AI-powered Menu Marketing: A Case of DoorDash

Source: Unsplash (2023)

Background

Visual aids have always been a powerful tool in driving sales, with approximately 38% of customers agreeing that menu photos significantly influence their choice of restaurant (DoorDash, 2025). Attractive and high-quality images not only grab attention but also help customers visualize the dishes, making them more likely to choose a restaurant that showcases its offerings visually.

In April 2025, food delivery giant DoorDash introduced a suite of AI-powered tools aimed at helping merchants optimize their online menus and boost sales by up to 44% (Hospitality Technology, 2025). These tools, available through DoorDash's Business Manager App, include an AI-powered camera that uses real-time computer vision to guide businesses in finding the best angles, lighting, and cropping for their product photos (DoorDash, 2025). The technology also enhances backgrounds, such as replacing a foam container with a ceramic plate, to create more polished and professional images (ZDNET, 2025). These features allow businesses to produce visually appealing photos without altering the actual appearance of the food (TechInformed, 2025).

Another new feature is the item description generator, which helps businesses create enticing menu descriptions for their dishes with one click using AI (Hospitality Technology, 2025). Leveraging the power of AI, this innovative tool generates compelling menu descriptions in seconds based on inputs like item names and photos (TechInformed, 2025). Merchants who have adopted the feature report a noticeable increase in sales for specific items, attributing this success to the more engaging descriptions (DoorDash, 2025). Additionally, DoorDash has incorporated AI moderation to offer instant photo approval, empowering restaurants to update their menus in minutes (ZDNET, 2025). Together, these tools significantly reduce the time restaurant managers spend on routine tasks, allowing them to focus more on delivering exceptional service.

Challenges

While these advancements are designed to enhance sales and streamline operations, they raise concerns about authenticity. AI-driven photo enhancements, such as smart lighting and

background adjustments, along with AI-generated descriptions, may not always reflect the true quality of the products. By masking imperfections, these tools could elevate customer expectations to unrealistic levels. If the actual product quality falls short of what is portrayed, it risks customer dissatisfaction and could harm the reputation of both the restaurant and the platform.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the potential benefits and challenges of incorporating AI-powered menu marketing tools?

2. How can restaurants or DoorDash better manage customer expectation while utilizing AI tools that enhance the visual and descriptive appeal of their menu items?

3. How might the introduction of AI tools like those offered by DoorDash change the landscape of the food delivery and restaurant industry in the coming years?

4. What are the long-term implications of widespread AI adoption in the food delivery industry?

References

DoorDash. (2025). DoorDash Unveils Suite of AI-Powered Tools to Enhance Online Menus and Streamline Merchant Operations. Retrieved from https://about.doordash.com/en-us/news/doordash-unveils-ai-powered-tools-to-enhance-online-menus-and-streamline-merchant-operations

Hospitality Technology. (2025). DoorDash Adds AI-Powered Tools to Enhance Online Menus. Retrieved from https://hospitalitytech.com/news-briefs/2025-04-08?article=doordash-adds-ai-powered-tools-enhance-online-menus

TechInformed. (2025). DoorDash taps AI to make meals look mouthwatering. Retrieved from https://techinformed.com/doordash-taps-ai-to-make-meals-look-mouthwatering/

Unsplash. (2023). A person taking a picture of a tray of food. Retrieved from https://unsplash.com/photos/a-person-taking-a-picture-of-a-tray-of-food-gFdLOFwVZOI

ZDNET. (2025). Your DoorDash menu options may look more tempting soon, thanks to AI. Retrieved from https://www.zdnet.com/article/my-5-favorite-ai-apps-on-android-right-now-and-how-i-use-them/

Keywords

- Food and Beverage
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Visual Marketing
- Instant Photo Approval
- Food Delivery Platforms
- Customer expectation