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EVOLUTION OF UK RESTAURANT BUSINESS

LONDON (ots) -

--News Direct--

[Revenue Management Solutions](#), a global enterprise providing sales and profitability solutions for over 100,000 restaurants in more than 40 countries, has released its findings from a [survey of more than 400 UK diners](#), examining consumer intent to dine out and the factors affecting their decisions.

Traffic down in city centres

Nearly half of all respondents report they are commuting to an office or workplace again. Yet, fewer UK respondents are back in the office when compared to Germany and France. In a similar [survey conducted by RMS in Germany](#), 64% of respondents are back at work, and another 11% can choose between home and work. [In France, 62% are commuting, and 12% enjoy a hybrid.](#)

According to [Philipp Laqué](#), Managing Director for the UK at RMS, the huge shift away from city centres and commuting forced 8% of all UK restaurants to close (10,000 units, roughly) as of the end of Q2.

Reasons for optimism

Still, Laqué projects a more optimistic future and agrees with predictions that the UK will experience a complete recovery of the out-of-home (OOH) market by the end of 2022. "Consumers are ready for hedonistic experiences."

Indeed, 'socialising with friends' was the key motivator to dine out for survey respondents, followed by 'lazy meals.' Comparatively, French respondents cited 'good food' and 'socializing with friends' as the reasons to dine out more or much more. In Germany, 'lazy evening meals' ranked as the top reason to dine out more.

In all three countries, business lunches were likely to decrease substantially.

Increased spending

A significant 43% of survey respondents reported increasing restaurant spending by more than 15% in the past three months. Whilst 31% of those spending more are using restaurants more often, delivery fees and higher prices factor into the increased spend. A majority of respondents believe most of the pressures on restaurants are justifiable reasons for rising prices, particularly the impact of increased wages and rising food costs.

Increased spending and a renewed desire to eat out are a blessing for brands, Laqué said, but it's complicated. "People are falling in love with restaurants again, but now we face paralyzed supply chains and Brexit, creating a perfect storm," Laqué says. "Customers have higher expectations of food quality and service, whilst supply chains are unstable and availability of hospitality workers is scarce."

Longevity lies in new approaches

Diversification seems to be the way forward, at least for some brands. In RMS' survey, 43% of people are still working more from home.

As a result, says Laqué, parameters for a convenient location have shifted from being next to a travel or office hub to being easily accessible from their homes, making residential areas outside London more attractive for food-service providers.

Respondents also report a big uptick in QSR and value meal purchases. Almost 1 in 2 reported purchasing a combo meal from a quick-service restaurant in the past month. For Gen Z and millennials, that number sails to 70%, and of 68% families grabbed a combo meal from a QSR in the past month.

The combination of convenience and value may explain why major US QSR brands are eyeing the UK for growth. Most recently, McDonald's announced it would open 50 units in the short term, Wendy's announced it will build 400 UK units, and Popeye's opened its first London location in September, the first of a planned 350 units.

Overall, says Laqué, "the UK is staged for growth, but brands will need to adjust to address a shift in traffic patterns and consumer behaviour — which may remain permanent — to succeed."

About Revenue Management Solutions

RMS provides numerous data-driven solutions and services to the restaurant industry, all designed to help brands drive sales and profitability while maintaining traffic and enhancing brand value long-term. RMS works with more than 50 major brands in more than 40 countries, with its patented processes of revenue management used in more than 100,000 restaurant locations globally.

The company holds five US patents on menu pricing and customer segmentation and supports ongoing academic research efforts. For more information on how RMS helps its clients, visit www.revenuemanage.com.

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