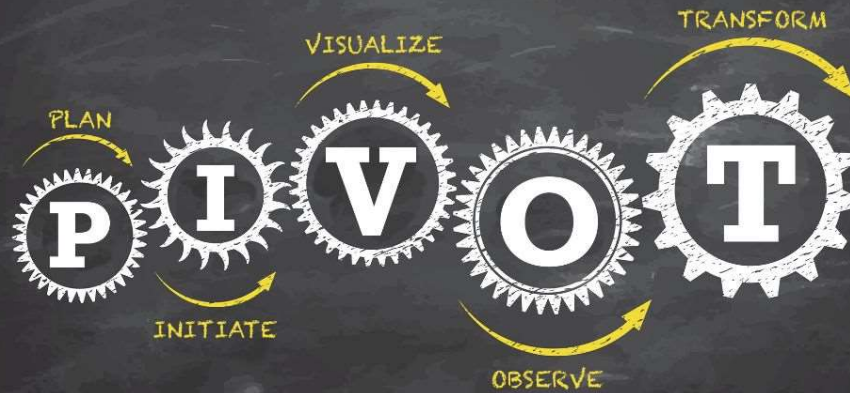


HOW TO PIVOT BACK TO THE POST-PANDEMIC WORLD, PART 2



by Jane Auster

Eventually, the pandemic will end and it will be time to make the transition to a "new normal." The new normal will look different for different types of operations. For some it will be a return to the old format, but for others it might be an opportunity to try something different, or to continue with some of the changes introduced during COVID-19.

Those who have successfully pivoted to takeout & delivery with simplified, streamlined menus are likely to stick with their new format with a gradual shift back to their previous brand identity.

Getting diners back into restaurants may prove challenging, according to Technomic, Inc. and Caddie Inc. research on COVID-19 and consumer behaviour. "Most consumers believe that it will take between two and five months for them to return to previous dining-out behaviours. This reluctance to envision revisiting restaurants anytime soon is likely due to Canada still being in the middle of the country's coronavirus battle. As of now, millennials and males are the demographics most likely to return to their normal restaurant behaviour within just a few days of virus concerns subsiding." For others, the return to dining out will be more gradual.

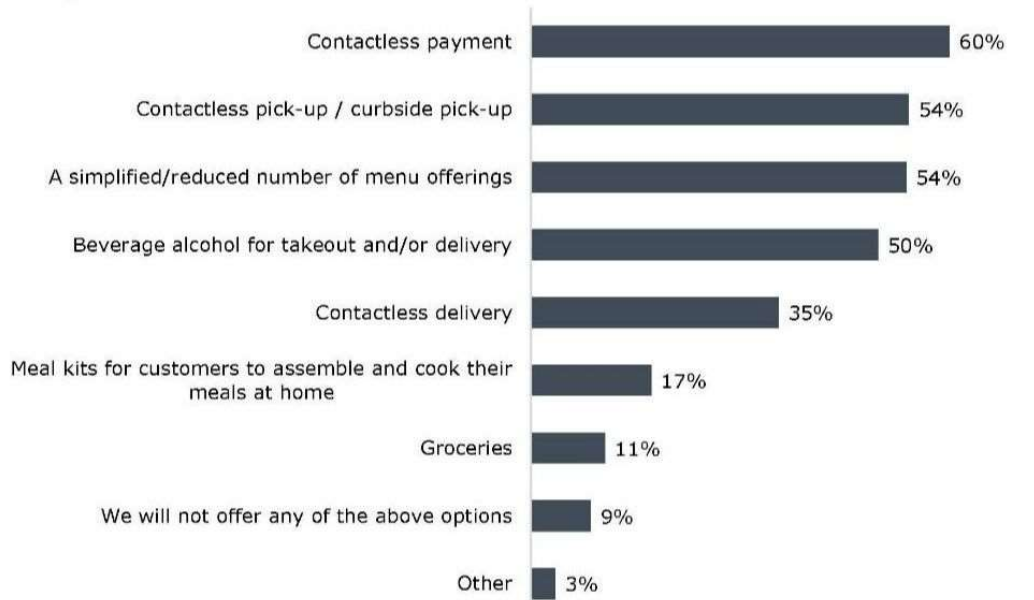
Operators Are Getting Ready

According to Restaurants Canada's May 15 survey, operators pivoting back and reopening will stick with some of the changes introduced during the pandemic. Top of the list are contactless payment and pickup.

CONTACTLESS PAYMENT



6 IN 10 RESPONDENTS WILL PROVIDE, OR CONTINUE TO PROVIDE, CONTACTLESS PAYMENT AT RESTAURANTS. NEARLY 2 IN 10 WILL CONTINUE TO OFFER MEAL KITS AND JUST 1 IN 10 WILL SELL GROCERIES.



Q: Once emergency measures are eased, which of the following offerings will your business provide, or continue to provide? (please select all that apply)

Source: Restaurants Canada's Restaurant Outlook Survey

Go Contactless While Staying In Contact

During the pandemic restaurant operators have had to up their technology game, whether by launching apps, beefing up online ordering, or introducing contactless payment options. The National Restaurant Association in their new report, [Reopening Guidance](#), recommend that you make technology your friend:

“Contactless payment systems, automated ordering systems, mobile ordering apps, website updates and simple texts can help you to communicate and conduct business with reduced need for close contact. As you begin to reopen, keep communicating with customers (your hours, menu items, reservations, etc.), and help promote your social distancing and safety efforts.”

Here are some tech solutions you'll want to keep on board when you're planning to reopen:

- email updates and social media posts
- contactless payment systems and mobile ordering (talk to your POS provider for more solutions)
- texts to diners to let them know their table is ready to eliminate lineups
- pre-payments where possible

Other tech hacks are set to change and improve the dining experience, to help operators pivot from takeout back to dine-in and to help reassure guests that dining-in is a safe experience.



Registry and Contact Tracing

"To restore economic growth and jobs, public healthcare experts are wrestling with how best to transition bars and restaurants from takeout to dine-in and how to reintroduce the public to gathering safely in public spaces as stay-at-home orders are relaxed," said Alberio Bathory-Frota, CEO of [Patronscan](#), a worldwide I.D. scanning firm.

Patronscan has developed an electronic guest registry that measures occupancy levels and makes contact tracing faster and safer. New Zealand already requires the hospitality industry to register all guests, and some states in the US have already introduced similar services. If a guest or employee contracts COVID-19, healthcare providers are able to use the information from the registry to notify staff and customers of their need to be tested. These heightened measures will help create a safe dining experience for everyone.



New POS Solutions

More than ever, operators will need to consider all the POS hardware, menu and ordering iPads, and other types of tech used daily in the restaurant. Many of these surfaces, used by both staff and guests, are plastic, and may allow germs to survive for an extended period of time. Before reopening, you'll want to research new solutions, such as anti-microbial POS screens, to keep germs at bay. What about voice-ordering technology? If Amazon, Google and Apple can do it ("Hey, Alexa!"), can this technology be so far-fetched?

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