Dear Associate:

This is your chance to say good-bye to my FYI layout. Our 40th year in business has me ready for a makeover! Better workouts, less sugar, more spa time—oops, I mean the business—new graphics, new website, interactive FYI, better-than-ever service.

REALITY CHECK

Hope you’ll like our new look and online functionality coming this fall.

In April, we moved our NYC presence to MiMA, a mixed-use building in the “Middle of Manhattan.” This building offers work/home/play and sports amenities, creating a vertical village, like those popping up all over the world. The lines between work and home life are becoming more blurred everywhere. We love our view of the river, Javits Center, and the city skyline. Let me know if you want to visit.

Recent events in the news have inspired me to think seriously about the purpose and value of truth and to be more grateful than ever to be a part, however small, of our industry. This platform gives me the opportunity to express my views and to wish that FYI was already interactive. Please let me know what you think about The Truth Business which follows.

Meanwhile, hope your summer is everything you want it to be. Let’s talk soon.

Your food service consultant, bringing you some food for thought, Lynne Hopkins

THE TRUTH BUSINESS

We live in a world where the invisible has grown mighty muscles. Cyberspace is where most of the people on the planet coexist (in words). There was a time when the dominant argument against the existence of God was that He couldn’t be seen. Now, the invisible world is as densely populated as an underground ant colony and just as obvious. In the invisible world, dishonesty dissipates and appears harmless but not in the material world.

Hard sciences, technology, engineering, and math are the tools we use to produce magnificent buildings that evoke strong sensations. The awareness of human grandeur that we glean from glorious towers and magnificent edifices penetrates deep within our psyches. These buildings speak. They inspire us to reach for greatness. They are at the same time functional and didactic.

In the making of construction documents, accuracy is essential. Accuracy is as truth. Accuracy describes truth to the curious who seek a definition of truth. Without accuracy the building falls. Without truth civilization collapses. Tools such as REVIT thankfully assist us to eliminate hapless errors to ensure sound construction, safety, and durability. Objective, blind truth is the equally sound structure for reality.

Imagine that this weren’t the case. Imagine we lived in a fantasy world where everyone created his or her own biased reality, and others had to learn it. Chaos. The rule of law, particularly natural law, gives us an unbiased reality to guide us. Natural law is to truth as accurate construction, safety, and durability. Objective, blind truth is the equally sound structure for reality.

The days of LSD were dangerous and thankfully short-lived. We could enjoy a psychedelic landscape only for so long. Even Salvador Dalí’s masterful surreal paintings wear on us after a while, and we yearn for a Turner landscape or even a cerebral Rothko. We don’t want to linger in someone else’s surreal world. We prefer the common reality.

In our business truth is king. We’re lucky that way. Let’s make sure that what prospers us also follows us into our social orbit for complete happiness. Let’s never lie, let’s not believe lies, let’s not befriend compulsive liars. For by doing so, we’re building our homes with straw. If we do that, when the big bad wolf comes, and he huffs and puffs, we’ll be homeless! Ω
HARNESSING THE HASHTAG

Millennials want to love where they work. They vote with their feet. If they don’t love it, they’re gone. Here are some devices to help them love your cafeteria:

- **Periscope** app allows live broadcast video streaming to show today’s lunch being made in the kitchen. Followers can join, comment, and send hearts in real time to be part of the experience.
- Engage guests before they enter the cafeteria. **Clutch** helps the operator identify customers to drive their dining experience (e.g., Is the guest a vegetarian, does (s)he go to the fitness center?)
- **Appcard** uses data to improve the dining experience to create a value exchange.
- Build customer loyalty in the fixed population by making the experience engaging. Whether customers use cash or a debit card, give them brownie points. Give them 50 cents, and it bounces back right away. For millennials, it’s about fun. They’ll grab the 50 cents and spend more. A line-busting technique is to offer double points between 2 and 3 pm. (Great for when there isn’t ample room for seats.)
- Perform a rolling survey, rather than stop customers to ask.
- **Agilquest** is a technology platform that gives people a choice of when and where to go to work.

When they search for you online, make sure you’re part of the conversation.