

IT'S SOCIAL COMMERCE MEETS SOCIAL GAMING



The app encourages customer interaction | Photo source KFC Pocket Franchise

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RESTAURANT CHAIN CREATES 'POCKET FRANCHISES' VIA WECHAT



KFC China turned virtual franchises into a platform to engage new customers

Spotted: KFC China has created a virtual franchise system to engage customers and encourage people to order from the restaurant. Named the KFC pocket franchise, the digital interface gamifies the experience of eating out, aiming to win over new clients.

The KFC pocket franchise is not the only social commerce platform on the WeChat network. But KFC China, working with Accenture Interactive-Hocomm, has taken it further by creating a platform that encourages customer interaction.

The social media campaign and platform was born out a need to attract a younger audience to the fast-food chain. The WeChat mini programme allows anyone to own their own KFC franchise, and players can unlock new products and personalise the franchise's storefront. The programme encourages people to "add sugar" to score points, which can be used to unlock more features.

The point system inspires "sugar communities" on WeChat, helping players engage with the brand and interact with each other. Digital franchise "managers" can also win real-money incentives to play, and when a digital customer buys something from a pocket franchise store on WeChat, the "manager" receives discounts at a physical KFC restaurant.

The WeChat mini programme has caught on with younger clientele and has even developed a celebrity following.

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Takeaway:

KFC China developed its pocket franchise in response to a growing problem in the restaurant industry—**people increasingly ordering in**. In response, some restaurants are investing more in takeout and delivery. The KFC pocket franchise indicates that innovative gamification can also bolster sales and expand the customer base. Other brands, like Nike, have used gamification techniques like competition to **encourage customer engagement**. The KFC pocket franchise model could provide a blueprint for how to take that model further.