

Propel info

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Survey shows online communication needs to be improved: A new survey by the guest experience management company [HospitalityGEM](#) has revealed that 80% of diners do not communicate with restaurants online, with this figure even higher in the Midlands. Even though the majority of diners do not communicate with restaurants through social media, 42% said that they still keep up to date with their activity online. This is supported by 83% of those surveyed, who agreed that it was important for them to feel well informed before they visited a restaurant, potentially because diners want to guarantee they have a great experience. To further ensure that they are happy with their choice of restaurant, 94% of people actively search online for a review first. Using online reviews to vet a restaurant before dining is a necessity for two thirds of those surveyed, with the 18-30 and 60-plus age brackets utilising this facility the most. This suggests that those between these age brackets, who are likely to have more time pressures from work or family, are perhaps more inclined to go to brands or places that they know and trust. All diners surveyed said that they would be more inclined to communicate with the restaurant if they offered more deals online for their guests. Males are more likely to communicate directly with restaurants online, but only if they are addressing a personal profile of a chef or owner, rather than the restaurant or brand as a whole. This implies that although restaurants have an online presence, they may not be communicating the right content, in the right way to their target markets – perhaps focusing too much on selling their brand, rather than interacting with customers. Steven Pike, managing director of [HospitalityGEM](#), said: “Even though the use of social media has surged in the UK hospitality sector, it appears that this only works when using a specific type of post to a specific target market, with online reviews seen as being most reliable. Restaurants now need to apply their personal approach of engaging with guests to their online communications.”
