

MEAL CLICKS:

Tracking consumer preferences and demand for food consumed away from home ordered online

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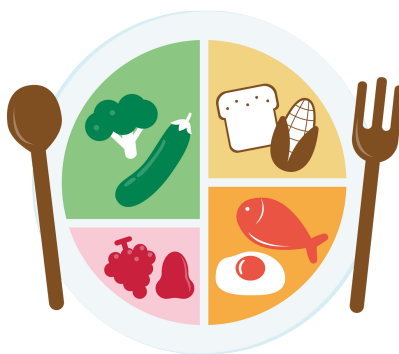


Context

In 2021, over half (53%) of all U.S. food expenditures were purchases for FAFH. Yet, partially because of the absence of secondary data on FAFH consumption, much of the existing literature on food demand and nutrition focuses on food prepared at home (FAH). The growth in FAFH consumption is largely attributed to the trend of online FAFH ordering, creating an urgent need to understand consumer choice behavior in digital FAFH settings to effectively empower consumers to make healthier food choices in the FAFH context.

Activities

- Develop a FAFH ordered online track survey, Meal Clicks, and track FAFH demand over 3-year time.
- Determine the healthiness of consumer FAFH choices.
- Design and conduct experiments with policy and just-in-time digital interventions in online FAFH platform.
- Engagement with stakeholders and policy makers.



Outcomes

Knowledge Generation

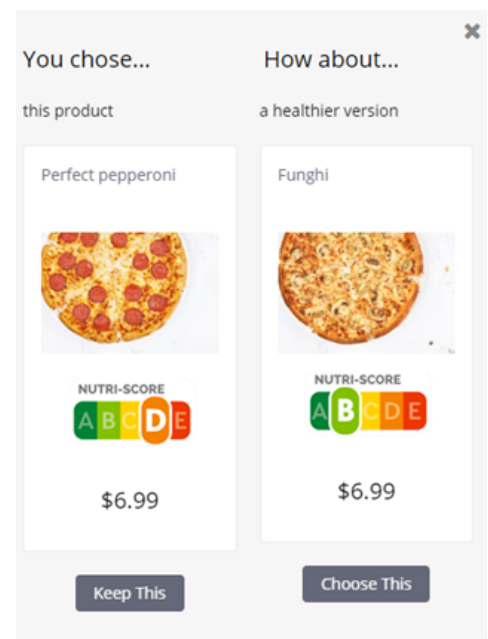
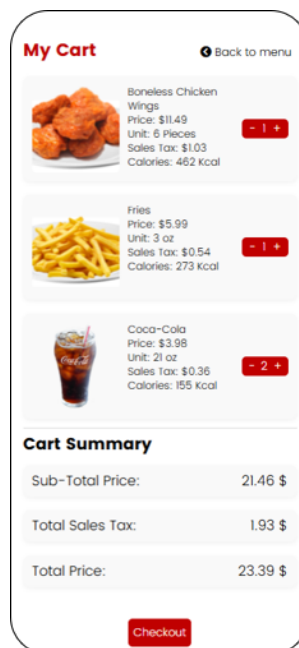
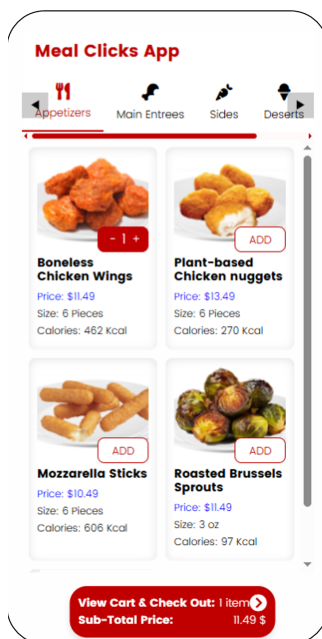
- Insights in trend of the FAFH ordering consumer preferences and demand.
- Understand the relation between FAFH demand and internal/external factors.
- Identify the effectiveness of policy and just-in-time digital interventions to improve dietary intake in online FAFH context.

Impact on Stakeholders

- Advise policy makers on strategies to encourage healthier FAFH consumption.
- Provide practical advice for online meal ordering services to support healthier FAFH consumption.
- Empower consumers to make healthy food choices in online FAFH settings (make the healthy choice, the easy choice).

Impact on Society

- Reduce unhealthy diets from online FAFH orders, reducing dietary-related health diseases.



Studies Studies

Consumer Demand

Industry Report:

Meal Clicks: A Data Driven Report on Food Away from Home Consumption Trends and Consumer Choice.

Key Insights

- The demand for FAFH and delivery service is driven by young and urban consumers.
- Third party food delivery apps lead the food delivery markets, especially Door Dash and Uber Eats.
- Fast Food and Pizzerias are the most popular types of restaurants for meal delivery.
- Cuisine types, price affordability, and menu item varieties are the most important characteristics when consumers select places to order FAFH online.
- With the simulated food delivery app, older and urban consumers prefer healthy dishes and healthy drinks more than young and rural consumers.

Tax Effect

Manuscript:

Meal Clicks: Understanding Consumer Demand for Online Food Delivery and the Effects of an Unhealthy Tax.

Key Insights

- Unhealthy taxes are more effective in fine-dining restaurants than in fast food restaurants at shaping food demand and improving dietary quality.
- Unhealthy taxes are more effective in influencing the food choices of low-income households compared to high-income households.
- However, unhealthy taxes are regressive and place a greater tax burden on low-income populations, especially in fine-dining settings.