of the new millennium ought to be. Encouraging healthy eating, environmental responsibility and prompt, professional service, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food runs a unique business model that distinguishes it from the plethora of smaller catering and meal delivery services in the greater Montreal area.

Rather than operate a traditional storefront or sit down restaurant, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food is primarily an online business. Customers, through a variety of means, find their way to the company home website and can create accounts and place orders online through our simple and intuitive menu and checkout system. Alternatively, for the less technologically inclined, orders can also be placed over the phone and received by a customer service representative.

Unlike most meal delivery services, notably the larger ones in the United States, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food places no obligations on clients and has zero contracts to sign. Clients can order as little as they want or as much as they want. Our philosophy is that offering great service and great tasting meals are a better way of building up a loyal list of clients than forced term contracts or minimum orders. The fact that our business has expanded to what it currently is should be a testament to this.

As a full fledged meal delivery business, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food offers several distinct but interrelated services which broken down into the following categories:

- Restaurant Services
- Home and Office Meal Delivery Services
- Catering Services
- School Lunch Services

## **Restaurant Services**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Food's restaurant services is the foundation atop of which all franchises are built. Restaurant services deal largely with lunchtime orders placed by customers at their place of work, as well as corporate and office catering events.

These services require less manpower, facility space and overall expertise than our other services and act as a great stepping stone towards taking a franchise to the next level of becoming a full on meal delivery service..

Currently, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food's restaurant services deal largely with area code specific orders placed between lunch time hours of 11:00am and 2:00pm and employ a separate set of staff consisting of a receptionist, a cook and a delivery driver to properly ensure timely deliveries and prompt service.

The menu is slightly different, as many of the meals offered by the meal delivery aspect of our services cannot be prepared in the time required to make the delivery. As such, many of the menu options resemble more closely to standard restaurant fare meals, such as pizzas, wraps and salads, albeit with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food touch of unique ingredients and health first.

## **Home and Office Meal Delivery Services**

Meal delivery specializes in the delivery of fresh and healthy meals to customers at their homes or places of work.

The meals are made fresh, within the preceding 24 hours before a client sits down to enjoy his or her meal. The meals are prepared by a team of specialized chefs, placed in our unique cooling containers to retain freshness, delivered in the early morning hours to customers, and finally re-heated and enjoyed.

21<sup>st</sup> Century Food's meal delivery services is where it all began, years ago in founder Joseph Mantagaris' apartment kitchen. Currently, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food is the largest meal delivery service in the greater Montreal region and, as such, it requires a great deal of logistics in its day to day operations.

A full time kitchen staff of a head cook, three sous-chefs and a nutritionist is employed from Sunday to Thursday to cook, prepare and pack the meals scheduled for the next morning's delivery. Once their work is done, the cooling containers are picked up by the night time delivery crew who then make their rounds between the hours of 12:00am and 5:00am. Customers then wake up, retrieve their meals and enjoy them at their leisure.

Offering meal delivery services provides several perks for business operators. Apart from expanding one's client base, certain meals can be made tax free, passing the savings on to happy customers and franchises alike. Because certain meals, meats and pasta dishes, need to be reheated, for tax purposes they are not considered final products and are thus non taxable. It is not entirely a game changer, but one of several perks of the business.

### **Catering Services**

Catering services go hand in hand with restaurant and meal delivery services. Essentially, event catering follows the same principles as these other two services, albeit with slightly more planning and logistics to consider, especially for massive events.

In the case of franchises receiving catering orders, as the case often is with restaurant locations and providers of gourmet meals, the franchise operator would record the order and relay it to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food head office. The main kitchen crew at the head office would then cook and prepare the order for the catering event, before having it delivered to the franchise. The franchise can then deliver the meal to the event hosts, and continue catering at the event as needed.

### **School Lunch Services**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Food currently works with several Montreal area schools, providing fresh, fun and healthy meals to students who have enrolled in our school lunch program. The program began as a way for existing clients of ours to provide their children with the same great service and meals that they currently enjoy.

The school lunch menu is, of course, slightly different than what we normally offer our adult clientele. The meals are designed to be balanced, containing a diversity of ingredients from each of the food groups, so that parents never need to wonder if their children are eating well.

As a means of handling the added logistics of preparing meals for students, the menu choices often coincide with those from our meal delivery service. This cuts back on having to order excess ingredients, and certainly helps ease the burden of the kitchen crew.

### **Environmental Commitment**

At 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food, we take our commitment to the environment seriously. "Going green", as the saying goes, is about more than just making a statement; it's about embodying an ideal. In this day and age, businesses have the unprecedented opportunity, and responsibility, to take the environment into consideration. It's about looking forward, rather than backwards, and truly having a long term vision for the company.

One of the common misconceptions about implementing a green policy is that it isn't financially viable

and or that it requires too much added effort. In reality, minimizing waste is actually a great way to save money, cut back on unnecessary costs and much of the “extra effort” is just simple common sense.

### **Our Initiatives**

We order the right amount of produce, rather than bulking up and being forced to toss half of it out. When we do have excess, such as from catering jobs or accidentally over ordering, we donate the remainder to the Old Brewery Mission and the Nazareth House who see that the meals are put to good use.

As well, whenever possible, we deal with local farmers markets and growers located in the Montreal region. Local produce cuts back on the amount of fuel used in transportation, it helps area economies and it taste all that much fresher.

Our drivers currently use hybrid vehicles, which pollute less and really cuts back on fuel costs here in the city. In late 2010 we will be making the switch over to electric cars, with the October release of the Nissan Leaf here in Montreal. Able to go 100 kilometers on a single charge, and taking only 26 minutes to recharge these cars are anything but glorified go-karts.

While the Leaf comes with a hefty price tag, the government of Quebec is offering discounts for business who make the switch in the first year that they become available.

### **Expectations of Franchises**

With regards to franchises, we expect our franchises to take the same approach to the environment as our head office does. Of course, we are willing to allow for exceptions where the case may be. Not everyone will be able to make the switch over the electric cars, but it is something that we hope to one day see fulfilled.

### **Marketing**

A company's reputation is its lifeblood. As such, sustainable thinking is also good marketing. Consumers are more aware than ever of the impact of their actions and those of the businesses they frequent. Taking a commitment to the environment seriously is a strong way of standing out amidst the competition and attracting like minded and loyal customers.

Cutting back on waste and keeping taking the high road towards sustainability from the start is also far more cost efficient than having to make a complete turn around years into a businesses life. As well, repairing a reputation tarnished by a serious environmental blunder is not something that money can simply buy.

Go smart, and go green.

### **Day to Day Operations**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Food It's the little things that can go a long way in making a difference.

A franchise needs to be well maintained in order to succeed; customers largely prefer frequenting establishments where it's obvious that a lot of love, care and devotion go into making each and every dining experience one to remember. For this to be achieved, numerous maintenance issues need to be respected and taken care of on a daily basis.

### **Maintenance**

A franchise needs to be well maintained in order to succeed; customers largely prefer frequenting establishments where it's obvious that a lot of love, care and devotion go into making each and every dining experience one to remember. For this to be achieved, numerous maintenance issues need to be respected and taken care of on a daily basis.

Cleanliness should be a top priority for any franchise operator. The tables, chairs, counters or any other surface that a customer would come into contact with must be impeccable. No one having to navigate through untidy tables, or become unpleasantly surprised by a spilled drink on a seat.

### **Daily Maintenance – Dining Room and Washrooms**

Washrooms should be at the top of list when it comes to cleaning. Customers appreciate clean washrooms more than you might know, and often the state of a washroom can make or break the whole visit for them. Either every morning before opening or every evening after closing, and employee should see to it that the washrooms are not only respectable, but commendable.

Apart from all the scrubbing and washing, it is imperative that dispensers across the establishment remain full as well. In the restaurant, the condiment dispensers should be topped up at every opportune moment. That doesn't mean toss in a straw or two, and hand full of napkins on the side; it means making sure that they are always full. When a customer goes for a pack of mayo, having a full basket of packs speaks far more for presentation than having a lonely two or three.

As well, in the washrooms there always needs to be toilet paper, hand towels and soap available.

And remember: the entire establishment should be cleaned not only at the end of the day, but also during down times when opened for business. Sometimes emergencies arise, and things just plain need to be cleaned. If an employee or franchise operators notices something that needs to be cleaned, such as food that fell on the ground, puddles on the floors of the hallway or what have you, they should try to attend to those matters at the first available opportunity.

### **Daily Maintenance – Kitchen**

Considering the nature of the franchise, the kitchen should receive special attention when it comes to daily maintenance and cleanliness.

During operating hours, the kitchen equipment should be constantly set to certain specific temperatures.

- The pizza temperature should remain at 315 Celsius (600 Fahrenheit)

- The fryer at a consistent 180 Celsius (350 Fahrenheit)

- The fridge at a cool 4-6 degrees Celsius (40-43 Fahrenheit). Be ready to adjust it slightly depending on the fridge, and keep the temperature at a steady level even when the franchise is closed.

- Also, the kitchen exhaust fan **MUST** be left ON during operating hours, or as long as the fryer is on, to ensure that the odours leave the building.

When it comes time to cleaning, the fridge, microwaves, stove tops, counters and sinks need to be taken care of every single day. Go through the fridge and toss out anything that's gone bad, wash the stove top and inside of the microwave and scrub those sinks clean! And don't forget about mopping the floors too!

A recommended cleansing procedure is to first wash down everything with soap and water and then immediately follow with a 10 to 1 mixture of water and bleach (1L water, 100ml bleach). This way, not only has the dirt and grime been removed but the germs as well.

### **Monthly Maintenance**

Some areas of maintenance need to be taken care of on a less frequent basis, though that hardly means that they should go forgotten!

The storefront windows, on the inside and outside, should be washed down and made to shine at least

once every month, more often in case of a stain or unpleasant spill on the glass. In the winter times, the outside becomes less pressing, though perhaps during a sunny afternoon the conditions might present themselves.

Floor mats should also be washed and cleaned once a month, especially during the winter when customers track in salt, sand and slush on their boots. Salt has a way of staining materials, and after a while really begins to look unpleasant. Give those suckers a good scrub when needed.

As well, in the winter having a mop handy is a must. On those particularly snowy days, water has a way of accumulating at the doorways rather quickly, regardless of whether you have a door mat or not. Be prepared to mop up excess ice and snow as it melts, and have a “caution: slippery when wet” sign handy to warn visitors to watch their step.

## **Service**

Service hours are broken down into several periods over the course of the operating day.

Breakfast is between 7:00am – 11:00am. During this time the regular lunch and meal delivery menu is unavailable. Instead, focus on bagels, toast, coffee and other light options. A smaller than usual cadre of staff should be able to handle this period without difficulty.

Lunch and Dinner begins at 11:00am and goes until closing. During this time, the meal delivery menu becomes available as well as the lunch time delivery service and regular menu. This stage of the day should consist of a straightforward 3 person operation along with delivery drivers.

Employee A works at the cash, taking orders. This employee should be warm and inviting.

Employee B serves soups, salads and other entrées along with food that can be picked up and immediately taken out. This employee should also converse with customers, and make them feel welcome while they wait for their meals.

Employee C serves the meals and works in the kitchen. This employee will handle the pizzas, wraps and french fries (where applicable) and is the back bone of the lunch and dinner operation.

One or more delivery drivers should be present during the lunch hours between 11:00am and 2:00pm to handle the large flow of delivery orders. More drivers should be available on call if needed.

Night time deliveries will be handled by one or more drivers during the hours between 11:00pm and 5:00am to handle the meal delivery aspect of the franchise. The speed of the service during this time frame should be the main focus for these drivers. They should plan their routes ahead of time, and see to it that orders are delivered in the most timely and efficient manner possible.

## **How the Franchise Operates – Restaurant**

The setup for operations at the restaurant is fairly simple.

Employee A works the cash and store front. He or she is responsible for taking orders that happen in person, over the phone, or that arrive electronically. Employee A will also be responsible for bringing each and every order printout to Employee C who will be in the kitchen.

Employee C takes the order printouts from A and begins to prep meals as needed. During this time C will also inform Employee B of soups, salads and entrées as needed.

During this time, the client pays, takes a tray and utensils and moves over to Employee B to receive entrées where applicable. B then talks and makes light conversation with the client.

When the meal is ready, Employee C hands it to B who then serves the client. The client goes to his or her seat and enjoys their meal.

## **How the Franchise Operates – Daytime Delivery**

Daytime deliveries are normally handled over the franchise's online services. A customer visits the website and passes their order. The receipt is then printed and sent to Employee C, who immediately begins prepping the meal. Employee C informs Employee B of any entrées that are needed.

Once the meal has been prepared, Employee C places the meal under heat lamps where it is received by a delivery driver who packs it along with any entrées and then delivers it to the client.

## **How the Franchise Operates – Night Time Delivery**

Night time deliveries are normally placed online. After a customer has visited the franchise's website and placed an order, a receipt is sent to the Head Office. Employees at the Head Office will prepare, seal and place the meal in a cooler bag, tagged with the appropriate delivery address and instructions.

The cooler bags are then delivered by Delivery Drivers from the Head Office to the Franchise, where the franchise night time delivery drivers take the cooler bags and deliver them to the clients.

## **How the Franchise Operates – Catering**

Catering orders are normally placed online, or over the phone for very particular order requests. Once the order is received, the franchise calls Head Office to inform them of the order. The order is then prepared by employees at the Head Office and delivered to the franchise at a reasonable time before the event. The franchise delivery driver then delivers the meals to the event, and makes certain to arrive at least a half hour before the event in case preparations are needed on site.

## **Staff**

Every business needs employees in order to function. With the case of franchises, employees are responsible not only for the presentation of the establishment, but for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food brand as a whole.

Staff members should be filled with energy: we want them to enjoy their jobs, and show some smiles to customers! In customer service positions they should be in a good mood, energetic, lively and, most important of all, awake.

These employees need to keep in mind that the customer is always right, and treat them in a way that they would want to be treated in return. A smile and good cheer can go a long way in turning a one time customer into a lifelong client.

Sometimes an employee might be forced to deal with a less than ideal customer. Sometimes clients can be rude, haughty or unpleasant. Employees need to remember to take it in stride. The customer probably isn't upset with them; people have bad days now and then, it's just the way life is. In cases like these, employees need to keep their cool and remain courteous! It costs nothing to keep a customer happy, but a fortune to attract new ones.

Employees should also have the proper posture when on the job. They shouldn't lean on the counters, have their hands in their pockets, and look like they are loitering. They are part of the establishment, and the way an employee holds him or herself tells customers quite a bit about what to expect from their visit.

Listening to customers, even when not directly serving, is a skill that every employee needs to master. For instance, if an employee overhears a customer make a remark like "I forgot my napkin", that employee should bring a napkin over to their table without even being asked. The customers will think that the staff is either very courteous or psychic or both; either one sure to make that customer pass on a recommendation to friends.



Employees should also always be visible. Hiding out in the back of the kitchen isn't very key for customer service, nor is having all the employees go on a break at the same time. Customers need to always have at least one employee within sight in case they have need of anything.

When serving food to customers, employees should remember to never touch the top of plates or utensils with their fingers or thumbs. When carrying a plate, they should place their hand under the plate and use the thumb for balance, not grip. Remember: finding thumbprints on plates, cups and utensils are some of the oldest sources of aggravation in the book. A customer will be much happier with a plate that doesn't have finger prints all over it.

### **Employee Safety Tips**

A few safety tips come to mind for employees.

- Always keep a wet rag handy: you never know when something will spill and need to be wiped up as fast as possible.
- Never leave a knife near the edge of a counter. A bump could cause it to fall on someone's foot, or be bumped into by a moving employee.
- When an employee is working with a knife in the kitchen, and another employee has to pass through through, he or she should make sure that the other employee knows they are there. The last thing anyone wants is for someone to turn around quickly with a knife and cut someone else!
- When moving through either the kitchen or the restaurant with plates, an employee should always let customers and other employees know when they are passing by, in case the other has their back turned. All it takes is a simple "I'm walking behind you" to prevent someone abruptly turning around and knocking over a plate.
- Remember to wash hands all the time, and in front of the customers too as it lets them know that the employees care about their hygiene and that of the establishment.

### **MAPAQ Certifications**

One employee at every franchise needs to be certified by MAPAQ. This is a straightforward certification in food hygiene and safety provided by the Quebec government and is required for all food and beverage establishments.

### **Uniforms**

Employees should see to it that their uniforms are cleaned every day, or at least ensure that a fresh and clean uniform is worn every day. A clean and tidy uniform makes a better impression than one that sat in a locker overnight.

Employee A's required uniform will be an issued fitted button dress shirt.

Employees B and C will be issued standard jackets and chef hats.

Delivery drivers will receive fitted polo shirts with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food logo.

### **Breaks**

During breaks, no smoking is allowed on the premises. If an employee wishes to smoke, they must remove themselves temporarily from the premises of the franchise. As well, during smoke breaks employees must either remove their uniform that identifies them as employees of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food or cover themselves with a sweater or jacket. Because 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food deals with offering customers healthy food, having employees chain smoke on the premises sends a poor message.

When returning from a break an employee must wash their hands immediately. As well, if they smoked

they must chew gum or a mint to remedy their breath, notably so for Employee A. Nobody likes giving an order to someone who smells like a cigarette factory.

No drugs or alcohol are permitted anywhere on the premises, or allowed to be consumed during shifts. Any breaches of this code of conduct will conclude with immediate dismissal.

### **Meal Preparation**

The meals served at 21<sup>st</sup> Century Food franchises are designed to be prepared with the minimal amount of hassle and expertise required.

When preparing any meal, employees need to take note to place the starch portion (potatoes, etc) on the bottom of the plate. On top of this goes the veggies (steamed vegetables, etc) and finally the protein portion (meats, etc) on top in the middle of the plate. Sauce should be lightly drizzled all around for presentation.

Meals should be heated 2 minutes in the microwave, or 4 minutes in the oven. Sandwiches should be flashed for a few moments in the oven to warm them up before being served.

Pizzas should spend 8 minutes in the oven, and will be cooked perfectly so long as the oven remains at optimal temperature. Employee C should remember to slice the pizza before serving on a plate.

French Fries (where applicable) should be placed in the fryer for exactly 2 minutes.

Salads should be served with the use of tongs, and dressed for the client unless that client made a prior special request for dressing.

Soups should be served with a ladle, and appropriate condiments and accessories (spoon, napkin, soda crackers) placed on the plate next to the bowl.

Toast, croissants and other breakfast foods need no explanation on how to be served. If you have ever made breakfast before, you know how the routine works.

### **Marketing**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Food encourages franchises to explore their own avenues for marketing in order to attract even more clients than the brand itself will convey. Most avenues are suitable for marketing so long as they are approved by the Head Office.

Outdoors signage is encouraged as it allows people passing by to notice the establishment. The signage should be kept clean, washed when needed, and lit during the night in order to attract attention. Do not light the sign during the day, as it is a waste of power. When a light bulb dies, see to it that it is promptly replaced.

Indoors signage is also essential for letting customers know about current specials and events. Fliers and posted should be kept handy and replenished at the cash, and near the dispensers. Posters should also be untarnished. If a poster becomes damaged, it should be immediately removed and replaced.

Fliers and mail marketing campaigns are great ways of getting area residents and businesses to take notice of lunch time specials and other delivery options.

Internet marketing is also encouraged, so long as it uses geo-targeting based by area code or surrounding area. Franchises should focus on their own clientele and not attempt to compete with other franchises. As well, all internet marketing should be approved white hat techniques.

21<sup>st</sup> Century Food will not tolerate the use of black hat or illegal online marketing, or any form of marketing that would promote alcohol, drugs or other unhealthy substances and lifestyles or break the terms of the franchise agreement.

## **Ordering**

For all orders pertaining to meal delivery services, the franchise operator may place one order per week to Head Office. This order must be for the following week, with the order to Head Office placed at least one week in advance.

Orders placed to Head Office will be paid for in Century Dollars out of the franchise operator's account. Franchise operators can acquire more century dollars by purchasing them from Head Office in bulk amounts. So, for example, a franchise operator may purchase to the amount of \$1000.00 in order to receive 1000.00 Century Dollars.

These orders will then be processed by Head Office, and delivered to the franchise and placed in their fridge each night for the following day's operations.

All orders must be placed using Century Dollars and placed on a day to day basis. Franchise operators cannot substitute Century Dollars for credit.