



Restaurants turn patrons into friends

- Social media sites, e-marketing tools becoming popular with customers
- PR reps say online is a great place to dialogue with regulars, respond to comments
- New advertising opportunities arise on sites like Twitter

Boston area restaurants that were quick to jump on e-marketing opportunities via Facebook and Twitter are reaping big rewards.

The Russell House Tavern opened in Harvard Square on April 8, with little advertising and a huge amount of blogging and lots of tweets. The blog — russellhouse.wordpress.com — helped amass almost 2,000 followers and fans by the time the restaurant opened its doors.

The Four Seasons' Bristol Lounge has long had a club-like following and Twitter reinforces that. "We have a chance to have a dialogue with our regulars and respond to their comments. It's been great for that interaction alone," says Kristan Fletcher, the hotel's director of public relations.

The Barking Crab used Facebook and Twitter to find a slogan for its 2010 regular marketing campaign. "The Barking Crab has a huge following of



► Bartender Jinny Edwards pours a beer at the Russell House in Harvard Square.

"The response was greater than we ever could have imagined."

KRIS KRATZAS, BARKING CRAB

loyal guests and we were hoping to tap into that when we established a presence on Facebook and Twitter," says Kris Kratzas, the harbor restaurant's director of operations.

While the restaurant's



slogan — The Barking Crab: Seafood with Attitude — came from a social media campaign, tweets like "love your food!" or "watched you on Man v. Food!" were a greater return.

Coffee company gets its tweet on

Food service industry newspaper, Nation's Restaurant News, reports that Starbucks is one of the first companies to participate in Twitter's "Promoted tweets," aka advertisements.



This move promises to provide a considerable revenue source for the microblogging site via selling companies the right to link their pages and profiles to keyword search results. • METRO/LL



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