

When food meets tech

Wondering If The Fusion Is A Match Made In Heaven Or A Badly Cooked Disaster

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As your stomach growls, your concentration tapers off. Your response is to grab your phone and open a food delivery app. But has it always been so? From calling a restaurant for an order two decades ago, to choosing between Zomato and Swiggy, we've come a long way. And every journey insinuates a series of changes, one we must look at in retrospect.

When hunger gets a new option

Food tech is revamping the way we procure and consume food today. Equipped with features like 24/7 delivery, real-time menus, wide-ranging payment options, monetary perks, premium memberships, tracking, reviewing, and so on, these apps are ensuring that we, the customers, are fed enough. People now prefer ordering from the comfort of their homes instead of travelling to the restaurant or bearing the struggles of cooking. This gets attested in how Zomato alone delivers 1.3 million orders across India per day. Consequently, food delivery has now become a global market of almost 150 billion USD, having tripled since 2017. The industry is predicted to have annual sales of an estimated 365 billion USD worldwide by 2030, registering a CAGR of 11.4% (Forbes).

When taste buds get a new flavour

As people especially working professionals and students away from home have gotten

busier, doorstep food service has become the only option. That is why more than 70% of online orders placed are by customers aged 21-36 yrs. What's worse is that, owing to the deals offered by these aggregators, one tends to order more than what is needed. Or even giving up on home-made food altogether. Having placed 3,330 orders in 2022, a Delhi resident was crowned the 'nation's biggest foodie' by Zomato. Whether this calls for a celebration, we will let you decide.

When eateries get a new address

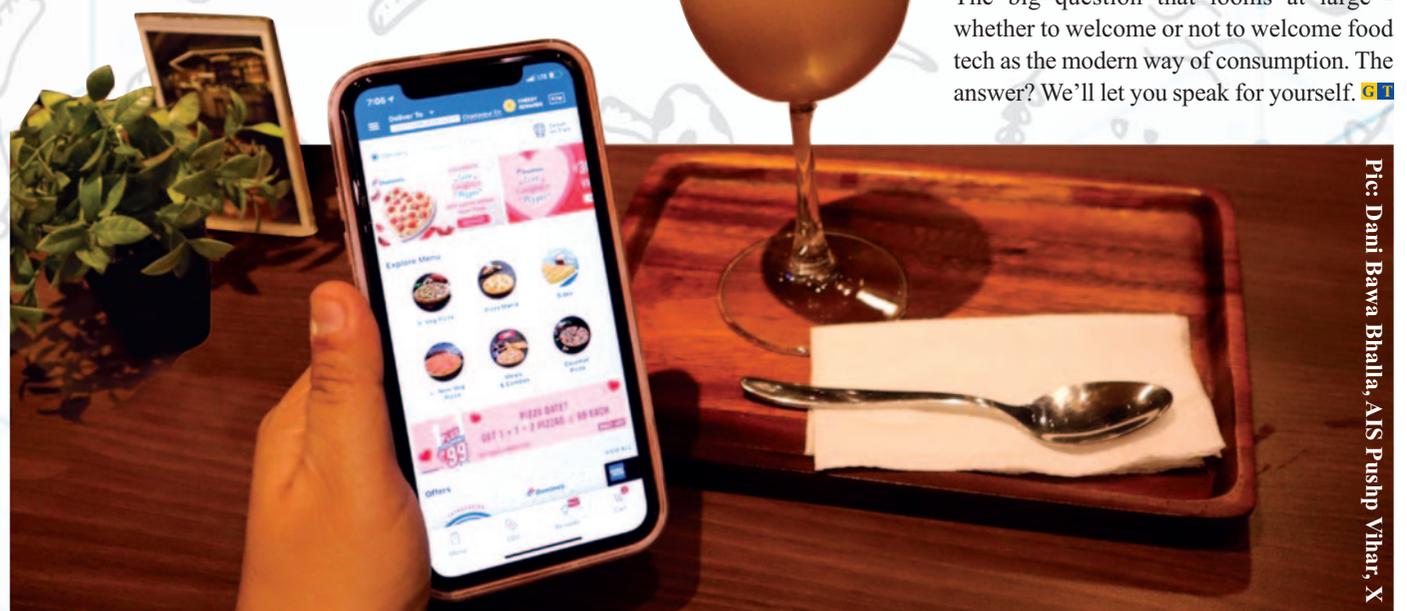
But to say that only consumers witnessed this shift would be wrong, for it was fully realised by the corporate sector as well. From getting a loyal consumer base to less labour costs, the restaurants dealing in online ordering get it all. Though this creates

extra competition for those operating as diners and online gourmets both, the benefit of needing lesser restaurant space balances it to some extent. Which is also why restaurants are drawing up plans to downsize. Burger King, for instance, plans to open outlets 60% smaller than their traditional locations. Howbeit, the race to profitability is still arduous as, according to McKinsey, these third-party delivery services want a 15-30% commission, which piles on the already low-margin. This means that customers are paying at least 40% premium to have the meal delivered to their homes, thrusting this scheme toward profitability.

When nature gets a new mess

Things, however, get messy when nature is compelled to partake in this trend, plastic packaging being the prime felon. Lids, foils, containers, cutlery etc., that restaurants use makes up 42% of the plastic produced. The packaging also has adverse effects on health. Chemicals in plastic materials, when encounter warm foods, can leach into the food. Case in point - BPA, a hormone-disrupting plasticiser, often used to line canned foods, affects the brain and prostate gland in children. On the brighter side, food delivery companies are trying to be better. Zomato, in 2021, made it imperative for its customers to explicitly request cutlery, instead of sending it by default. This helps them save around 5000 kg of plastic each day.

The big question that looms at large - whether to welcome or not to welcome food tech as the modern way of consumption. The answer? We'll let you speak for yourself.



Pic: Dani Bawa Bhalla, AIS Pushp Vihar, X

Page editor: Yashwini Seth, AIS Pushp Vihar, XII E

THE GT POLL

Does Michelle Yeoh becoming the first Asian to bag Best Leading Actress in Oscar's 95 years of history highlight the alarming need of recognition of diversity in Hollywood?

a) Yes b) No c) Can't say

To vote, check out our Instagram page @the_global_times

Coming next

Contest Edition (AIS VAs 1)



This special edition has been brought to you by Amity International School, Pushp Vihar, as a part of the 'GT Making A Newspaper Contest'. Each page of this unique edition carries a special story handcrafted by the school's editorial team as a part of the competition. The inter-Amity newspaper making competition witnesses different branches of Amity schools across India churn out their own 'Contest Edition'

which are pitted against one another at the end of the year, culminating with GT Awards. So, here's presenting the seventh edition of 'GT Making A Newspaper Contest 2022-23'.

What's inside

Fatal burn, P4

Dear diary, P5

Passionate much? P6

Hitting the right notes, P7

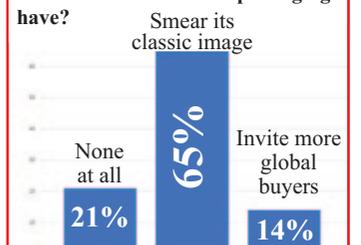
Caught red-handed, P8

For a paw-fect date, P10

POLL RESULT

for GT Edition March 13, 2023

What impact will the removal of Matterhorn mountain peak from the Toblerone chocolate packaging have?



Results as on March 18, 2023