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INDUSTRY WEEKLY DIGEST

#HOSPITALITYatSurrey



'COVID-DRIVEN' INNOVATION

HOW RESTAURANTS PIVOTED THEIR BUSINESS OVERNIGHT

The Coronavirus pandemic led to a period of government-imposed lockdown in the UK in early 2020, with restaurant businesses shuttered and facing an uncertain future. These dark times have emerged as an incubator of true innovation in the sector with operators pivoting their business models literally overnight ([journalists](#) recognised this as the sectors' 'masterclass in adaptability') and enjoying success through diversification into [new revenue streams](#). Find out [Mark Ashton](#)'s curation of these service innovations in this week's digest. Have a great weekend!

What's in this issue:

**RESTAURANT
INNOVATION
SPARKED BY
COVID-19**



Restaurant Innovation Sparked by COVID-19

MARK ASHTON

The early pandemic period food shortage challenges led to some operators, including rural pubs, adapting as mini-retail units providing groceries to locals, whilst others took their products online to retail through various ecommerce platforms. As consumers become fatigued with cooking their own meals or searched for an engaging family activity, the rise of **DIY Meal Kits** from their favourite restaurants became a real pull, as did the temptation of takeaway and delivery, not only from the usual providers, but also from diverse operators entering this space, from pubs to **fine dining restaurants**.

Others, in an attempt to provide light entertainment and maintain engagement with their customers, provided virtual cooking classes.

The development and permanent adoption of these 'new normal' operating models, or at least a choice between these and more traditional ones, is naturally in the forefront of operators' minds. In recent days **Pizza Pilgrims** announced a permanent operation for their frying-pan pizza meal kits, **Dishoom** announced four ghost kitchens to accommodate increased delivery volumes, and quick service operators such as **Chipotle** and **Taco Bell** are adapting drive-thru models to accommodate increased customer choice of ordering/collection method. The future restaurant landscape may well provide far greater customer choice than that of the pre-pandemic period.

Follow **#restaurantinnovation** for further curated posts of contemporary changes in the sector.

CURATED PRACTICE

- **Leon**: Mini Supermarkets
- **Patty and Bun**: DIY Patty Kits
- **Ormer**: Fine dining as a delivery and collection service
- **Wagamama**: Virtual Cooking Lessons