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Latest data from Feed It Back reveals the key focus points for operators this Christmas

The latest data from leading online review specialist, Feed It Back has revealed the key focus points for operators this Christmas, that will drive positive or negative reviews across the hospitality sector.

Through an in-depth analysis of thousands of online and social reviews across the restaurant and bar industries throughout December 2018, the data highlighted, unsurprisingly, that people skills and service were key drivers in positive reviews over the festive period, with the words 'staff', 'service', 'friendly' and 'atmosphere' all garnering positive sentiment.

The predominant key theme underlining negative reviews was operational issues with 'cold food', as well as 'wait times'. With a large number of guests booking in advance, the research also revealed significant customer frustration when the table isn't prepared, with 67% of negative reviews referencing book highlighting this.

When customers, who either had a negative or positive experience, left a review on Google, only 22% received a management response. Considering that the Google platform commands a 63% share of all social reviews, this presents a great opportunity for the industry to acknowledge reviews, reinforce positive endorsement and attempt to rescue customers from negative reviews.

When asked their main reason for choosing a site for their Christmas celebration, the primary reason (38%) from respondents was because they enjoyed a previous visit; followed by a recommendation from friend or family (15%); and the Christmas menu (13%); followed by location (10%).

Commenting on the insight, Carlo Platia, CEO of Feed It Back said: "Christmas is the most important trading time of the year for operators – not only is it a make or break occasion for driving sales, but it also brings new customers into premises who have the potential to be converted into loyal customers.

"For me, what stands out from the data is the importance of the entire customer journey. Even before customers have set foot in a business their experience could already be tarnished by a bumpy booking process. Equally important, is acknowledging all reviews, both positive and negative, at the other end of the customer journey, in order to save customers or recognise praise.

“With an influx of customers, the Christmas period presents an operational challenge for businesses, with a greater volume of sales placing strain on the team. While it seems obvious to say, and often easier said than done, focusing on the time it takes to get food to table is crucial. That said, when operationally pressures mount, the data does reveal that a bit of festive spirit and positivity from the front of house employees goes a long way to keeping guests happy.”

About Feed It Back:

Feed It Back is a company that tracks the word on the street about operators, through immediate feedback on experiences and online review platforms, such as Facebook and TripAdvisor. It aggregates all feedback into one easy to use platform that allows operators to efficiently deal with feedback they otherwise wouldn't have heard, reward employees for excellent service and turn negative experiences into positives.

The company is managed by experienced operators Julia and Carlo Platia, who drew on their experience running a cocktail bar and restaurant to launch the platform in 2008. It currently boasts a range of clients including: Loungers, Bistrot Pierre, Las Iguanas, Dirty Martini, Brains and Be at One, to name a few.

Notes:

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