

THE ART AND BUSINESS OF BAKING

batter up

WINTER 2019

Dream Team

IF YOU BUILD IT,
THEY WILL COME

SHIPPING SMARTS

Deliver deliciousness
across the country

#FOODSTAGRAM

Tips for social
media success

LITTLE LUXURIES

ELEGANCE & FLAIR MEET IN MINI DESSERTS

SHIPPING YOUR BAKED GOODS

Ready to boost business with a menu of shippable treats? **Follow these tips to keep your products intact and deliver deliciousness to customers near and far.**



Choose the Right Products to Ship

1 Wicked Good Cupcakes in Hanover, Massachusetts, sells cupcakes, cakes, pies and brownies shipped in glass Mason jars. Co-founder and CEO Tracey Noonan says these products maximize the cost-benefit ratio of shipping: They're affordable for both the bakery and customers. Unlike delicate treats like cheesecake, these products don't require dry ice or expedited shipping (which can be pricey), and the bakery can translate the cost savings to lower prices for customers. **You may also consider pricing shippable items in bundles to encourage larger purchases.** Pair items that require similar packaging, such as cookies and brownies.

Fine-Tune Your Packaging

2 Right-sized, sturdy and affordable packaging is key to shipping products safely. **Shipping companies, foodservice equipment makers and packaging manufacturers offer many options.** Wicked Good Cupcakes, however, wanted an economical, eco-friendly solution for products that need to stay cool and decided to build its own coolers. The bakery uses corrugated boxes; surrounds jars with insulated, 100 percent biodegradable panels; and adds suede ice-pack bags to prevent the glass from sweating. This combination allows products to travel safely for three days.

Provide a Seamless Ordering Process

3 "You've got a better cart retention rate when you give people all the information they need upfront," says Noonan. **Your website should provide comprehensive product details, clear pricing that outlines shipping fees and taxes, estimated shipping times and easy payment processing.** "It's all about getting customers to close the deal," Noonan says. "Make your website simple and easy to navigate." Partner that digital experience with excellent customer service: Respond to inquiries within 24 hours and consider implementing a refund or replacement policy if orders arrive in less-than-perfect condition. Working with a third-party e-commerce provider can help streamline these processes.

Consult the Pros

4 Whether you need a food scientist to tweak recipes for longer shelf life, a developer to create your website or a number cruncher to strategically identify which products to ship, experts can help guide decision-making. If you can't hire professionals with these skills, consider tapping your network of family and friends, as well as other bakery owners. Many, like Noonan, are willing to share their expertise. **Suppliers are another helpful source for insight into product formulation and consumer trends, while private shipping suppliers may be able to share tips for mailing perishables.**

Follow the Rules

5 When it comes to product labeling, be vigilant about both federal and state regulations if you're shipping across state lines. "There's no fooling around with that—it's a must," Noonan says. The FDA requires that labels list ingredients, allergen warnings, net weight or quantity and more. **Stay on top of evolving regulations by visiting the FDA's website and talking to your suppliers.**

— Lisa A. Beach