

Chapter 11

The Role of Social Media Marketing in the Food Industry

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses at social media marketing's important position in the food business, emphasizing how well it works to promote brands, engage customers, and increase sales. It goes over important tactics including using analytics, producing a variety of content, and stressing the value of real customer interactions. The chapter also covers issues like maintaining an online persona and adjusting to the quickly evolving digital environment. It also looks into future developments like social commerce, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR), as well as new social media platforms. In order to build long-lasting brand loyalty and relationships, the chapter ends by highlighting the necessity of a planned, adaptable, and data-driven approach to social media marketing that strikes a balance between promotional activities and sincere consumer involvement.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Evolution of Social Media

A great deal of the wonders of the modern era have contributed to the development and prosperity of society. For countless numbers of individuals, technology has made everything convenient and accessible. Social media's emergence and its ability to aid in the promotion of several products—in this case, food-related ones—are among the advantages of technology (Bermoy et al., 2021). Since its origin, social media has seen a rapid growth, evolving from basic tools for communication to intricate ecosystems that have an impact on every aspect of life, including the food business. People can engage in many social media platforms, such as social networking websites, and exchange ideas and content by using these various modes of communication. Social media's explosive growth has garnered a lot of attention in the

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cutthroat corporate world of today. Social media should be a means for brands to engage with and draw customers (Riaz et al., 2019).

Facebook

Facebook was first launched in 2004 as a networking site for Harvard students, but it later spread to other colleges and the broader public, thanks to the efforts of Mark Zuckerberg and his undergraduate roommates (Carlson, 2010). With features that enabled social media interaction, like as photo sharing, chat, and status updates, it swiftly expanded to become the biggest social media platform.

Twitter

Twitter, a social media platform founded in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams, brought a new dimension to social networking with its 140-character (and then 280-character) post restriction, known as “tweets.” Twitter has been a popular venue for news, celebrity encounters, and live event updates because of its format, which promoted concise communication and real-time involvement (Kwak et al., 2010).

Instagram

Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger launched Instagram as a photo-sharing app in 2010. With its emphasis on clear pictures and easy-to-use effects, it attracted an extensive user base fast. Instagram was acquired by Facebook in 2012, and as a result, its features and capabilities were expanded. Notably, IGTV and Stories further prioritized visual material (Hu, Manikonda, & Kambhampati, 2014).

TikTok

With its short-form video content, TikTok, which was introduced globally in 2018 by the Chinese business Byte Dance (after its merger with Musical.ly), transformed social media. TikTok has been incredibly popular, especially with younger audiences, thanks to its algorithm-driven content discovery and user-friendliness (Anderson, 2020). Its focus on user interaction and innovation has raised the bar for social media platforms.

In the food business, social media marketing has become a vital tool, transforming the way firms interact with customers and establish their online identities. Food brands can now exhibit their products through aesthetically appealing material, interact with a wider audience, and influence customer behavior in previously unheard-of ways thanks to the growth of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. A Hootsuite (2020) survey found that over 4.5 billion individuals globally use social media, and this figure is still rising. This presents food brands with a large audience to reach. According to Kim and Lee (2019), this change has not only brought about a transformation of conventional marketing tactics but has also presented new avenues for firms to innovate and communicate more personally with their customers.

The rise of user-generated content and influencer marketing, which are now crucial in influencing consumer perceptions and influencing purchase decisions, highlights the importance of social media in the food business (Liu-Thompkins, 2019). Social media also facilitates real-time feedback and interaction, which helps brands react swiftly to changing consumer trends and preferences. In order to remain

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