

CONFIDENCE
IN EVERY CASE.



Trends

FALL - COVID-19 2020

Here to Stay: Perfecting Modes of Delivery

Before the pandemic hit, delivery was already gaining market share due to the Netflix, stay-home trend, but once much of the world went on lockdown, off-premise dining jumped to the front of the class.

It's not likely that post-pandemic mindsets will give up the safety and convenience of ordering for pickup or having food dropped at their doorsteps. This is a sector that has staying power and looks to be with us for years to come.

- It's estimated that 42% of foodservice venues added delivery as a result of Covid-19. Additional polls revealed that 31% plan to continue investing in this segment.
- Many surveyed diners stated they prefer ordering from restaurants that deliver themselves rather than those using services (PostMates, GrubHub, DoorDash, etc.); savvy restaurants are employing their own drivers they trust for more quality and safety control, as well as better budgeting.
- Grubhub, one of the larger delivery platforms, reports that their average order size during the second quarter was \$39, an increase of 20% year over year.
- With more customers working from home, the growth of single-person households, and the persistent fear of crowds, menuing dishes that better survive delivery times makes dollars and sense.
- Tamper-proof seals, masked and gloved drivers, contactless payment and drop off, and proper temperature control are already expected, not perks. Next up compartment-specific packaging, infographic lids, and beverage shot kits.

Effective Covid-Era Communication

Consumers say it's important for restaurants to communicate their safety and sanitation strategies. If diners don't know what extra measures you've implemented, they may not feel confident enough to visit and/or recommend to family and friends.

- Make social media your best friend. When most of your customers are at home, their phones and devices are the most likely way to decide where to eat. Enticing food photos remain par for the course, but demonstrating safety measures, posting revised menus and operating hours, and showing the faces (and smiles) of your loyal employees are also effective ways to connect.
- Training should reach beyond merely teaching employees new safety techniques. Also instruct waitstaff to inform and reassure diners at each table about what's being done to limit exposure.
- Post visible safety posters at entrances, throughout the dining room, and in restrooms to reinforce what measures you have added to battle the spread of the pandemic (see photo above left).
- Old-school advertising like radio and television commercials can be repurposed to alert the public that you are indeed open and why it's safe to dine with you.
- Personal chef's tables and visits from the kitchen are on-hold to reduce contact, so smart chefs are offering online demonstrations and tutorials. Try going live and answering viewers' questions to develop and maintain bonds with customers.



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The bad news is that restaurants are expected to lose \$240 billion by the end of 2020, according to the National Restaurant Association. The good news is that we're learning how to implement new strategies to keep our customers safe that are driving more people back to dining out.

How is the industry changing and what can your establishment do to rise to the myriad challenges and come out on top?



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Fresh, Healthy, & Convenient

As more customers return to dining out, operators need to focus on keeping them safe, leaving less time for back of house prep. Budgets are tighter than ever, so ready-to-use ingredients help reduce waste, storage space, and labor costs.

- Peeling, chopping, slicing...these tasks are easily skipped by employing 100% usable products, especially in core ingredients like Ready-Set-Serve® (RSS) Carrots, RSS Onions, RSS Celery, and RSS Salad Mixes that are versatile for the multi-purposing key to today's more concise menus.
- After months being stuck inside, diners are expressing increased interest in healthy, fresh produce-oriented meals that will help them meet their dietary goals.
- Chefs can expand their salad category with the larger number of colorful leafy green varieties in pre-mixed blends like RSS Kale Color Crunch and RSS Heritage Blend.
- Sustainability efforts are also returning to the forefront. Using no-waste ingredients that don't require rinsing saves water and keeps more trash from landfills and oceans.

The Hot List

- Hyper Hygiene
- Zero Waste Ingredients
- Mask Enforcement
- Ghost Kitchens
- Good Vibe Atmospheres
- Patios, Pop-Ups, & Parking Lots
- Drive-Through Innovations
- Immune-Boosting Dishes
- Family Meal Bundles
- Germ-Killing UV Lights
- To-Go Kits
- Outdoor Grilling Stations
- Restaurant Pantry Sales
- Delivery-Proof Recipes
- Eco-Friendly Packaging
- No Tipping Policies
- Barbecue Spreads
- Delivery Cocktails
- Convenience-Driven Products
- House-Made Pie & Ice Cream
- Increased Efficiency
- Virtual Experiences
- Community Outreach
- Private Dining
- Original Pizzas
- National Park Catering
- Hand-Helds
- Social Responsibility
- Sandwich Resurgence
- Single-Use Menus
- Vegetarian & Vegan Meals
- Employee Respect & Protection
- French Fries
- Instagram Connectivity
- Dumplings
- Individual Condiments
- Loyalty
- Renewed Sustainability Interest

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- **Fresh Crop**—a weekly rundown of the fresh produce market including prices, supply levels, and quality.
- **Trends**—forecasts what is on the culinary horizon four times per year.

Innovation Mode: The New "FoodTech" Normal

As cooler fall temperatures approach and outdoor dining may become untenable, many restaurant businesses are integrating technology into their processes to provide safer dining environments. Customers have never been as selective about where to dine, placing trust as their new number one concern (over quality/flavor).

- The post-pandemic future points to the need for having long-term safety measures in place.
- Germicidal UV-C lights, to purify the air and sanitize surfaces, are being installed in air ducts to destroy bacteria and viruses throughout indoor buildings. Additionally, visible air purifiers are being placed in dining rooms to double-down on keeping potentially airborne germs from reaching customers and employees.
- Many establishments are implementing temperature tests at the entrance to ensure symptomatic carriers do not infect the space.
- Hand sanitizer is now a must. Providing pump stations and personal table bottles allows customers to reapply as needed.
- Placing partitions between tables with glass, plastic, or other barriers helps enforce social-distancing measures.
- Instituting contactless payments, QR codes, and online menus reduces the potential for virus exposure.
- Untraditional drive-throughs are on the radar—beyond fast food and QSRs. Providing a quick and easy pick up method may become a viable mode for more independents and even fine dining.

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