RevRoom Ai

REVROOM INDUSTRY BRIEF · THAILAND F&B · NOVEMBER 2026

No time for TikTok? How restaurants in Thailand stay full without becoming content creators

Filming and posting every day is a second job most restaurant owners don't have time for. This brief shows how restaurants that stay off social media still bring in new guests.

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LISTINGS · REVIEWS · REGULARS · AUTOMATION

Executive summary. This is our third brief on restaurants in Thailand. The last one was about TikTok and viral food trends. This one is for restaurant owners who don't have the time to film, post and chase the next trend.

They still need new guests, and the market is tough. LINE MAN Wongnai counted more than 100,000 new restaurants in 2023, and says half of new restaurants close within their first year. Going viral is one way to stand out, but it is not the only one.

Guests also find restaurants through map searches, listings, reviews and friends. This brief looks at what is documented about each of these channels, the simple steps that make them work, and how to turn your regulars into your best marketing, without spending your evenings on content. Our earlier briefs are listed at the end.

01

Too busy to be a content creator

Running a restaurant already fills the day: suppliers, staff, service, cleaning, accounts. Filming, editing and posting every day is a second job, and most owners of a family restaurant, a neighbourhood noodle shop or a small kitchen simply don't have the hours for it. That doesn't stop them from being good businesses. But they all face the same problem: there are more restaurants every year, and guests have more choice than ever.

LINE MAN Wongnai's own figures show how crowded the market is. In a July 2023 report based on its platform data and a survey of 1,230 restaurants, the company said more than 100,000 new restaurants had opened that year, up 13.6%. It also said half of new restaurants close within their first year, and 65% within three years. The restaurants it surveyed named heavier competition, and fewer new and returning customers, among their top concerns.

INDICATOR	FIGURE	SOURCE
New restaurants opened in Thailand, 2023	100,000+	LINE MAN Wongnai, July 2023 (+13.6% year on year)
New restaurants closing within the first year	50%	LINE MAN Wongnai, July 2023
New restaurants closing within three years	65%	LINE MAN Wongnai, July 2023
Restaurants listed on LINE MAN Wongnai	700,000+	LINE MAN Wongnai, Users' Choice 2025 announcement

Opening and closure figures come from LINE MAN Wongnai's platform data and its own survey; they are not official government statistics.

Our TikTok brief showed that a viral moment can fill a restaurant for a few weeks, then leave it with more competitors than before. For a restaurant that wants steady covers rather than a spike, the more useful question is where guests look when they are not scrolling a feed, and how to show up there without spending hours on it.

02

Where guests find you without a video

These four channels work for restaurants that never go viral, and none of them needs daily posts.

1 Maps and search

When a guest types "noodles near me", the results come from Google Maps and Google Search. Google's own help centre says customers are 2.7 times more likely to consider a business reputable when they find a complete Business Profile, and 70% more likely to visit it.

2 Wongnai and LINE MAN listings

LINE MAN Wongnai lists more than 700,000 restaurants and reports more than 26 million users. A complete listing with photos, menu and opening hours is what diners see when they check a place on the app before they go or order.

3 Guides and awards

Some recognition comes without any social media effort. The MICHELIN Guide's 2026 Bib Gourmand list for Thailand includes 137 restaurants and street food stalls, and Michelin itself points to "street food stalls and neighborhood eateries" among its new entries. LINE MAN Wongnai's Users' Choice awards go to restaurants based on user reviews, ratings and real orders, with no jury.

4 People who have already eaten with you

Regulars come back, bring friends and leave reviews. It is the oldest channel, and it costs almost nothing.

What we could not confirm: we found no recent, reliable Thai survey showing what share of diners choose a restaurant through maps, listings, reviews or friends. Several marketing articles quote such percentages without a traceable source, so we have left them out. The channels above are the ones every restaurant can act on, whatever their exact weight.

03

The basics that work while you cook

Most of this takes an afternoon to set up and a few minutes a week to keep current.

- **Complete your Google Business Profile.** Correct name, address, phone, opening hours, menu, photos of the food and the room. Update it on holidays. A guest who finds a closed door because your hours were wrong may not try again.
- **Do the same on Wongnai and LINE MAN.** Same hours, same menu, same photos. Different information on different platforms confuses guests.
- **Use real photos.** A clear picture of your best dishes does more than a perfect logo. You don't need a photographer, just daylight and a clean plate.
- **Reply to reviews, good and bad.** A short, polite reply shows future guests that someone is paying attention.

04

Reviews: today's word of mouth

Reviews let a restaurant with no social media presence compete on equal terms. The most cited study on the subject is by Michael Luca at Harvard Business School. Using Yelp and Seattle restaurant data from 2003 to 2009, he found that each one-star increase in rating was linked to a 5 to 9% increase in revenue. The effect came from independent restaurants. Chain restaurants' revenue was not affected by their ratings.

That study is from the United States and from Yelp, not from Thailand or Wongnai. But its main point holds wherever guests read reviews: for an independent restaurant with no brand name to lean on, reviews are the brand.

Ask, but don't pay for it: Google lets businesses share a direct review link with their customers. Its own help centre also says not to ask for reviews through incentives or "review stations" at your location, and reviews that break these rules may be removed. A discount in exchange for a five-star review is a risk, not a strategy. A simple, well-timed request to a happy guest is allowed.
The best moment to ask is shortly after the visit, while the meal is still fresh in the guest's mind.

05

Your regulars are your marketing

Recommendations from people we know remain the most trusted form of advertising. In Nielsen's global Trust in Advertising study (2015), 83% of respondents said they completely or somewhat trust recommendations from friends and family, the highest score of any format in the study. Your regulars are the people making those recommendations.

LINE MAN Wongnai's 2023 survey found restaurants worried about fewer returning customers. Returning guests are also the number a busy restaurant can influence most directly, because they have already walked through the door.

- **Know who your regulars are.** Not just their faces: their names, how often they come and what they order. Staff change; that knowledge should not leave with them.
- **Stay in touch without becoming a content creator.** A few useful LINE messages a month (a new dish, holiday hours, a small offer for regulars) do more than daily posts. Our first Thailand brief covers how to do this with LINE OA.
- **Notice when someone stops coming.** A regular who hasn't been back in two months is easier to win back now than in a year.
- **Give regulars a reason to bring someone.** A dish for two, a table for their birthday, a first-visit offer for the friend they bring. A friend brought by a regular arrives with a reason to trust you.

The common thread: every channel in this brief, from Google and Wongnai to reviews and recommendations, depends on the same thing. Guests who had a good experience, and a restaurant that knows who they are and stays in touch.

06

What restaurants can actually do about it

You don't need to dance on camera to fill your tables. You do need to know who your guests are, and to stay in touch with them after they leave. That is the part most restaurants skip, because nobody in a busy kitchen has time for it.

RevRoom is built to do that work for you, in the background. A QR code on tables, receipts or takeaway bags lets guests leave their name, email and LINE ID, with consent. AI guest tagging then sorts them automatically by visit frequency, spending and habits, so first-time guests, regulars and regulars who have stopped coming each get the right message.

Once a guest is on your list, RevRoom can send a short thank-you after their visit with a link to leave a review, an offer to come back after a few quiet weeks, or a reason to bring a friend. Campaigns run on LINE OA, WhatsApp and email from one dashboard, and campaign analytics show which messages bring guests back.

Once it is set up, it runs on its own: no daily posts, no filming, no influencer. You keep cooking, and the guests who already like your food turn into the reviews, recommendations and repeat visits that keep a restaurant full.

Turn a QR Scan Into a Regular Guest subscribed to your Line channel

Drop a QR code on your receipts, tables or takeout bags. Guests scan it, leave their name, email and Line ID and they're instantly on your Line news — subscribed to your news and promotions, ready for your next campaign.

Ready to Turn More Guests Into Regulars?

Join restaurants across Thailand and Singapore using RevRoom to increase repeat visits, automate guest communications, and grow revenue — without growing their team.

Start for Free →

FREE PLAN AVAILABLE · NO SETUP FEE · FROM $25/MONTH

Selected RevRoom Industry Briefs

A selection of our briefs for Singapore and Thailand. This list is not exhaustive and may not be up to date.

SINGAPORE	**The hidden cost of delivery platforms** Is GrabFood or foodpanda still worth it for Singapore restaurants?
SINGAPORE	**Grab bought Chope. Here's what actually changed.** What the acquisition means for reservations, delivery and guest data.
SINGAPORE	**WhatsApp, not email? What messaging guests really costs Singapore restaurants.** When WhatsApp's per-message cost is worth it, and when email does the job.
THAILAND	**Why LINE OA, not email, is the backbone of restaurant marketing in Thailand** How to use LINE well, what it costs and where it falls short.
THAILAND	**TikTok made it famous: riding (and surviving) Thailand's viral food trends** How to ride a food trend without getting burned.
THAILAND	**No time for TikTok? How restaurants in Thailand stay full without becoming content creators** This brief.

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Sources & notes:

- New restaurants in 2023 (100,000+, +13.6%), closures (50% within the first year, 65% within three years), survey of 1,230 restaurants and their top concerns (competition, fewer new and returning customers): LINE MAN Wongnai, "LINE MAN Wongnai Aims to Secure Top Spot in POS Market; Reports 100K Newly Opened Restaurants in 2023", 24 Jul 2023 (lmwn.com).
- LINE MAN Wongnai Users' Choice 2025 (650 winners, 700,000+ restaurants on the platform, 26M+ users, selection based on user reviews, ratings and orders with no jury): The Standard, sponsored article by LINE MAN Wongnai, 2025. Figures are the company's own.
- Complete Google Business Profile (2.7x more likely to be considered reputable, 70% more likely to be visited) and review rules (review links allowed; no incentives or review stations): Google Business Profile Help, support.google.com/business/answer/10515606.
- MICHELIN Guide Thailand 2026 Bib Gourmand (137 restaurants and street food stalls; quote from Gwendal Poullennec): Khaosod English, 20 Nov 2025.
- Yelp ratings and restaurant revenue (one star = 5 to 9% revenue, effect concentrated in independent restaurants, Seattle 2003 to 2009): Michael Luca, Harvard Business School working paper 12-016, as reported by Harvard Magazine, Oct 2011.
- Trust in recommendations from friends and family (83%): Nielsen, Global Trust in Advertising, September 2015.
- RevRoom features (QR forms, AI guest tagging, LINE OA / WhatsApp / email campaigns, campaign analytics, review request after a visit): revroom.beehavesoft.com and the RevRoom team.

We found no reliable, recent Thai survey on how diners split between maps, listings, reviews and recommendations, so this brief gives no percentages for those channels. The Harvard and Nielsen studies are not Thai data and are cited for their general findings.

RevRoom is an AI-powered guest marketing and CRM platform for restaurants and bars in Thailand and Singapore. © 2026 RevRoom. A product by Beehavesoft. revroom.beehavesoft.com