

Economic growth:

Our company has been fortunate to have a steady sales increase over the past four years. This generates a generous amount of tax revenue for our city. We also employ close to a hundred people with good paying jobs and we have a great retention rate. While we are always striving to get better we have been very pleased with our growth.

To set ourselves apart from the competition & customer service practices:

Willie Sue's has been embedded in the bedrock of Sumter history since it's early days of its inception. The name was derived from our owners' grandmother Willie Sue Pierson Mcleod. Historical photos of Sumter's rich agricultural history adorn the walls. The wood used to build/decorate the restaurant is reclaimed wood from the old Sumter Train Depot. We have an upscale menu with a laid-back atmosphere. While it has gotten better over the years, Sumter has not had a lot of variety with its food establishments. We have created a menu that allows for many different food choices. We only use certified angus beef for our steaks. All our steaks are cooked on a custom-made wood fire grill that creates the high heat need to sear meats, which makes them much juicer. The wood grill also imparts a great smoky flavor that you can't get when cooking on gas. With both our service and food we try to provide our guests with an experience, not just a meal.

We call our patrons guests, not customers. The reasoning is we want our staff to convey that these are our guests whom we've invited into our home, and not just customers that show up to buy something. We monitor social media to find out what we are doing right, as well as our opportunities. Our managers make a concerted effort to talk to all our tables so that we get to personally know our guests.

We have been in business for four years.

The biggest challenge that we have faced has been staffing. It is very difficult to find quality or experienced help. Location has also been a challenge that we've had to overcome. We don't necessarily have the traffic or the hotel patrons that other restaurants in town enjoy. However, we are fortunate that we get traffic from the back gate of Shaw. The new construction of homes/apartments in this area has helped as well.

Unique Approach:

We spend a lot less in advertising than most chain restaurants. Instead we have an employee that takes food samples & Togo menus around to business' in the community. We use this opportunity to generate excitement about our food and create awareness.

We give to numerous schools, churches, Shaw and other charities on a weekly basis. We have participated in Sumter Farm to Table, Sumter Disabilities Benefit Gala, The Fall Feast. We have hosted the Young Professionals as well as the Chamber's After-Hours event.

We have been members of the Chamber since opening four years ago.

While we are quite sure that we have a large environmental foot print, we do everything possible to decrease it. We use led bulbs, where possible. We have tankless toilets and water heaters. We recycle fry oil and cardboard boxes. We just recently installed a nitrogen generator, to nullify tank deliveries,

which will use less fossil fuels. Our wood supplier tries to get as many donated or downed trees as possible for us to use. These trees would typically end up in a landfill.