

THE



BLUEPRINT

A case study in agile repurposing of business operations and staff to serve in crisis

Frontera[®] Blueprint

- A very current and local example of how business can move fast to create and deliver direct aid outside of traditional NFP channels.
- Gov. Pritzker's shutdown of the restaurant industry created a pressing need to feed out of work restaurant workers, many living on the margins of the economy.
- Many restaurants emptied their pantries and gave it to their staff. Some vendors joined to contribute food for the workers, but it was only a stopgap measure.
- The Bayless family and their team designed a "shovel-ready" solution to the pressing need to feed their restaurant "family" using existing staff, vendors, and infrastructure.
- A funder was brought on board, and within ONE WEEK, they were up and running to provide 400 families with two 30 pound boxes of groceries a week. Funded from the outset for an eight week duration.
- This is a behind the scenes look at their blueprint, which is an excellent model of how businesses can agilely pivot to address pressing social needs using the skills and staff from their everyday operations.
- Most NFP have viewed businesses primarily as potential donors. But with the COVID-19 layoffs, we're seeing businesses as an untapped resource for good with excess capacity, available to help NFPs scale rapidly to serve their communities. And we can put people back to work at the same time.



Blueprint - Big Picture

CORONAVIRUS

Rick Bayless Unveils Effort to Provide Laid-Off Restaurants Workers With Jobs

Through a new partnership, Bayless and US Foods are giving food and opportunity to those without jobs

by [Elias Cepeda](#) | Mar 31, 2020, 3:30pm CDT

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Chef Rick Bayless | [Barry Brecheisen](#)/Eater Chicago

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Blueprint - Mission

One of the greatest needs for the hundreds of thousands of suddenly unemployed restaurant workers is food. Ironically, those who have dedicated themselves to creating beautiful food for all of us are suddenly without any resources to feed their families. And relief isn't coming to them fast enough.

We have developed a way to solve this tragic dilemma that can provide food for unemployed restaurant workers as well as to create jobs and help prop up the supply chain. With an anonymous donor's \$250,000 contribution, we have started:

- Purchasing US Foods product by the truckload
- Hiring 15 of our laid-off restaurant workers to sort grocery boxes
- Distributing groceries to employees at our Frontera family of restaurants
- Partnering with chefs throughout Chicago to pick up grocery boxes for their staffs.



Blueprint – Overview

Timeframe: 8 weeks, March 30th – May 23rd, 2020

Impact: Feeding 400 foodservice worker families twice a week with 30 lbs. meal boxes (each box to feed a family of 4 for 3 days). A box contains rice, pasta, beans, produce, dairy, meat and poultry.

Background: On Monday, 3/23 US Foods was generous enough to contact us to help them distribute extra product they found themselves with after the unexpected shuttering of restaurants, approx. 320 cases of food donations. We quickly rallied a group of our laid-off staff to process the hundreds of cases of food that showed up at Frontera, dividing everything into several hundred boxes. Chefs from nearby restaurants came to pick up cases of food to divide among their staffs. As the late afternoon faded, grateful staff arrived, thankful beyond words that we were helping them get by until restaurants can open again.

We have started to repeat this model. Our plan for the next 8 weeks is to work with US Foods to purchase approx. \$13,375 of product twice a week, giving a shot in the arm to a struggling supply chain. We will hire 15 laid-off restaurant workers for 8 hrs. each day to process and pack the food into boxes and bags for pick-up.

Through the enormous coalition of independent restaurants that was formed as the restaurant closure was being announced, these boxes will be picked up by, and be distributed to our circle of chefs to their unemployed restaurant workers in the City of Chicago.



Blueprint - Intentions

- Create individual boxes that contain staple pantry foods that are nutritious to feed restaurant workers that are in need.
- Each of these 30 lb. boxes will feed a family of 4 for about 3 days.
- Supply 400 of said boxes per day, 2 days a week = 800 boxes per week.
- We will run this program for 4 weeks.
- We plan to operate this project through the Frontera Farmer's Foundation, a registered 501c3. Our Chef team has consulted medical professionals and created a food safety and workers safety program in line with CDC recommendations, ensuring the utmost protection for the community and our teams.



Blueprint – Box Contents

The proposed contents for a typical single box. These are *categories* of food that are somewhat flexible. They may choose options to substitute in place of the meat (for example: pre-made meals such as soup)

- Rice, 2 lbs
- Beans, 2 lbs
- Pasta, 2 lbs
- Carrots, 2 lbs
- Onions, 3 lbs
- Potatoes, 2 lbs
- Green veg, 3 lbs
- Eggs, 15
- Sliced bread, 1 loaf
- Frozen, pre-packed meat, 5 lbs
- Butter, 1 lb



Blueprint – Daily Inventory

For each packing day they will require these items, as well as a location to receive and repack:

- Rice, 800 lbs
- Beans, 800 lbs
- Pasta, 800 lbs
- Carrots, 800 lbs
- Onions, 1200 lbs
- Potatoes, 800 lbs
- Green Veg, 1200 lbs
- Eggs, 6000 (17 cases)
- Sliced bread, 400 loaves
- Frozen meat, 2000 lbs
- Butter, 400 individual lbs
- All bulk items will require repack, except for the bread, frozen meat, and butter.



Blueprint – Daily Supplies

- 400 cardboard produce boxes that are **uniform, come flat**, and with a **folding top and bottom (not a box we have to tape)**. Ideal size 13" x 13" x 9.5"
- 2 boxes of each size (S, M, LG, XL) nitrile or powdered vinyl gloves
- 400 plastic grocery bags
- 1200 small plastic produce bags, or ziplock bags (For bulk dry goods: rice, beans, pasta)



Blueprint– Safety/Sanitation

- Do not shake hands or bump fists with others. This is not rude, but necessary for our safety!
- Everyone must have their temperature taken upon arrival. If your temperature is above 100F 3 times, you will be sent home.
- Everyone must wear a mask or bandana over your face when handling food or grocery boxes.
- Everyone must wash their hands on the hour, every hour. Wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds: This includes your wrists, fingernails, back of hands, and between fingers.
- Wash your hands after you have touched an unsanitized surface.
- Sanitize surfaces regularly with sanitizer in red buckets.
- Keep distance between people: At least 6 feet.
- Wear gloves when handling food or interacting with guests. Change them regularly, and always after touching unsanitized surfaces, or surfaces that many people touch.
- Do not touch your face with or without gloves. If you do, wash them immediately.



Blueprint – Budget Overview

- The cost of the food and supplies should be roughly \$35/box
- 15 staff working 8 hour shifts / We will be paying them \$150/shift
 - 3 hours sorting & repacking items
 - 3 hours packing boxes
 - 2 hours distributing
- 15 staff x 8 hours x \$150/shift = \$2,250 per day
- 2 days per week = \$4,500 / week
- Food, Supplies, Staffing Cost per week = \$32,500
- Food, Supplies, Staffing Cost – 4 weeks = \$130,000
- Cost per box, picked up at Frontera = \$40.63
- Cost to feed a family of four for 6 days (2 boxes) = \$81.26



Blueprint – the fine print

The Frontera Blueprint (in our analysis) assigns no costs to these (donated or in place) items, some of which may not be available at no cost to every group desiring to activate this model – please factor these into your budgeting as appropriate:

- Rent and utilities, telecom, internet
- Management to handle procurement, payment, and staff scheduling
- Staff to receive and inventory food and supply deliveries, often on days when no packing staff is present
- Cold storage space for meats, dairy, eggs
- Dry storage space for dry goods and packing supplies
- Space and tables needed to repack bulk goods, and assemble / pack boxes
- Food service sanitation certification and monitoring
- Sufficient clean sinks and restrooms with hot water and soap for frequent hand washing
- Sanitizing supplies, and PPE for staff
- Management to oversee packing staff and coordinate box pickups or distribution



Can Business Serve?

Would you wager that anyone could decide to provide 400 out of work families with food for four weeks and get it funded and up and running in a week? It's a sure bet if you know the Bayless family.

Rick and Deann Bayless aren't like many of today's business owners who find it convenient and profitable to pay lip service to social mission and giving back. They're the original trailblazers who've partnered with local farmers and producers to nurture the Midwest food system since the inception of their restaurants. They chose to sacrifice fast profits by buying local, and have gone to extreme lengths to nurture their supply chain, including paying small farmers for their crop a year in advance to help them scale. The Bayless brand may be global, but they are true Midwesterners, and are pioneers in pairing business with social and societal good.

Since 2003, their Frontera Farmer Foundation has given nearly \$2 million in micro grants to small Midwestern family farmers while funding all operation costs out of their pockets. These grants have been pivotal for many small producers to grow and to support their families, and today the foundation has pivoted to rapidly mobilize their company infrastructure and staff to meet the needs of a crisis.

This is the future- a 501(c)(3) mobilizing a business, leveraging its existing assets and teams to deliver a fast to market crisis relief solution.



Lessons & Questions

Based on the success of this business-operated model:

- What can business teach non-profits about planning and logistics? Should we be modeling caterer or restaurant best practices, as an example, when trying to build sustainable feeding programs?
- Must we delay delivering services while a NFP builds a new operations/staffing team and processes to deliver programs, and the clients suffer through the growing pains and inefficiency?
- If we jump in too early, do we risk "owning" leadership and process failures of NFP organizations that often don't become apparent until later in the process? Can we prevent that by partnering with business?
- Must all stakeholder needs can be addressed in crisis solutions, or would we do our jobs better as donors if we declared "Perfect is the enemy of done", and decided speed to service is most important?
- Should we initially outsource program operations/staffing under NFP oversight to deliver results faster while also providing hands-on mentorship for the NFP staff who will eventually take over?
- In the time of COVID-19, what about partnering with companies that have large number of furloughed workers, putting them back to work with their teammates to operate programs and getting free facilities?
- Will more "fast-start" and "shovel-ready" programs designed and/or implemented by businesses attract major donors as alternatives to the usual slow process of consensus building and implementation?



Notes

- When planning feeding program using this model, consider the advantages of partnering with a business entity to run operations in order to be up rapidly, and run with the highest efficiency.
- These business types have facilities, management, and the necessary core capabilities to start fast and reduce or eliminate some infrastructure costs – and they are sitting idle:
 - *Restaurants*
 - *Foodservice companies specializing in meals for schools*
 - *Catering companies*
 - *Operators of employee cafeterias at corporate offices now closed for distancing*
- In the time of COVID-19, consider the added benefits of being able to put laid-off staff back to work by partnering with business.
- If business closures continue, CARES / PPP funding may be able to provide those businesses with funds to pay their employees to come back to work for a NFP until their normal operations are restored. Staffing costs are about 14% of the Frontera budget, eliminating those would feed more families.
- Details of the Blueprint were used with the permission of Frontera and Frontera Farmer Foundation.



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