

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Name:** 2022 Social Media Marketing Trends for the Food Industry in Thailand

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**Report Highlights:**

Social media has become an indispensable tool for marketing food and beverages in Thailand. Effective social media marketing is the key for growth in any food and beverage business; however, the social media landscape is changing continuously as new platforms and features emerge. Marketers need to stay current on all the changes in social media trends to choose the right platforms and activities that target their intended audience in Thailand's dynamic food and drink environment.

## **Social Media in Thailand**

There were 54.5 million users (77.8 percent of the population) connected to the internet in January 2022, which was a 0.2 percent year-on-year increase from January 2021, according to the Digital Advertising Association of Thailand (DAAT). Millennials, or Generation Y, between 28 and 41 are the most active age group with 97.3 percent being active social media users, followed by Generation X between 42 and 57 years old (94 percent), Generation Z between 8 and 27 years old (92.9 percent), and Baby Boomer between 58 and 76 years old (89.3% percent.) The DAAT also highlighted that Thailand is ranked seventh in the world for the longest average amount of time, 9 hours and 6 minutes, that users use the internet on any device per day comparing to the world's average at 6 hours and 58 minutes. Thais spend almost three hours per day on social media. While Facebook and YouTube remain the country's key social media platform, Tik-Tok is becoming a powerful marketing tool in 2022.

It is undeniable that social media has become an indispensable tool for marketing food and beverages. More than 80 percent of food and beverage businesses (not including street-food outlets) use social media as a marketing tool. Food and beverage businesses initially utilized social media as a communication platform with consumers. However, digital marketing is not just necessary now but essential for success. Digital marketing helps businesses engage with their customers, establish brand authenticity, and generate sales and income. There is an influx of digital marketing trends on social media platforms. Restauranters must choose the right platforms and the right digital marketing activities for their business to reach their target customer base.

## **Short-Form Social Media Videos**

Video content dominated the social media landscape in 2021. Instagram is no longer just a photo sharing application but focuses instead on video media, while YouTube introduced YouTube Shorts as a specific platform for short video content. In 2022, restaurants and foodservice operators need to invest in or increase investment in short form video content to get the most out of their digital marketing strategy. Short-form videos are a great way to engage with customers and keep their attention. Dentsu (Thailand), Thailand's leading advertising company, predicts that short-form videos will be even more widespread than ever before in 2022. Short videos are essential as 85 percent of internet users consume content on their phones and tablets. In addition, social media users share videos at twice the rate than any other form of content, and 84 percent of consumers will be convinced to buy products or services based on the brand's videos. They also encourage their clients to invest at least 30 percent of their digital marketing budget in short-form video production including brand introduction videos, behind-the-brand videos, educational videos, FAQs videos, live-streaming events, and videos highlighting past events. Although there is no exact sweet spot on the length of the video, most advertising agencies are making videos as short as possible. Sixty to ninety seconds is the ideal length of time for short video content as businesses can use the video content on multiple social media platforms while still grabbing the attention of consumers.

Videos are a great way for restauranters and other foodservice operators to showcase their businesses. Videos help operators establish brand image, present food and products, highlight their restaurant's atmosphere, demonstrate their unique cooking methods on signature dishes, and announce special

promotions. Operators could also conduct virtual soft launches via live video streaming to introduce chefs, new dishes, or new services. For example, instead of publishing single or multi-photo content, Nespresso Thailand utilized their Facebook and Instagram accounts and shared short videos that highlighted their new limited edition coffee capsules and new drink recipes. Short-form video content not only effectively conveys brand personality or identity, but it also helps boost engagement rate, increases time spent on business's website and social media pages, generates organic visitors, and develops trust and affection towards the brands.

## **Social Commerce**

Social commerce gained traction during the pandemic as consumers started purchasing more online. Many social media platforms have introduced new shopping features that allow consumers to purchase products without leaving the platform or connect the consumer to online shops partnered with the social media platform. In 2022, more businesses and operators will take advantage of social selling opportunities through social channels like Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest's buyable pins. They will do this by developing eye-catching visuals, tailoring smooth customer journeys, and providing superior customer experience from the beginning to the end of the buying process. Additionally, key opinion leaders (KOLs), social media influencers, and brand ambassadors have become important tools in social commerce as they endorse brands and sell products via live streaming, which has become a popular way for consumers to interact with announcers and even purchase products immediately.

Restaurateurs and operators should explore ways to enhance the customer experience on social media platforms in order to take advantage of social commerce. For example, grocery store Villa Market is utilizing their Facebook page to drive purchases to their own official website and show live streaming events where consumers can make payments through Facebook's comment box and live chat features. Villa Market performed market research that showed Thai consumers like to chat with sellers during their purchasing processes. LINE Thailand believes that customer relations is just as important as price in the Thai market. In 2021, more than 62 percent of Thai consumers purchased products via chat commerce, and LINE official accounts (LINE OA) increased 73 percent from 2020.

## **Augmented Reality**

The food industry has increasingly used augmented reality (AR) in social media marketing to help customers visualize dishes and menus and enhance customers' experiences. In 2022, more food retail operators and restaurateurs are using AR to offer interactive or true-to-scale 3D visualizations of their products or dishes to present and promote them. Grocery stores and restaurants can also leverage AR to showcase farm-to-table stories. They can add QR codes to packages that introduce producers and farmers and take customers on a virtual tour of farms, vineyard, or even factories. Likewise, a QR code on food packaging or on the website can teach consumers how to prepare food or enhance their experience by collaborating with well-known chefs to demonstrate recipes and cooking techniques.

## **Social Communities**

Social communities have risen on many social media platforms such as Facebook Group, Clubhouse, and Twitter because of social distancing. Social communities provide people with similar interests and ideas a space to share experiences, thoughts, and comments. Many companies including foodservice

operators are creating brand-owned communities to listen to and engage their customers. Social communities offer companies a unique ability to gain valuable market intelligence, improve customer experiences, build authentic connections, and create long-term loyalty. However, encouraging customers to join the community is not easy. Companies must attract customers to join through reward programs and special events. Starbucks has strengthened their communities with several social initiatives to boost member interaction and engagement, such as offering all Starbucks Rewards members with free products and free birthday treats. Starbucks also makes use of social media listening tools like branded hashtags allowing customers to share and repost special marketing campaigns. Social communities also allow marketers to gain insights and understand how people perceive their brands.

## **User-Generated Content**

User-generated content (UGC) marketing has taken over on social media as one in three shoppers make purchases on social media after engaging with UGC. UGC is recognized as word-of-mouth marketing on social media platforms including Tik-Tok, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. UGC shows how existing customers are using products and services, their experiences, satisfaction levels, and brand advocacy. UGC In 2022, where the content is the king and everyone is content creators, UGC is becoming one of the most necessary marketing activities for most brands as it helps brands and businesses build credibility, increase recognition, and boost sales with small to no marketing budget. The 2022 Social Media Trend by Hubspot reported that 93 percent of marketers agree that consumers trust content created by consumers more than content created by brands and almost 90 percent of the people trust UGC to help them make purchasing decision.

Food companies like Taco Bell also use UGC marketing by creating a video filter on Snapchat promoting their new taco. Consumers can download and use the Taco filter to share their creation on their other social media platforms. Haidilao, the most famous Taiwanese “hot pot” restaurant brand, was the first brand using UGC in Thailand challenging consumers to share creative Gyudon recipes on their personal social media. The most creative recipes will become a promotional menu. Consumers shared more than 2,000 videos, reaching 5 million views, through the Haidilao campaign. BBQ Plaza, under Food Passion Company Limited, is another Thai brand using UGC marketing. On Valentine’s Day, NNQ Plaza put the green dragon mascot “Gon” beside customers who came alone and advertised that everyone is loved, which went viral as singles were encouraged to share their picture or video.

Social media has had a tremendous impact on Thailand’s food industry. Most operators have increased their social media marketing efforts in response to changes in consumer behavior. There are many tools and activities on various social media platforms available to businesses, but business operators should carefully consider the platforms and tools that help them achieve their marketing goals and reach their target customers.

End of Report

## **Attachments:**

No Attachments.