

People prioritise social media before restaurant visits

 casualdiningmagazine.co.uk/news/2017-03-30-people-prioritise-social-media-before-restaurant-visits

Two-thirds of people check a restaurant's social media before eating out, according to the latest research from HGEM.

The importance of social media isn't restricted to a specific age group, with 58% of millennials saying that they go onto a restaurant's social media before every visit or before the majority of visits, as well as 53% of 56-65 year-olds following the same pattern.



When asked why they had visited a restaurant's social channels, 30% said they were looking for menu information, while 22% were seeking customer reviews.

Although on-site conversations with staff were deemed to be more important than social media conversations for 62% of consumers, 34% believe social media interactions to be an equally important part of the guest experience. With this figure rising to 43% amongst the millennial audience, the study highlights the demand for consistent communications between consumer and operator, online and offline.

When it comes to content, offers and promotions are the most popular, followed by photos, events and competitions. Facebook is the most widely used platform, with 64% choosing the network as their chosen channel for interacting with restaurants.

“We know that social media is an incredibly powerful tool for operators to monitor customer feedback and maintain a seamless guest experience, however the results emphasise the influence that such platforms have over what drives diners to visit a venue in the first instance,” says HGEM managing director Steven Pike.

“Ensuring that your restaurant's channels are updated regularly with pertinent and engaging information for customers is crucial to meet guest expectation of what content is available – and shareable – on these social networking sites.

“While many operators will of course devote considerable resource to ensuring their social media presence is well managed, the findings highlight that on site conversations still remain important to the overall guest experience, and we encourage restaurant to consider all elements of the customer journey when considering how to manage and improve the conversations had with customers.”