

## 5 Restaurant and Retail Trends for Success for 2022

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In like a lion, out like a lamb, and the first quarter of the year is an ideal time to plan goals and projects for the months ahead that will help you take your business to the next level. A great way to step up is by following industry trends. If you're in the retail or restaurant business, here are the top trends to keep an eye on so you can succeed throughout 2022:

### 1. Livestreaming the shopping experience

With Forbes predicting that livestream shopping will become a \$500 billion market\* this year, here's a trend you can't afford to ignore. Part entertainment, part personal connection, livestreaming the shopping experience\* is taking on different forms.

A popular format features influencers who share and link to the products so followers can instantly purchase the identical recommended goods. With major social players like Facebook and TikTok jumping aboard this trend, expect features that make it easier for business accounts to go live and sell products.

Slightly different than livestreaming are live one-on-one video chats, which are great for building engagement and developing relationships with your customers. For example, some brands are allowing customers to book virtual shopping appointments, which feature a sales rep touring the customer through a bricks-and-mortar location while helping them pick out products and making personalized suggestions. Video content will keep you and your business in front of your customers.

### 2. Partnering up through collabs and popups

With costs rising across the board, restaurants and retailers are finding new ways to do more with less space so they can save on rent. A creative idea that's gaining popularity is the mini store-within-store popup concept\*, which offers curated experiences of select brands for customers of larger retailers.

A great example of this is finding ways to blend restaurant and retail experiences. Around some holidays, many restaurants host popup markets featuring local artists and makers. The collaboration allows patrons to shop for gifts, like handmade jewelry and unique art, while picking up takeout or dining in. The extra time in-store can result in higher bill totals and foot traffic for restaurants, as well as more exposure for featured artisans.

If you're thinking of trying a partnership, choose a brand with similar values and customer lifestyles. You could try selling local fruit juices at your luxury loungewear apparel shop or partnering with a florist to sell fresh blooms at your restaurant on weekends.

### 3. Leveling up digital interactions.

Digital now plays a more important role in customer experience than ever before, with shoppers and diners expecting seamless interactions that are quick, easy, and convenient. For restaurants, this means digital menus and **QR code check-ins are here to stay**. Some diners even prefer to order via smartphone and get their food delivered with no human interaction. To keep guests happy, you'll need to sort out any kinks or glitches and make sure your tech is easily accessible on any smartphone operating system.

Retailers, meanwhile, need to focus on blending the online and in-store experience to make purchases and returns effortless. For example, if a customer wants to return an online order in-store, perhaps offer a QR code or share their email address – not have to bring paper slips or recite long order numbers.

Whether your business is part of the restaurant or retail industry, the right payment processor is key for making these digital transactions smooth and simple. You can offer **contactless payments**, accept digital wallets, **process payments in your mobile app**, or **text to pay features**. POS systems that can offer a seamless customer experience and payment transaction.

### 4. Prioritizing shipping, pick-up, or delivery logistics

As consumers continue flocking to online shopping and expect everything from clothing to toothpaste to their favorite Italian food to be delivered at home, staying on top of shipping and delivery logistics will be key to your success this year.

Try a new way to pick up your goods, a fresh approach to your fulfillment is key for a smooth transaction and customer experience. Have your staff trained in ways to welcome and thank customers for their purchases on phone and pick up area. Even when delays happen, a "kind and thoughtful" associate can create a good experience for your customer.

### 5. Boosting social media game

**In retail, shopping on social is taking a larger piece of the overall revenue pie, with 31% of all eCommerce retail sales coming from mobile\* and social commerce specifically forecasted to be \$36.6 billion\* in 2021.**

These numbers alone show that whatever you're already doing on social platforms, it's probably worth your time and energy to step it up.

Since a positive online presence is more important than ever, even restaurants need to get in the game. Posting behind-the-scenes reels of your **chef plating a tasty dish** or your **bartender mixing a cocktail** is a great way to draw in customers or promote your takeout. Never underestimate the sale-boosting potential of a droolworthy-Instagram photo around lunchtime. Just be careful to avoid promoting items that are sold out.

**Even a small business needs to make sure someone is reliably posting on the most popular platforms and responding to comments and direct messages to boost engagement. Social media is quickly becoming the primary place angry customers go to vent, so community management is also key for responding to reviews and complaints.**

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