

# 49.5 Ways to Better Market Your Frozen Dessert Business

**Specialized Equipment, LLC**

*Electro Freeze of Upstate New York*

5996 East Molloy Rd.

Syracuse, NY 13211

**888-741-6252**

[www.specializedequip.com](http://www.specializedequip.com)



# Marketing ideas to get involved in your Community

- Local Sports Teams and Schools
- Local Organizations
- Local Celebrities
- Local Charitable or Non-Profit Organizations
- Other Local Businesses



- **Get involved with the local sports** – Sponsor local sports teams. Anyone who wears a team jersey on specials days and times gets a free small product. Kids can't drive so the whole family will come in! You can even give awards for special achievements in the games. If you feel you can't give product away for free, say every team member gets something for \$1.00. This way the coach/parent paying has a controlled amount they are spending.



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- **Get Involved with Schools** – Print coupons that offer “free” kids water ice or ice cream. Distribute these coupons to schools for teachers to give out as incentives to their students. Again, the schools are doing all the work for you. If you can’t break into the schools through the principal/teacher, try the PTA.



- **Doctor’s & Dentists** – Approach the local doctor’s and dentists with coupons for your store. Let them use the coupons for their patients and for their families too.



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- **Sponsor local organization days** – Approach the local police, fire, and religious organizations. Tell them you want to have a “Police” day once a month. Pick a slow business day. All members of that organization or family members get some type of incentive. The best part is they do the advertising for you. A great way to create customers.



- **Celebrity Scoopers** – Find the people in your community who would create a buzz. Local politicians, teachers, principles, parents, coaches, priests, rabbi, etc. Have them come in and work the store for a night. Scooping ice cream and making product. Donate a portion of the proceeds to the organization or charity. Again, pick a slow night to do this. Brings in a bunch of customers!



- **Fax/Email Flyers and Menus to Local Businesses –**  
Another way to boost daytime sales. Offer product for office parties and lunches. Also offer to sponsor promotional days for the business.



- **Collection for Canned Foods and Charity-**  
Get involved with local charities and be a dropping off point. Promote food drives at your store. Do the Toys for Tots program. It creates a ton of traffic which means sales for you. It's also nice to give back to the community.





- **Cross Promos** – Team up with local movie rental business, pizza stores, mini golf, etc. Develop a cross branded coupon that promotes both locations. Give a discount if your customer shows a receipt from a neighboring business.
- **Local Community Pages** – Advertise on local community pages for specials and promotions. These pages are usually looking for some type of daytime activity for kids. Can you think of something better than ice cream or yogurt?
- **Sponsor Field Trips** – Daycare centers and schools are always looking for somewhere exciting to take their students. Let them into your store for a small fee. Daytime is slow time anyway and you can give all the kids a coupon to come back again with their families.



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# Offering Discounts, Specials, & Coupons

- The Value of FREE
- Gift Certificates
- Baby and Senior Discounts
- Frequent Buyer and Birthday Club
- Coupons and Specials





- **Don't be afraid of “FREE”** — The goal of marketing and advertising is to get potential customers to your store. Once there, it's up to you to get them to come back. Nothing gets customers there like “Free.” Use it. Give away a small water ice or ice cream for free. The perceived value is better and the actual cost to you is less.
- **Gift Certificates** — Great gifts for people to give. Best part is that you get paid up front and have something in a customer's purse/wallet/etc. to stay on top of their mind.



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- **Frequent Buyer Cards** – Really encourages repeat sales. Buy 6 get the 7<sup>th</sup> free! Don't get too crazy with the length. People shouldn't have to buy 15 of something to get one free.
- **Baby Cones** –children 2 years old or under get a little baby cone for free.
- **Senior Citizen Discounts** – Give seniors a discount on their products. Believe me, they will notice.
- **Birthday Clubs** – Gather information from your customers about their birthdays or anniversaries. Then email or mail them coupons on their special day.



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- **Bounce Back Coupons** – You have to work to get customers to come back. If someone buys a high ticket item, give them a coupon for a discount on that item in the future. Sometimes it takes a few visits before a customer is truly created. Bounce back gives a customer an incentive to visit and then you are one step closer to having them hooked.
- **Honor your Competition's Coupons–**  
Don't let your customers go somewhere else just because they can save a buck with your competition.  
Honor those coupons.



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- **Rainy Day Specials** – Have specials on rainy days. Half off or free smalls. Don't just get upset when it rains and chalk it up as a loss. Give people an incentive to come out. Also, have coupons that you give out on sunny days which can only be used on rainy days. A great way to help business in a rain out.



- **Happy Hour** – Promote a happy hour from 3-5pm, typically the slowest part of the day. Give an incentive for items purchased during this time. Watch the numbers climb!

- **Combo Products to Promote Big Ticket Items –**

Instead of settling for the small cone, yogurt or Italian Ice, why not create a bundle to promote your big ticket items.

For instance, when you buy two water ices you get \$2.00 off a quart. Or a signature sundae & milkshake special.

This will help increase your average check transaction and grow your sales.



# Menu Ideas and Promotion

- Menu Rotation
- Create Signature Desserts
- Offer specific dessert specials
- Pet Treats
- Add Gluten-free, Organic, No Sugar items





- **Spice It Up** – Promote different items throughout the season. Don't come out with everything you have on day 1. Customers will tire of your menu after 3 months. Be ahead of the curve with new products and promotions. And remember to pre-promote the items at least a week before.



- **Signature Sundaes** – Every store should have signature sundaes. Do the work for the customer. Be creative and get customers hooked. Remember, signature sundaes should be named based on the theme of your store. Also create them with different ice cream types in mind: chocoholics, fruit type sundaes, peanut butter addicts, etc.



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- **Sundae Specials** — In addition to signature sundaes, add weekly sundae specials. This spices up the menu and gives customers something to anticipate throughout the season.
- **Be Pet Friendly** — Animal lovers will appreciate doggie cones or cups of ice cream. Entice people to bring their pets to the store. They will love you for it!



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- **Don't Ignore The Vocal Minority –**

Gluten free. No sugar added. Organic.

These are buzz words that frozen desserts avoided for years.

As the public becomes particular and educated about their diet choices, these segments can no longer be avoided.

But don't wait for someone to ask what you have in those segments. Be proactive and market to them. They will never be the foundation of your sales, but they can certainly be the difference between a good and great season.



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# Offering Contests, Special Events

- Create a Product Contests
- Eating Contests
- Customer Interactive Contests
- Create Annual Events



- **Create a Sundae/Product Contest** – Have your customers fill out ballots to create their own sundae or specialty product. They get to make it up and name it. The winner gets an incentive and their picture on display. Lots of fun and it will get people involved in your store directly.
- **Sundae Eating Contest** – Create a huge sundae for people to try and eat. If the person eats it, they get it for free and they get their picture on the wall of fame. If they don't they have to pay for it. Win, Win!



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- **Host a Crazy Picture Contest** – It allows your proudest customers to showcase their talents, and if you pick your theme right, your products. It will also most likely result in you having lots of pictures of happy customers to share and reuse on your website, in marketing materials, or just displayed in your store.



- **Create Your Own Awards Show** – A really fun and exciting idea. Think of it as the Academy Awards of Ice Cream. Best Sundae. Best Supporting Topping. Have your customers vote and have a ceremony to make it an event.



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- **Balloon Popping Payment –**

Pick a high ticket and profitable item in your store.

Stuff discounts on that item into balloons.

When a customer orders that item, they can pop the balloon and see what they pay.



- **Annual Events** – Christmas in July, car shows, grand opening specials, charity events, movie nights, eating contests, etc. Have these annual events and be consistent. They may be hard to get off the ground, but when they get rolling they create great buzz and your customers will look forward to them.



# Inside & Outside

- You ought to be in pictures!
- Being Kid-friendly and People-friendly
- Get Creative
- Importance of Menus
- Merchandise
- Keep it Clean!



- **Pictures are Worth a Thousand Customers –**

Take pictures of your customers and put them on display for all to see. Nothing creates a destination more than pictures of your patrons.

Also put pictures of local sports teams, organizations, and special days that you do.



- **Wall of Fame –** In addition to pictures of your customers, collect any local items that can be placed on the wall. Local artwork, uniforms, stories, etc. It will really create a sense of community within the store.

- **Coloring Sheets, crayons, bubbles –**

Give these items away to kids at your store. Parents will love you for it. It keeps the kids occupied. Also, post the colored sheets on your wall of fame!



- **What is in a Name? –**

Nothing sounds sweeter to someone than the sound of their own name. You and your staff should work to remember the names of your customers as often as possible! Another great idea is to create name tags for your customers. People can take them home or hang them on the wall of name tags. As customers come in, they get their name tag and come to order. \*If you want people to take them home, add the frequent buyer card promo to the name tag. Not only will the tag show you their name, but it is also a coupon.



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- **Creation Station** — Have certain days where you promote parents and kids to come in and create their sundaes and products. Kids really love to get involved and if you do it during the day, it can help boost daytime sales.
- **Take Home Menus** — Simple and effective. These will sit in the drawers, purses and glove boxes of all your customers just waiting to keep you top of mind and create that impulse sale. Also a nice handout for off site events.



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- **Menus for your tables** – Build a menu for your tables that features your menu with promotions along with information on other local companies. You can split the cost with those companies too.



- **Menus for your ledges** – Walk up stores have ledges that customers see all the time. Use that space. Put promotional items, events, specials on there for the customers to see. Have a plastic mold put over it where you can slide different things in and out as you need to change it. Also an A-Frame sign where the line builds is a great way to promote your store.



- **Let's Get Visual** – You'll see a theme that visual works better. Customers are more apt to buy off a picture of something than off the title of the same product. Your store menu should be visual and appealing. Use digital pictures of your actual products. Everybody has pulled into a fast food drive in. When is the last time you actually had a menu to read? It's all special pictures. You'll know you're doing it right when a customer points at your menu and says, **"I want that!"**



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- **T-Shirts & Hats** — Have T-shirts and hats for your store.

They are usually inexpensive to print, roughly \$5.00 – \$8.00 each. Rather than spend \$500.00 on some local advertising, give away 100 shirts.

That is constant advertising and lets people remember your store and is a very nice incentive for customers.

Crazy straws, special sundae buckets, silly spoons, etc... inexpensive promotional items like these are always a hit with the kids!



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- **Be Clean!!** – We designate a full one and a half bullet points to stress the importance of keeping your store clean. Customers notice. They may not comment to you, but if they see a dirty store they will definitely be telling someone. Don't let it happen. And your store doesn't stop at the window or entry door. Your store extends to your sidewalk and parking lot. Keep it clean inside and out. And please...please....please don't let the trash overflow!



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# Ideas in Advertising & Social Media

- Marketing Calendar
- Text promotions
- E-Newsletters
- Website
- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram



- **Create a Marketing Calendar** – A must if want to stay organized with your promotions and advertising/marketing events.
- **Text Message Promotions** – Text messages are seen and heard. They appeal to all demographics and campaigns are relatively inexpensive when compared to print coupon magazines.





- **Talk to Your Customers** – Use sites like Constant Contact to send blast emails to your customers. The cost is less than \$150.00 per year. Engage them on your social media channels. When out in the town, ask about your store. Best yet, get out from behind the counter and converse. Your customers will tell you what they want. You just need a platform to listen.
- **Website** – If you have a website, let people know and direct them to it. Have a special word or phrase each week that people can repeat for an incentive at your store. Your website is merely a landing page in this industry but it is important.



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- **Facebook & Twitter** – Now is the time to market your business on Facebook & Twitter. Let your employees help grow your business on there. They are on them everyday. Advertise specials and discounts on these sites. It's free to do it so take advantage. Don't use Groupon to promote your coupons – use an organic FB & Twitter Campaign.



- **Instagram!** –Instagram is a perfect fit for frozen desserts. Not only can you post, but your customers will post their photos and help it grow.



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# Ways to distinguish yourself from the competition

- Create novelty or specialty items to offer your customers that your competition does not offer
- Create to-go pint containers of leftover ice cream or yogurt when you clean your machines
- Create new flavors by mixing yogurts (i.e. Lava Flow – Pineapple, Coconut and Vanilla)



# Ways to distinguish yourself from the competition

## Ice Cream Sandwich

2.5oz. Soft Serve	\$.13
2 Chocolate Wafers	.10
<u>Wrapper</u>	<u>.01</u>
Total	\$.24



**Selling Price**      **\$1.20 each / \$5.00 pack of 6**



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# Ways to distinguish yourself from the competition

## Arctic Swirl

*Note: Candy Pieces are for pre-chopped candy.*

### **16oz. Size**

11oz. Soft Serve	\$ .55
2oz. Chopped Candy	.50
Cup and Spoon	.10
<hr/>	
Total	\$1.15



**Selling Price**

**\$3.75 – \$4.25**

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# Ways to distinguish yourself from the competition

## Ice Cream Cake

69oz. Soft Serve	\$3.45
4oz. Chocolate Cake Fudge	.40
4oz. Cake Fudge	.35
Misc. Decorating Costs	2.50
10" Corrugated Circle	.11
<u>10x10x4" Cake Box</u>	<u>.58</u>
Total	\$7.39

**Selling Price**      **\$17.95 – \$22.95**



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# Ways to distinguish yourself from the competition

## Caramel Espresso Drink

3.5oz. Soft Serve	\$.21
Slush	.05
Caramel	.10
Espresso Flavor	.15
Cup and Spoon	.10
Chocolate/ Caramel Chips	.10
<u>Whipped Cream</u>	<u>.08</u>
Total	\$.79

**Selling Price**      **\$2.75 - \$3.50**



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# Ways to distinguish yourself from the competition

## Fruit Smoothie

3.5oz. Soft Serve	\$.21
Slush	.05
Fruit	.45
<u>Cup and Spoon</u>	<u>.10</u>
Total	\$.81

Selling Price **\$3.00 - \$3.75**



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# Ways to distinguish yourself from the competition

## Yogurt Pie

Graham cracker pie crust	\$2.00
21oz. Yogurt	1.89
Fruit (to garnish)	.50-.75
Whipped topping or Vanilla	
Butter Cream	1.25
<u>Box</u>	<u>.50</u>
Total	\$6.39
<b>Selling Price</b>	<b>\$ 11.00 - \$11.50</b>



  
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# Ways to distinguish yourself from the competition

## To-Go Containers

Pint container	\$0.16
12oz. Yogurt	1.08
<u>Label</u>	<u>.05</u>
Total	\$1.29

**Selling Price    \$5.50**



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