



## Healthy Products in a Touchless World

### Healthy food and drink products were already multi-faceted

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic healthy food and drink products were mainly defined by their nutritional profiles, choice of raw materials, innovative recipes and portion control.

So, perhaps your products make nutritional claims such as “High in Protein, Rich Source of Iron” or highlight so-called superfoods such as Avocados and Blueberries or Chia Seeds and Chlorella ?



Or do your foods or drinks draw on traditional use in ancient cultures and feature ingredients such as Turmeric. Maca, Echinacea or Ginseng but which you have brought up to date with innovative, tasty recipes and convenient packaging formats ?

All of this was demanding enough but now, if you are a business producing products targeted as healthy options, there is another important new dimension that you also need to consider.



### Health now has a new dimension

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, market commentators – such as The Food People, IGD and IRI - are all highlighting the new phenomenon of the “Touchless World”.

There is growing evidence that “post-pandemic consumers” will not only expect to be able to make contactless payments, shop safely in socially distanced aisle or buy products online for next day delivery, but will also be scrutinising whether products have been made in hygienic, touch-free and uncontaminated ways.

## Is “Handcrafted” still a strong selling point ?

This presents a real sea-change as pre-pandemic, the demand for and popularity of products marketed as “Craft Produced” or “Handcrafted” and “Artisan” had reached an all-time high.

Many small businesses marketing healthy food and drink products were able to make a virtue of their small scale, their “low-tech/old tech” manufacturing techniques and intimate interaction with their ranges.

However, in many cases this inherently involves “hands on” production methods.



Suddenly however, the concept of hand- made, hand-packed and small batch production may take on a negative connotation.

Products produced by hand could be perceived as “over-handled” by humans compared to those manufactured on sterile, automated production lines, undermining confidence as a result.

## Reassuring Your Customers

Consumers are seeking the reassurance of touch-free goods and this includes food and drink.

So, how might you address this new dimension of healthy in your healthy food or drink marketing ?

## Proof of Food Safe, Hygienic Production

External accreditation of your hygiene and food safety standards will be more expected by your customers than ever – so, by ensuring you secure top scores when inspect by a trusted accreditation body, you can offer this reassurance.

Make sure to display your accreditations and explain why customers can be assured of high hygiene standards. This can be on your website, your marketing materials and on social media. If you sell direct to customers at food markets and consumer events, be sure to highlight this reassurance on your stand when these re-open.



Can you show customers how you make your products with a focus on food safety and hygiene ?

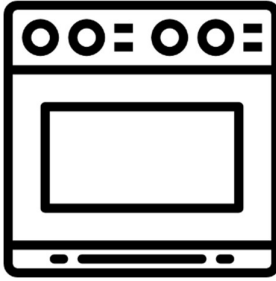
By auditing your supply chain, production, storage and distribution processes and identifying “touchpoints” you can then show how you carefully ensure hygienic handling at every stage.

You could demonstrate the care you take using showcase pictures or video on your customer communications or via QR codes on the product’s labels.

## Helpful “Touch-Free” innovation is needed

How could you enhance the “touch-free experience” for your customers ?

New vending machines which allow customers to hover their phone over the payment point are being introduced and this type of experience will trigger more awareness in consumers of how much products are handled. So how can you respond ?



If your products are oven cooked or microwaveable would direct to oven packaging be an option ?

With the correct time and temperature combinations in your cooking instructions, you could ensure any pathogens on the outer packaging would be destroyed and the consumer would be confident that their meal has had as little exposure to potential contamination as possible.

Or for snacks and handheld foods, what about squeezable packaging where consumers hold the packaging eats what's inside without directly touching it ?

### **Get Your Ideas Flowing and Into Action !**

Lots to think about, but it's well worth you spending some time thinking through what this trend will mean for your business and how you can position your products to thrive in our new post-pandemic world !

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