



## CHEESESECARE Strategic Communications Plan 2020

### Situation Overview

Since the beginning of quarantine in March 2020, 100,000 restaurants have closed during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Travel + Leisure. The restaurant industry has suffered immensely, as restrictions made it so restaurants could continue to do only take-out and delivery services. Small, local restaurants were especially hit by the pandemic and as an effort to help small restaurants during these uncertain times, the Cheesecake Factory plans to launch CHEESESECARE in December 2020. This program will:

- Launch CHEESESECARE kits, complete with all the ingredients needed to make its original cheesecake at home. Kits will be sold for \$25 and will be available for pickup at Cheesecake Factory locations in the greater Washington, D.C. area and through its delivery partner DoorDash.
- For those who prefer takeout to baking, Cheesecake Factory will unveil a new limited-edition CHEESESECARE cheesecake for \$8.25/slice, available for dine in, takeout and delivery.
- All proceeds generated through sales of the kits and limited-edition cheesecake will be donated as grants to small, locally owned restaurants in the Washington, D.C. area.
- Restaurant owners can apply to be considered for grants by visiting [cheesecare.com](http://cheesecare.com).

The pandemic has caused many people to work from home and many students to complete their schooling online. This puts a burden on parents working from home who also need to take care of their children.

### Objectives

- Introduce CHEESESECARE kits and limited-edition cheesecake slices to the public
- Raise awareness about the CHEESESECARE program in the greater Washington, D.C. area
- Reach the target audience of people with school age children in the greater D.C. area
- Build a media presence in order to gain traction in the community

### Audience

The target audience for the CHEESESECARE kits and limited-edition cheesecake slices will be upper-middle to upper class parents of school age children in the greater Washington, D.C. area.

- In general middle class families dine-in at the Cheesecake Factory, but kits will be targeted towards upper-middle and upper class parents due to the price.
- The stay at home order makes it so those who work in offices or hold white collar jobs must do their work from home. People with these types of jobs, especially in the greater Washington, D.C. area, are upper-middle to upper class.



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- Wealthier people often like the idea of donating money, so the CHEESESECARE program will target this want of the audience. Not only will they be spending money to create a memory of baking a cheesecake with their children, they will also be giving back to the community.

### Strategy

Below are strategies that will help the Cheesecake Factory launch their CHEESESECARE program and achieve their objectives:

- Build a social media presence that targets parents of school age children
- Make the greater D.C. community aware of the CHEESESECARE program and its motives to help the small, local restaurants
- Increase awareness of the program to local restaurants so they can benefit from the sale of kits and slices
- Reach out to the media to get CHEESESECARE's message out

### Messaging

**Overarching message:** This holiday season, the Cheesecake Factory will be launching a program where you get to make everlasting memories while helping local restaurants in need.

#### Submessages:

- Baking is a fun family activity
  - During quarantine, many people turned to baking to help pass time. The CHEESESECARE kits are an easy way to create something delicious for the whole family to enjoy
  - The whole family might be stuck at home with online work and schooling, so baking is a new activity that brings everyone away from their screens for a bit
- Ending dinner with a special dessert can be a new holiday tradition
  - Having traditions can make normal days seem more special, so why not have the family spend a night out at the Cheesecake Factory and end dinner with a slice or two of the limited-edition CHEESESECARE cheesecake
  - Being cooped up in the house can get boring and exhausting, so it would make a great night to bring the family together and eat at one of the local Cheesecake Factories
- While creating and eating something delicious, you can also help local restaurants during the pandemic
  - The holiday season is for giving and purchasing cheesecake kits or the limited-edition slices will help benefit your favorite local restaurants
  - If your favorite restaurant has been struggling during the pandemic, you can have them apply to receive donations from the CHEESESECARE program and have your money benefit them directly

**Call to action:** Help your favorite local restaurants during the pandemic by purchasing CHEESESECARE baking kit or limited-edition slice online or at your nearest Cheesecake Factory restaurant!

### Tactics



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Listed below are tactics that help fulfill the Cheesecake Factory's strategies for launching the CHEESESECARE program:

- **Social Media:** Sharing on social media will help spread the word on a greater scale than just the D.C. area.
  - Create partnerships with celebrities in order to gain publicity on social media
    - Partnership with Mariah Carey: Mariah Carey is a popular singer among parents who would have school age children. She also is big into Christmas and the holiday season and would be a good spokesperson to share the CHEESESECARE program on her social media profiles. The public relations team could work with Carey to create posts she can share on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and TikTok.
    - Carey could be filmed making a cheesecake from the kit and trying the limited-edition cheesecake at home.
  - On current Cheesecake Factory social media accounts (Instagram, Twitter and Facebook), we have over 6 million followers. The CHEESESECARE public relations team will create posts to promote the program across these three platforms.
  - Create an Instagram campaign where if a user follows the Cheesecake Factory, reposts the photo announcing CHEESESECARE on their story and tags three people, they have the chance to win a CHEESESECARE kit and a coupon for a free slice of the limited-edition cheesecake.
    - A random winner generator will be used to select 10 winners. The winners will be direct messaged and asked to send their address and email in order to send the kit and coupon.
  - Families can post their final cheesecake product on Instagram with a specific hashtag and tag the Cheesecake Factory for the chance to win a gift card to the Cheesecake Factory. In order to be considered for the contest, participants will need to direct message the Cheesecake Factory a picture of their cake and the cake with the family. The contest will be a cheesecake decorating contest. We will hold one that is holiday themed (Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, etc.) and one spring themed to continue excitement about the CHEESESECARE campaign.
    - Cheesecakes would win based on the number of votes. A team from the Cheesecake Factory will be assembled to select 50 finalists. Those 50 cheesecakes will be featured on the Cheesecake Factory's Instagram story where viewers can vote between two cheesecakes. There will be 25 winners.
    - Prizes: Top 10: \$100 gift card; places 11-20: \$50; places 21-25: \$25 gift card.
- **Events:** These will help spread awareness of the program and get restaurants and our target audience on board.
  - Our team will host a virtual event with the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW) in order to share information about the program.
  - Before the event, we will send kits and limited-edition cheesecakes so they can enjoy the goods during the virtual event. At this event we will invite a few owners of restaurants in the D.C. area to talk about why they need our help.
  - The purpose of this virtual event is to get the RAMW talking about the CHEESESECARE program so more restaurants can apply and be considered for the grants.
- **Reaching out to the media:** By reaching out to the media, we can reach the segment of our audience that might not check social media often or go out in their neighborhood.
  - Media kits will be assembled to be given to reporters at local news stations, newspapers and blogs.



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- Someone on the public relations team will write a media pitch in hopes of getting an article or segment of a news broadcast about the CHEESESECARE program. This will spark interest within the community and hopefully boost sales of the kits and slices.
- Create an advertisement to put in local magazines and newspapers.
  - Advertisements in: the *Washington FAMILY Magazine*, *The Washingtonian*, *The Georgetown Dish* and *The InTowner*
- **DoorDash:** Partner with DoorDash to promote the limited-edition slice and cheesecake making kits.
  - When people are ordering food from the Cheesecake Factory in the D.C. area, have the kit and slice at the top of the menu for the greatest exposure.

**Timeline**

December 2020	<p>Early December: Announce partnership with Mariah Carey</p> <p>1st: Post the CHEESESECARE program on our social media platforms with a set release date</p> <p>3rd: Send information of virtual event to RAMW and invites to restaurant owners. Give media pitches to local newspapers, magazines and news channels.</p> <p>7th: Announce Instagram campaign and cheesecake decorating contest</p> <p>8th: Hold virtual event</p> <p><b>10th: Official release date of kits and slices</b></p> <p>12th: Start accepting decorating contest submissions</p> <p>15th: Launch Instagram campaign (ends 12/20)</p> <p>Before Christmas: Have Mariah Carey post on Instagram</p> <p>Late December: Notify winners of the campaign and send out kits and coupons.</p> <p>Launch advertisements in local magazines and newspapers</p>
January 2021	<p>Early January: Post holiday-themed decorated cakes on story and gather data. Send in advertisements to publications with monthly issues.</p> <p>Mid January: Announce contest winners and post photos of the top 10 cakes. Send out gift cards to winners.</p> <p>End of January: Distribute grants from kit and slice sales to qualified restaurants</p>
February 2021	<p>Early February: Continue posting on social media about kits and slices. Send in advertisements to publications with monthly issues.</p> <p>Mid February: Second virtual event with new restaurant owner guest speakers</p>
March 2021	<p>Mid March: Announce spring cake decorating contest.</p> <p>Late March: Check in with restaurants who received money and get testimonials. Write up testimonial to put in next month's advertisement</p>
April 2021	<p>Early April: Post reminder of cake decorating contest. Send in advertisements to publications with monthly issues.</p> <p>Mid April: Start accepting decorating contest submissions</p> <p>April 30th: Stop accepting decorating contest submissions</p>
May 2021	<p>Early May: Post cakes and gather votes.</p>



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	<p>Mid May: Announce contest winners and post photos of the top 10 cakes. Send out gift cards to winners. Evaluation.</p> <p>Late May: Give grants to restaurants from the sales of kits and slices. Get testimonials from restaurants the Cheesecake Factory helped.</p>
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### Budget

Advertising: \$30,000  
Social Media Partnership: \$96,000  
Events: \$8,000  
Printed Media Kits: \$1,000  
Prizes From Social Media Campaign: \$100  
Prizes for Cake Decorating Contest: \$3,500  
Total Budget: \$138,600

### Evaluation

- Determine the profit made (Dollar amount of sales - total budget = profit)
- Measure social media and contest engagement
- Survey restaurant owners to see if the grants helped keep their restaurants up and running