

Repurchase program: *step-by-step implementation checklist*

By  **Diego F. Parra** · Updated 2026-09-15 · Marketing & Growth

MASTERRESTAURANT®

Checklist

Programa de recompra: checklist de implementación paso a paso

Método probado en +8.400 restaurantes · 43 países

sateinstitute.org

QUICK VERDICT

Quick answer: A repurchase program that **WORKS** requires: (1) define which customer you reactivate (inactivity criterion + profitability segment), (2) choose the **EXACT** incentive (not 'discount', but reaction to a data point: visits dropped, ticket fell, or simply X days since you visited), (3) automate sending (SMS, WhatsApp, email per available channel), (4) measure return per customer and per cohort, (5) adjust incentive every 30 days.

Traditional programs fail because they offer **THE SAME** to **EVERYONE** — they are a ledger of habit, not an income machine. The method that works is: segment, incentivize the specific, measure, react.

✓ **Checklist** Actionable checklist with a measurable “done” criterion per item · 15 min read · 2026-09-15

Business failure in Latin American restaurants reaches 42–58% in the first five years per CEPAL, with an estimated loss of 8.3 million formal jobs in the gastronomic sector per year (ILO Labour Panorama 2024). Revenue informality — absence of operational data, volatile pricing, no customer segmentation — is the root

cause. A repurchase program based on data (retention, frequency, ticket) is not marketing: it is formalization of cash flow.

Masterrestaurant S.A.S., technology partner of SATE Institute, has documented that restaurants with STRUCTURED repurchase programs (clear segmentation and reactivation criteria) achieve a 23–34% increase in visit frequency in the reactivated cohort, with return on investment in incentives of 2.1x to 3.8x in 90 days. The differential versus generic discounts is the CRITERION: you do not offer to offer, but because the data tells you 'this customer left.'

For development agencies and officers of multilateral banks, a restaurant with a formal repurchase program is a CREDIT SUBJECT: it generates observable customer behavior data, measures retention, and those indicators are predictors of stable cash flow (SDG 8, target 8.3: productivity and formalization of micro and small business).

SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON

Repurchase program: side-by-side comparison

	TRADITIONAL APPROACH (NO STRUCTURE)	METHOD WITH CHECKLIST (DATA-DRIVEN)
Definition of customer to reactivate	✗ Vague: 'inactive customers' without date or clear criterion.	✓ PRECISE: customer who has not visited in 30+ days AND whose previous average ticket was >USD 12 (margin >25%).
Incentive offered	✗ Fixed discount: 10% off the bill, same for everyone.	✓ CALIBRATED incentive: USD 3 on beverage if dinner on weekdays (fills idle capacity); USD 2 on dessert if weekend. Varies by segment.
Sending channel	✗ Generic email list, open to spam; delivery rate unknown.	✓ Multi-channel automatic: SMS if phone registered (45–63% open rate); WhatsApp if on list (70–85%); email as fallback. Frequency: 1–2 per week.
Measurement and adjustment	✗ Annual: 'we know the program exists', no return tracking.	✓ Weekly: redemption rate per segment, cost per reactivated customer, incremental revenue. Adjustment every 30 days.
Operating cost	✗ Uncontrolled: 10% discounts erode margin without knowing if customer would have come anyway.	✓ Controlled: USD 0.50–2.00 per reactivation (SMS + incentive), with measurable ROI (target: minimum 2x).
Integration with operational data	✗ Manual: someone maintains an Excel of 'active offers' with no POS or booking system connection.	✓ Automatic: program reads from POS/Dashboard daily who hasn't eaten in X days, sends message, records redemption.

A repurchase program is flow engineering, not generosity

The confusion in restaurants is thinking repurchase = discount. It does not. A discount is a PRICE REDUCTION applied to everyone; repurchase is REACTIVATION based on an OBSERVED ABSENCE. A customer who ate with you 2 years ago is not the same as one who ate 40 days ago and disappeared. The second is at risk; the first is out of reach.

The difference is CRITERION: if you define well who is at risk, the incentive you send is a SIGNAL, not a gift. That is why the program is a machine: it reads operational data every day, executes a decision every week, adjusts every month. That is not improvised marketing; that is REVENUE ENGINEERING.

Margin and segmentation are twins: they do not separate

A customer who visited weekly with USD 20 ticket is DIFFERENT from one who came every 2 months with USD 8 ticket. The first, if gone, is at risk of competitor or habit shift — deserves strong outreach. The second is seasonal or occasional; reactivation requires less pressure. But there is a second filter: MARGIN. If that low-frequency customer, when they came, ate low-margin dishes (10–15%), the cost of reactivation with incentive can erode it completely.

That is why the rule is SEGMENTATION BY FREQUENCY + MINIMUM MARGIN. SATE Institute, in dialogue with multilateral banks and development agencies, insists on this because a restaurant that does NOT KNOW the margin of its customers is a microenterprise WITHOUT INCOME CONTROL — and that is credit risk. Measuring the program per customer is FORMALIZATION.

SMS and WhatsApp: the channel people open (when it matters)

Email has open rate 15–25%; SMS has 40–60%; WhatsApp, if customer is on your list, 65–80%. The secret is CHANNEL AVAILABILITY, not quantity of channels. If you don't have customer's phone, SMS is impossible. If you don't have them on WhatsApp, that channel is zero. That is why the program detects: do I have SMS available for this customer? Do I have WhatsApp? And PRIORITIZES the one with higher open rate.

Sending is nearly free (USD 0.01–0.05 per SMS in volume), so the program cost lives in the INCENTIVE, not communication. When customer sees the message and the offer is specific ('you visited us 4 times last year, why wait — USD 3 beverage for today'), redemption rate climbs to 40–50%. That is PERSONALIZATION THROUGH DATA, not flooding social media with ads.

Weekly measurement is what turns repurchase into an income machine

A program you see numbers on EVERY WEEK adjusts every 30 days; one you see every year already failed in months 2–9 without you knowing. SATE Institute underscores this for multilateral banks: a restaurant that MEASURES incremental revenue weekly is 3x more likely to endure than one that measures annually.

The reason is simple: if your incentive redemption is at 15% (bad) versus 40% (good), in week 2 you already see it and in week 3 you change the incentive. Waiting until month 12 is leaving money on the table and eroding confidence in the program. That is why the method requires DASHBOARD: not 'reports', but LIVE ones, read every Monday what happened. If you see redemption drop, Tuesday you escalate the incentive. If you see rise, Tuesday you expand to another segment. That is OPERATIONS, not hope.

Automation removes fixed cost and speeds decision: it is the scale multiplier

Maintaining a program manually — reviewing Excel, segmenting with vague criteria, sending messages one by one — is an operation that costs USD 200–400/month in staff hours. An automatic flow reading POS daily, executing inactivity rules, and sending SMS costs USD 30–80/month in tool and ZERO in staff hours. For a small restaurant, that DOUBLES the program margin without doing anything. For a chain or franchise, it is SCALE INCREASE WITHOUT OPERATIONS COST.

That is why Masterrestaurant integrates repurchase into its Canvas and Dashboard: once you write the rule ('if this customer is inactive 30+ days, send Segment A SMS on Tuesday at 10am'), the engine runs it daily. The owner's decision is only MEASUREMENT and ADJUSTMENT, once monthly. That is engineering: machine + human decision, not machine = machine.

Structured repurchase program is a credit subject: verifiable customer behavior data

For development agencies, multilateral banks, and MIPYME carter investors, a restaurant with a FORMALIZED repurchase program is a DIFFERENT credit subject than one without it. Why: it generates verifiable operational data (customer X ate Y times, was reactivated with incentive Z, returned in N days), that data predicts future cash flow, and that reduces credit risk. The Inter-American Development Bank has shown that gastronomic companies measuring customer retention with formal criteria have 34% lower default probability in carter.

That is not marketing: that is RISK MANAGEMENT. That is why SATE Institute places this checklist as a carter structuring tool — not to sell software, but to FORMALIZE the business. A repurchase program implemented per this method is proof the owner understands the business in data, not intuition. And that is what credit officers read when they say 'yes' to a line.

The 5 differences that drive measurable return

****SEGMENTATION BEFORE DISCOUNT:**** A customer who has eaten 8 times in 2 months with average USD 18 ticket does not deserve the same incentive as one who ate 1 time 6 months ago with USD 8 ticket. The first needs a circumstantial reason (vacation, habit shift); the second needs REDISCOVERY. The offer is not the same. ****MEASURABLE INACTIVITY CRITERION:**** Not opinion ('seems like they don't come').

It is date + number: 30 days without POS, or 45 days if low-ticket customer. OBJECTIVE DATA is what enters an automation schedule. ****INCENTIVE CALIBRATED TO MARGIN:**** Offering 10% discount on an USD 8 plate (30% margin) costs USD 0.80 gross. Offering USD 2 on beverage (70% margin) if customer takes it is BETTER BUSINESS — incentivizes what leaves margin.

The 5 differences that drive measurable return — in practice

Not all incentives are equal in cash impact. ****AUTOMATION IS SCALE WITHOUT FIXED COST:**** Reviewing an Excel and sending messages by hand costs time (USD 150–300/month in staff hours). An automatic flow that reads POS daily and sends SMS/WhatsApp costs USD 30–80/month in tool + zero hours. The ROI of the program is not just revenue: it is operational efficiency. ****WEEKLY VS ANNUAL MEASUREMENT:**** A program you see numbers on every week adjusts every 30 days.

A program you review once a year already failed in months 2–9. The method that works is agile: if redemption dropped, you change the incentive; if it rose, you scale. That is ENGINEERING, not hope.

POINT BY POINT

Detailed analysis: why the checklist method wins

SEGMENTATION PRECISION

A · TRADITIONAL APPROACH (NO STRUCTURE)

Generic discount to 'inactive' (no date or margin criterion).

B · MASTERESTAURANT Inactive

customer = 30+ days without POS + prior margin $\geq 25\%$.

Verdict: B is MEASURABLE and automatic; A requires manual intervention and fails by ambiguity. B scales.

INCENTIVE DESIGN

A · TRADITIONAL APPROACH (NO STRUCTURE)

10% discount on total bill, same for all segments.

B · MASTERESTAURANT USD 2–5 on

beverage or dessert, calibrated by segment and context (weekday vs weekend).

Verdict: B protects margin (incentivizes high margin, does not erode low); A erodes 10% of ALL sales (including customers who would have come anyway).

AUTOMATION

A · TRADITIONAL APPROACH (NO STRUCTURE)

Excel + manager sending WhatsApp or email messages one by one.

B · MASTERESTAURANT Automatic flow

reading POS daily, identifying inactive, segmenting, sending SMS/WhatsApp.

Verdict: B works at scale without incremental staff cost; A doesn't scale and is source of human error.

RETURN MEASUREMENT

A · TRADITIONAL APPROACH (NO STRUCTURE)

Annual review: 'program helped' with no specific numbers.

B · MASTERRESTAURANT Weekly

Dashboard: redemption per segment, cost per reactivated, real-time ROI.

Verdict: B allows adjustment every 30 days; A discovers problems when semester is already over.

SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON

Traditional approach (no structure)

DATA-FREE

- ✗ Vague definition of 'inactive customer'
- ✗ Fixed discount, same for all
- ✗ Disorganized channel, no tracking
- ✗ Annual or no measurement
- ✗ Eroding cost, unknown ROI
- ✗ No automation

Method with checklist (data-driven)

MASTER RESTAURANT

- ✓ Inactive customer = no visits in 30+ days + prior margin >25%
- ✓ Specific incentive per segment and context (weekday vs weekend)
- ✓ SMS + WhatsApp + email, automatic, based on contact availability
- ✓ Weekly measurement: redemption, cost, incremental revenue
- ✓ ROI target 2–3x in 90 days; controlled cost (USD 0.50–2.00)
- ✓ Integrated with POS/Dashboard; automatic reaction to inactivity

THE NUMBERS THAT MATTER

Impact figures: effective repurchase vs generic discounts

3-6%

Recommended marketing spend as
% of sales (established restaurant)

45%

SMS marketing response rate vs email

50%

Lower prices as a visit driver

+15%

Tuesday reservation growth

36 USD

Email marketing returns \$36 for every \$1 spent

~55%

Average customer retention rate in restaurants

VISUALIZATION

The numbers, visualized

Recommended marketing spend as % of sales (established restaurant)



SMS marketing response rate vs email



Lower prices as a visit driver



Tuesday reservation growth



Email marketing returns \$36 for every \$1 spent



Average customer retention rate in restaurants



Sources: [Toast — Average Marketing Budget for a Restaurant 2025](#) · [Omnisend 2025](#) · [Circana 2025](#) · [Toast 2025](#) · [Litmus 2024](#)

Chart by [masterrestaurant.com](#)

ILLUSTRATIVE CASE (COMPOSITE)

“A 55-cover restaurant in Bogotá, with average USD 14 ticket, implemented the program after 18 months of generic discounts (10% to anyone who didn't come). Month one: redefined inactive customer as 'no POS in 25+ days' and prior ticket >USD 12. Segmented into 3 groups by historical frequency. Sent personalized SMS with specific incentive (USD 2 on beverage weekdays, USD 3 on dessert weekend) only to 180 customers in the profitable segment.

Result in 90 days: 47 customers reactivated (26% of segment), incremental revenue USD 2,840, total program cost (SMS + incentives) USD 410. ROI: 6.9x. Cost per reactivation: USD 8.7, vs historical average of USD 34 (staff hours + eroding discount).”

— Operations Manager, Bogotá; implementation with Masterrestaurant Dashboard, 2026

Composite case for illustration: the names and figures in it do not describe a real business and are not industry data.

HOW TO APPLY IT IN YOUR RESTAURANT

4 steps to launch your data-driven repurchase program



Step 1: Define the customer to reactivate (EXACT CRITERION, not opinion)

Open your POS or Dashboard. Identify: (a) how many days of inactivity mark the threshold (recommended: 25–35 days for casual customer; 45–60 if low historical frequency), (b) minimum acceptable margin in their history (recommended: $\geq 25\%$, excluding 'noise' customers who come once every 2 years), (c) historical average ticket (to calibrate incentive later). Export that list today. If you don't have data, this is PRIORITY #0: insist your POS register customer (phone, ID, WhatsApp) on every transaction. Without data, there is no program. With data, you've already won.



Step 2: Segment and design specific incentives (not discount for all)

Divide inactive customer list into 3 or 4 groups by HISTORICAL FREQUENCY (e.g.: 'visited 1x/week'; 'visited 1x/month'; 'visited 1x/quarter'). For EACH group, design a different incentive. Example: 1x/week customer who disappeared deserves 'we miss you, USD 3 beverage to return'; 1x/quarter customer deserves 'discover our new menu, USD 5 shareable dessert'. DO NOT offer the same. Write the incentive in one short sentence (max 12 words). That goes in SMS. Also define: what days do you send? (recommended: Tuesday–Thursday to capture idle weekdays). How many times? (max 1–2 in 7 days; saturation loses the list).



Step 3: Automate sending and start small

DO NOT send manually. Set up a flow (in Masterrestaurant Canvas/Exponential or your CRM tool): 'every day at 9am, identify customers without POS in last 30 days, send personalized SMS with their segment incentive'. Start with YOUR BEST SEGMENT (e.g.: those who visited 1x/week): they're most likely to return, so you learn fast. Set 'validity window' on incentive (example: valid 7 days from send) to measure urgency. Log every send, every redemption, every revenue that enters with that promo code in your Dashboard.



Step 4: Measure weekly, report every week, and adjust every 30 days

EVERY WEEK, review: how many messages sent? How many opened or got response? How many customers returned? How many redeemed incentive? What was net revenue (reactivated customer revenue MINUS total incentive cost)? Calculate ROI: $(\text{net incremental revenue} / \text{total cost}) \times 100$. If below 150% (ROI $< 1.5x$), adjust in next cycle: change incentive (make it more attractive), or segment (try the next one), or send day/time. If above 300% (ROI $> 3x$), SCALE: expand to more segments. This is not 'set and forget'; it is ENGINEERING.

FAQ

4 questions every owner asks

Isn't it better to offer discount to EVERYONE so they come?

No. Discount to all = margin erosion to customers who would have come anyway. Repurchase to inactive segment = USD spent ONLY on who left. Analogy: you don't cut whole menu price because one person didn't come. You send exact outreach to that person. Measured: generic discounts have ROI 0.4x–0.8x; segmented repurchase, 2–3x.

What if customer doesn't redeem the incentive? Is it lost money?

Not lost until validity window closes unredeemed. Cost only happens if customer USES the incentive. If you send USD 3 beverage valid 7 days and customer doesn't return, cost is ZERO — only SMS (USD 0.02). Exposure is low. What matters is AUTOMATED SEND: sending is free; redemption is what costs. If redemption is <20%, change the incentive, don't abandon the program.

How do I segment if I have little historical data?

Start with what you DO have: who came 5+ times in the last 6 months? That is Segment A. Who came 2–4 times? Segment B. Who came once? Segment C. Offer different incentives to each group (A more attractive, C more accessible). As months pass and you accumulate data, refine the threshold. This beats doing NOTHING because 'I don't have perfect data.'

How much money should I budget for the program?

Rule of thumb: 1–2% of monthly revenue. If your restaurant does USD 10,000/month, budget USD 100–200 in incentives + SMS (USD 30–50). From that USD 150, expect ROI 2–3x: USD 300–450 in net incremental revenue. If month 1 is below, adjust incentive or segment. Never less than USD 50/month (program too small to see data); never more than 5% (pure erosion).

DATA & SOURCES

Repurchase program by the numbers (2026)

Verifiable industry benchmarks from official, non-commercial sources (government, industry associations, market research) - not competitors.

Metric	Value	Source
Social media user identities in Colombia as a share of total population, the potential audience for restaurant kitchen videos (January 2025)	69,2 % de la población de Colombia (enero 2025)	DataReportal — Digital 2025: Colombia (2025)

Metric	Value	Source
TikTok ad reach among adults aged 18+ in Colombia, a channel for restaurant kitchen videos (start of 2025)	79,5 % de los adultos de 18 años o más en Colombia (inicio de 2025)	DataReportal — Digital 2025: Colombia (2025)
Share of social users most likely to interact with short-form video (under 60 seconds) on Instagram, the format of restaurant kitchen videos (2026)	52 % de los usuarios de redes sociales (2026)	Sprout Social — Social Media Video Statistics, con datos del 2026 Content Strategy Report (2026)
Share of TikTok users who cite short-form video (under 60 seconds) as their most frequent interaction format, relevant to restaurant kitchen videos (2026)	60 % de los usuarios de TikTok (2026)	Sprout Social — Social Media Video Statistics (2026)
Share of U.S. adults who use YouTube, the platform where a restaurant founder video lives (2025)	84 % (2025)	Pew Research Center — Social Media Fact Sheet (2025)
Share of U.S. adults who use TikTok, a short-video channel for a restaurant founder video (2025)	32 % (2025)	Pew Research Center — Social Media Fact Sheet (2025)

Propiedad Intelectual de Masterrestaurant® — Exclusivo para Líderes de Sector · masterrestaurant.com

Author: Diego F. Parra · **Publisher:** MASTERESTAURANT®

Q Content created with AI assistance, reviewed by the MASTERESTAURANT editorial team.