

Mintel identifies five new social media trends

CHICAGO, US: In the latest of a quarterly series, Mintel's social media analysts, Gabi Lieberman and Lizz Martinez, have identified five new trends in online consumer marketplace behaviour gleaned from high-level research into the strategies employed by Fortune 500 companies across the US.



1. Food ingredients and active lines of communication

"Among all meat alternative brands reviewed in Mintel's recent Meat Alternatives report, there's a strong sense of commitment to healthful and cruelty-free living that helps in fostering strong online communities," says Gabi Lieberman. "Twitter is the most common source of mentions surrounding meat alternative brands, accounting for nearly six in 10 mentions online (57%), led in part by the large sharing of the #MeatlessMonday hashtag. People discussing meat alternative brands on Twitter commonly discuss their eating of the brands, the sharing of recipes they used the products in, and their overall satisfaction with the brands. All meat alternative brands reviewed maintain a Twitter account, although Boca has allowed its account to run inactive, having not tweeted from its @BOCAMeatless account since December 2011. Due to a majority of the consumer conversation happening on Twitter, it's imperative brands keep up their profiles to ensure they can properly respond to these highly influential users."

2. Proactive social media campaigns to foster or rebuild consumer trust

"A perfect example of proactive social media efforts to maintain consumer trust took place earlier this year when Lean Cuisine's buzz peaked on 11 February 2013, as news sources and consumers shared news of a recall for the frozen food when glass was found in various packages of its ravioli meals. Lean Cuisine addressed this issue on its Facebook page on 8 February, instructing consumers to call its customer service hotline for a full refund. Facebook fans were receptive to the post and thanked Lean Cuisine for its quick attention to the issue. In bringing up the issue to its consumers online via social media, Lean Cuisine was able to salvage a potentially disastrous event. Fans quickly took to the brand's hotline to get refunds for their meals," notes Martinez. According to Mintel research, Lean Cuisine accounts for 35% of online conversations among the selected frozen meal brands. Consumers discussing Lean Cuisine online use the meals as a means of staying on track with calorie counting.

3. Companies piggybacking on captive audiences from other large-scale events

"One hugely successful example of this trend is Oreo's infamous Super Bowl blackout tweet. As people scrambled to find the cause of the stadium blackout during the Super Bowl on 3 February, OREO took advantage of the captive audience and in a matter of minutes, the brand released an ad that was one of the most talked moments of the game. Thanks to a simple tweet 'Power Out? No Problem' and a simple image with a few words, 'You can still dunk in the dark,' OREO was thrust into the spotlight and appreciated. The initial tweet was retweeted nearly 16,000 times and its Facebook post with the same image received more than 19,500 likes. Oreo's Twitter following grew by more than 8,000 followers during the 2013 Super Bowl after its hugely successful tweet sent during the blackout became one of the most talked about during the game," says Gabi Lieberman.

4. Nostalgia for an old product in a new reality

"Founded in 1921, Betty Crocker is able to highlight its long-standing expertise through its social media content. Betty

Crocker takes to Instagram to give an inside look into its kitchen, where recipes are born every day. Not only a baking and dessert mix brand, Betty Crocker is well-known for its lines of cookware and bakeware, as well as its cookbooks. As such, people are given access to recipe development. As the Mintel Market Application Only for the Loyal suggests, exclusive experiences help raise loyalty and engagement among consumers, something Betty Crocker has been able to tap into with its Instagram account. In December 2011, Betty Crocker introduced Betty911 which allowed people to post their emergency cooking and baking questions on Facebook, or tweet them using the #Betty911 hashtag. The brand took to Twitter to prompt users to ask questions on making the perfect Thanksgiving turkey and how to make the perfect dough for Christmas cookies. The Betty911 initiative proved to be successful and the brand incorporated the approach to its everyday marketing initiatives with its 'Ask Betty' Facebook tab," adds Martinez.

5. Leveraging blogger influence

"In January 2012, L'Oréal teamed up with YouTube for the 'Be the Next Beauty Guru' nationwide contest to find the next rising beauty vlogger (video blogger). The contest invited aspiring beauty vloggers to submit a video tutorial offering advice on how to re-create their favourite Hollywood-inspired hair and makeup looks. Nearly 1,000 video entries were submitted, with the winning video uploaded to the L'Oréal website and its Destination Beauty channel, which was launched in 2010 and now has more than 17,000 subscribers. L'Oreal announced a new line of makeup from YouTube celebrity Michelle Phan in August 2013," concludes Gabi Lieberman.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>