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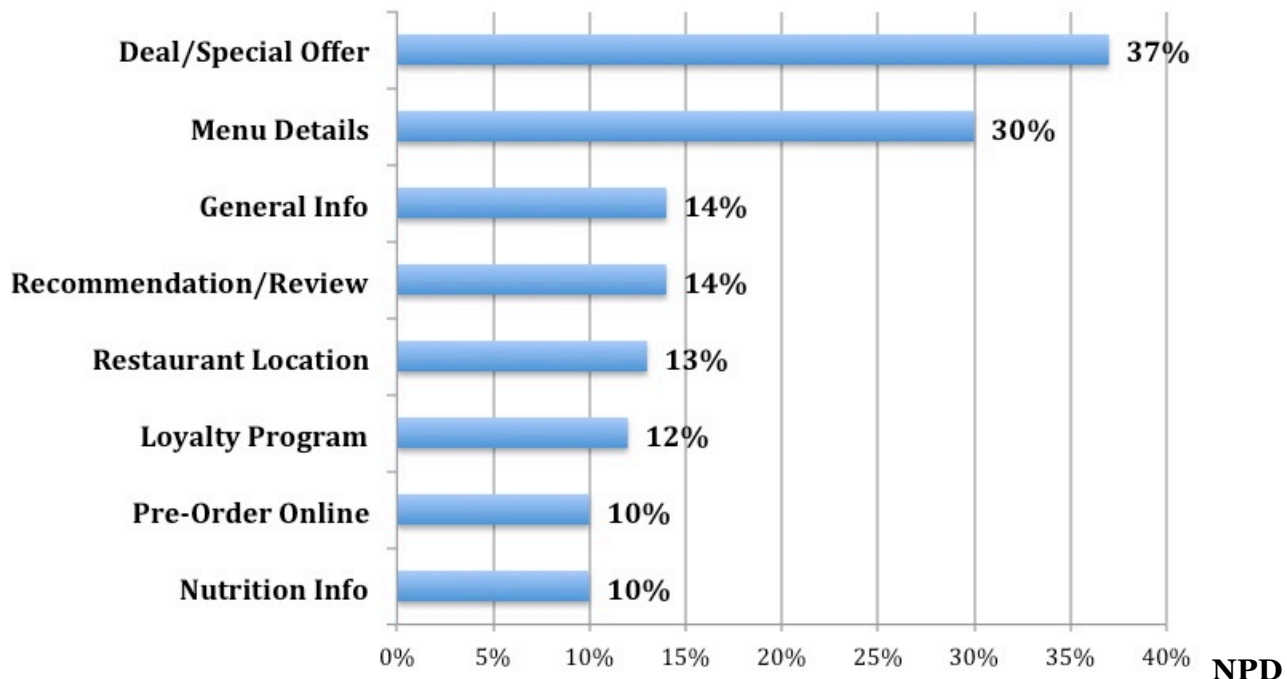
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NPD: Online Marketing Drives Restaurant Trial

Posted: 26 Jun 2012 10:38 PM PDT

Online and Smartphone Applications That Influenced a Restaurant Visit



Group released new research on the effectiveness of online marketing. Its CREST study finds 6% of restaurant visits (926 million visits) were influenced by **online marketing** during the first quarter of 2012,. Those online-influenced visits accounted for 8% of restaurant spending.

Not surprisingly, what had the most impact were pocketbook-targeted applications: deals and special offers accounted for 37% of visits that had been influenced by online marketing. Menu details were the second most effective application at 30% of influenced visits. Nutrition information? It doesn't drive

customer traffic.

NPD also says that 26% of restaurant visits influenced by online marketing were first-time visits, which is double the “new buyer incidence” for all restaurants overall. Further, NPD reports that consumers who use online marketing have higher revisit intentions than diners who don’t.

Most visits influenced by online marketing are to QSRs, casual dining gets a disproportionate share, according to NPD’s CREST survey. It finds that while casual dining accounts for one in 10 restaurant visits, it is the destination for one in six visits prodded by online marketing.

Red Robin Gives Up the Ghost

Posted: 26 Jun 2012 11:37 AM PDT



Spicy has become a basic QSR flavor, along with barbecue. McDonald’s is doing a spicy LTO version of Chicken McBites; Jack in the Box has its Chipotle Chicken Club sandwich. But fiery is another matter, and that’s the territory into which **Red Robin Gourmet Burgers** is wandering.

The chain has added two new “styles” or toppings bundles that can be added to its \$6.99 **Tavern Double** burger added in April or the even newer and larger Red’s Big Tavern burger. Both styles incorporate the zing of the infamous **ghost pepper**, reputed to be the hottest chile (800 times the Scoville heat units of a jalapeño). Ask for the burger **Fiery Ghost Style** and toppings include not only ghost-pepper sauce but also freshly cut and dried jalapeños atop pepper-Jack cheese.

The slightly less threatening **Cry Baby Style** calls for toppings of crispy onion straws in a dry seasoning infused with Southeast Asian sriracha chili sauce. There’s also onions sautéed in Cholula hot sauce along with the pepper-Jack and a ghost-pepper ketchup.

The styles—including the original **Pig Out**, **Cantina Jack** and **Buzzalo** varieties—are a \$1 upcharge with the burger, allowing the chain to create new LTOs without having to create a new burger.