

How Dalia is Changing the Way Food Delivery Services Operate

by Joy Corkery | Sep 3, 2019 | Market Insights



What greater place to make an impact than in the sustainability, or lack thereof, of today's world. There is no doubt that the world is in crisis. Plastic pollution is having a negative impact on our oceans and wildlife, recycling is falling short and, while new initiatives are coming from major companies such as PepsiCo and Danone, it is still not enough.

We need to think bigger and better and not just a few companies or people here and there – all of us. With making a good impact on the world high on our list, we were beyond happy to support David E. Rubio, our Head of User Acquisition, with his quest to help food delivery companies produce less waste. Here David shares how his initiative first came into play and how in the space of a few short months, he along with other members of the Dalia team, is already helping food delivery companies in Germany make a change.

Coming to the Realisation Change is Needed

As an avid foodie, David loves to cook and eat great food but like the rest of us, often likes to order food online because it is convenient and tasty. Until one day, it left a sour taste in his mouth.

“Soon, every time I ordered food online I began to feel eternally guilty because of all the plastic waste generated because of my Sunday laziness. Yes, I could stop ordering food online, but this won't stop the food delivery industry from growing (or from causing more environmental waste)”.

David began looking into how he could order food online without harming the environment but found no viable option. So, he decided he wanted to help put one in place, at least in Germany.

Dalia strives on team collaboration so having the different expertise of various team members was essential in getting things off the ground. With the help of Christine Maree, Team Coach at Dalia, he began to formulate the Colibrí project. The overall aim of the project was to help organisations that are trying to implement a circular business model by showing solid information that those confirmed consumers are willing to use reusable containers.

Dalia has an extensive network which would make it easy to find out more about consumer online food ordering behaviour in Germany. Dalia has access to 40,000 apps and websites across 100+ countries. As a result, we can

distribute 5 million micro-surveys per month. This allows us to easily reach a multitude of demographics and get the answers to a vast array of questions.

For the Colibrí project to be useful, it was decided that it should provide answers to the following questions:

1. What percentage of German consumers in Germany are interested in using reusable containers if food delivery companies offer this choice?
2. How much are consumers willing to pay for an online food delivery service that uses reusable containers?
3. What materials are relevant/preferred by consumers?
4. What is the preferred way of returning the containers? Determining the Survey

There were two things other things that needed to be done before unleashing the Colibrí project. One was to determine exactly what the survey would ask respondents. With the help of Fred DeVeaux, Senior Data Analyst, the following questions were devised:

- How often do you order food for delivery?
- Which of the following food delivery services have you used in the past 6 months where you live? (Deliveroo, Foodora, Lieferando, Lieferheld, Pizza.de, Ubereats, Other similar services not in the list, None of these)
- Would you be more or less likely to use a food delivery service using reusable containers?
- How much more extra would you be willing to pay for an order than normally costs 10 euro?
- Which of the following materials would you prefer the food delivery service use for the reusable containers? (Stainless steel, Glass, Reusable plastic, Bamboo, Other metal, Don't care/don't know, Other, None of the above)
- What would be your preferred method for returning the reusable container after you're finished meal? (Return to the same restaurant, Return to any restaurant in the food delivery network, Drop it off at a return box/station in my neighbourhood, Give it to the delivery person on my next order, A delivery person picks it up the next 1-3 days. Don't care/don't know, Other, None of the above)

Secondly, before the survey could be distributed, the idea needed to be validated. David contacted Bastian Schumacher, co-founder of Vanilla Bean, a German startup that will launch a food delivery system with reusable

containers in Summer 2019. Not only was Bastian happy with the initiative and the questions included in the survey, he also believed the results would be very interesting for Vanilla Bean.

“Of course, such a survey would be interesting for us, although we focus on a special target group, of which we already know, that there is demand and willingness for using reusable containers. We wish you good luck with your research and looking forward to the results.”

Following this, it was decided that the outcome of the survey should provide four main insights:

1. “X% of Germans say they’d be more likely to use a food delivery service that switched to reusable containers”
2. “X% of Germans say they’d be willing to pay extra for a food delivery service that used reusable containers. The average amount was ... euros extra. “
3. “X% of Germans say their top choice for reusable container material is ... “
4. “Most Germans would prefer to return the reusable containers by ... “

Each of these four insights will be able to be segmented by age/gender/education and any combination of those demographics. One more round of validation was done with Vanilla Bean who believed the insights would be actionable. The survey was now ready to run, with the intention to share the data with Vanilla Bean at the end at no extra cost.

The Results

The nationally representative survey was launched in Germany to 1,000 people and ran between 21/06/2019 and 05/07/2019. The end result was deep insights into introducing reusable containers by food delivery companies, and answers to all David’s questions were provided.

What percentage of consumers in Germany are interested in using reusable containers if food delivery companies offered them this choice?

We found that a high percentage of German consumers are interested in reusable containers.

- 64% of Germans are more likely to order from a food delivery service that uses reusable containers.
- 79% of the 47% of Germans who use food delivery services regularly would be interested in reusable containers.
- Of the 53% of Germans who don't use food delivery services regularly, younger Germans (16-30) are more likely to be swayed than older Germans (31-65) if reusable containers were used: 63% vs. 46%.

How much are consumers willing to pay for an online food delivery service that uses reusable containers?

Again, we found favourable results.

- 82% of Germans are willing to pay more for a reusable container on a food order of 10 euros.
- Out of those who are willing to pay more, the average price is 2.2 euros.
- Young Germans (16-30) who already use food delivery services are the most willing to pay more (94%) at 2.7 euros.
- Young Germans (16-30) who don't currently use food delivery services are also very willing to pay more (89% at an average price of 2.6 euros).

What container materials are relevant/preferred by consumers?

There was no one outstanding answer to this question, making it easier for companies to convert as they have a choice.

- The most desired material is bamboo (38%), followed by glass (29%) and reusable plastic (28%).
- Germans of all ages, regardless of whether or not they are current users of food delivery services, have roughly the same order of material preferences.

What is the preferred way of returning the containers?

One preferred method stood out here.

- Overall, the preferred method for return is: "I give it to my delivery person on my next order" (52%)

Sharing the Data

David shared the results with Vanilla Bean who pleased with the data and found it helpful:

“Currently, the data helps us in our conversations with investors. It backs many of our assumptions. Later on, it could help to tailor our message to the right audience.”

David also shared the results with reCup, a deposit system for returnable coffee cups that is now developing and testing reusable containers for both takeaway food and home delivery”. Business Development Manager, Tammy, said this of the data:

“It helps us with the decision about brand and design, Overall, it is very helpful data that helps us understand the German market.... the percentage of people who are more likely to use a delivery system that uses reusable boxes will serve as a PRECIOUS ARGUMENT for our sales team”

The results were shared with both companies [via PDF](#) and access to the project dashboard. Our project dashboard is an interactive tool which allows users to filter the information and enjoy a whole wealth of data.

What's Next?

The Colibrí project doesn't stop here. Prompted by the positive feedback from Vanilla Bean and reCup, we will continue to share the data with other companies who are in the position to use reusable containers.

“Thanks to the feedback and support of my Dalia colleagues, we have been able to produce data that proves there is a large chunk of German consumers who would choose a food delivery service who offers reusable containers over a company who doesn't”, says David. “This is good news for both the companies and the environment. We plan to continue to share this data with companies and help make a positive impact on the sustainability fight we all need to be part of.”

If you have any questions about the Colibrí project or feel it could benefit your company, please contact David at david.rubio@daliaresearch.com

Nothing at Dalia happens without teamwork. Collaboration is what makes projects succeed. A special thank you to all those directly involved in making

this project happen: David Rubio, Christine Maree, Fred DeVeaux, Kostas Christidis, Javier Leandro, Niklas Anzinger, Odette Brownings, Katharina Legge, Ralph Pastel, and Joy Corkery. And not forgetting the rest of the Dalia Team whose work every single day allows us to work projects like this that will help make a positive impact on the world.

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