



GLOW TOUCH

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Food & Beverage Industry

The global food and beverage industry is a study in contrasts and how unexpected events shape human behavior. The overall F&B market is going to decline this year by about 3%, but online revenue will increase by 50% as consumers adjust to ordering groceries online, eating out less, and otherwise coping with the economic slowdown that Covid-19 triggered.

Quick bites

\$7 billion

The global industry will top \$7 billion in the next few years

\$1 trillion

Beverages alone will top \$1 trillion by 2024

40%

Online grocery sales to grow by 40% this year

21,000

More than 21,000 new food products are released every year



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A DYNAMIC MARKETPLACE

A renewed focus on healthy consumption, combined with the rise of foodie culture, the growth of craft breweries, and an explosion of options, has created a population that seeks out food and drink for the experience as much as for consumption.

One beneficiary has been the meal-kit business. Brands like HelloFresh and Blue Apron saw business skyrocket when restrictions were implemented, and consumers shifted discretionary money from eating out to a different means of eating in.

A second impact has been in food delivery as takeout has gone mainstream. This has been a lifeline for restaurants struggling to survive. Apps mean someone else hires and trains drivers, while consumers can treat themselves to favorite dishes they would otherwise not be able to enjoy.

The third result has been innovation. Restaurants in the US offer to-go family meal bundles that typically serve four people at a lower cost than eating on-site. In the Philippines, a burger and burrito shop began a drive-in service. In Spain, a burger place created an express format with a limited number of items for takeout or delivery only. And mobile street stands are popping up in China.



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Things to watch

As investment capital goes to IT and innovation research, less money remains for vital functions like customer service, sales, and technical support. This is an ideal situation for a BPO. A study conducted by Zendesk showed a significant spike in support tickets in the weeks and months after virus-related restrictions took hold.

So, what do customers expect? Healthier ingredients, fresher food, more packaging options, and a reduced environmental impact for starters. They also want transparency in how their food is sourced, processed, shipped, and protected from field to table, which frequently happens across continents. In turn, the industry is responding:

Safety: researchers have identified more than 250 foodborne diseases. Machine vision and artificial intelligence can improve food-sorting processes and remove damaged foods from packing operations, reducing spoilage.

Automated farming: farms today use GPS systems, sensors, robots, and drones. Automated functions include spraying fertilizers, herbicides, and self-driving tractors. Drones provide an abundance of crop information from the sky, including soil variations, plant health, and areas of pest infestation.

Meat alternatives: pea protein is the crucial ingredient in some popular “burgers.” Companies are experimenting with plant-based ingredients, including mushrooms and chickpeas, or combining meat with plants in creating hybrid proteins. New plant-derived products will go beyond beef to include chicken and fish.

Convenience: the continued expansion of capability has allowed for new and creative applications from simple online shopping with either curbside pick-up or at-home delivery to more complex inventory management automation.



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INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

Every year there is at least one major recall of a tainted product, and the direct and indirect costs of foodborne pathogens are steep. One potential antidote is blockchain technology, which uses data to track materials from harvest to consumption, making crisis response much faster. In one test, Wal-Mart followed the source of its mangos in less than three seconds. Other issues include:

- The supply chain:** more than 60% of restaurants and suppliers report product shortages, specifically animal protein.
- Plastics:** regulatory bans on plastic in production and packaging may sound eco-friendly, but they also add to costs.
- Regulation:** this industry is already heavily regulated. Rules governing issues like waste disposal, raw materials, the handling of surplus production, and other areas can create a confusing maze of rules that, at times, contradict each other.

Things to watch

We have industry experience, such as developing a mobile platform for restaurant management groups. In addition, ecommerce has spread into F&B, and we have experience with that and with hospitality, two areas with a good deal of crossover:

- Customer-driven enterprises in which choices abound
- We can work comfortably across all channels
- The consumer's need for personalization
- In a tight labor market, service talent is in short supply
- Periodic ramp-up during peak demand



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Outsourcing with a company like GlowTouch also frees up the client's staff to work on strategic initiatives. For example, will service in a busy restaurant be better if a menu question is handled by a rushed employee or a contact center agent? Does a baker want to step away from an order with a tight deadline, or would the business benefit more by having us talk to the customer? If there a post-purchase question about quality, it's more cost-effective for the contact center to work with the customer than for a store employee.

Customer care for buyers who ask about the ingredients involved, what's on a restaurant menu, if dietary restrictions such as nut allergies or lactose intolerance are addressed, or delivery options

Retention is always an issue and part of the challenge is to keep customers from leaving in the first place. But they can also be reclaimed

Lead generation with an outsourced team of agents making outbound calls more cost-effectively than an in-house salesforce

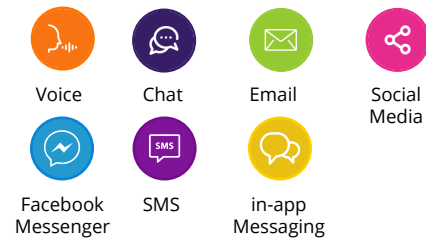
Direct marketing that manages communication with customers, including responses and follow-up.

Live chat support, where we are an industry leader with a track record of enlisted new sales, upselling existing customers, and providing timely service.

CLIENT BRIEF



Channels



Services

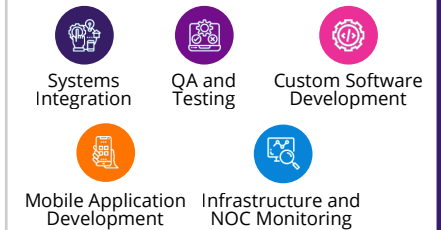
Customer Contact Outsourcing



Business Process Outsourcing



Technology Outsourcing



GlowTouch LLC provides personalized contact center, business processing, and technology outsourcing solutions to clients around the world. Founded in 2002, its 2,300+ employees deliver operational excellence with high-touch engagement. A certified Woman-Owned Business and six-time Inc. 5000 honoree, GlowTouch is headquartered in Louisville, KY, with additional locations in Mangalore, Bangalore, & Mysore, India, and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

To learn more about GlowTouch, visit: www.GlowTouch.com.

Certifications



Awards

