

THE RED ENVELOPE PLAYBOOK

A complete how-to guide for planning, launching, promoting, and measuring a digital Red Envelope campaign.



The big idea: Give customers something today that brings them back on the day you actually need the business. Digital wallet cards add a direct reminder channel that paper envelopes do not have.

Practical examples • Seven campaign models • Push copy • Staff scripts • Launch checklist • Metrics

Executive summary

A Red Envelope promotion turns a present-day visit into a reason to return later. A customer receives a special envelope during a distribution period, then returns during a defined redemption period to reveal or claim a prize. Restaurants often use it during busy holiday weeks to increase traffic during slower weeks in January, but the same mechanics work on ordinary slow nights, after events, or as a VIP reward.

With Krowd, the envelope is a digital wallet card saved to Apple Wallet or Google Wallet. Instead of hoping a guest keeps a paper envelope and notices an occasional social post, a restaurant can communicate with participating passholders through wallet updates and push notifications, subject to phone settings and supported pass capabilities.

This guide explains the promotion as an operational program, not simply a giveaway. It covers choosing the right offer, establishing rules, training staff, planning communications, running redemptions, and evaluating return on investment.

Critical distinction: Enrolling in a wallet card replaces the separate paper-envelope registration step. It does not automatically give the restaurant an email address, phone number, or consent for email/SMS marketing. Those must be collected and permissioned separately.

What you will build

- A clear distribution window and separate redemption window.
- A prize structure that guests find exciting and that the restaurant can afford.
- A digital card enrollment and a reliable redemption process.
- A promotion plan using in-store staff, social media, email/SMS where permitted, and wallet pushes.
- A measurement plan that connects redemptions with actual return visits and sales.

Contents

Section	What it covers
01 Strategy	Mechanics, goals and what changes when the envelope is digital
02 Campaign models	Seven ways to run the promotion throughout the year
03 Build the campaign	Dates, prizes, economics, configuration and rules
04 Promote and operate	Staff training, channel plan and notification sequence
05 Redemption	Verification, edge cases and measuring results
06 Launch toolkit	Examples, checklists, templates and a 30-day timeline

01 Understand the mechanics

The traditional version

A restaurant hands a sealed paper envelope to eligible guests while traffic is strong. The guest keeps it unopened until a return visit during the redemption period. Staff verify and open it, and the guest receives whatever prize is inside. The model works because it creates anticipation and gives the customer a deadline and reason to come back.

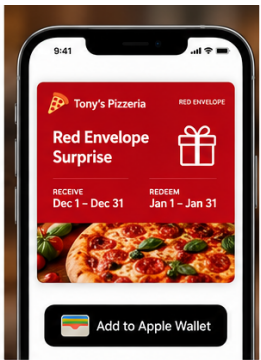
The Krowd digital version

- Enrollment: A guest scans an in-store code or follows a link and saves the digital Red Envelope wallet pass. This first scan is for receiving the pass, not an additional registration of an already-issued paper envelope.
- Holding period: The pass remains in the wallet. The restaurant sends campaign reminders and updates where supported.
- Return: During the published redemption period, the guest visits, shows the pass, and follows the specified redemption process.
- Completion: Staff validate and record redemption to prevent the same reward being claimed twice.
- Afterward: If the card and program are configured to support it, participating passholders may be invited to future promotions.

A five-step customer journey



1 Customer Visits
They see your Red Envelope promotion and scan or tap to get their digital envelope.



2 They Save It
The envelope is added to their Apple Wallet or Google Wallet in seconds.



3 They Get Reminders
You send push notifications to build excitement and remind them to return.



4 They Return to Redeem
They visit during the redemption period and reveal or redeem their prize.

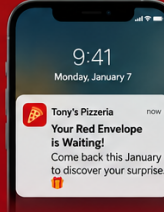


5 You Keep the Connection
Continue engaging them with future offers and promotions.

EXAMPLE PUSH NOTIFICATIONS



Campaign Launch
Drive participation during your pick-up period.



Redemption Reminder
Build excitement and bring them back.

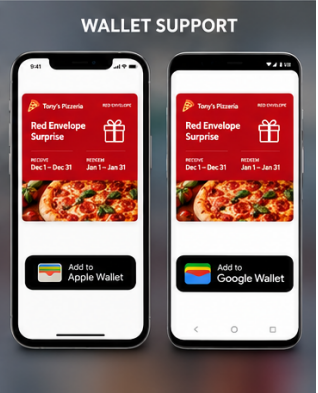


Last Chance
Create urgency before the deadline.

EXAMPLE ENVELOPE PRIZES



WALLET SUPPORT



Illustrative sample: “Tony’s Pizzeria” and sample push messages are fictional examples, not actual Krowd campaign results.

What the wallet pass does and does not do

It can help with	Do not assume
A convenient pass customers keep on a phone	Every push will be seen or opened
Sending permitted wallet-pass updates and reminders	A wallet pass supplies email or SMS permission
Presenting campaign details at redemption	Random prize assignment and reveal are automatic
Making it easier to run follow-up promotions	POS integration, reporting or single-use locks exist without setup

02 Choose your campaign model

Pick one primary goal before picking dates and prizes. The best model is the one matched to an actual gap in traffic or repeat visits. All examples below are illustrative and should be configured to match the restaurant's capabilities and written rules.

1. Classic holiday mystery

Goal: Bring December guests back in January.

How to run it: Distribute during December 1–31. Redeem January 2–31. Give every eligible guest a digital envelope that is valid only for a January prize reveal or claim.

Sample wallet push: “Your Red Envelope is waiting! Come back this January to discover your surprise.”

Operating note: Requires a documented method of assigning and securely verifying each prize, plus staff rules for opening/revealing it.

2. Instant-win / mystery reveal

Goal: Create immediate excitement around a visit or brief promotion.

How to run it: Distribute during a weekend. Assign a reward as the customer enrolls, or reveal a reward on a later qualifying visit. Limit redemption to the promotion dates.

Sample wallet push: “You’ve got a mystery reward. Visit us Tuesday or Wednesday to reveal it!”

Operating note: If prizes vary, decide whether they are preassigned, randomly assigned or manually revealed. Test the exact implementation before advertising it.

3. Slow-night accelerator

Goal: Fill tables on specific low-demand days or times.

How to run it: Issue envelopes on busier days and make rewards redeemable only Tuesday–Thursday, or within another clearly defined slow window.

Sample wallet push: “Tuesday surprise: bring your Red Envelope tomorrow and claim your reward.”

Operating note: Set blackout periods, valid hours and any minimum spend clearly; avoid complicated terms.

4. Seven-day bounce-back

Goal: Turn one recent visit into the next one.

How to run it: Offer a return incentive after a first visit or event. Give customers seven to fourteen days to redeem; remind them before it expires.

Sample wallet push: “Thanks for stopping in! Your Red Envelope reward expires this Sunday.”

Operating note: Track return visit, not only enrollment, and ensure expiration timing is communicated accurately.

5. VIP-only appreciation

Goal: Reward current members and make membership desirable.

How to run it: Issue exclusive envelopes to existing VIP members monthly or quarterly, with a reward unavailable to casual visitors.

Sample wallet push: “VIP perk: your members-only Red Envelope is ready this week.”

Operating note: Clearly distinguish a VIP campaign from a public offer and avoid accidental access by nonmembers.

6. Shop-local partner edition

Goal: Expand reach with nearby businesses.

How to run it: Collect sponsored prizes from local businesses; feature partners in prelaunch posts and celebrate redeemed partner prizes.

Sample wallet push: “This month’s Red Envelope includes surprises from our neighborhood partners!”

Operating note: Agree on prize inventory, redemption responsibility, validity, publicity permission and fulfillment in writing.

7. Monthly mystery program

Goal: Make repeat engagement habitual without creating notification fatigue.

How to run it: Reuse the theme each month with a fresh eligibility window, offer rules and expiration date; invite existing passholders back.

Sample wallet push: “New month. New surprise. Your Red Envelope offer is back.”

Operating note: Confirm whether your pass can be refreshed, must issue a new reward, or must be replaced before promising monthly reuse.

03 Build a campaign that makes economic sense

Step 1 Name the target behavior

Avoid starting with “What can we give away?” Start with “Which additional visit do we want?” Choose an objective such as 150 Tuesday redemptions, stronger January return traffic, more second visits within 14 days, or renewed engagement with existing VIPs.

Step 2 Select your two date windows

- Distribution: the date range during which guests qualify to receive or enroll in the envelope.
- Redemption: the later date range during which a customer can claim a prize.
- Qualifying action: any purchase, a minimum spend, an eligible menu item, an event attendance or membership status, depending on lawful published rules.
- Urgency: the redemption period should be long enough to be practical but short enough to encourage a return visit.

Example: Begin promoting November 15. Issue envelopes December 1–31. Redeem January 2–31. Schedule a reminder when redemption opens, another mid-month, and a final reminder three days before expiration.

Step 3 Build a prize lineup worth talking about

The everyday rewards give guests a reason to participate. The headline prize gives the entire community a reason to pay attention. A \$100 gift card can be a useful supporting prize, but should not be the featured grand prize in a major holiday campaign. Plan the headline first, then build the lower tiers around it.

Prize philosophy: Make the grand prize a local newsworthy experience or meaningful item: an illustrative \$2,000 getaway package, \$1,500 home entertainment bundle, premium e-bike, major concert weekend, or a sponsored year of local experiences. Confirm the actual prize, stated value, eligibility, and availability before advertising.

Create a four-tier prize ladder

Tier	Illustrative prize	Purpose
Headline / Grand	Weekend getaway package, premium e-bike, or \$1,500 home theater package	The reason to talk, share and come back
Major prizes	Hotel night + dinner, golf foursome, concert tickets + dining, spa package	Build visible excitement with multiple winners
Mid-tier	Dinner for two, \$50-\$100 gift card, family entertainment package	Make the prize list feel substantial
Everyday wins	Free dessert, appetizer, \$5-\$10 qualifying offer	Affordable, broadly distributed reasons to return

Illustrative allocation for 500 envelopes

Reward tier	Count	Example
Grand prize	1	One sponsored headline prize, target advertised value \$1,500-\$2,500
Major prizes	4	Four partner-funded experiences or products
Mid-tier prizes	25	Dining packages, \$50 gift cards, partner services
Everyday rewards	470	Desserts, appetizers and qualifying bounce-back offers
TOTAL	500	Set actual quantities, odds and value in official rules

This allocation is a sample budgeting framework, not a promise of prize inventory or a built-in randomization feature. Use actual confirmed inventory and legally reviewed contest mechanics.

Step 3A Recruit local businesses to sponsor the big prizes

Local partners are not a footnote. They can be the most powerful part of a Red Envelope campaign. Instead of asking the restaurant to spend thousands of dollars on a single prize, assemble an experience using products and services contributed by businesses that also want local attention.

Build a package that sounds better than its parts

Local partner	Example contribution	Sample combined package
Boutique hotel	One-night stay	Weekend getaway
Restaurant / brewery	Dinner for two	Weekend getaway
Spa or activity venue	Couples treatment or activity passes	Weekend getaway
Florist / retailer	Gift basket or local goods	Weekend getaway

A hotel night, dinner, activity and gift basket can become one compelling “Local Weekend Escape”. Another package could combine concert tickets, a hotel stay, transportation credit and pre-show dinner. The advertised package value should be the documented fair value of the actual contributions, not an inflated promotional number.

Who to approach

- Hotels, inns and vacation properties for overnight stays.
- Golf courses, bowling centers, theaters and entertainment venues for experiences.
- Auto dealers, bike shops, electronics retailers and outdoor stores for a featured item.
- Salons, spas, fitness studios and wellness businesses for service packages.
- Other independent restaurants, breweries and coffee shops for dining experiences.
- Local chambers, merchant associations and neighborhood groups for introductions and amplification.

What sponsors receive in return

- Prominent credit on a dedicated sponsor graphic and the campaign landing page, where available.
- Individual social media spotlights explaining each sponsor and its donated prize.
- Recognition in restaurant signage and employee talking points.
- Inclusion in approved campaign emails and partner announcements, where permissioned.
- A winner announcement or prize-presentation feature, subject to the winner’s consent.
- A coordinated opportunity to share the promotion with the sponsor’s own audience.

Do not promise every sponsor a push notification. The wallet audience joined a restaurant promotion, so keep messages relevant, avoid excessive sponsor advertising, and respect permissions and applicable rules. You can still recognize partners in campaign content and selected relevant updates.

Offer simple sponsorship levels

Participation	Example contribution	Suggested recognition
Headline partner	Donates or funds grand prize	Featured title credit + prominent launch spotlight
Major prize partner	Contributes a meaningful experience or merchandise	Prize spotlight + signage + winner mention
Community partner	Contributes smaller prizes or services	Partner roundup + shared campaign recognition

Keep sponsorship simple: contribution and fulfillment expectations in writing, clear recognition deliverables, and no exaggerated reach or sales promises. Partner tiers are suggested outreach structures, not fixed Krowd packages.

A practical five-step sponsor outreach plan

- Make a target list: Start with 15-25 businesses that share the same local customer base without directly competing.
- Lead with the community story: Explain that the campaign brings residents back into local businesses during slow weeks.
- Ask for a specific item: A two-night stay is easier to consider than a vague “donation.” Offer smaller alternatives.
- Put it in writing: Capture retail/fair value, restrictions, dates, delivery, substitution policy, logo permission and what publicity the sponsor receives.
- Promote and follow through: Tag and thank sponsors, provide a clear fulfillment handoff, and share a short post-campaign recap.

Copy-and-use sponsor invitation

“We’re running a community Red Envelope campaign to bring customers back to local businesses during the slower season. We’re putting together a few exciting prize packages with neighborhood partners. Would you be interested in contributing a stay, experience, product or gift card? We’ll feature confirmed partners in our promotion and celebrate the winners. I’d love to share the simple details.”

The sponsor agreement checklist

- Exact donated item and realistic stated value; number available.
- Who delivers the prize, to whom, by what date and at whose expense.
- Expiration, booking limitations, exclusions, taxes and fees.
- Permissions for sponsor name, branding, photos and joint promotions.

- Any substitution process, cancellation handling and winner contact workflow.
- Agreed marketing deliverables, without guaranteed impressions or sales.
- Legal review of rules, prize valuation, drawing/randomization, eligibility and relevant registration/bonding obligations.

Make the prize campaign itself a marketing event

Do a prize reveal before the giveaway begins. Introduce one sponsor at a time on social media. Show the actual item or experience rather than only posting text. During redemption, announce verified winners with permission. The featured prize helps earn attention; the digital envelope and well-timed wallet pushes help convert that attention into return visits.

Step 4 Work backward from economics

Prepare a simple forecast before launching: estimated number of enrolled guests × expected redemption rate = expected redemptions. Then multiply expected redemptions by average reward cost. Compare this with the expected incremental gross profit from resulting visits. Record marketing, design and staff time as campaign costs too.

Example, not a performance claim: 500 passes × 30% redemption = 150 redemption visits. At \$4 average reward cost, expected redeemed rewards cost \$600. Whether the campaign is profitable depends on how many of those visits are incremental and the contribution margin on purchased items.

Step 5 Establish clear terms

- Define eligibility, distribution dates, redemption dates and participating locations.
- State whether one envelope is allowed per person, per visit or per qualifying purchase.
- State whether rewards can be combined, transferred or redeemed for cash.
- Document how staff verify expiration and prevent duplicate redemptions.
- If prizes are randomized or awarded through a drawing, obtain appropriate review of promotional law, official rules and any no-purchase-necessary requirements.
- Decide what happens if a customer changes phones, loses a pass or has no smartphone.

04 Configure and test the digital experience

A practical configuration checklist

- Create a campaign-specific wallet card design with the restaurant's name, clear Red Envelope branding and readable dates.
- Choose the enrollment entry point: tabletop sign, check presenter, receipt, website link, QR code or existing member journey.

- Choose the reward model: everyone gets the same offer, staff reveal a preset reward, or individualized prizes are assigned using an approved process.
- Document where redemption is validated, who can approve it, and how it is recorded.
- Write and schedule wallet push messages only for enrolled recipients whose pass supports those notifications.
- Run the complete guest journey on a real iPhone and Android device before launch.
- Verify that expired or already-redeemed rewards cannot be reused unexpectedly.

Product configuration note: This white paper describes campaign operating models, not a claim that every prize allocation, reveal screen, redemption lock, or reporting integration is available out of the box. Confirm the exact Krowd setup used by your venue before advertising that behavior.

Test cases before going live

Test	Expected result
First enrollment	Guest can save the intended card and sees accurate campaign dates.
Repeat enrollment	A returning guest cannot unexpectedly collect duplicate rewards.
Push delivery	Supported pass/device receives the intended update or notification.
Before redemption period	Staff correctly refuses early redemption and explains why.
Eligible redemption	Staff can validate the reward and register completion.
Second attempt	Previously claimed reward is rejected or flagged.
Expired pass	Terms and staff process handle expiration consistently.

05 Train the team and assign ownership

The promotional owner is responsible for the reward inventory, staff readiness, campaign communications, redemptions, and the final scorecard. This can be a manager, owner, or engaged team member. Without one clear owner, even a well-advertised campaign can fall apart at the point of service.

What every server and bartender should know

- Who qualifies and how the guest receives their digital Red Envelope.
- When it can be redeemed and whether it needs a future visit.
- What to say when someone asks whether they won something.
- How to handle eligibility questions and exceptions.
- How to verify the prize and mark it as used.
- Who resolves disputes, technical issues or an unrecognized card.

Suggested 15-second guest invitation

“We’re doing a Red Envelope promotion! Save yours to your phone today. It has a surprise for a future visit, and we’ll send a reminder when it’s time to come back. It only takes a moment.”

Suggested redemption script

“Welcome back! Let me see your Red Envelope. I’ll verify the dates and your reward, then we’ll get it applied.”

Manager opening checklist

- Confirm the correct campaign dates and active reward inventory.
- Check that signs and table tents are visible and links work.
- Remind the team of the 15-second explanation.
- Check any upcoming pushes for accurate dates and terms.
- Review exception handling and who has manager approval.

06 Market the promotion before, during and after distribution

Phase A Build anticipation

Begin a week or two before distribution. Post a preview of the Red Envelope, show selected prizes, feature community partners and let guests know when distribution starts. Use social engagement to create curiosity, not just to repeat a discount.

Phase B Enroll customers during the busy period

Make the invitation impossible to miss inside the restaurant. Use a small sign at the host stand, a table tent, a check presenter, and staff reminders. External social and email channels can increase awareness, but the in-restaurant moment often offers the clearest opportunity to enroll an actual guest.

Phase C Bring them back for redemption

Start the redemption window with a wallet reminder. Follow with a mid-period message and a deadline reminder. Share winner stories with permission and let customers see that prizes are being awarded fairly.

Sample four-channel activation plan

Channel	Example action
In-store	Table tent + staff invitation + checkout reminder
Social / Google Business Profile	Launch post, partner spotlights, reminder post, winner feature
Email / SMS where permissioned	Announce campaign and support specific enrollment or redemption messages
Wallet pass	Message enrolled Red Envelope holders at redemption opening and before deadline

Push notification sequence you can adapt

Timing	Suggested message
Enrollment opens	"Red Envelope season is here! Visit us to claim your digital surprise."
Redemption starts	"Your Red Envelope is ready! Come back this month to reveal your reward."
Mid-window	"Have you redeemed your Red Envelope yet? Your surprise is still waiting."
3 days left	"Only 3 days left! Bring your Red Envelope in before the deadline."
Final day	"Last day for your Red Envelope reward. Visit us before closing tonight!"

Important: Use final-day language only when accurate for the particular restaurant's hours and rules. Do not promise guaranteed rewards or features the campaign is not configured to deliver.

07 Run the redemption period like an event

Have one owner accountable for daily redemption readiness. Train employees to recognize valid passes and celebrate wins. Film or photograph enthusiastic winners only with appropriate permission. Highlight prizes actually awarded; do not stage or imply results that did not happen.

Daily redemption workflow

- Customer presents the wallet card.
- Staff verify the campaign, dates and eligibility.
- Staff reveal or validate the assigned reward according to the published rules.
- Staff record redemption and apply the reward through the venue's checkout process.
- Manager handles any exceptions; staff do not improvise prize rules.

Common issues and a practical response

Issue	Response
Guest has no pass	Offer the approved enrollment or lookup option if allowed by program rules.
Customer arrived early	Show the redemption dates and invite a return during the valid period.
Offer is expired	Use the published policy; do not promise ad-hoc extensions.
Same pass is shown twice	Check recorded redemption before granting another reward.
A large prize is awarded	Manager verifies record and fulfillment process; request photo consent separately.

08 Measure return visits, not vanity metrics

An attractive wallet card and lots of campaign posts do not by themselves prove the promotion worked. The central question is whether the program generated additional profitable visits in the target period.

Core performance dashboard

Metric	How to use it
Passes issued	Shows enrollment volume and campaign reach.
Unique customers	Avoids overcounting people with multiple passes or visits.
Redemption rate	Redeemed rewards divided by eligible issued rewards.
Incremental visits	Estimate visits that would not have happened without the campaign.
Average redemption check	Measures sales from returning customers.
Cost per redemption	Prize cost plus allocated campaign expense per completed redemption.
Contribution from the campaign	Incremental gross profit less reward and campaign costs.

A better after-action review

- Which distribution channels enrolled the most customers?
- Which shifts and staff members explained the program most consistently?
- Which push messages were sent, and what happened to subsequent redemptions?
- Which prizes encouraged return visits without undermining margin?
- Which dayparts improved, and how did they compare with ordinary weeks?
- What should change next time: dates, reward mix, staff script, eligibility or frequency?

09 Copy-and-use campaign kit

A simple 30-day holiday launch plan

When	Your action
Days -30 to -21	Set goal and dates; pitch 15-25 potential sponsors; confirm prize terms and budget.
Days -20 to -14	Configure wallet card; test enrollment, push and redemption; design signage.
Days -13 to -7	Train staff; prepare social posts; announce upcoming promotion.
Days -6 to 0	Complete device tests, check prize stock, launch campaign and enroll guests.
Distribution window	Mention envelopes at every eligible visit; post prize and partner updates.
Redemption window	Push launch, midpoint and deadline reminders; celebrate verified winners.
Week after closing	Review results and document the next campaign improvements.

In-store sign headline

“GET YOUR RED ENVELOPE. SAVE IT TO YOUR PHONE. COME BACK FOR YOUR SURPRISE.”

Social launch copy

“Our Red Envelope promotion is here! Visit during the giveaway period, save your digital envelope to your phone, and bring it back during the redemption dates for your chance to claim a surprise. Ask your server how to join.”

Redemption reminder copy

“Your Red Envelope is waiting. The redemption window is open now. Check your card for the dates and bring it in before the promotion ends.”

Campaign owner worksheet

Decide before launch	Your answer
Target return-visit behavior	_____
Distribution period	_____
Redemption period	_____
Eligible guests / visit rules	_____
Restaurant prize budget	_____
Confirmed sponsors / prizes	_____
Grand prize and verified value	_____
Prize assignment and validation	_____
Campaign owner	_____
Push and post schedule	_____
Success metric	_____

10 Turning a single promotion into a lasting customer relationship

The real value of the Red Envelope is that it trains customers to associate the restaurant with a future reason to return. A holiday version can become a slow-night version. A one-time guest can receive an invitation to a VIP program. A community sponsor can become a repeat promotional partner.

Digital wallet delivery removes one of the traditional campaign's biggest obstacles: the extra effort of registering a paper envelope after the customer has already taken it home. The restaurant gains a convenient way to reach enrolled passholders during the campaign, while email and text remain optional channels requiring their own data and permissions.

Remember: The goal is not to send more notifications. The goal is to create more worthwhile return visits. Make the reward meaningful, the rules easy to understand, and the reminder timely.

Final launch checklist

- ☐ One clear business goal and measurable success metric
 - ☐ Published eligibility and redemption rules
 - ☐ Affordable, funded reward inventory
 - ☐ Pass enrollment and redemption fully tested
 - ☐ Staff training completed and campaign owner named
 - ☐ In-store signage, social and wallet messages ready
 - ☐ Exception process and reporting method documented
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Give customers a reason to come back. Then make it easy to remind them.

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