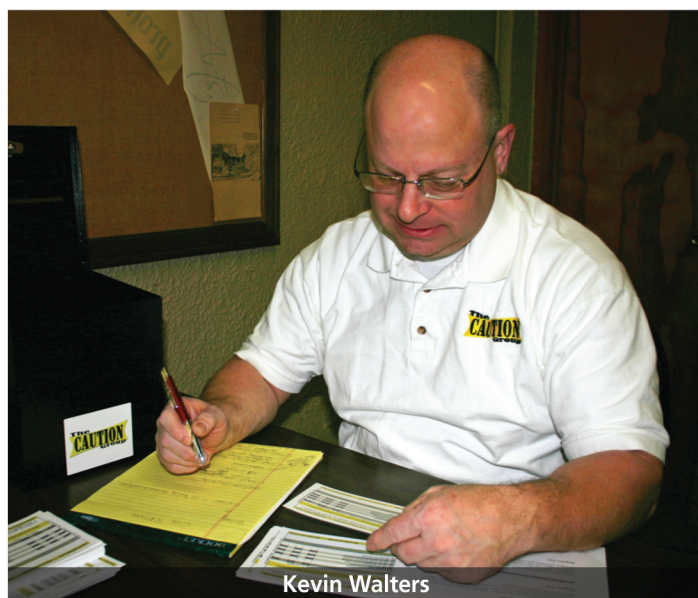


# OUT & ABOUT

*As seen in the Profile Magazine: Dec/Jan 2013-14*



Kevin Walters

## THE CAUTION GROUP

*Restaurant surveys and ratings*

**T**he Caution Group uses customer satisfaction surveys to help restaurants improve operations and to provide reliable ratings to potential customers.

To celebrate their opening in July, The Caution Group held a pizza competition, during which 25-man panel judged nine local pizza places. The winner: Karl's Pizza in Taylor. That was just a kick-off event though; the heart of the business is in actual restaurant surveys and ratings.

"The primary purpose of the RATINGS program is to help customers identify those restaurants that stand above the rest in food quality, customer service, cleanliness and proper food safety precautions and it will help local owners compete with national chains," said Founder and

Owner Kevin Walters, a former military serviceman.

Participating restaurants are provided with blank surveys for the wait staff to hand out to customers and a lock box for customers to drop completed surveys. A member from The Caution Group empties the box out a few times a week and at the end of the second week a full report is issued.

In order for a participating restaurant to qualify for The Caution Group RATING they must earn an average customer rating of 4.2 or higher on a scale of 1-5; complete employee satisfaction surveys; have a minimum rating of satisfactory by two independent mystery diners; pass a detailed food inspection, similar to health department inspections; and they must not have any unresolved Better Business Bureau complaints.

"It's like the Zagat ratings, but it applies to each individual location instead of a whole chain," Walters said. "Even in otherwise successful chains, some locations are a lot better than others and a rating that does not take that fact into account is of little real value to customers."

Ratings that hold value to real and potential customers are The Caution Group's priority.

"To ensure integrity of the survey, customers are asked to deposit survey cards in a collection

box themselves rather than leaving completed cards on the table or handing them to their server," Walter's said, adding that some managers are hesitant to embrace such surveys, but customers actually like them.

"Some managers think that customers will be put off by being asked to complete a survey, but it turns out that surveys are back in style again, as long as they are kept short."

Customers at All American Buffet in Southgate certainly didn't mind them. In the two-week period that servers were handing out the surveys, they received more than 600 responses – and many of them were overwhelmingly positive.

"The customers just love the staff there," Walters said. "And most commented that they enjoyed taking the survey."

The management didn't mind either.

"The Caution Group Team and Kevin were knowledgeable and very helpful as we worked to design and conduct a survey of our customers," said Steven La Fleur, president of All American Buffet. "They made implementation of the survey a breeze. The entire process was painless and actually fun. I would recommend The Caution Group to anyone after the experience I had with them."

*The Caution Group supports Michigan-First initiatives and is a TradeFirst member. For more info call 877-875-2248 or visit [cautiongroup.com](http://cautiongroup.com)*



To earn the Caution Group RATING restaurants must earn an average customer rating of 4.2 or higher on a scale of 1-5; complete employee satisfaction surveys; have a minimum rating of satisfactory by two independent mystery shoppers; pass a detailed food inspection, similar to health department inspections; and they must not have any unresolved Better Business Bureau complaints. Call 877-875-2248 or visit [cautiongroup.com](http://cautiongroup.com) for further details.