

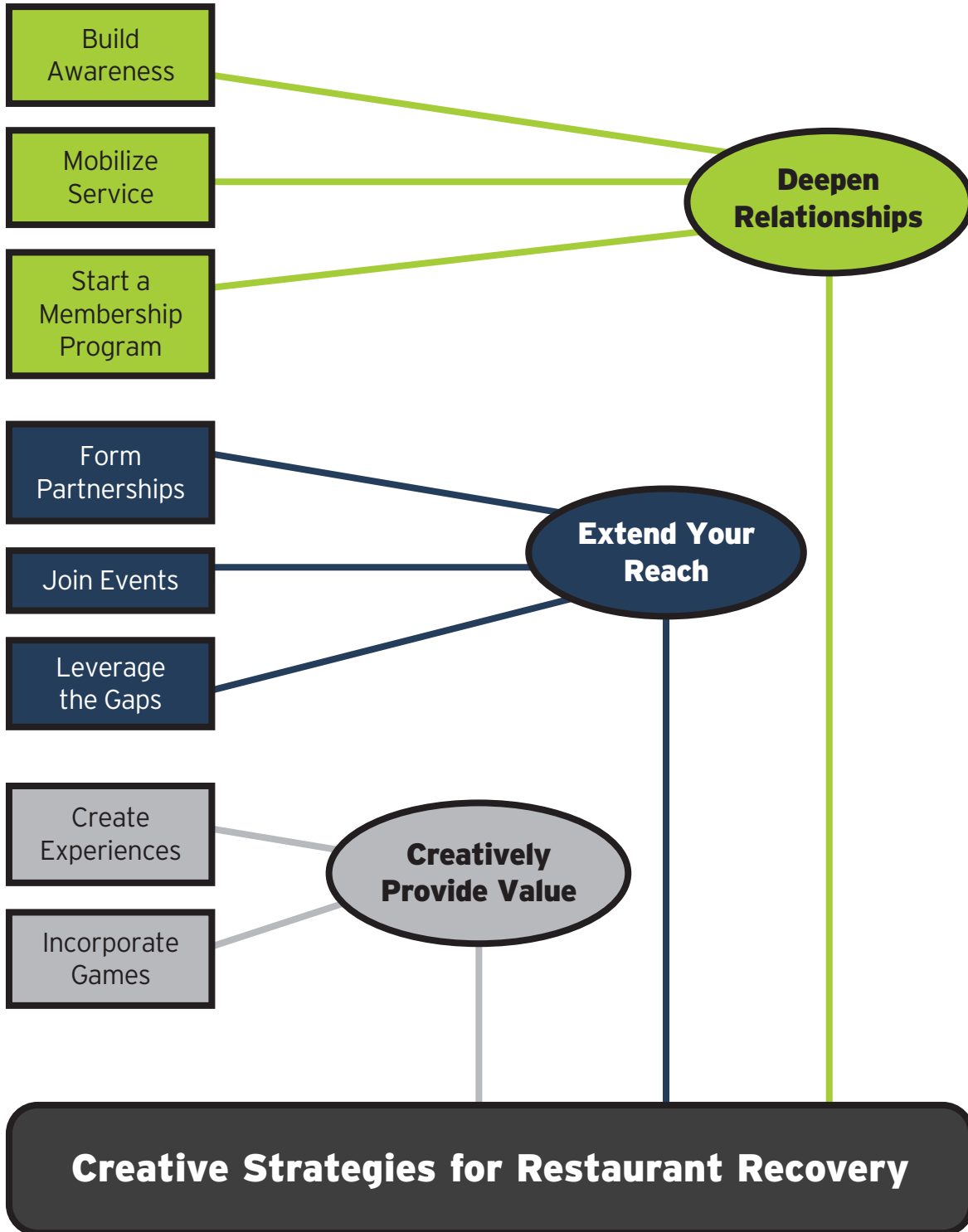
CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR RESTAURANT RECOVERY

These last several months have been hard, even devastating, for many of us. At Aperio Consulting Group, part of our response is to do what we do best: support clients and our community by helping leaders make key decisions and innovate.

That's why the Aperio Lab, our testing ground for new ideas, decided to try something different. We brought together middle schoolers, high schoolers, and college students in our community and asked: how would you help our restaurants get back to work? We wanted to hear from voices that are often left out of the conversation, and we wanted ideas that were fresh and outside the box.

Their ideas ran the gamut. What we found, though, were innovations you likely wouldn't have heard in a room full of adults. What didn't change were core goals for most any business: **extend** your base to reach new customers, **deepen** relationships with your existing customers, **provide value** with your products, services, and experiences potentially in new ways.

Aperio shaped and mapped their ideas below. We hope these will serve you well on the road to recovery.



Build Awareness

- How frequently do you update your social channels? Try spotlighting dishes, the people who make them, and the ingredient sources.
- How did you get started? Share your origin story, including why you started, to build support. Pro tip: throw in pictures from the early days.
- Say thank you. Come up with social media-friendly ways to thank your customers for supporting you during this difficult time. Ask to take their photo when they pick up their order, reshare any posts they make mentioning you, and more.

Mobilize Services

- How can you go to them? Reach out to neighborhoods with shared spaces (like clubhouses or pools) and offer to cater a meal with a per head charge. Consider giving a neighborhood free delivery or a small discount if a minimum number of families place an order on the same night.
- Continue (or start) curbside pick-up.
- Consider creating delivery-friendly dishes.

Start a Membership Program

- Now might be the time to engage your loyal base with a membership. Maybe a fee gives them access to a monthly members-only cocktail or entree. Maybe you host a special event for members later this year.
- Consider giving attire or memorabilia as a bonus for signing on.

Form Partnerships

- Partner with other restaurants who serve different categories of food. Maybe you create a package where a customer gets a drink and an appetizer at one place and walks next door for an entree. Consider family-friendly options like a pizza and an ice cream.
- Partner with other services to create experiences. Can you team up with a theatre for an outdoor dinner and a movie?
- Join events. What events are already happening? (Farmer's markets, festivals, Saturday morning walkers on the MKT)

Leverage the Gaps

- If you have the space, can you use your restaurant for events outside of mealtime? Maybe try snacks and board games or dessert and a movie.
- What other assets can you use in unconventional ways?

Create Experiences

- Mix up your menu to create bundle packages for 4-8 people. These family or group meals can be for delivery, takeout, or dine-in when it's possible.
- Make your own cooking class! Customers can pick up partially prepared food and ingredients along with an instruction guide. Or, host a video call with your chef where s/he teaches customers how to finish the dish.

Incorporate Games

- Include activities with your meals: print out table topics or conversation prompts.
- Create a digital quiz. Customers take the quiz for a recommendation on what to order.
- Make your own May Madness. Participants pay a small fee to fill out a bracket with their favorite appetizer, drink, entree, and dessert combination. Then the public votes for their favorite in each category on social media. The person with the winning combination receives a gift card or that meal for free.