



Social Media & Its Influence on Small Food Businesses

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Current Food Service Topic
Food Production Management



Introduction to the Trend

“Small-Scale Eating”

Eating at small food businesses/restaurants has become increasingly popular as these small businesses often offer: locally produced, seasonal, unique, homemade, and wholesome food products.



A New and Old Trend!

Although small food businesses have been around for some time now, this industry gained popularity post COVID-19 pandemic due to supply-chain issues.



A New Approach

One trend that has emerged within the past few years is a consumer's desire to eat food that has not travelled far. Many small businesses pride themselves on providing homemade and local products.



The Influence of Social Media on this Trend

A Marketing Strategy

- Social media provides increased awareness about a food business (ads)
- Menus and ordering is accessible to those with Internet



A Consumer Community

- “Foodie” accounts
- People post reviews and photos of food
- Emphasis on “trendy” foods – people are attracted to local businesses that specialize in a certain recipe/food product
- Food Blogs
- “Phone eats first”





Instagram

Search



viennavafoodies

Follow



37 posts

362 followers

102 following

Vienna VA Foodies

A community for foodies in Vienna, VA



Tag us in your pics 📷 #viennavafoodies

Want to collaborate? Send us a DM! ➡️

m.facebook.com/groups/2256387114440229

POSTS

TAGGED



Instagram Foodie Account Example

Target Populations

There is no “one” population:

- This trend is relevant to all demographics– the population attracted to a certain small business varies by location.
- Mainly younger generation; technology of modern day has made our recent generations highly interested in social media



Pros of Social Media



- **Shares relevant information** about food products or the small food business
 - Including: restaurant hours, ingredient lists, speciality items, photos, etc.



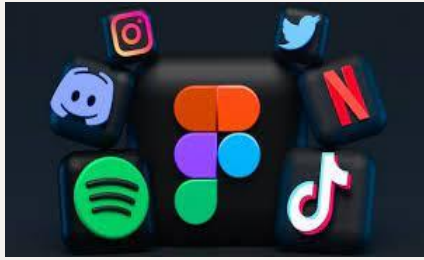
- Allows for consumers to **stay up-to-date** on information
- **Low cost** to the business owner– most social media platforms are **free**
- Allows for good **consumer relations**



- Social media can be used to **target a specific audience**
 - Produces a **sense of loyalty and interaction** between the business and the consumer
- An array of social media platforms can be used depending on the **motives** of the food business



- Tiktok, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc.
- **Communication** strategy

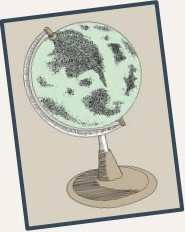


Cons of Social Media



- **Reputation:** Risk of using social media include not being able to control messaging about your company, or damage to the reputation of the company (e.g., negative reviews)
- **Once it's out there, it doesn't go away easily:** If complaints and criticisms spread, and aren't handled appropriately, your brand's reputation can suffer severe damage.
- **Time-consuming:** Social media updates every second, requiring constant attention and immediate reactions.
- **No Guarantees:** If you don't post often or pay for an ads to have your posts seen, on social media platforms, you may not get much traction. There are no guarantees.

Impacts on Food Industry

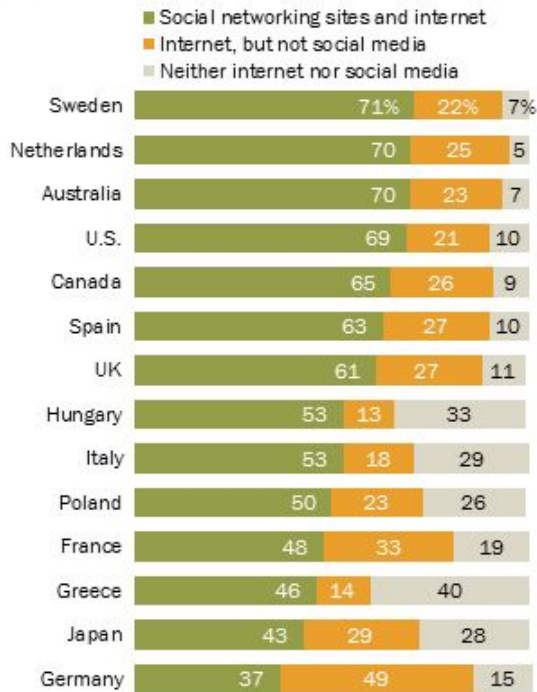


- **Social media used everywhere**- small businesses able to reach people globally!
- Reach different **“food communities”** more easily, broadening awareness of small businesses- “engage in communities with people around the globe with similar likes, hobbies and interests”(Singh 2021)
- People not relying on just food critics and experts, but **learning from actual customers** (singh 2021)
- Many businesses looking to work with influencers: micro/macro influencers
- Influencer Marketing Statistics:
 - “Each dollar invested in influencer marketing returns \$6.50” (tomoson agency)



Large differences in social media usage throughout the developed world

Adults who report using ...



Note: Percentages based on total sample.

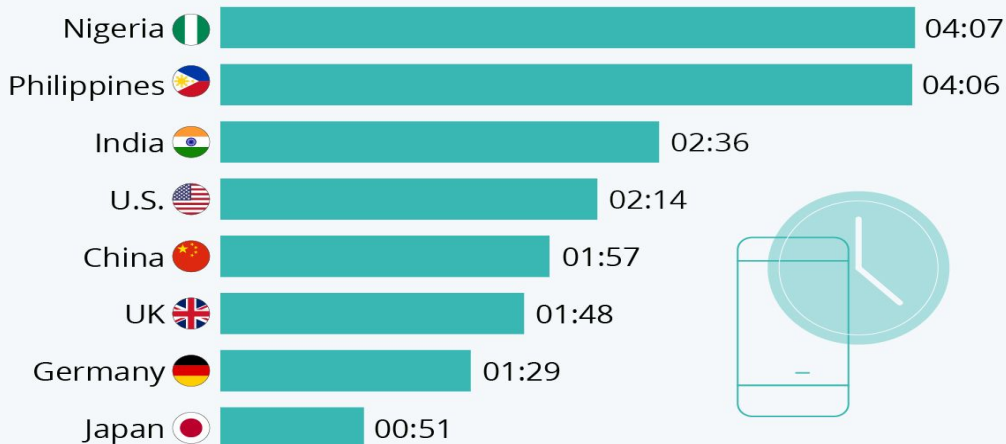
Source: Spring 2016 Global Attitudes Survey. Q79, Q81, Q82.

U.S. data from a Pew Research Center Survey conducted Sept. 29-
Nov. 6, 2016.

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Where People Spend the Most & Least Time on Social Media

Average time spent connected to social networks per day in selected countries in 2021 (hh:mm)



904,000 internet users (16-64 y/o) surveyed across 46 markets

Source: Global Web Index via DataReportal



statista



REV
CIANCIO
BURGER
EXPERT

SOCIAL SUPERSTARS

**STOP AT 1:09

Data/Related News

- Research on the best way to implement social media for business strategy
 - Study looking at small businesses in Malaysia: **AIDA model** created for small businesses
 - AIDA: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action (Hassan 2015)
- American Marketing Association: 29% of small businesses using social media as **major marketing tool** in contrast to 20% of large companies (Broekemier 2015)

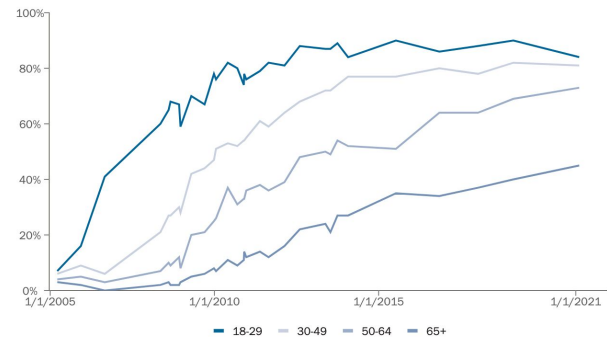


US Social media stats:

- 2005: 5% of American adults;
- Today: 72% of the public uses some type of social media
- 84% of adults aged 18-29 use at least one social media site (Pew research center)

Social media use by age

% of U.S. adults who say they use at least one social media site, by age



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.
Source: Surveys of U.S. adults conducted 2005-2021.

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“Project Instagram” by Ipsos, 2018

People surveyed say they perceive brands on Instagram as the following:

Popular

78%

Creative

77%

Entertaining

76%

Relevant

74%

Committed to building
community

72%

“**54% of people** surveyed say they made a purchase either **in the moment** or after seeing a product or service on Instagram.”

People surveyed said they took the following actions after seeing a product or service on Instagram:

79%

searched for more information

65%

visited the brand's website or app

46%

made a purchase online or offline

37%

visited a retail store

31%

followed the brand's account online

29%

talked to someone about it

People surveyed say Instagram helps them with the following:

83%

discover new
products or services

81%

research products or
services

80%

decide whether to
buy a product or
service

Strengths

- Locally produced food
- Social Media can reach an array of people & locations
- Builds a consumer community
- Social media can advertise special promotions/deals

Weaknesses

- Limits people who do not have internet & technology access
- Can produce a negative reputation easily (for instance, someone leaves a bad review)
- Reliant on the success and effective of online marketing

Opportunities

- Hiring a professional marketing staff
- Can be represented by famous influencers/food bloggers
- Opportunity to increase profit because buying becomes easier and faster.

Threats

- Bans on social media platforms
- Competition with other small businesses (who may have more publicity/followers)
- Technological error/malfunction within the system (on the website, etc.)

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