

Word-of-mouth still drives hospitality industry

By Liam Garrahan , 04-Aug-2015



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A report has found that 80 per cent of people say that word-of-mouth has the biggest influence on where they decide to eat, four times more than social media.

According to the survey by HospitalityGEM, diners are twice as likely to eat somewhere if a friend or relation has recommended the place to them than they are to choose where they eat based on other factors such as personal experience, special offers, vouchers or TripAdvisor.

The figures show that 75 per cent of respondents are 'very likely' to stay longer than planned and order another course if they are enjoying the dining experience.

Steven Pike, managing director of HospitalityGEM said: "Remarkably, despite all the fuss surrounding Social Media, four times as many respondents felt they were influenced by face-to-face discussions, which demonstrates how vital it is for operators to manage the guest experience to ensure consistent delivery of their offering. "

Pike believes that to give their guests the best experience organisations need to focus on timing and diner interaction.

"Maximising the guest experience is not solely about the quality of the product offering. It is also about the organisation, timing and how a team

engage with the customer, which must all work seamlessly in harmony with an operators brand values. A great experience can help to increase dwell time, which will then encourage a team to upsell, as well as encouraging customers to return again and again," he said.

The survey also found that six per cent of people would be least tolerant to a 'robotic' style of service, whereas 58 per cent of those surveyed said that they would be least tolerant to poor food even if the service was organised and friendly.