



BEST B2B CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FEATURING CHEFS – THE ROCK STARS OF OUR GENERATION

- The UK Hospitality Industry is the fourth biggest industry in the UK, contributing an estimated **£41bn¹** to the economy every year
- **1 in 9²** meals are eaten out of home
- Army of **225,000 chefs** employed, often in highly demanding working environments
- Working hours are long and anti-social – a 70-hour week is common
- Chefs were looking for content online but couldn't find the new ideas and inspiration they were looking for
- The Staff Canteen was created in 2007 as a forum and became a stand alone website in 2008. Like Facebook for chefs, it is now the most influential membership-based networking website for professionals. It's the go to place for chefs to learn, develop and interact with colleagues, peers and role models who are passionate about food like-minded people
- 'Featured Chef' – a series of short films, broadcast bi-monthly showcasing A-list chefs like Tom Kerridge and Raymond Blanc has made the content the most anticipated in the chef industry
- The Staff Canteen www.thestaffcanteen.com now **reaches 30,000 chefs every day**
- **40%** of all professional chefs use it and it has been voted the No 1³ online platform by chefs. It's as popular to chefs as Netmums is to parents (www.mumsnet.com)

¹British Hospitality Association 2016

²MCA Eating Out in the UK Report – September 2016

³The Social Side of Food – independent research conducted by William Murray Communications. The Staff Canteen was voted No 1 channel for chefs outside of Facebook and Twitter.

BACKGROUND

As a classically trained chef with an impressive CV, Mark Morris, creator of The Staff Canteen, wanted to find a simple and effective way for chefs across the hospitality industry to share and inspire each other.

Using his insider, practical knowledge of the industry and ignoring the advice of publishing companies and PR consultancies in his field, he created a winning strategy. He created a place for chefs to chat, share ideas and inspire each other. Knowing that chefs are visual, video demonstration and interviews were launched in 2010 in the form of 'Featured Chef. The short feature films include interviews and practical demonstrations from the best chefs in the country and the world.



But, it's not about vanity for the chefs. Every chef involved happily donates his or her time to share ideas and experiences because they understand the value of The Staff Canteen to its audience. When Rene Redzepi, Chef and Co-owner of two Michelin-starred Noma in Copenhagen that won the World's Best Restaurant in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2014 heard about The Staff Canteen, he wanted to get involved. This began to open doors to the world's very best restaurants.

The Staff Canteen makes the skills and expertise of the industry's elite accessible to all chefs whether they work in a quick service restaurant, a staff canteen, a pub, a restaurant or in fine dining.

“Featured Chef essentially gives chefs a stage⁴ in the best restaurants in the world without having to leave their kitchens.” says **Mark Morris**, creator of The Staff Canteen

⁴Staging is an unpaid internship when a chef works briefly for free in another chef's kitchen to learn and be exposed to new techniques and cuisines.

In 2015, a sister site called 'The Perfect Starter' was launched to give students and young chefs just starting out careers advice and skills training from people they look up to and admire. Again, chefs jumped at the chance to help the next generation, making chefs like Tom Kerridge really accessible, which would never have been possible before. It's endorsed by PACE, the industry body that represents all catering colleges in the UK and is the only online one stop shop training resource for young chefs.

The Staff Canteen has broken down barriers. There's no snobbery or hierarchy – it's about uniting an industry to share, learn and inspire, creating a real sense of community in what is traditionally an anti-social profession.

Mark Morris – CV

Trained at **Bournemouth College** [1983–1985]

The Howard Hotel⁵
Commis Chef [1985–1987]

The Dorchester Terrace Restaurant (2 Michelin stars 🌸🌸)
First Commis [1987–1988]

Chewton Glen
First Commis [1988–1989]

Gleeneagles
Chef de Partie [1990–1992]

Relais Chateau training programme (1 Michelin star 🌸)

La Bonne Etape
Cobblers Cove Hotel Barbados
[November 1992–April 1993]

The Savoy Chef de Partie [1993]

Copped Beech Hotel
Senior Sous Chef [1993–1996]

The Aberdeen Marina Club
(A Shangri-La property) Marina Grill
Sous Chef [1996–97]

Goodwood Executive Chef [1997]

⁵Named the best hotel in the country by the UK's leading hoteliers, July 2016

Eating out is now a way of life, with 114 million⁶ meals eaten out of the home every year. So how do you keep the 225,000 UK chefs engaged in a constantly changing market? In an industry where skills shortage is the biggest issue, how do you encourage and inspire the next generation to make sure there's enough skill to meet growing and evolving demand?

Cue Michelin star chefs... Raymond Blanc, Marco Pierre White, Tom Kerridge... idealised by consumers, admired by professionals, they're the rock stars of our time.

Mark Morris, the brains behind what is now the UK's largest online chef network – The Staff Canteen – saw an opportunity to use these 'Premiership' chefs to talk passion, skill and technique to the chef community.

“ Chefs don't read magazines. When you work a 70-hour week, there isn't time. There's not really time to do anything else, so chefs tend to eat, sleep and dream the kitchen. They're visual, so I knew the way to hit the spot was with video content that they wouldn't want to miss. ”

By working with the 'A-lister' chefs, The Staff Canteen, created a unique 'Featured Chef' series of editorial content to talk directly to chefs. First launched in 2010 with a pilot featuring the highly acclaimed Raymond Blanc of Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, it is today the most widely viewed content in the chef industry with an average of 50,000 views per video (46% of the total chef population). This is 50% higher than engagement figures for Mumsnet*.

(*Mumsnet is referenced to give context by comparing The Staff Canteen to another hugely successful, but unconnected online social engagement product.)

⁶Horizons Annual Briefing March 2016

OBJECTIVES

- Create an online community for professional and student chefs
- Deliver engaging, interesting content that inspires chefs, whatever their level (whether it's a student fresh out of college or a well-established chef).

STRATEGY

FEATURED CHEF – BITE-SIZE VIDEOS FOR HUNGRY CHEFS

The Staff Canteen works with the most revered and celebrated chefs in the industry to create a window into the world's best restaurants. Each chef donates his time to be involved – it's viewed as the 'Vogue' interview of the chef industry.

Designed to deliver interesting content that makes the knowledge, expertise and skill of the A-list chefs accessible to all 225,000 chefs in the UK, each of the eight annual Featured Chefs follows the same format.



Video 1 – The Interview

An in-depth look at chef's career, their influences, what inspires them and what the future holds.



Video 2 – Operation

Food style goes under the spotlight. Chef describes two dishes that illustrate the food style of the operation.



Video 3 – Recipes

Chef demonstrates the recipes step-by-step.

Content takes two days to create and is always filmed on location at the chef's restaurant. Each video, which is no more than 3mins 30secs, is just the right length to watch on a chef's shift break.

It's then shared at two weekly intervals on The Staff Canteen YouTube channel, on The Staff Canteen website and on social media channels: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

58% of chefs search videos online for recipe ideas, new cooking techniques, the latest cooking trends and inspiration.



The 'Featured Chefs' – holding 20 Michelin stars between them

Raymond Blanc OBE – Chef owner of Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons – “one of the ultimate gastronomic destinations in the country”. 🌿🌿



Tom Kerridge – Chef Owner of The Hand and Flowers, the first pub to receive two Michelin stars. 🌿🌿



Phil Howard – Known as a 'chefs' chef' with great influence and founder of two Michelin-starred The Square, which he recently sold after 25 years to start a new restaurant. 🌿🌿



Clare Smyth – Former Chef Patron at Restaurant Gordon Ramsay – the first female chef to hold and retain three Michelin stars. 🌿🌿🌿



Massimo Bottura – Chef Patron at three Michelin-starred Osteria Francescana, the world's best restaurant (The World's Best Restaurants 2016). 🌿🌿🌿



Rene Redzepi – Chef and co-owner of two Michelin-starred Noma in Copenhagen. It was voted the world's best restaurant in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2014. 🌿🌿



Elena and Juan Mari Arzak – world-renowned father and daughter chef team. Juan's Arzak restaurant was one of the first three-star Michelin star restaurants in Spain and daughter Elena holds the Veuve Cliquot World's Best Female Chef title. 🌿🌿🌿



Andrew Fairlie – Patron of the eponymous Restaurant Andrew Fairlie. It is the only two Michelin starred restaurant in Scotland. 🌿🌿



Angela Hartnett MBE – Once protegee of Gordon Ramsay, Angela is Chef Patron of Michelin-starred Murano, Café Murano and joint owner of Merchant's Tavern in Shoreditch. 🌿



RESULTS

In 2010, the YouTube channel had just 98 subscribers. Today, it is the most popular and well-known channel in the sector with 60,000 subscribers. It's thanks to its creator's insight, determination and trust in both his gut instinct and belief in his chef peers' passion, that has made both the Featured Chef and the channel itself the greatest platform in chef history.

No 1 chef channel

528 hours of video content watched every day

27,000 new subscribers May-September 2014 (170% increase)

250,000 views of the Clare Smyth video (then, Chef Patron of Restaurant Gordon Ramsay) – 72% more views than Nigella Lawson's 2013 video on BBC Good Food

90,000⁷ subscribers (40% of all chefs)

2000 – average new Instagram followers every week

21,000 Twitter followers

82,000 Facebook fans

⁷YouTube and website

TESTIMONIALS

“I was very happy to be the first 'Featured Chef' for The Staff Canteen. Chefs grow by getting inspired and learning from each other, so it is very important to share the passion and excitement for beautiful and delicious food.”

Raymond Blanc

“The 'Featured Chef' profiles on the Staff Canteen website are an insightful looking glass into other people's kitchens. You see technique, dish structure and an understanding of how their particular kitchen works. Not only does this drive enthusiasm from within the industry, but it encourages an openness between chefs creating a hub for a chef like society where we are all working towards the greater goals of staff retention, encouraging growth and moving British food forward.”

Tom Kerridge

“For chefs, practice and inspiration is what it's all about. Appearing in 'Featured Chef' was a fantastic opportunity for me to share some of my skills and experience with both my peers and the next generation of young chefs. I was thrilled with the results and astounded by the number of chefs that watched my videos. The Staff Canteen does a fantastic job of uniting our industry.”

Clare Smyth

BUDGET

£28,000 a year for Featured Chef production costs.

For the same price as a Chef de Partie's salary, The Staff Canteen reaches 30,000 chefs a day with content and inspiration from the world's most prestigious chefs.