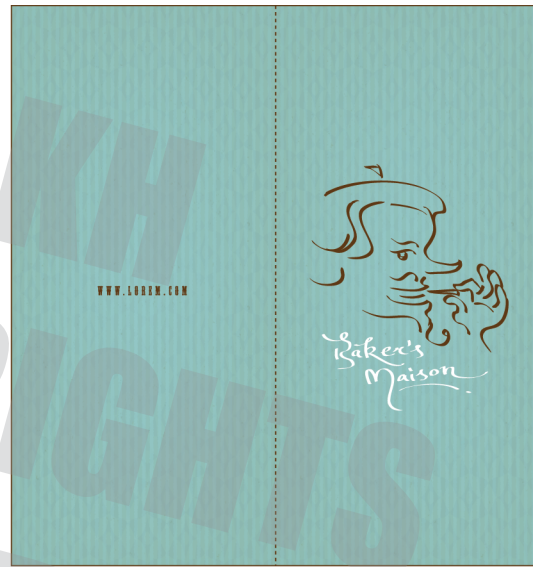


Chapter 3

Developing and Designing the Sales Menu

MENU DESIGN



COVER



CONTENTS 1



CONTENTS 2

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter, the student should be able to:

1. identify and discuss the major classifications on a menu.
2. select and describe menu listings based on variety, balance, and composition.
3. explain the new menu labeling requirements.
4. identify menu classifications according to the restaurant's concept.
5. highlight menu items.
6. discuss the essential elements of printing type: typeface, type size, spacing of type, weight of type, and upper and lowercase letters.
7. explain how to utilize color effectively on the menu.
8. discuss how paper selection relates to menu usage.
9. discuss how menus are printed.

KEY TERMS

Balance

Bold Print

Classifications/Headings

Composition

Descriptive Copy

Grade

Italics Printing

Laminated Cover

Leading

Letterspacing

Light Print

Logo

Lowercase

Medium Print

Menu Listings

Normal

Opacity

Padded Covers

Points

Proof

Ream Weight

Reverse Type

Sans Serif Type

Script

Serif Type

Set Solid

Subclassifications/Subheadings

Texture

Truth-in-Menu

Typeface

Uppercase

Variety

Weight of Type

Wordspacing

INTRODUCTION

Developing a menu takes time and careful planning. In the first part of this chapter the basic components of menu development are defined and explained: menu classifications, menu listings, variety, balance, composition, and descriptive copy. Truth-in-menu guidelines and the new menu labeling regulations are also examined.

In the second part of this chapter layout and design is discussed. The layout and design of a menu must be carefully planned in order to produce a menu that is readable and easily understood. The correct placement of headings, subheadings, and menu items; the highlighting of menu items; fundamentals of type; color presentation; paper usage; construction of covers; and printing are examined in detail. All of these elements have a direct relationship to the overall appearance of the menu and can make a favorable and lasting impression on patrons when done correctly.

Menu Classifications

The restaurant concept must first be defined in order to plan a proper menu. The number of **classifications** or **headings** on a menu depends upon the type of restaurant. Most menus have the following classifications: **appetizers, soups, salads, sandwiches, entrées, accompaniments** and **desserts**. There are, of course, other more nontraditional classifications such as: side orders and beverages, which might appear on a luncheon menu, or a pasta section on an ethnic menu. A list of menu classifications with a brief explanation of each follows.

Appetizers

The major purpose of an appetizer is to stimulate the palate before the meal. The portion size is generally small and when accompanied with wine or spirits tends to be spicy. Appetizers can be either hot or cold and include: beef, poultry, fish or seafood, fruits, and vegetables.

Soups

Soups can be either hot or cold and are usually served after the appetizer. Soups are divided into three major categories: clear or unthickened soups, thick soups, and “Specialty” soups. Clear soups consist of: bouillons, broths, consommés, and thin vegetable soups. Thick soups encompass: bisques, chowders, creams, potages, and purées. “Specialty” soups are representative of certain countries or regions and include: Minestrone, French Onion, or Gumbo. Cold soups also fall under the “National” or “Specialty” category and are often served in warmer climates: cucumber, gazpacho, fruit, and vichyssoise are a few examples of cold soups.

Salads

Salads are generally served as an accompaniment or as a main course on the menu. Salads should be fresh and served at the proper temperature whether hot or cold. Accompanying salads can be served in lieu of the appetizer or soup and are sometimes referred to as first course salads. The major purpose of the first course salad is to enliven the palate. Grilled vegetables, fish or seafood, specialty meats, or fruits can be utilized. In fine dining restaurants, the accompanying salad is served before the entrée. These salads are designed to cleanse the palate; they should be light in nature and consist of mixed greens such as Bib and Belgian endive. Main course salads or cold plates are referred to as cold entrées. Lobster salad, chicken salad with apple and walnuts, or grilled vegetable plates with aged balsamic and pecorino are a few examples of cold entrées.

Sandwiches

Sandwiches can be served cold or hot and might contain beef, poultry, fish or seafood, and vegetables. Sandwiches are generally found on the luncheon menu and can be simple to elaborate: ranging from a chicken salad sandwich, to a grilled swordfish sandwich provençale served open faced.

Entrées

Entrées are usually also separated into hot or cold sections on the menu. Hot entrées are the largest classification on the menu and are sometimes further broken down into **subclassifications** or **subheadings**. These can include: meat, poultry, and fish and seafood. Cold entrées make up a

smaller classification; therefore, subclassifications are not warranted. Generally, a listing of main course salads or cold plates follows the cold entrées.

Hot Entrées

Meats. Meats are the largest subclassification on the menu and contain: beef, lamb, pork, and veal. Menu listings should be adequately represented to ensure proper cross-utilization. Cooking techniques must also be well balanced and include: braising, broiling, frying, grilling, roasting, sautéing, and smoking. An adequate representation of cooking techniques facilitates proper rotation of kitchen equipment and takes into consideration customer preferences.

Poultry. The poultry subclassification on the menu includes chicken, duck, pheasant, quail, and turkey. Poultry is relatively inexpensive to procure and can be cooked in a variety of ways: baked, barbecued, braised, fried, grilled, roasted, and smoked. Poultry can be cross-utilized with relative ease throughout the menu in appetizers, soups, salads, and entrées. Chicken and turkey, over the last decade, have risen in popularity due to health concerns over high-fat and high-cholesterol in the diet. They have become healthier alternatives to red meats.

Fish and Seafood. Fish and seafood are rich in flavor and are an excellent source of protein. Fish and seafood listings can be numerous and include freshwater fish and saltwater fish such as: flatfish, round fish, mollusks, and crustaceans. Fish and seafood can also be prepared a number of ways: baked, broiled, fried, grilled, poached, roasted, sautéed, and smoked. Unfortunately, fish and seafood are highly perishable, and therefore, should be carefully handled and served immediately.

Cold Entrées. As mentioned earlier, cold entrées generally encompass main course salads or cold plates. Main course salads might consist of: a grilled duck salad with vegetable couscous and fall greens, or Caesar salad with lobster. Cold plate listings might include herb salad with cured scallops and brioche sticks, or a fruit and cheese plate with an assortment of smoked meats. Cold entrées are a welcomed addition to the menu for patrons who prefer lighter fare.

Accompaniments

Accompaniments on the menu consist of vegetables, potatoes, rice, and pastas. Both vegetables and starches are low in calories and are relatively inexpensive to prepare. Accompaniments can be cooked in a variety of ways: baked, grilled, roasted, sautéed, and steamed. When accompaniments are prepared correctly and presented with the appropriate entrées on an à la carte menu, they can contribute considerably in increasing the overall check average.

Desserts

Desserts are relatively inexpensive to prepare, and when merchandised and served correctly, are extremely profitable. A variety of choices should be included in the dessert section of the menu: fresh cakes, cobblers or crisps, fruits, ice creams, pies, puddings, sorbets, specialty items, and tarts.

Menu Listings

Once the menu classifications have been selected, **menu listings** must be chosen. The menu listings in each classification vary depending upon the demographics, the type of restaurant, the geographical

location, the accessibility of product, the equipment capacity, and the skill level of employees. All these factors must be considered when preparing menu listings. After the tentative menu listings are assembled, they should be reexamined in terms of variety, balance, and composition.

Variety

Variety refers to the diversity of product; hot and cold offerings; the cooking techniques used; and the color, configuration, taste, height, and texture of the menu items. Each component of variety must be fully addressed within each menu classification.

Hot and Cold Items. The number of hot and cold items on a menu has a direct correlation to the geographical location of the restaurant and the season. Hot or cold items can be offered in appetizer, soup, salad, sandwich, entrée, and dessert categories.

Cooking Techniques. Each classification of the menu should incorporate a variety of cooking techniques when possible, in order to facilitate equipment equalization within the kitchen, and to ensure customer satisfaction (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1

Menu Classifications and Cooking Techniques

Menu Classification	Cooking Techniques
Appetizers	Baking, barbecuing, frying, grilling, and smoking
Soups	Simmering
Salads	Grilling, poaching, roasting, and smoking
Sandwiches	Baking, barbecuing, broiling, frying, grilling, and roasting
Hot Entrées	
Meats	Braising, broiling, frying, grilling, roasting, sautéing, and smoking
Poultry	Braising, barbecuing, broiling, frying, grilling, roasting, sautéing, and smoking
Fish and Seafood	Baking, broiling, frying, grilling, poaching, roasting, sautéing, and smoking
Cold Entrées	Grilling, poaching, roasting, and smoking
Accompaniments	Baking, roasting, sautéing, and steaming
Desserts	Baking, poaching, and freezing

Color. A variety of vibrant, as well as earth tone colors, certainly adds eye appeal to any presentation. Scrod with bread crumbs, rice, and cauliflower is less attractive than roast ham with raisin sauce, au gratin potatoes, and French green beans with almonds. Today, patrons have come to expect an eye-appealing plate which has the proper balance of vibrant and earth tone colors. Remember, 50 percent of all sales is based on visual presentation.

Configuration. A variety of configurations of food items on a plate has a direct relationship to eye appeal. Configuration takes into consideration special cuts, slices, molds, and loose or whole food items. The rather flat configuration of a roasted tenderloin of beef entrée, served with zucchini provençale and lyonnaise potatoes, is far surpassed in attractiveness by the mixed configurations offered in a tuna steak with citrus butter, rice pilaf, and asparagus presentation.

Taste. Be careful not to overload the menu with too many spicy or bland foods. Spicy, as well as bland, foods need to be balanced throughout the menu. When composing any plate, remember this fundamental rule: spicy entrées are desirable with bland accompaniments and bland entrées are advisable with spicy accompaniments.

Height. The aesthetic qualities of each food item on the plate are enhanced through a presentation that incorporates a variety of heights. An entrée of veal schnitzel, potato pancakes, and shredded red cabbage are all fairly level in height, whereas, sirloin steak, garlic mashed potatoes, and broccoli offer diverse heights.

Texture. Menu items can contain a variety of textures. These textures include crispy, liquid, chewy, solid, and soft. A complete meal should have an abundance of textures rather than just one or two. For instance, a Chinese menu might encompass: crispy fried wontons; liquid egg drop soup; slightly chewy and crispy mandarin orange salad; solid, chewy, and soft Peking duck with pancakes; soft rice; and slightly crispy stir-fried vegetables.

Balance

Within each menu classification, there must be a proper **balance** of food items, hot and cold offerings, cooking techniques, colors, configurations, tastes, heights, and textures. Appetizers should include meats, poultry, fish, seafood, fruit, and vegetable selections. There should also be a somewhat equal number of hot and cold offerings in the appetizer classification. Cooking techniques might include: baking, barbecuing, frying, grilling, and smoking. Color, configuration, taste, height, and texture must also be examined when composing the appetizer classification. Prosciutto with Chanterelles and Tomatoes, Grilled Chicken Tortilla with Fresh Salsa, Fried Rock Shrimp with Organic Greens and Chive Mustard Sauce, and Goat Cheese Bruschetta with Pan Seared Garden Tomatoes demonstrate the fundamental principles of balance.

Composition

Composition refers to the presentation of food on a plate. Both variety and balance are an integral part of composition. When composing a plate, keep in mind traditional food combinations such as: roast ham with sweet potatoes, or au gratin potatoes and green beans; or lobster with corn on the cob, baked potato, and coleslaw. Looking to traditional combinations can greatly simplify the task of composition development.

Descriptive Copy

Descriptive copy essentially introduces the menu listings to the customers. Depending upon the menu listing, descriptive copy includes some or all of the following elements: size of portion, geographical origin, product, primary and secondary ingredients, method of preparation, and appropriate accouterments. For instance, a menu item listed as BAKED STUFFED LOBSTER might include the following descriptive copy: a two pound Maine lobster stuffed with crab meat, scallops, and seasoned Ritz[®] cracker crumbs, baked and served with drawn butter. When writing a descriptive copy, remember the following:

1. Keep the explanation simple, clear, and concise.
2. Exclude words such as “best,” “colossal,” “extraordinary,” “magnificent,” and “superb.”
3. Use appropriate food terminology such as: chilled, glazed, flaky, grilled, medallions, sautéed, toasted, and whipped.

Truth-in-Menu

Once the major components of the menu have been developed, an examination of legal regulations should be addressed. Legally, each food item description advertised on the menu must be completely accurate. Several states have passed **truth-in-menu** legislation to deter deceptive advertising on the menu. If a restaurant violates truth-in-menu, legislation fines, court expenses, and negative publicity can result.

It is important that restaurants serve exactly what they advertise on the menu. Portion size for steaks is often described by weight. Because it is generally assumed that the stated weight of such an item is the actual weight prior to cooking, it can be legitimately listed as such on the menu. Food items from specific geographical locations must also be accurately described. Duck cannot be advertised as Long Island Duck if it is not specifically from that area. When substitutions of menu items are necessary because of availability, price or merchandising considerations, foodservice operations must specify that these changes are being made. Flounder cannot be substituted at will for sole, cod for haddock, ground beef for ground sirloin of beef, or Roquefort cheese for blue cheese.

Because the cooking method of food items is often a deciding factor in a customer's selection, the method listed on the menu must also be exactly as stated. Items that are described as smoked, grilled, barbequed, stir-fried, or poached must be prepared as indicated. When brand name items are advertised to assure patrons of a quality product, it is important that Tabasco® sauce, Godiva® chocolate, Haagen-Dazs® ice cream, 7-Up and Ritz crackers are actually used, and are not replaced by generic brands. In the intended spirit of truth-in menu, items prepared on premises must also be qualified as "made in house" rather than "home made."

Menu Labeling Regulations

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recently proposed labeling regulations for "restaurants and other similar retail food establishments" that have at least 20 locations, are conducting business under the same name, and are essentially offering similar menu items. Other types of properties that sell restaurant-type food and dedicate greater than 50% of their total floor area to the sale of food would have to adhere to these labeling requirements.

The proposed regulations would require that restaurants and other food producing and processing retail establishments clearly display the calorie content of all food items with the designations "calories" or "cal" on their menus, menu boards and drive-through boards. The suggested daily caloric intake as well as a clear and succinct statement concerning the availability of additional nutritional facts would also have to be posted to assist consumers in understanding the overall importance of calorie information. The information required would include:

1. Total calories
2. Calories from fat
3. Total fat
4. Saturated fat
5. Cholesterol
6. Trans fat
7. Sodium
8. Total carbohydrates
9. Sugars
10. Dietary fiber
11. Protein

State and local governments would not be permitted to enforce different or additional nutritional requirements for foods sold at restaurants and similar food establishments under these proposed guidelines.

Implementing a Healthy Choice

Professionals in the foodservice industry have been working very hard to keep up with customers' demands for menus that offer them a choice of healthy meals. Many foodservice companies have been adapting their menus to offer a variety of healthy menu items such as appetizers, soups, entrée salads, entrées, and desserts. Customers who want to maintain a healthy life style are requesting more information on nutrition including the number of calories, the sodium and cholesterol content, and the grams of fat in dishes listed on the menu.

The challenge for foodservice managers and chefs is to serve both customers who want to maintain a healthy life style and customers who do not want to maintain a healthy life style while dining out. How do they provide the necessary information on the menu to satisfy both customers without upsetting either party?

In the past customers frowned upon menus that communicated healthy menu items by using a designated logo or symbol such as a heart. Customers who wanted to eat healthy did not want to be singled out by letting other people in their party know they wanted to eat healthy. Customers who did not want to eat healthy but knew they should eat healthier dishes found the heart label to be annoying. Today customers are demanding that companies in the foodservice industry—from limited serve to fine dining establishments—provide customers with nutritional information and a greater selection of healthy menu items so they can make an informed choice of what to eat.

Layout

Layout is nothing more than the placement of headings, subheadings, and menu items on the menu.

Identifying Menu Classifications or Headings

Generally, the classifications used on a menu reflect the type of restaurant and its offerings. When naming menu classifications, make sure that they are easily identified and not misleading to the customer. A list of menu classifications and names you might find in a casual dining restaurant follows (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2

Menu Classifications

Appetizers	5	Beginnings
Soups	5	Hearty Alternatives
Salads	5	Refreshing Complements
Entrées	5	Repast
Desserts	5	Finale

Occasionally, a restaurant such as a sports bar with a distinct theme, identifies menu classifications with names appropriate to a particular sport. Figure 3.3 uses menu classification names which are appropriate to baseball.

Figure 3.3

A List of Menu Classifications and Names in a Sports Bar

Appetizers	5	Singles
Soups	5	Doubles
Salads	5	Triples
Sandwiches	5	Home Runs
Entrées	5	Grand Slams
Side Orders	5	Extra Innings
Desserts	5	Bases Loaded

Sequence of Menu Classifications or Headings

The sequence of classifications on a menu should be listed in the order that they are consumed: appetizers, soups, salads, entrées, followed by desserts. Sometimes the sequence and type of menu classification varies depending on the foodservice establishment and meal period. For instance, a family restaurant that serves lunch might list appetizers, soups, salads, sandwiches, entrées, side orders, and then desserts. A white table cloth restaurant would most likely list appetizers, soups, entrées, and finish with salads (to cleanse the palate), before dessert is served.

Organizing Menu Subclassifications or Subheadings

Oftentimes subclassifications are listed under major classifications on the menu. On a typical dinner menu, below the entrée classification, the subclassifications might read: meat, poultry, fish, and seafood. These subclassifications are not subject to any particular sequence; meats for example, need not precede poultry. Once subclassifications have been finalized, the menu items must be carefully selected.

Listing Menu Items

Menu items should be grouped by the type of product. Under the entrée classification, for example, the poultry subclassification should list all chicken dishes together. Menu items should also be listed based on profitability, in lieu of price. Many restaurants list the most expensive menu items first and then proceed in descending order. When restaurants do this, customers tend to focus on the price instead of the item, and this can have a negative impact on sales. Profitable food items should be strategically placed at the top and bottom of a column. Less profitable food items can be located in the middle of a column, as patrons generally focus on the top and bottom first, and then skim the remaining food listings.

Highlighting Menu Items

After the menu items are selected, arranged, and listed, it is imperative that food items be placed in an appropriate position on the page. The type of menu a restaurant utilizes has a direct correlation to where a patron's eye focuses. On a one-page or three-page menu, customers generally look to the center upper third of the menu page. However, on a two-page menu, the eye usually focuses on the middle section of the right-hand side. Regardless of the type of menu the restaurant uses, management can utilize merchandising space to highlight specials, signature items, highly profitable food, or beverage selections.

Design

Once the placement of headings, subheadings, and menu items has been completed, attention must be given to the design process. The most important factors to consider in the design phase are readability and customer acceptance of the menu. The menu should be designed to reflect the restaurant's atmosphere and decor. For example, a fine dining menu might have a leather or suede cover with the restaurant's name and logo embossed in gold. Inside, the menu might have a light cream-colored paper with Times Roman type in black. This menu would certainly give patrons a favorable first impression and hint at what is to come throughout the meal. A menu is an overall reflection of the restaurant and can set a positive or negative mood for the entire dining experience.

Typefaces

The **typeface** or style of lettering that is selected for a menu has an impact on the patron. Typeface must be legible and compatible with the overall design of the menu. Most importantly, the selection of a particular typeface should disclose the charm and individuality of the restaurant. Commercial script typeface, for example, implies elegance and is often used on fine dining menus.

There are several different kinds of typeface or styles of lettering employed on a menu. A typeface which is frequently utilized is Serif type. **Serif type** has letters that are slightly curved, such as Palatino, and is easier to read. Serif type is often used for menu items and descriptive copy on the menu. On the other hand, **Sans serif type**, which is more difficult to read because of its blocky letters, might be utilized for headings and subheadings on the menu. Figure 3.4 offers samples of type found on a menu.

Print generally comes in four forms: normal, bold, script, and italics. **Normal** printing, such as Times Roman which is the easiest to read, can be employed for headings, subheadings, menu items, and descriptive copy on the menu. Bold print, as in the case of Bondi Regular, should only be utilized for headings and subheadings on the menu. **Script** (generally referred to as Commercial Script), due to the difficulty of its readability, should only be used for headings, subheadings, and menu items. However, in some cases, when descriptive copy is limited on the menu, Commercial Script might be employed. In **italics printing**, letters are slanted upward towards the right which also makes readability difficult. Italics is generally used for headings, subheadings, and key phrases in descriptive copy. Remember, script and italics are problematic to read and must be used sparingly on the menu. If the patron has difficulty reading a menu, it has a negative effect on sales.

Figure 3.4
Samples of Type

Serif
Times Roman
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
Bookman
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
Garamond
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
Palatino
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
Sans Serif
Avant Garde
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
Futura
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
Erie
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
Helvetica
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.

Type Size

Type size on a menu should be large enough so that the patron can read the menu clearly and easily. Printing that is too small makes reading the menu problematic. On the other hand, printing that is too large can take up valuable merchandising space.

Type size on a menu is measured in **points**. On any menu, there should be a variation of point sizes. For instance, headings and subheadings can be 18 point type, menu items 12 point type, and descriptive copy 10 point type. If all of the type sizes are the same on a menu, it can be very monotonous to read and may again jeopardize sales (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5

Samples of Type Sizes

4-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
5-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
5 1/2-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
6-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
7-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
8-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
9-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
10-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
11-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
12-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.
14-Point Type
Flaky pastry shells filled with freshly chopped tomatoes sautéed in butter with parsley and shallots. Topped with poached eggs and covered with Hollandaise sauce.

Spacing of Type

The amount of spacing between each letter in a word is referred to as **letterspacing**; and the amount of spacing between each word is known as **wordspacing**. Both influence the readability of

type on the menu. Letters and words should be typeset so that they are not too condensed or too far apart to make for easier reading. Attention to the vertical spacing between the lines of type, known as **leading**, is also important. Leading, similar to type, is also measured in points. When there is no leading between lines on a menu, this is referred to as **set solid**. Generally, three point leading should be utilized on a menu to simplify reading (Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6

Samples of Leading

Solid
Bananas Foster . . . A Brennan creation and World Famous! Bananas sautéed in butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and banana liqueur, then flamed in rum. Served over vanilla ice cream. Scandalously Delicious!
1-Point Leading
Bananas Foster . . . A Brennan creation and World Famous! Bananas sautéed in butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and banana liqueur, then flamed in rum. Served over vanilla ice cream. Scandalously Delicious!
2-Point Leading
Bananas Foster . . . A Brennan creation and World Famous! Bananas sautéed in butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and banana liqueur, then flamed in rum. Served over vanilla ice cream. Scandalously Delicious!
3-Point Leading
Bananas Foster . . . A Brennan creation and World Famous! Bananas sautéed in butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and banana liqueur, then flamed in rum. Served over vanilla ice cream. Scandalously Delicious!
4-Point Leading
Bananas Foster . . . A Brennan creation and World Famous! Bananas sautéed in butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and banana liqueur, then flamed in rum. Served over vanilla ice cream. Scandalously Delicious!
5-Point Leading
Bananas Foster . . . A Brennan creation and World Famous! Bananas sautéed in butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and banana liqueur, then flamed in rum. Served over vanilla ice cream. Scandalously Delicious!

Weight of Type

The **Weight of Type** on a menu refers to the lightness or heaviness of the print. Generally, **light print** looks gray and is difficult to read. Therefore, light print should never appear on a menu. **Medium print**, on the other hand, is darker than gray and is often utilized in books, magazines, and newspapers. Medium print should be applied to descriptive copy on the menu. **Bold print**, which is employed primarily to add emphasis, can be used for headings, subheadings, and menu items,

but never for descriptive copy. Frequently, the name of a restaurant featured on the front cover is in bold print as well.

Uppercase and Lowercase Letters

Typeface can be set in either **uppercase**, capital letters (A, B, C), or **lowercase**, small letters (a, b, c). Uppercase is predominantly used for headings, subheadings, and menu items we wish to emphasize. When descriptive copy is employed on the menu, each sentence should begin with an uppercase letter, followed by lowercase letters. Also, when proper nouns are used on a menu, their first letter should be capitalized: Sauce Béarnaise or Shiitake mushrooms. On the other hand, lowercase letters are easier to read than uppercase letters and should be utilized for descriptive copy. Generally, it is advantageous to use both uppercase and lowercase type on the menu to ensure readability.

Describing Menu Items

When describing menu items, keep the explanation simple and the number of sentences to a minimum. A longer sentence may cause customers to lose their place or their concentration. The length of a sentence should not be longer than 22 picas, or about three and two-thirds inches long.

Margins

Margins on the menu should be uniform from top to bottom, and left to right. One and one half inch margins are commonplace on menus. The key is to have well-defined margins without crowding the descriptive copy. If overcrowding becomes an issue, additional pages can be added.

Color

Color also affects the readability of a menu. Black type on light-tinted paper (cream, ivory, tan, or white) is easy to read. Menus printed in colored ink or on colored paper are difficult to read. If type is printed in blue, brown, or red make sure that the print is dark and on white paper. Dark colored print on dark colored paper can also be problematic to read and should be avoided. Green print on red, or black on reddish orange paper also limits legibility. Copy in a light color on dark paper is difficult to read as well: white print on black, referred to as **reverse type**, should not be used.

Headings, subheadings, and menu items can be printed in a bold secondary color on the menu to distinguish them from medium colored type used for descriptive copy. Remember, the colors selected for the print and paper should complement the restaurant's decor. In a specialty restaurant with a nautical theme, blue print on white would be appropriate and easy to read.

Paper

Paper is made of a number of materials: wood pulp, fabric, chemical, and fiber compounds. Generally, most papers that are utilized for menus are wood based and coated or treated with clay, pigment, varnish, or plastic. Most restaurants select paper based on menu usage. A menu that is designated for durability is usually printed on heavy, coated paper such as heavy cover, Bristol, or tag stock, which has been coated with clay, pigment, varnish, or plastic. These menus generally

last an extended period of time, despite extensive customer usage, as they are extremely durable and easy to clean. On the other hand, a menu that changes daily is usually printed on lightweight, noncoated paper that is less expensive. In many cases, menus can be printed on more than one type of paper to curtail expenditures. A strong, heavy, coated paper might be employed for the menu cover; and a lighter weight and less permanent paper for the interior pages. The menu planner must keep in mind that paper represents 30% to 50% of the total menu cost.

When selecting the paper, take into consideration the following elements: texture, opacity, color, strength, weight, and grade. Textures can vary from very smooth or coated paper, to a slightly rough surface, such as antique eggshell, or vellum finish. Since customers generally hold the menu in their hands, the **texture** or “feel” is noteworthy. Another concern when selecting paper is opacity. The **opacity** of paper refers to the inability of light to penetrate through it. Maximum opacity is important regardless of the color of the paper. Paper colors can range from white and pastels to dark solids; but as mentioned earlier, light-tinted paper is the easiest to read.

The strength of the paper is the next consideration: paper with short pulp fibers is weaker and does not hold up well. The durability of paper also depends to a lesser degree on weight. Paper is manufactured and identified according to its **ream weight**: the weight in pounds for five hundred sheets in a basic size, for that appropriate grade. **Grade** is the name given to paper, based on its intended utilization (Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7

Types of Paper Used for Menus

Antique paper	Paper with a rough and textured surface
Bond paper	Paper utilized for forms, letterheads, and business correspondence
Book paper	Paper having attributes suitable for books, brochures, and magazines
Bristol	Cardboard which is 0.006 of an inch or more in thickness (index, mill and wedding paper are examples of Bristol)
Coated	Paper of paperboard which has been treated with clay or some other pigment
Cover stock	A variety of papers utilized for the exterior cover of menus, booklets, catalogs, and magazines
Deckle edge	Paper with a feathered, uneven edge which is left untrimmed
Dull-coat	Paper coated with a low-gloss surface
Eggshell	Paper with a semi-rough exterior similar to the exterior of an egg
Enamel	Paper coated with a high-gloss surface
English finish	A book paper with a machine finish and uniform surface
Machine finish	A book paper with a medium finish, rougher than English finish, but smoother than eggshell
Matte coat	A coated paper with little or no glass surface
Offset paper	Coated or uncoated paper suitable for offset lithography printing
Vellum finish	A finish similar to eggshell, but from harder stock with a finer grained surface

Cover

The cover is the symbol of a restaurant's identity. The cover should be carefully designed, attractive, and complement the restaurant's decor and style. A fine dining menu might use leather or simulated leather with the restaurant's logo embossed in silver on the cover in order to reflect its more elegant and refined decor; whereas, a family style casual restaurant, or a dinner house, might decide on bright colors on a **laminated cover**, which is usually cardboard covered with a clear plastic coating to ensure longevity.

The selection of paper for the cover can be determined by how often the menu is used. If the menu is in the form of a place mat, light weight stock should be utilized. On the other hand, if the cover is permanent, heavy, cover stock, and Bristol or tag stock, are more appropriate. In some white table cloth restaurants, **padded covers** are popular. These permanent covers are protected with a durable plastic or other materials such as leather, simulated leather, linen, silk, suede, or velvet. These materials are often laminated onto a light board or heavy cardboard, and then packed with material, resulting in a menu cover that has a padded appearance.

Once the menu cover has been chosen, the menu planner must decide what is acceptable to put on the front and back covers. Copy on the front can include the name of the restaurant or a **logo** (an identifying symbol unique to an operation). Other information such as the address, phone number, hours of operation, credit card acceptance, reservation policy, history of the operation, management's philosophy, catering and banquet information, and takeout information can be printed on the back cover. Whenever possible, avoid placing food or beverages on the back cover as many patrons tend to overlook those items.

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Printing the Menu

There are a number of options available for printing the menu. These include: **professional printers, advertising agencies/artists designers and desktop publishers.**

Professional Printers

The major advantage of having a menu professionally printed is the number of professionals on staff. These include: writers, artists or free-lance artists, production personnel, and designers who can assist the restaurateur in the layout and design of the menu. Once the layout and design is completed, the menu can be typeset into a computer system. The typesetting program then duplicates the type on photographic paper or transparent film. The result is a copy of the type according to specifications, called the **proof** or the galley. The proof must be scrutinized for punctuation, misspelled words, and incorrect phrases. All corrections are made and then fed into the computer.

Advertising Agencies/Artists Designers

Occasionally, restaurants work with advertising agencies to help generate publicity. At times, these agencies also assist in the writing, layout, and design of the menu as well. Commercial artists or graphic designers, on the other hand, are generally responsible for just the layout and design of the menu, while the writing is left up to the menu planner or menu planning consultant.

Desktop Publishers

Printing the menu in-house on a computer and utilizing a laser color printer, has a number of advantages:

1. the wine list and menu can be changed on a daily basis to meet customer demand.
2. managers and chefs can react promptly to price fluctuations in the market place.
3. the chef can take advantage of regional and seasonal items by placing them on a menu at any time.
4. the restaurant is able to print special occasion and promotional menus when necessary.
5. desktop publishing saves money on overall menu costs such as typesetting.
6. in-house publishing is convenient.

Review Questions

1. Name the seven menu classifications and create eight menu listings for each.
2. How does variety and balance play an important role in composition on a menu?
3. Write a descriptive copy for the following menu items:
 - Crabcakes
 - Seafood Corn Chowder
 - Caesar Salad
 - Grilled Swordfish with Citrus Salsa
 - Brown Rice Pilaf
 - Peach Crisp
4. What impact do menu labeling regulations have on restaurants?
5. Select a particular restaurant concept. List and describe the type of headings, subheadings, and menu items you would use on your menu. Write the descriptive copy for each of the menu items. Choose the typeface, size of print, and color for the headings, subheadings, menu items, and descriptive copy. Select the paper for the inside and cover of the menu. Explain the cover and design in detail.
6. What are different options available for printing a menu?
7. Define the following terms:
 - Serif Type
 - Sans Serif Type
 - Italic Printing
 - Letterspacing
 - Wordspacing
 - Leading
 - Set Solid
 - Uppercase
 - Lowercase
 - Reverse Type
 - Opacity