

Social Media: Food - UK - July 2012

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"The food market is presented with a number of challenges to overcome with regards to engaging consumers online. Despite sizeable communities established by some brands within the market, the majority of consumers remain unwilling to form affiliations with brands, rather engaging only when the opportunity of acquiring a discount or promotional offers presents itself.

– Rob Parkin, Social Media Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- How can food brands capitalise on their male audience?
- Do high levels of offline engagement undermine brands' social strategies?
- Are people more engaged with food brands before or after purchase?
- What is the best way for food brands to engage people online?
- Obesity is on the rise in Britain, but does online conversation show consumer concern or apathy?

The UK is a nation of food lovers. As the country's passion for food grows, so too does its integration into the social media landscape. The internet is an easily accessed source of information that feeds an ever-growing appetite for food, enabling people to expand their tastes and cooking repertoires. People come together to share their love of food via photographs, recipes, blogs and tweets. However, it is not just foodies, bargain hunters and brand advocates that come together in online communities; increasingly brands are entering this space too. Social media platforms provide a rich environment for brands to communicate with its customers and would-be customers. However, keeping them engaged via dedicated brand pages on social media sites is more challenging.

Mintel's Social Media and Food Brands report monitors and analyses discussions taking place on social media, interpreting and providing insight on what people are talking about online. It also tracks the engagement between consumers, products and brands in the online environment.

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