



MILLIONAIRE CHEF

Menu Engineering Tool

User Guide



Turn menu sales and recipe costs into clearer pricing,
contribution, and menu decisions.

COST SMART, PRICE RIGHT, PROFIT MORE

MILLIONAIRE CHEF

@themillionairechef | www.millionairechef.com

WHAT THIS TOOL DOES

The Menu Engineering Tool helps you understand which menu items sell, which contribute strongly, and which need attention.



Track Dish Cost, Sell Price, Quantity Sold, and Total Revenue.



Calculate Contribution / Dish, Total Cost, Total Revenue, and Total Contribution.



Review Weighted Menu Food Cost % against your target.



Identify your strongest contribution drivers.



Spot high food cost risks.



Classify items as Stars, Workhorses, Challenges, or Dogs.



Make better decisions about pricing, placement, recipe changes, and menu structure.

This tool is designed for chefs and operators who want a clearer view of menu performance without building a spreadsheet from scratch.

BEFORE YOU START

Use this checklist before entering your menu data:

-  Open the file in Microsoft Excel desktop.
-  Enable macros when Excel asks for permission.
-  Save a clean backup copy before editing.
-  Keep the file saved as an .xlsm file.
-  Do not save the file as .xlsx, because this can remove the tool's button and macro functionality.
-  Only type into the intended input areas.
-  Do not delete or rename workbook tabs.
-  Do not type over formulas, dashboards, pivots, helper areas, or protected cells.

If Excel blocks macros:

On Windows, right-click the downloaded file, choose Properties, select Unblock if available, then reopen the workbook.

The customer copy is delivered as a clean workbook. Save a backup copy before entering your own menu data.

TOOL MAP

The main tabs in the Menu Engineering Tool are:

1

Welcome

Start page and navigation. Use the navigation buttons at the top of each main sheet to move through the tool.

2

Dashboard

Review Revenue, Cost, Contribution, Weighted Menu Food Cost %, Menu Mix, and operational insights. Use the Dashboard dropdown filters to focus the analysis by Menu Class, Meal Period, Period Covered, or Date of Report.

3

Menu Matrix

Review menu performance by category and item, including Popularity %, Contribution / Dish, Total Contribution, and Menu Class.

4

Input

Add menu items manually or import recipe cost data from the Recipe Costing Tool. Imported recipes become available in the Menu Item dropdown.

5

Setup

Customize restaurant name, currency, report year, targets, meal periods, and menu categories.

Settings and technical/helper tabs

These are not part of the normal daily workflow. Do not edit technical tabs or helper areas unless you know exactly what you are changing.

STEP 1: COMPLETE SETUP

Start with the Setup tab.

MILLIONAIRE CHEF Welcome Dashboard Menu Matrix Input **Setup**

RESTAURANT SETUP & CONFIGURATION

Customize the workbook to match your restaurant, menu structure, and reporting targets.

1 RESTAURANT SETTINGS

SETTINGS	VALUE
Restaurant Name	Millionaire Chef
Currency Symbol	Change Currency \$
Report Year	2026
Food Cost Target %	25.0%
Contribution Target / Dish	\$15.00

These settings personalize your reports and set default targets used across the workbook.

3 MENU CONFIGURATION

MEAL PERIODS	MENU CATEGORIES
Breakfast	Appetizer
Lunch	Tapas
Dinner	Main Course
Brunch	Entrees
Take away	Desserts

These lists feed the dropdowns on the Input sheet. Add, remove, or rename items to match your menu structure.

2 DASHBOARD TARGETS

TARGET	VALUE
High Food Cost Warning %	25.0%
Low Contribution Warning	\$10.00

These targets drive performance indicators, coloring, and status labels on the Dashboard and Menu Matrix.

ABOUT THESE SETTINGS

These settings help tailor the Millionaire Chef Menu Engineering System to your restaurant. Changes made here will automatically update dependent reports and calculations.

TIP: After making changes, go to the Dashboard to see the impact.

Restaurant settings:

Restaurant Name

Enter the name of your restaurant, outlet, bakery, café, hotel department, or business.

Currency Symbol

Enter the currency you want the workbook to use.

Report Year

Enter the year you are reporting on.

Food Cost Target %

Enter your target food cost percentage.

Contribution Target / Dish

Enter the minimum contribution per dish you want to use as a reference target

Dashboard targets:

High Food Cost Warning %

Use this to flag items whose Food Cost % is above your warning threshold..

Low Contribution Warning

Use this to flag items whose Contribution / Dish is below your warning threshold.

Important

Warning thresholds are alerts only. They do not determine Star, Workhorse, Challenge, or Dog classification. Menu Class is based on relative Popularity % and Contribution / Dish within the menu analysis group.

Menu configuration:

Meal Periods

Customize the meal periods you use, such as Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Brunch, or Takeaway.

Menu Categories

Customize the menu categories you use, such as Appetizer, Main Course, Desserts, Tapas, or Entrees.

After changing the currency symbol, use the Change Currency button if available so the workbook updates the currency formatting.

STEP 2: ADD MENU ITEMS MANUALLY

Use the Input tab to enter menu item performance data.

The screenshot shows the 'Millionaire Chef' menu engineering tool interface. The 'Input' tab is selected, and the 'Menu Data Entry' form is visible on the left. The form includes fields for Meal Period, Date of Report, Period Covered, Menu Category, Menu Item, Quantity Sold, Dish Cost (\$), and Sell Price. A dropdown menu for 'Meal Period' is open, showing options like Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner. The main table on the right displays menu items with columns for Meal Period, Date of Report, Period Covered, Menu Category, Menu Item, Qty Sold, Item Cost, and Sell Price. The table contains data for various items like Brownie, Panna Cotta, Pavlova, Ice Cream, Chocolate cake, Grilled Chicken, Fish Tacos, Braised Beef, Veggie Pasta, Zero-Cost Test Entree, Strawberry Cream Cup, Melon Cream Parfait, Dessert Trio, and Fruits and Cream.

Complete the Menu Data Entry form:

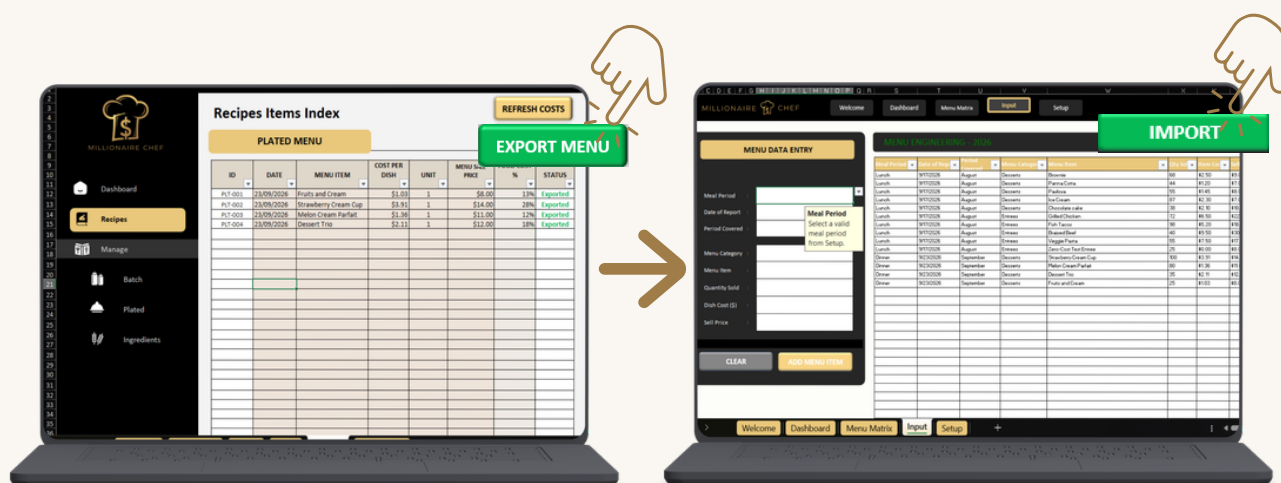
- 1 Meal Period
Choose the meal period, such as Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner etc.
- 2 Date of Report
Enter the report date.
- 3 Period Covered
Enter the month or reporting period being reviewed.
- 4 Menu Category
Choose the menu category, such as Appetizer, Main Course etc.
- 5 Menu Item
Enter the menu item name.
- 6 Quantity Sold
Enter how many portions or units were sold during the period.
- 7 Dish Cost
Enter the cost to produce one portion of the item.
- 8 Sell Price
Enter the selling price.
- 9 Then click ADD MENU ITEM.

The tool validates the entry, saves it into the menu data table, calculates the key metrics, and clears the form for the next item.

You can also edit the allowed input columns directly in the Input table when needed. Calculated and technical columns are protected.

STEP 3: IMPORT FROM THE RECIPE TOOL

Use this step only if you also have the Recipe Costing Tool.



Before importing:

1. Save both .xlsm workbooks in the same folder and keep their original file names.
2. Open the Recipe Costing Tool.
3. Make sure the plated menu items you want to send are marked Ready.
4. Click EXPORT MENU.
5. Open the Menu Engineering Tool after the export if it is not already open.
6. Go to Input and click IMPORT.

The Menu Engineering Tool does not need to be open before you export.
The Recipe Costing Tool can open it as needed when both files are saved correctly.

The import brings across:

- Recipe ID
- Menu Item
- Dish Cost
- Sell Price

Select the imported recipe, then complete:

- Meal Period
- Date of Report
- Period Covered
- Menu Category
- Quantity Sold

New imported recipes become available in the Menu Item dropdown.



Important:

Importing does not automatically create a row in the menu data table.

The Recipe ID, Dish Cost, and Sell Price are pulled from the imported recipe data.
Then click ADD MENU ITEM.

Previously imported recipes remain available. If the same Recipe ID is exported again, the imported recipe data is updated instead of replacing the rest of the imported recipe library. For an existing Menu Engineering row, the recipe-owned fields can update while the reporting fields remain intact.

UNDERSTAND THE INPUT TABLE

The Input table stores the menu data used by the Dashboard and Menu Matrix.

MENU ENGINEERING - 2026								Import	Clear All Menus
Meal Period	Date of Report	Period Covered	Meal Kinds	Menu Item	Qty Sold	Item Cost	Sell Price		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Appetizer	Wagyu Taco	55	\$9.15	\$29.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Appetizer	Mbeyu	42	\$3.56	\$18.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Appetizer	Fuet Tartar	35	\$3.21	\$19.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Appetizer	Snapper Crudo	65	\$6.86	\$26.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Main Course	Scallops	56	\$12.25	\$28.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Main Course	Potato Churros	72	\$7.67	\$22.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Main Course	Bloody Mary Oysters	26	\$10.03	\$27.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Main Course	Beef Sandwich	99	\$3.94	\$24.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Main Course	Lobster Prawn Poke	85	\$5.12	\$22.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Desserts	Cheese Plate	34	\$4.08	\$24.00		
Dinner	3/28/2026	March	Desserts	Watermelon Ceviche	40	\$4.77	\$14.00		
Dinner	8/5/2026	March	Desserts	Pavlova	46	\$3.24	\$12.00		
Dinner	13/5/2026	March	Tapas	Spanish Omelette	43	\$2.20	\$12.00		
Dinner	13/5/2026	March	Tapas	Ensalada Russa	33	\$1.60	\$10.00		
Lunch	14/5/2026	April	Desserts	Fruit Floatie	14	\$2.31	\$12.00		
Lunch	14/5/2026	April	Desserts	Ice Cream Sandwich	36	\$2.00	\$12.00		
Lunch	14/5/2026	April	Desserts	Mango Mania Sundae	28	\$1.25	\$12.00		
Lunch	14/5/2026	April	Desserts	Acai Sorbet Bowl	12	\$2.15	\$12.00		
Lunch	14/5/2026	April	Desserts	Gelato & Sorbet	44	\$1.21	\$10.00		
Lunch	14/5/2026	April	Desserts	Molten Pistachio Blossom	32	\$3.31	\$15.00		
Lunch	14/5/2026	April	Desserts	Lemon Mirage	18	\$1.74	\$12.00		
Lunch	14/5/2026	April	Desserts	S'mores	48	\$2.57	\$14.00		
Dinner	15/5/2026	April	Main Course	Beef Wellington	12	\$2.25	\$19.00		

- Meal Period
The meal period or service.
- Date of Report
The report date.
- Period Covered
The reporting month or period.
- Menu Category
Appetizer, Entrées, Dessert, etc.
- Menu Item
The name of the item being analyzed.
- Qty Sold
The number of portions or units sold.
- Dish Cost
The cost to produce one item.
- Sell Price
The selling price.

The Dashboard and Menu Matrix read from this table. Keep this data clean and consistent.

Dashboard dropdown filters affect Dashboard calculations only. They do not hide or filter rows in the Input table.

READ THE DASHBOARD

The Dashboard gives you a high-level view of menu performance.



← Dashboard filters

Use the four dropdown filters to focus the analysis:

- Menu Class
- Meal Period
- Period Covered
- Date of Report

Key areas include:

- **Total Revenue**
Shows total sales generated by the menu data.
- **Total Cost**
Shows the total dish cost across the selected sales mix.
- **Total Contribution**
Shows the contribution generated by the selected data before the rest of the business costs.
- **Contribution Margin %**
Shows Total Contribution as a percentage of Total Revenue.
- **Weighted Menu Food Cost %**
Shows the sales-mix-weighted theoretical food cost of the selected menu data.
- **Target Food Cost %**
Shows the food cost target set in Setup.
- **Average Contribution / Dish**
Shows the average Contribution / Dish for the selected menu data.
- **Menu Mix**
Shows the share of Stars, Workhorses, Challenges, and Dogs.
- **Operational Insights**
Highlights Top Seller, Top Contribution Driver, Highest Food Cost Risk, and Biggest Opportunity.

Use the Dashboard first to understand the overall picture.
Then use the Menu Matrix to decide item-by-item action.

READ THE MENU MATRIX

The Menu Matrix breaks menu performance down by category and item.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z AA AB AC AD AE AF AG AH AI AJ AK AL AM AN AO AP A

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WelcomeDashboardMenu MatrixInputSetup

PDFFiltersPeriod:Report Date:REFRESH/CLEAR FILTER

Desserts

Menu Item	Qty Sold	Popularity %	Dish Cost	Sell Price	Contribution	Total Cost	Total Revenue	Total Contribution	Menu Class
Brownie	68	12.78%	\$2.50	\$3.00	\$0.50	\$170.00	\$612.00	\$442.00	Workhorse
Panna Cotta	44	8.27%	\$1.20	\$1.00	-\$0.20	\$52.80	\$308.00	\$255.20	Dog
Pavlova	55	10.34%	\$1.45	\$3.00	\$1.55	\$173.75	\$440.00	\$266.25	Dog
Ice Cream	81	16.35%	\$2.30	\$7.00	\$4.70	\$200.10	\$609.00	\$408.90	Workhorse
Chocolate cake	38	7.14%	\$2.10	\$10.00	\$7.90	\$173.80	\$380.00	\$206.20	Challenge
Strawberry Cream Cup	100	18.80%	\$3.31	\$14.00	\$10.69	\$331.47	\$1,400.00	\$1,068.53	Star
Melon Cream Parfait	80	15.04%	\$1.36	\$11.00	\$9.64	\$108.34	\$880.00	\$771.66	Star
Dessert Trio	35	6.58%	\$2.11	\$12.00	\$9.89	\$173.97	\$420.00	\$246.03	Challenge
Fruits and Cream	25	4.70%	\$1.03	\$3.00	\$1.97	\$25.75	\$200.00	\$174.25	Dog
Averages:	53.11		\$2.00	\$3.56	\$1.56	\$131.40	\$583.22	\$451.82	
Total Items: 9									

Entrees

Menu Item	Qty Sold	Popularity %	Dish Cost	Sell Price	Contribution	Total Cost	Total Revenue	Total Contribution	Menu Class
Grilled Chicken	72	24.83%	\$6.50	\$22.00	\$15.50	\$466.00	\$1,584.00	\$1,118.00	Star
Fish Tacos	36	33.79%	\$5.20	\$18.00	\$12.80	\$503.60	\$1,764.00	\$1,260.40	Workhorse
Braised Beef	40	13.73%	\$3.50	\$30.00	\$26.50	\$380.00	\$1,200.00	\$820.00	Challenge
Veggie Pasta	55	18.37%	\$7.50	\$17.00	\$9.50	\$412.50	\$935.00	\$522.50	Dog
Zero-Cost Test Entree	25	8.62%	\$0.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	Dog
Averages:	58.00		\$5.14	\$19.00	\$13.26	\$354.02	\$1,136.60	\$782.58	
Total Items: 5									

GRAND TOTALS:

822\$2,952.71\$10,932.00\$7,979.29

ghted Menu Food Co.27.01%

MENU ITEM CLASSIFICATION GUIDE

CATEGORY	CONTRIBUTION	VOLUME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
WORKHORSE	LOW	HIGH	Review pricing, portioning, garnish cost, ingredient cost, supplier pricing, and prep efficiency. Small improvements matter because this item sells often.
CHALLENGE	HIGH	LOW	Improve menu placement, description, server training, photos, recipe, or cost. Repricing is a last resort. Repricing is a last resort. Repricing is a last resort.
STAR	HIGH	HIGH	Protect the recipe and execution. Keep it simple and consistent, promote carefully, and make sure the team knows how to sell it.
DOG	LOW	LOW	Review the recipe, pricing, portioning, and purpose. Improve, simplify, replace, or remove the item if it no longer earns its place.

You can review:

- Menu item
- Quantity sold
- Popularity %
- Dish cost
- Sell price
- Contribution / Dish
- Total cost
- Total revenue
- Total contribution
- Menu class

The Menu Matrix groups items by Menu Category. Popularity % and Contribution / Dish are compared within the relevant category in the selected report view to determine Menu Class.

Use the filters at the top of the Menu Matrix to review the report view you need.

The purpose of the Menu Matrix is not just to show numbers. It is designed to help you decide what to promote, protect, improve, reprice, replace, or remove.

WHAT EACH MENU CLASS MEANS

Star



High contribution. High popularity.

These are strong items within their menu category..

Action:

Protect the recipe and execution. Keep standards consistent, promote carefully, and make sure the team knows how to sell it.

Workhorse



Lower contribution. High popularity.

These items sell often, so small contribution improvements can matter.

Action:

Review pricing, portion size, garnish cost, ingredient cost, supplier pricing, and prep efficiency. Small improvements matter because this item sells often.

Challenge



High contribution. Lower popularity.

These items contribute well when they sell, but need more demand.

Action:

Improve menu placement, description, server training, photography, specials, or guest positioning. The goal is to increase sales without damaging contribution.

Dog



Lower contribution. Lower popularity.

These items need a closer look at their financial and strategic role.

Action:

Review the recipe, pricing, positioning, and purpose. Improve, simplify, replace, or remove the item if it no longer earns its place.

Use classification as a decision aid, not a verdict. Check recipe cost, contribution, operational complexity, and the item's strategic role before making changes.

PRINT, PDF, AND CLEAR SAFELY

EXPORT PDF :



Menu Matrix

Use PDF button on the Menu Matrix when you want a printable menu engineering report. Choose the save location when prompted.

Dashboard

Use PDF button on the Dashboard when you want to save the current Dashboard view as a PDF. Choose the save location when prompted.

Clear Filters



Use Clear Filters on the Menu Matrix if the report looks incomplete or filtered.



Clear



Use Clear on the Input tab to clear the manual entry form.

Clear All Menus



Use Clear All Menus only when you intentionally want to remove menu data.

Important:

Before using Clear All Menus, save a backup copy of the workbook. This action is designed for resetting menu data and should not be used casually.

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Avoid these mistakes when using the Menu Engineering Tool:



Entering sales quantity as revenue instead of portions sold.



Entering total recipe cost instead of dish cost for one sold item



Leaving sell price blank.



Using inconsistent menu category names.



Forgetting to update Setup before entering data.



Typing over calculated or technical columns in the Input table.



Saving the file as .xlsx instead of .xlsm.



Renaming the connected Recipe Tool file or Menu Engineering files.



Using Excel Online, Google Sheets, or Apple Numbers.



Importing recipe data but forgetting to complete Meal Period, Date of Report, Period Covered, Menu Category, and Quantity Sold.



Assuming Contribution is the same as final restaurant profit.



Reading the Dashboard or Menu Matrix without checking active filters



Using Clear All Menus without saving a backup.

Clean input data creates useful menu decisions.

Poor input data creates poor analysis.

TROUBLESHOOTING & SUPPORT



Macros are blocked

Open the file in Excel desktop. If Windows blocks macros, right-click the file, choose Properties, select Unblock if available, then reopen the workbook.



Dashboard does not update

Check that menu data exists in the Input table. Check the four Dashboard dropdown filters and set them to All to restore the full view.



Menu Matrix looks incomplete

Check the filters at the top of the Menu Matrix. Use Refresh / Clear Filters if needed.



An imported recipe does not show

Confirm that the recipe was exported from the Recipe Costing Tool and that both files were saved correctly.



The numbers look wrong

Check Quantity Sold, Dish Cost, Sell Price, Food Cost Target %, reporting period, and Menu Category.



Currency did not update

Go to Setup, choose the currency symbol, then click CHANGE CURRENCY. Currency changes display formatting only; values are not converted.



I made a mistake

Close the file without saving, or return to your clean backup copy.

For support, contact:

support@millionairechef.com



When asking for help, include:

- Which file you are using
- Which tab you are on
- What button you clicked
- A screenshot of the issue
- A short description of what you expected to happen

FINAL NOTES



Clear menu data leads to better pricing,
stronger decisions, and a more profitable menu.

COST SMART. PRICE RIGHT. PROFIT MORE.



*Thank you for being a
Millionaire Chef.*

MILLIONAIRE CHEF

COST SMART. PRICE RIGHT. PROFIT MORE.
