

Market Intelligence Digest

Volume 3 Issue No. 04 | January 2021



Highlights

- This report focuses on consumers recognizing the significance of communication and socialization with their community due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The key opportunities for United by Food are “Celebrate individuals' unique passions”, “Create community around common interests”, and “Mobilize consumers to do good”.
- This issue discusses how brands can help consumers reconnect with themselves and others.

2021 Global Food & Drink Trends (Part 3)



Photo by Kate Trifo from Pexels

United by Food

The 2021 Global Consumer Trend Coming Together forecast explores how consumers' understandings of community have been strengthened by COVID-19.

Recognizing the importance of connection and support, consumers will organize

in like-minded communities for socialization and camaraderie.

Food, drink, and foodservice brands can take advantage of their positions as common interests and passions to which consumers can tie their identities.

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Brands will then be able to actively bring individual fans together into online communities or organize in-person gatherings.

Bound by the brand(s) they have in common, communities will expand people's social circles and introduce collective ways to make a difference.

Three key opportunities for United By Food

Celebrate individuals' unique passions

Food, drink, and foodservice brands will support and connect with people who are using food and drink to express facets of their personalities and to find new hobbies.

The next 12 months will be the pivotal time to solidify food and drink as a key part of one's identity following the rise in food as a creative outlet in 2020.

Create community around common interests

Food, drink, and foodservice brands will create communities of brand fans that provide consumers with

new ways to socialize and meet new people.

Whether online or in person, companies can connect individual consumers around their passions and create forums for meaningful, engaged interactions.

Mobilize consumers to do good

Food, drink, and foodservice brands can act as facilitators that help consumers become part of the change they want to see in the world.

Brands will draw on their resources and reach to organize consumers to take action in local and global communities.

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Brands can help consumers reconnect with themselves and others

People will be keen to form connections with each other in new ways in the coming months. Following a year in which food and drink provided security, fueled bonding and offered adventure, brands can be used as symbols that help people celebrate their authentic selves and eventually as catalysts to meet new people.

Inspired by sports, apparel, and beauty products, more food, drink, and foodservice brands can be used as key indicators of people's passions and personalities. In the coming years, brands will have an opportunity to introduce their fans to each other in online and in-person micro-communities.

What's happening now: empower personal expression through passion for food and drink

In the next 12 months, food, drink, and foodservice brands will encourage people to use their brands to express themselves and to reconnect with their pre-pandemic identities.

Food and drink has become a safe outlet for escapism during COVID-19. Food, drink, and foodservice brands will launch more interactive products and recipes that encourage the use of food and drink as creative outlets. Products and services also will help people revive their pre-pandemic

lifestyles and interests such as travelling, dining out, and attending sporting events.

In addition, consumers can be encouraged to use food and drink to express their moods, opinions, or passions. Sharing social media posts will help consumers express their personalities in times of limited social interactions, while also linking them to a wider community of online brand fans.

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Single Dog crisps corners China's market for unmarried snackers

What's next: establish communities where consumers can form new connections'

Consumers will be looking for ways to create authentic connections with other people who share their values. Inspiration can be found in sports, apparel, and other industries that host events or create communities where fans can celebrate their passion with other people. Food, drink, and foodservice brands can create online and physical spaces that bring consumers together.

Online hubs can offer e-commerce as well as networks that introduce brand

fans to one another. The makers of the kitchen appliance Instant Pot provide a template of how to create online communities of super users who share recipes and tips independent of the brand.

Many consumers will also be craving opportunities to socialize away from screens. Food, drink, and foodservice brands can create places where consumers can (safely) come together in-person and form meaningful connections.

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Next: social commerce will be a new way to capitalize on community

Interactive ecommerce offers new ways to bring people together. Food and drink brands can adopt social commerce models, in which the online shopping experience is shared with fellow shoppers and friends.

This model has been successful in China, as shown by social buying app Pinduoduo. The app aims to replicate the shared experience of shopping in-person with friends. Pinduoduo invites users to share deals from a range of consumer packaged goods

(CPG) categories with their friends. A lower price is activated only when a specific number of people are interested in purchasing the product.

In the coming years, brands and restaurants can expand on the online social model and host in-person events where a select group of fans are invited to pick-up limited-edition online purchases or experience a menu together.



Pinduoduo celebrates the experience of browsing and sharing finds with friends

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Future forecast: organize brand communities to make a difference

In the future, companies have the opportunity to give their communities of fans actionable ways to give back. Consumers see companies as having the potential to make a difference in the world, as observed by the 2030 Food & Drink Trend Change, Incorporated. Yet, few people believe they personally can create change.

Brands can use their resources, reputation, and reach to help consumers take action on important causes locally.

During COVID-19 lockdowns, Walmart launched its Neighbors Helping Neighbors program that connects US shoppers with people nearby who need assistance shopping or picking up items.

While local is a focus now, brands can help revive the attention on global issues. Brands can create charitable products that donate a portion of profits to provide a meal to a family in need or fund farms that are converting to sustainable practices in the product's country of origin.

The opportunities to take now and into the future (United by food)

Now

Give people new ways to define and express themselves through their favorite food and drink.

Next

Connect individuals around their passions and organize forums

for meaningful interpersonal interactions.

Future

Mobilize brand communities to donate, volunteer, and otherwise commit to making a difference locally or globally.

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DTI-EMB recommends

- Aside from improving and innovating their products, PH Brands should start investing on their sustainability and corporate social responsibility.
- As suggested by Mintel, brands and retailers should now look closely on their product designs and retail solutions – they should be safe and hygienic. More consumers nowadays are extra careful and brand conscious due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It will be a good time to innovate or create new products that will help in stress relief.
- As the economy is trying to recover, more consumers will be in distraught and distress. It will be a good move if entrepreneurs explore and align with Psychology-based ways that would push for a healthier eating and drinking habit.



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