

CertiStar

CERTISTAR

TAKING THE GUESSWORK OUT OF FOOD ALLERGIES
Founded by CEO, Shandee Chernow



SHANDEE CHERNOW

CEO + FOUNDER

Available to Speak About:

- Food Allergy Awareness (Education + Misconceptions)
- How CertiStar's MenuStar software is saving the hospitality industry and its customers
- EpiPen Safety; How To Use

FOR:

- Restaurants, Cruises, Hotels, Airlines
- Schools
- Nutritionists; Coaches



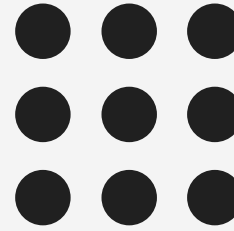
SHANDEE CHERNOW

CertiStar Founder + CEO, Shandee Chernow discovered in her late 20s she had life threatening food allergies. And not by a standard "test," as many would think - by actually eating foods she had no idea she was even allergic to, only to discover she was by way of a traumatic reaction. You can imagine the anxiety and frustration that came with dining out to eat with friends, family and clients.

Shandee knew the hospitality industry needed a solution - not only a software to make things easier on the restaurant, hotel, school or airline, but also on the customer - or person - with food allergies.

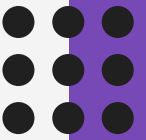
Enter in CertiStar - a software launched in 2017 that allows for guests dining out to have a safer and easier experience by way of the MenuStar software. With a quick 3-second search, the restaurant server can tell the guest all the offerings on the menu they are in fact safe to eat by way of a green, yellow, red list of options.

CertiStar is based in Phoenix, Arizona.



FORBES

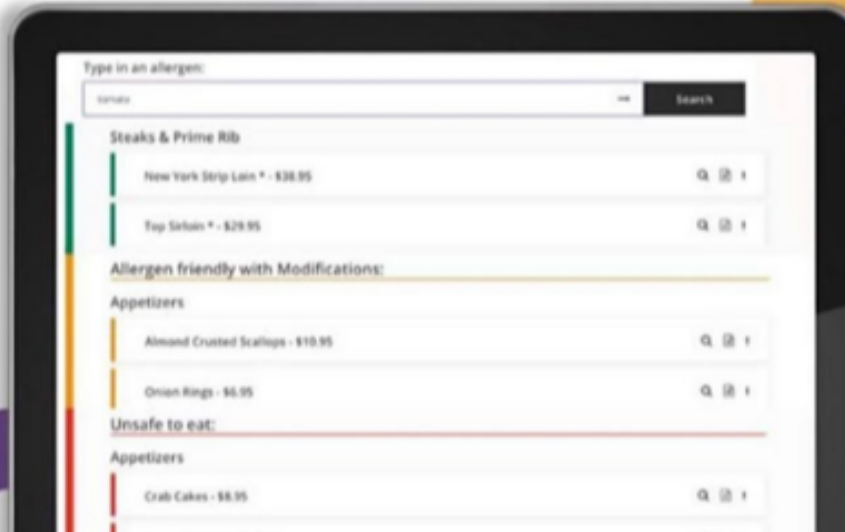
FEATURES CERTISTAR DURING COVID



Forbes

This Company Revolutionized Dining For Allergy Sufferers And Restaurant Owners

The specialized menu indicates, based on the customer's individual profile, which dishes are safe and which are not. Certistar provides a more personalized dining experience for the customer with allergies, the ability for restaurants to boost revenue, profit, and daily efficiency, and the opportunity to secure loyal customers who will return with trust in a staff that is trained to address the unique needs of the allergy-challenged customer.

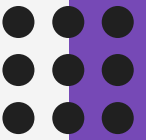


Forbes



USA TODAY

FEATURES CERTISTAR DURING COVID



Robot cooks and virtual kitchens: How the restaurant industry looks to technology for help

"CertiStar...helps restaurants inform customers of potential allergy issues on their menus...greatly expediting a process that otherwise could take 10 minutes or more as the conversation shifts from customer to waiter and waiter to chef, then back again."



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200,000

EACH YEAR IN THE US, 200K
PEOPLE GO TO THE EMERGENCY
ROOM FOR ALLERGIC
REACTIONS TO FOOD.

THAT = 1 VISIT EVERY 3
MINUTES.

CERTISTAR'S MENUSTAR
RESTAURANT SOFTWARE CAN
IMPROVE THE SAFETY OF
CUSTOMERS WITH FOOD
ALLERGIES AND HELP REDUCE
RESTAURANT LIABILITIES.

DID YOU KNOW?





CERTISTAR PARTNER CHATTER



CHOMPIE'S

"If I were opening a new restaurant today, CertiStar would absolutely be my first phone call. Before I even started designing my menu, we use to stress about food allergy customers. Not any longer."

-MANAGER, BRIAN BECKER



OSCAR'S PIER 83

"MenuStar is very helpful in understanding what items on our menu pose potential risks to customers with food allergies. It is very timely as the number of customers with food allergies we serve each night is increasing."



WHAT'S CRACKIN

"CertiStar is a great idea with leading innovation and intelligence. Our clientele is super excited that we are taking the guess work out of eating. The fact that the industry must change to protect our guest shows that there is a huge need for such an industry. We are proud to be partners and look forward to watching them grow!"

-OWNER, CRAIG ARSTINGSTALL

OTHER CERTISTAR PARTNERS





MEDIA BUZZ

CERTISTAR +
SHANDEE CHERNOW
ON TV





FOOD ALLERGY AWARENESS WEEK

HOW RESTAURANTS CAN BEST CATER TO THOSE WITH FOOD AI



MEDIA BUZZ

CERTISTAR +
SHANDEE CHERNOW
ON AZDAILYMIX DURING COVID + FOOD
ALLERGY AWARENESS WEEK





SHANDEE CHERNOW
CertiStar President & CEO

ZAYNA ALLEN
Host

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Bold TV Interview: Certistar Helps Restaurants Quickly and Easily Serve Food



MEDIA BUZZ

CERTISTAR +
SHANDEE CHERNOW
ON BOLD TV DURING COVID



LIVE!



Jennifer English, a.k.a. Mrs. Spices



Shandee Chernow

LIVE

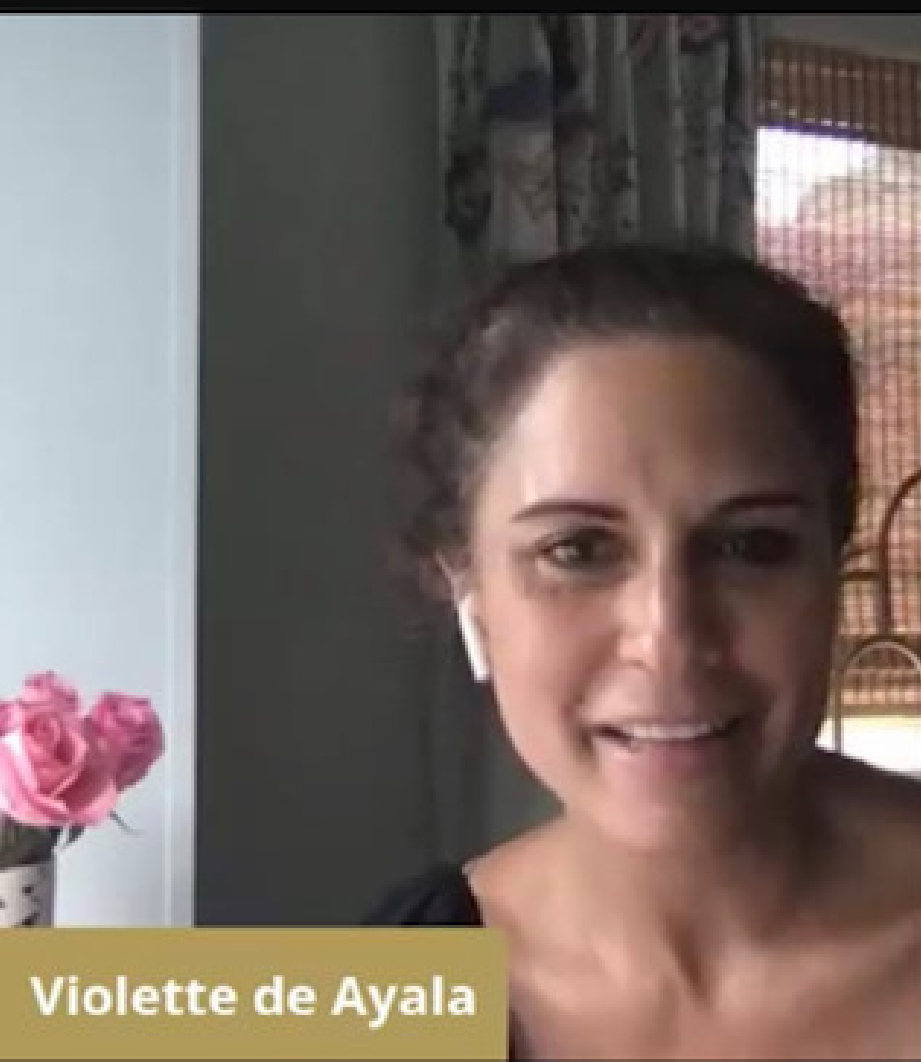
Food & Beverage Magazine LIVE! Episode 137 ∨ : Shandee Chernow, Founder of CertiStar



MEDIA BUZZ

CERTISTAR +
SHANDEE CHERNOW
ON FBTV LIVE DURING COVID

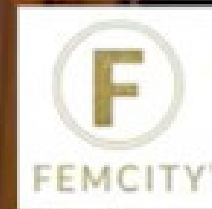




Violette de Ayala



Shandee Chernow



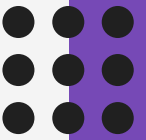
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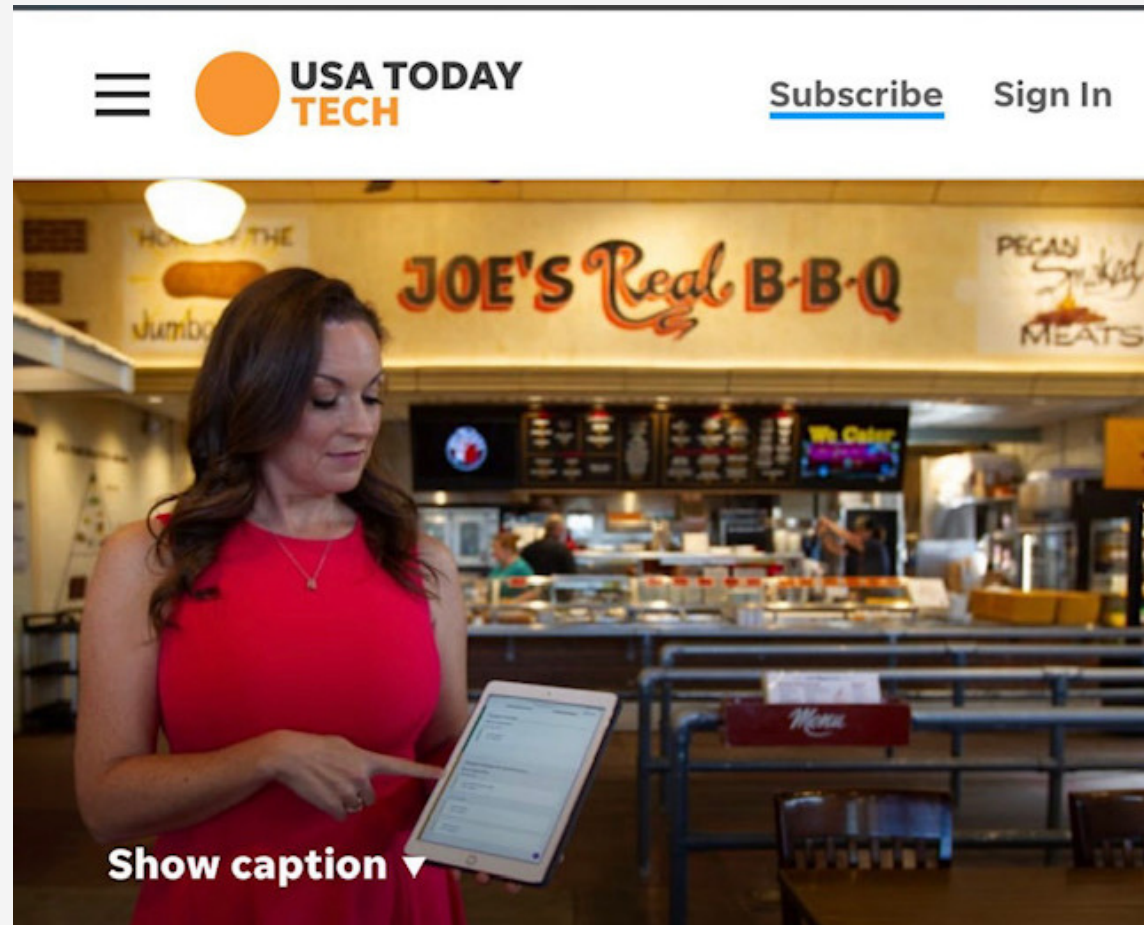
CERTISTAR +
SHANDEE CHERNOW
ON FB LIVE DURING COVID



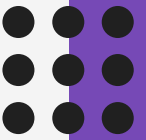
USA TODAY
FEATURES CERTISTAR



MENU TECH
HELPS PEOPLE
WITH ALLERGIES
DINE OUT



AWARD-WINNING CERTISTAR TECHNOLOGY ELITE 2019



Technology Elite
Awards 2019



In this Issue:

AxisCare
empowering home care

Best Software & Hardware
Development Firm - USA
We at US Business News profile Kreative Tek Solutions
to learn more about their successes. - Page 6

TurnCare
Critical Care Product of the Year:
TurnCare Guardian System
We profile the firm and its unique Guardian System
to find out more. - Page 10



KUARIO

DATIX

BIOLAB
SCIENCES

CertiStar™

Best Restaurant Allergy Threat Reduction Solution

Designed to benefit restaurants and the clients they serve, CertiStar™ offers an innovative platform that helps to improve transparency and reduce hospitalization as a result of eating allergen contaminated meals. We spoke to Founder and CEO Shandee Chernow to find out more.

With food allergies and intolerances on the rise, businesses are increasingly under pressure to update their knowledge and offer menu options to suit a variety of diners.

As allergies become more widely recognised, restaurants and food service staff must understand their customer's needs, reduce their liabilities and use the technology available to serve up safety with menu innovation.

Award-winning CertiStar has taken food industry and food allergy data and matched it with patent-pending smart technology to create an easy-to-use web platform, MenuStar™, that helps company owners to manage their menus, recipes and inventory; all while empowering staff to serve those with food allergies in a competent and professional manner.

The firm was established by Shandee as a result of her personal experience dining out with food intolerances. She discusses how she came to create this innovative company to meet the needs of both those who have allergies and those businesses that serve them.

"Initially CertiStar was established two years ago as a result of me wanting to provide a solution to the restaurant and hospitality industries. I wanted to make the dining out experiences safer and easier for those like myself, suffering from food allergies. I discovered I had food allergies a few years back and eating out was always such an anxiety driven and often scary experience for me and everyone I was dining out with. I knew there had to be something I could create that would provide ease and safety to customers dining out with food allergies, while also making the process easier on the operational teams from the restaurant, hotel or school at the same time.

"Our success thus far with partners is in that they share our excitement and passion for wanting to deliver something to make their customers have an incredibly safe and easy dining experience too. The success for us also comes in the feedback we get from partners telling us how easy and fast it was to get them on boarded to start using it in their location. The software is truly a game-changing industry disruptor. I would say overall though, the biggest success for us comes in knowing that we've brought something to market that is not only impacting lives, but saving them too."

Over the years, CertiStar has flourished and worked with an array of renowned food providers nationwide, including Chompie's in Arizona, National Restaurant Association Show, Bobby Rubino's, Olato Festival of America, Harlem Children's Zone, What's Crackin Cafe in Arizona and Yest.

Since the firm's inception many companies have worked to emulate its success, but, as Shandee highlights, CertiStar's personal investment in the food allergies market and its commitment to both restaurants and diners is what sets it apart.

"In today's competitive food technology market, there are several other options on the market that touch the food allergy menu sector. However, we are the only solution that allows for any food allergy, not just the most common, and we take into account cross contamination and offer chef driven modifications.

"Additionally, we also provide a recipe book for restaurants who may not have had a digital recipe solution before, along with nutritional calculations for the recipes entered into CertiStar. We are super flexible in terms of deployment in the restaurant and offer quite a few options for restaurants to interact

with their food allergic guests. All of these factors combine to ensure that we offer the most complete solution, alongside the fastest implementation, and this makes us the best possible option for restaurants and food service providers across the hospitality space."

As she looks to the future, Shandee is optimistic that her company can grow even further thanks to its unique approach and creative technology.

"At CertiStar, we are on a mission to protect and improve the safety and dining experience of men, women and children vulnerable to food allergies. No matter where food is prepared or served, we want our clients' customers to eat, and their staff to serve with confidence.

"This is our ongoing focus as a business. We understand how hard it is to run a busy kitchen safely and as such we have made it our mission to help. This will remain central to our success as we look towards a bright future."



Company: CertiStar
Name: Founder + CEO, Shandee Chernow
Telephone Number: 833-EAT-SAFE
Web Address: www.certi-star.com

5 LEGACY CHAINS MODERNIZE

SEPTEMBER 2019 / NO. 368

QSR

Plus

Meet the Industry's Social Media Stars P.10

Why Business Travelers are Big Business P.31

Is Parental Leave Feasible in Foodservice? P.21

How CEO Kevin Bazner and his team are pushing the brand 100 years on

A&W HITS THE CENTURY MARK

P.38

CERTISTAR FEATURED IN QSR MAGAZINE

NEW ON THE MARKET



Hash Patties

Jones Dairy Farm added fully cooked Canadian Bacon Hash Patties to its extensive line of foodservice offerings. The product is leaner and lower in carbs than traditional Corned Beef Hash and contains 7 grams of lean protein per 2-ounce serving. Since the patties are fully cooked, operators can simply heat and serve them in a wide variety of menu options.

jonesdairyfarmfoodservice.com



High Chair

Tomlinson Industries' Marston High Chairs are ASTM F404-18 compliant. The C-40 high chairs are solid 14-inch oak with mortise and tenon construction. The wider base stance improves chair stability and prevents tipping. An easy-to-use three-point harness system with passive crotch strap firmly secures child in chair. The chair is available in walnut, natural, and black finishes.

tomlinsonind.com



Precision Cooked Chicken

Tyson Foodservice introduced Tyson Precision Cooked Chicken, a new fully cooked product category that helps operators meet consumer demand for food that looks and tastes like it was made from scratch. Operators can choose from premium options: Portioned Breast, Thigh and Ready-to-Pull Thigh.

precisioncookedchicken.com



Juice Drink

Perrier Carbonated Mineral Water introduced Perrier and Juice drink. The new product line features Perrier mixed with real fruit juices, sugar, and other natural flavors, and is available in three vibrant flavor combinations: Strawberry & Kiwi, Peach & Cherry, and Pineapple & Mango, all of which boast a touch of real apple and lemon juices to round out the flavor.

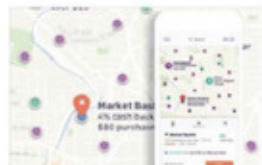
perrier.com



Allergen App

CertiStar's mission is to make the dining-out experience safer and easier for children, women, and men who suffer from allergies and intolerances. Its MenuStar software for restaurants can help identify food-allergy threats with a 3-second search. The software also allows for restaurants to create and house recipes and educate and empower staff with allergen and nutritional information.

CertiStar.com



Cash-Back App

GetUpside is a platform that personalizes brick-and-mortar commerce to help communities thrive. Consumers use the mobile app to earn cash back on daily purchases at restaurants, gas stations, and grocery stores. Personalized offers win merchants new customers and motivate existing customers to buy more, more often. Merchants see exact changes in incremental profit daily without requiring any incremental work.



certistar.com

BEHIND THE SOCIAL MEDIA CURTAIN / CONTINUED FROM PAGE 54

1/2

wagon, but I try to avoid that because that gets really tired really fast," Lewandowski says. Still, City Barbeque was quick on the uptake during HBO's "Game of Thrones" final season, when the brand doctored a viral still of a scene featuring an accidental Starbucks cup by superimposing a Motherload barbeque platter onto the photo.

Brands are even choosier about leveraging platforms for activations or brand announcements, like Arby's loyalist-graced announcement of the return of its seasonal Orange Cream Shake, or Chipotle's creation of limited-edition scented Giphy stickers following the success of the digital version, which pulled 225 million views. This is largely to protect what the brands have grown in the hopes that, when a customer makes a choice about where to eat, they'll remember those connections.

"Social has definitely opened up people's perspective about the brand," Martin says. "We've seen over and over very qualitative results—people saying, 'I've never been to Arby's, but since you connected with me on my favorite anime character, I'm going to go.' Thirty minutes later, they @ us with a picture of their drive-thru bag."

Building on recent successes, Chipotle is looking beyond existing channels for activations and engagement to platforms such as short-form mobile video app TikTok, which it partnered with on a hashtag challenge for free delivery and digital payment service Venmo, where it paid out various amounts of free Chipotle in March concurrent with the announcement of its new rewards program. It was the second company after Uber to get its own emoji, one of a chipotle pepper.

"We're so heavily mentioned on Venmo that there was a natural connection," Lieberman says. "We only want to show up if we provide value or are endemic to that platform."

But in this fast-moving culture of experimentation, it's worthwhile to take risks, which is why the leading brands empower their marketing teams. "You can't be too precious," Lieberman says. "Sometimes you hit it out of the park, sometimes you don't, and that's a really good thing. We keep trying things."

Maggie Hennessy is a regular contributor to Food News Media and is based in Chicago.

CERTISTAR FEATURED IN GREEN LIVING MAGAZINE



TECHNOLOGY Applications

Food Allergies? Why You Need CertiStar

The president and founder of CertiStar explains her invention

BY SHANDEE CHERNOW

Three years ago, CertiStar was born here in Arizona. I found that people with food allergies were struggling to dine out in restaurants and while traveling, and that simultaneously, restaurants were struggling to serve their food-allergic customers effectively and efficiently.

Did you know that 10.4% of the U.S. population—or 32 million people—suffer from food allergies? CertiStar serves to make the dining experience significantly easier on both sides of the issue.

Suffering from food allergies myself made these issues hit super close to home. I would spend an inordinate amount of time ahead of any meal away from home trying to figure out what I could safely eat. The reason for going through such a process ahead of time was to avoid inconveniencing my friends, family, coworkers or customers. Particularly for business meetings, I didn't want to be the center of attention for my health issues; rather, I just wanted to be able to have the same dining experience as everyone else.

They say that necessity is the mother of invention, and in my case, the old adage certainly rings true.

CertiStar provides individualized allergen menus for every guest who has an allergy or intolerance. The menu shows the entire breadth of options for the customer, regardless of their set of allergens. Many allergen menus used by restaurants address only the top eight allergens—dairy, wheat, eggs, tree nuts, peanuts, soy, fish and shellfish—but CertiStar serves any allergy without limit and in any combination.

Historically, having either an allergy outside of the top eight or any combination of allergies would make dining out extremely difficult. However, with CertiStar, these problems are no longer an issue.

This past August, our company launched a new service called the CertiStar Concierge. When food allergy sufferers want to dine out at a restaurant that isn't already using the CertiStar software, we offer a service to facilitate their food allergy conversation ahead of when they are going to the restaurant. We take care of calling the restaurant and figuring out the available menu options for the guest. We have a wide set of expertise in food allergies and food service, so we're uniquely positioned to ask a complete set of questions to the restaurant in order to ascertain all of the dishes that will be safe to eat.

Between these two services, CertiStar services both sides of the food allergy conversation, making a more pleasant, less stigmatized experience for both customers and restaurants. Our mission is to facilitate incredible dining experiences for those who are vulnerable to food allergies, as we believe that everyone should be able to break bread with their friends and family.

For more information, visit www.certiSTAR.com.



48 GREEN LIVING | greenlivingmag.com

CERTISTAR FEATURED IN SCOTTSDALE HEALTH MAGAZINE

Scottsdale HEALTH

08/20
youneedforhappiness.com

Kurt and
Deanna Mangum's
health and wellness
brand, CoupleyFit, is
led by faith, vision
and teamwork.

Feeling Better Together

**GOOD VIBES
GOOD LIFE**
Creating and cultivating
positive energy

**THE MOMMY
AND ME
WORKOUT**

**FOOD
ALLERGY
TESTING
101**

**+
TESTOSTERONE:
WHAT YOU
NEED TO EAT
FOR BETTER
T-LEVELS**

RICHMAN MEDIA GROUP

list

/ by Shandee Chernow

5 Things to Consider When Food Allergy Testing

Shandee Chernow is the president and CEO of Certistar (www.certistar.com), a company on a mission to make the dining out experiences safer and easier the millions of people impacted with food allergies.



Food Allergy Research and Education estimates 32 million (one in 10 adults) Americans have food allergies. A food allergy or intolerance occurs when the body's immune system reacts unusually to specific foods and oftentimes, it's difficult to know what food is causing it. Environmental allergies are very easy to identify with scratch or prick tests. Many allergists will perform the same test for a common set of food allergens, and there is also a bevy of at-home tests to consider as well. But are the results actually something you can count on? Here are key things to keep in mind when working with your allergist to figure out what foods you may be allergic to.

1. Find a specialist
You want to absolutely make sure that your allergist specializes in food allergies. They're quite different from environmental allergies in how the body reacts, how testing should work and treatment. Read their online bios or ask the receptionists questions to be sure you are winding up with someone who has the right specialty.

2. Keep track of foods
You may have some foods in mind that are causing issues or reactions. Be sure to mention those to your doctor and focus any testing on the foods that are suspected so the testing can be narrowed down using information you already know. Over 170 foods (foods outside of the popular top eight must not be discounted) have caused food allergic reactions and no one wants to have that many scratches or pricks!

3. Come prepared
Many foods do not have a test available, but some doctors will have you bring the actual food with you to extract a sample to be used for a test. Be sure to ask ahead of time if they have a test for the suspected allergen.

4. Be aware of false positives
If you've tested positive for a wide variety of foods but you are still eating them regularly without issues, strongly question whether they are foods you really need to avoid. Also ask about Oral Food Challenges (that feed you the suspected food in measured doses) for those foods that you are testing positive to but do not appear to have any issues actually consuming.

5. Prepare for the worst
Be sure to ask for a prescription for an epinephrine auto injector. Even if you've never needed one, it is far preferable to have it and never need it to the alternative.

PHOENIX

TOP 100 Restaurants

PLUS

OUR CRITIC'S FAVORITE NEW RESTAURANTS

2020 SNEAK PEEKS

SPECIAL - OCCASION SHOWSTOPPERS!
THE ESSENTIAL MOM-AND-POPS!
PRINCELY PIZZERIAS!

► OUR DEFINITIVE LIST OF THE VALLEY'S MOST INDISPENSIBLE EATERIES

Find Out Who's No. 1!

JANUARY 2020
phoenixmag.com \$4.99
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CERTISTAR FEATURED IN PHOENIX MAGAZINE

PHOENIX FILES

BUSINESS BUZZ

Story Mapping

Scottsdale's Kirby Kim proves literary agents can thrive beyond the Big Apple.

PEOPLE TEND to think of book publishing as a New York City-centric industry. No question, it's still where many editors, publishers and agents call home. But these days, the ambitious literary type doesn't require a Brooklyn address.

Case in point: Kirby Kim, an agent with the top-tier literary firm Janklow & Nesbit, has been operating out of Scottsdale since 2017, representing clients like the rapper Common, acclaimed novelist and Arizona State University writing professor Matt Bell and science fiction author Ted Chiang, whose novella *Story of Your Life* became the 2016 blockbuster *Arrival*.

"We're seeing more and more agents decentralizing," Kim says. "The idea of not being in New York is something that doesn't feel so revolutionary." Kim credits technological improvements for that change, along with the high cost of living in Gotham. But living outside of publishing's biggest bubble can also be an asset.

"I'm still looking for clients, and Arizona is definitely an interesting place," he says. "It's a swing state, a border state and a microcosm of a lot of the tensions across the country. LA and New York are kind of monocultures, which are comforting but also not real."

Kirby launched his career as an agent in New York in 2005 after graduating from law school. His reading tastes back then were narrower, he says, focused on slacker-lit icons like Nick Hornby, and have since broadened to include science fiction and Asian-American writers (through his work on the board of the Asian American Writers' Workshop). But he says genre types aren't what he looks for in a query letter. Strong sentences and a good grasp of conflict are what really catch his eye.

"I don't need you to tell me what happens in every chapter," he says. "I don't even need to know the main character's name. I need to know the situation. What makes it urgent?"

— Mark Athitakis



NEW!

Papago Orange Blossom

Arizona beer lovers' favorite fruit ale got a refresh this fall when Huss Brewing Co. launched new can and packaging designs for its 15-year-old brew. Thankfully for devotees, the changes are merely cosmetic — the iconic beer's creamy, citrusy, vanilla-kissed flavor remains intact.

hussbrewing.com

— Leah LeMoine



TECH CORNER

CertiStar

Dining out with food allergies is challenging at best, deadly at worst. Phoenix entrepreneur Shandee Chernow used her own experience with allergies to create CertiStar, a software program servers and school cafeteria employees can use to identify food allergens so patrons can feast without fear of emergency room visits. CertiStar (starting at \$99/month) is in use at Chompie's, Joe's Real BBQ and more.

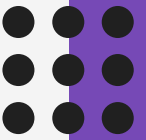
certistar.com

— Leah LeMoine

PHOTOS BY ANGELINA ARAGON, COURTESY HUSS BREWING, CERTISTAR.COM



CEO + FOUNDER, SHANDEE CHERNOW FEATURED IN ARIZONA FOOTHILLS MAGAZINE




SHANDEE Chernow
PRESIDENT
AND CEO OF CERTISTAR

Instagram and Twitter: @certistar;
@shandeeamber

I chose this as my career because I needed a way to be able to safely go out to eat. Food allergies affect me every day, so it was something I spend a lot of time thinking about. The problem of food allergies in the culinary industry wasn't being effectively solved, so when a solution came to mind, I had to make a career change and start the company, CertiStar, in order to try to make a difference.

I hope my greatest contribution to the Valley culinary scene is to help ease lives and make people feel more comfortable and welcomed with their dining experiences.

Taking the food allergy stress away from both restaurants and diners is what I love most about what I do. Trying to reach as many people as possible each day is the biggest challenge.

I separate myself and my brand from others by addressing all food allergies and attacking the problem from the hospitality angle rather than from the consumer angle. Any food can cause an allergic reaction, so we had to make a product that addressed that and didn't expect chefs to make any changes to their existing menus.

I draw inspiration from other women entrepreneurs and from the kids who have to tackle these issues every day.

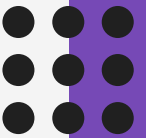
My New Year's resolution is to start and finish a journal.

My greatest advice to share with young girls is to align what you study with what you love. And to take business or economics classes, whether you love it or not, because at some point that knowledge will serve you well.

CertiStar is a technology that is on a mission to improve the safety and dining experience of those vulnerable to food allergens.



CERTISTAR AND FOUNDER, CEO SHANDEE CHERNOW FEATURED IN SO SCOTTSDALE MAGAZINE



1/3

SHANDEE CHERNOW

CEO, CertiStar
Children: Chase, 9 and Charlie, 6

Tell us about your company. CertiStar has taken food industry and food allergy data and matched it with patent-pending smart technology to create a web platform that helps restaurants manage their menus, recipes and inventory – all while empowering staff to serve those with food allergies. I founded the company in 2017.

What inspired you to open your business? Frustration with my own experiences going out to eat. I'm frequently declined service due to my restrictions, and the conversation is almost always a challenge. Once I figured out that there's a better way to do it, it was almost an inevitability that I had to start my own business to implement it.

What is the best part of owning a business? Building something from the ground up that my family can be proud of. And, of course, having the freedom to make decisions as they come up.

Advice for other moms wanting to start a business: Don't underestimate the costs of opening a business. There are so many little line items that you don't necessarily anticipate. Also, make it something that you're passionate about doing.

How have your children influenced you? When they see a way to do something or figure something out, they jump in with both feet. They are fearless that way. It's a good reminder to do the same when I'm battling with which way to go.

Favorite thing to do with your children: I love playing games with them. Watching how their brains work through the strategy is incredibly cool, and it's a great way to spend bonding time.

What lesson do you hope to pass on to your children? I hope they keep that fearlessness and do what they think is right and charge ahead with it. I hope they don't let peer or societal pressure make them do something that strays from that path.

Most valuable lesson you've learned since opening your business: To never be afraid to ask for help.



'HEART
POUNDING'
ERIC DEVORE IS
CAVE CREEK'S
TOP TEACHER

SCOTCHDALE
DUO QUENCHES
THIRST WITH
NEW SPIRIT

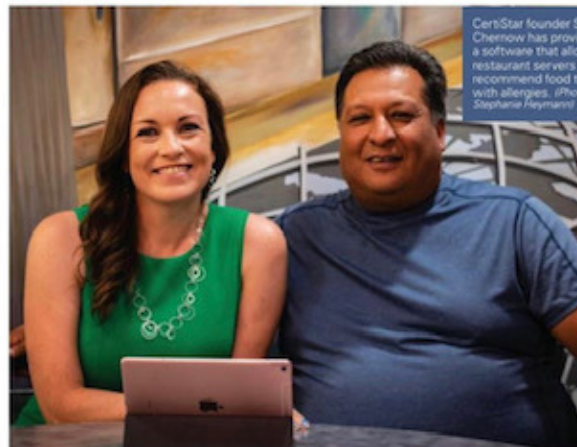
ZACHAR LAW FIRM

WILLING TO TAKE
THE NEXT STEP

TOP
VALLEY
LAWYERS
2019

CERTISTAR AND FOUNDER, CEO SHANDEE CHERNOW FEATURED IN NORTH VALLEY MAGAZINE

BETTER • APP



CertiStar founder Shandee Chernow has provided a software that allows restaurant servers to safely recommend food to guests with allergies. (Photo by Stephanie Heymann)

'I'm Trying Not to Die'

North Valley woman creates a safer way to dine out

By Octavio Serrano

Shandee Chernow rolled out of bed to find her lower lip had "blown up." "I can't even explain to you how large it was. As though Mike Tyson punched me, and all his force landed in my lower lip," the North Phoenix resident recalls.

Terrified, Chernow quickly picked up her cellphone to send her father, a physician, a photo. He knew right away his 28-year-old daughter developed a food allergy. In her case, it was pork.

According to Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE), food allergies are on the rise, with 32 million Americans having them. Furthermore, Chernow says some people don't even realize they're allergic to certain foods. The reactions can occur with foods people have eaten many times before.

Inspired by her experience, Chernow founded CertiStar in 2017, a company dedicated to improving the dining experience of people who have food allergies. Restaurants and businesses, as well as schools, can use CertiStar to create a safe and versatile menu for their guests.

Prior to CertiStar, Chernow worked as a sales rep for MicroStrategy, a business intelligence company, and her food allergy complicated her job.

"When you have food allergies, going out to eat is very difficult. I was selling software, which involved a lot of going out to eat," Chernow says. "I got tired of playing Russian roulette with my life every night. I figured out there was a better way, so I quit my job and started CertiStar and the rest is a little bit of history."

CertiStar created a web platform MenuStar. Restaurants can input their menus and quickly provide healthy options for their guests. If a server is taking an order, for example, and a customer has an allergy, the server can quickly input the allergy into MenuStar, and it will highlight safe menu items.

On MenuStar, when a dish is "green," it means it is safe for that customer; yellow means the recipe can be altered for the guest's needs; and red means that recipe is not suitable.

"The goal would be that any food-allergic person can have virtually the same dining

experience at any of those types of places as any nonfood-allergic person," Chernow says. "And the truth is that right now, it is virtually impossible for that to happen."

Chernow says folks with allergies are faced with limited menu options.

With MenuStar, servers can confidently offer a wider selection from the menu.

"It's nice to have many options, as opposed to one or two that may not fit in with what you were in the mood for," Chernow says.

Chompie's Vice President Frank Lara says his restaurant has used MenuStar for two years. Thanks to the MenuStar, Lara says Chompie's servers don't have to guess anymore when recommending menu items for people with allergies.

"I'll tell you that the staff, kitchen and managers are a lot more relaxed when it comes to that question," Lara says.

Every Chompie's location keeps a tablet for servers, and guests have responded positively to the MenuStar.

"It's made the guest experience much better for those who come in with their family and have concerns about food allergies and sometimes they don't even eat because they don't want to take a chance," Lara says. "What this MenuStar does is it allow that guest to feel comfortable and eat along with the rest of the family or business group, so they don't feel left out."

When asked where her passion for CertiStar comes from, Chernow jokingly says "I'm trying not to die."

"Food allergies are a really interesting thing because it's been a quiet, under-the-radar topic for a very long time," Chernow adds.

With the increase in awareness regarding food allergies, Chernow and her team continue to bring the Valley, a safe and healthy way to prevent an unwanted allergy reaction. Chernow says her team is always available to anyone who has any questions.

"Food allergy people don't want to be a pain in the neck. They don't want to be that guy at the restaurant. So, you see people have the tendency to make themselves smaller and accommodate the restaurant as opposed to the other way," Chernow says. "I'd love to see those people standing tall, not shrinking down."

For more information,
visit certistar.com

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By Nicole Myden

GET INVOLVED

Making Dining Out Safer for those with Food Allergies

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CertiStar's mission is bright—to make the dining experiences for men, women and children suffering from food allergies and intolerances not only safer but more enjoyable.

"We're here to not only make the customer's restaurant, hotel, airline or cruise eating experience easier but the staff experience just the same," Chernow says. "With a quick, 3-second menu search on our software, we shorten the risk for the front of house, back of house and guests all in one, saving everyone time to focus on other things, like actually enjoying all the delicious foods they can eat."

Arizona based restaurants already using the software include all Chompie's locations in Phoenix and Scottsdale as well as What's Crackin Cafe in Mesa. "We're just getting started," says Chernow. "It's my mission with the company to have this software integrated into every restaurant, hotel, airline, cruise ship and school in the world."

According to FARE (Food Allergy Research and Education), 5.9 million children, or 8 percent, have food allergies. That's 1 in 13 children or roughly two in every single classroom. Moving forward, she dreams of the day when she can see her software used globally.

In addition to the software itself, Chernow is incredibly passionate about educating the public in general about food allergies, specifically more on the 170 foods that can cause allergic reactions. "I find that most people only talk about the top eight allergies: peanuts, tree nuts, dairy, wheat, shellfish, fish, eggs and soy, but there are over a hundred others that are equally as important for people to know about."

In addition to her role as CEO, Chernow wears many hats in the local and national food community. She's actively involved in the Arizona Restaurant Association and also teaches high school students and instructors frequently about food allergies.

Chernow knows how difficult living with the daily burden of food allergies can be. In fact, she has two young sons, Chase and Charlie, who she runs regular "safety drills" with at home where the boys trial using an EpiPen on her, should they ever be faced with an emergency and need to. "As a single mom, I get emotional thinking about having to put that pressure on such young boys, but I may need them to save my life one day."

To learn more about Chernow and CertiStar, visit www.certistar.com.

Just like an iPhone, it's crazy to think it has not existed before. Luckily though for fifteen million Americans suffering from food allergies and intolerances, it exists now. Phoenix businesswoman, Shandee Chernow, founder and CEO of CertiStar, launched the restaurant and hospitality industry software in 2017, after she had a near death reaction to a food she had no idea she was allergic to. Chernow only first experienced this reaction in her late twenties by eating something, not from a test, which many think is the only way to discover allergies.

As a result of this traumatic experience, Chernow was prompted to create a truly disrupting and potentially life-saving technology for the fast paced hospitality and restaurant industries. "If I, as a person living with life-threatening food allergies was looking for a solution for a safer and easier dining experience that came with 'less burden,' surely there had to be millions of others out there looking for the same," says Chernow.



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L I F E S T Y L E

GOING GREEN
WITH KARMA



I WANTED TO HELP MYSELF AND
OTHERS LIKE ME HAVE EASIER AND
SAFER DINING EXPERIENCES.
—CERTISTAR FOUNDER
SHANDEE CHERNOW

EATING OUT WITH FOOD ALLERGIES CAN BE A DAUNTING TASK INSTEAD OF A PLEASURABLE EXPERIENCE, KEEPING THOSE WITH SEVERE FOOD ALLERGIES AT BAY WHEN IT COMES TO EATING OUT.

Shandee Chernow understands this dilemma firsthand. Her struggles with food allergies began at age 28.

"I was selling software and part of my job involved networking with clients over food and drinks. I didn't want the topic of allergies to become the focus of conversations with clients, so I would go to the restaurant early and discuss my allergies with the server. I've had so many experiences with how restaurants handle my food allergies and most of the time finding safe dining options is a struggle."

With 32 million Americans living with food allergies, Chernow knew she wasn't the only one going through this

situation and it was clear that the problem of food allergies in the culinary industry wasn't being addressed properly.

"I wanted to help myself and others like me have easier and safer dining experiences. Using my background in computer science and data solutions, I figured out that it was just a big data problem involving the cross-referencing of food allergies with recipes, ingredients and cooking instructions. I was in a unique position to develop a solution for the entire hospitality industry to be able to serve food-allergic guests in an easier and safer way, thus came the introduction of CertiStar in 2017."

Most of the tools used by restaurants handle one allergy at a time and only consider the top 8 allergens in the US. Since there are over 170 different foods that have caused food allergic reactions, and upwards of 30% of food allergic people have multiple allergies, their tools are insufficient. CertiStar aims to help restaurants easily handle any food allergy situations that they encounter.

CONTINUED >

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CERTISTAR PRESIDENT + CEO SHANDEE CHERNOW FEATURED IN SCOTTSDALE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

CERTISTAR (CONTINUED)



THE RESOURCES WE PROVIDE
RESTAURANTS ARE IMPACTING THE FOOD
ALLERGIC COMMUNITY EVERY DAY.

CertiStar is user friendly: the guest can simply enter their individual allergy or combination of allergies into the platform at any partnered restaurant. The platform then has a process of complex logic that happens in the background to determine an individualized menu specifically for that guest. The items on the restaurant's menu are separated: straight style into green, yellow and red. The green items are considered to be allergen-friendly choices while the yellow require some modification and the red options should be avoided. A complete and accurate list of approved options for the guest is provided and that person can even order items in multiple categories, like appetizers and desserts. Once a customer has a positive experience dining out, they will be inclined to share the experience amongst the community and create additional loyal fans for the restaurant.

"The resources we provide restaurants are impacting the food allergic community every day. CertiStar's data-based software creates an additional layer of safety as we examine every recipe,

ingredient, and possible areas of cross-contamination. We also minimize loose ends in the kitchen as accurately as possible and help the restaurant team's to streamline their operations, allowing them to ultimately turn tables faster, which puts more money in their pockets. Our mission is to give both the food allergic guests as well as restaurant owners greater peace of mind in the overall dining out experience."

CertiStar has partnered with several restaurants in the Valley including Chompies, Oscar's Pier 63 and Joe's Real BBQ. All have seen amazing results with revenue, operations, and customer experience.

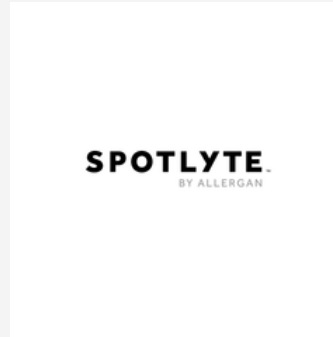
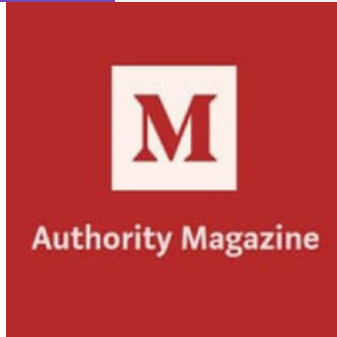
Chernow says she has lofty goals in this new year to bring CertiStar to a variety of industries. "We've worked with schools and have plans to partner with national and global organizations in the hospitality and cruise line industry. I want those with food allergies, wherever they are based, to have more options and safer places to dine."

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