

Meet Spot On, the ultimate guide to London's food scene

As part of our new quickfire questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Jesus Agudo, founder at Spot On, about creating a business tailored towards hospitality during the industry's crisis in the pandemic.

Temps de lecture : minute

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What was the catalyst for launching Spot On?

I have worked as a food blogger for over five years, so have many connections in the hospitality industry and especially in the fine dining scene. My blog was doing well from the beginning but grew rapidly in 2019 when I went on a press trip to Singapore; and was then invited to another experience at Nobu in Kuala Lumpur, thus taking my blog international.

At that point, I decided that I want to share more in-depth accounts of my experiences, beyond just social media posts. I also wanted to share the experiences that I was having with other people in my community and that is how Spot On came about.

Spot On is an online magazine and platform where users have direct access to these special experiences. I love restaurants, new and unique experiences, meeting people and creating content – I often think that I was born to do this.

Tell me about the business?

Spot On is the ultimate guide, showcasing the capital's re-emerging culinary scene and is a one-stop digital source for restaurant news, reviews, openings, insider information and generous member rewards. We aim to open the doors to the expansive London dining scene for everybody and we work with over 160 restaurants that accommodate all tastes and budgets. To receive our offers, customers must be subscribed to our newsletter and follow us on social media.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

In 2019, I decided to create an online platform where I could share both in-depth content and access to special and unique dining experiences. Everything was going well; I had a team of five employees and was in talks with several investors. Then, *the pandemic* hit the UK in March 2020 and restaurants had to close down.

With restaurants reworking budgets and strategy, I knew straightaway that I would have to put my project on hold and let go of my employees. It was a really tough time and I was sad to see my work and vision stalled.

What has been your biggest challenge so far, and how have you overcome this?

During the first and second UK lockdowns, I saw both big and small restaurants that I love closing permanently. It was so sad to see and made me want to come up with a solution to help the restaurants that were still surviving.

Building on my original Spot On idea, I wanted to help fill seats at

restaurants that were reopening, help diners make the most of post-pandemic dining in London, as well as support the resurgence of the capital's restaurant scene.

How does Spot On answer an unmet need?

Many restaurants struggle to get their name out and announce changes on their menu. Spot On is a platform that fills this gap, it connects restaurants with customers, and allow customers to receive exclusive restaurant news and offers.

What's in store for the future?

There are lots of developments lined up for Spot On. We have five new food specialists joining the editorial team, which will multiply the capabilities and reach of the magazine. One section of the magazine we will grow is that dedicated to industry news where we discuss and meet chefs, restaurants owners, mixologists, designers and so on - it's a section dedicated to those who bring the restaurant to life.

There are also some tech developments in the pipeline: in early 2022, we will launch a web app where users can download the magazine from the app store and receive live news. We plan to expand internationally starting with some key European cities.

What one piece of advice would you give to other founders or future founders?

A vision is something special. No matter what it is, if it happens, it is for a reason. I see it as a calling that must be answered. Things haven't been easy. Setting up a hospitality business in the middle of a pandemic, when everything was closed, wasn't easy, but it hasn't been impossible. I

haven't stopped working on this project because of my strong vision to create a platform where people can have fun, experience special moments and share it with their friends.

My advice is to stick with your vision, no matter what happens along the way, or the problems you may encounter, or the people who don't share your vision. Fear will come and a million reasons to stop working, but all you have to do is remember the reason you started and the vision you have. Connect to it, see it, feel it and go for it!

Jesus Agudo is founder at *Spot On*.

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