

# Recipe for Success:

From Amateur to Professional, a study of homegrown professional food blogs and their readership using a uses and gratifications framework

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*Image from Smitten Kitchen blog, April 2015*

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# Introduction

Food blogs can be anything from an amateur blogger that just has an interest in casually sharing recipes to big business with tens of thousands or even millions of followers on social media. It is incredibly easy for the average person to create a blog if you have access to a computer with the internet and an interest in doing it. It is so easy at this point and there are so many avenues for creating blogs (hosting with sites like WordPress or Blogger, or creating one on your own self-hosted site) that just about anyone could create a blog. Food blogging is an incredibly popular genre within the blogosphere so it can be a challenge for an individual blog to stand out.

One main focus of the research done for this paper is uncovering commonalities between homegrown blogs that turn into professional blogs, brands and businesses that can sustain their creators as livelihood, turning a hobbyist into a professional blogger. The other main focus of the research is to better understand what audiences are looking for from food blogs as it is not only important to capture commonalities, but to also get at least a general sense for what different readers are looking for in a food blog. This was explored using a uses and gratification framework.

In this way, a hobbyist food blogger can through this research be better informed about what motivates readers to be loyal to a blog, what qualities are shared by professional food bloggers that started out in a similar way and what qualities are shared by different kinds of readers (specifically foodie readers that are most engaged in the content), or even what different kinds

of readers are most interested in and how they find blogs. While this paper focuses specifically on a certain kind of food blogger, the methods used here could be used to understand other kinds of blogs and their readers.

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## Literature Review

### Introduction to Food Blogs

Food blogs are a way for individuals to share their passion about food and in many cases share about their lives. With the rise of blogs in general, food blogs have turned out to be a popular topic and it is not entirely surprising to see what typical food blogs and food bloggers look like within the context of food historically as in many cultures, specifically American culture, women predominately were the ones cooking in the home. As Paula M. Salvo points out many of these blogs are “[a]kin to postwar cookbooks...filled with details about daily life and alimentary lessons about preparing meals and caring for family, friends, lovers, and husbands” (32).

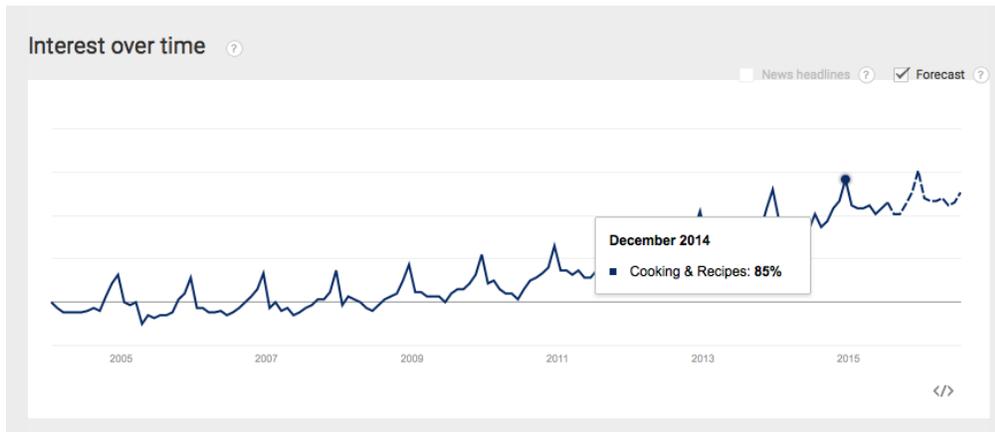
Food blogs are very comparable to cookbooks and memoirs and are mostly female centric as a whole. “Food blogs have burst forth on the worldwide web as a genre strikingly close to memoir. Many of the most widely read blogs intersperse personal anecdotes about preparing food with travel notes and other displays of primarily middle-class status...” (Salvio 31). In her book *Will Write for Food: the complete guide to writing cookbooks, blogs, memoir, recipes, and more*, Dianne Jacob describes food blogs as being about:

...more than your performance in the kitchen or a list of the dishes you ate at a restaurant. Developing your storytelling skills so readers keep coming back. Use humor, self-deprecation, confession, guilt, and suspense. Your posts must draw readers in. They want to relate to your experience. You want to elicit emotions and remind readers of events in their own lives. (58-59)

Food has always connected people and has held deep significance to individuals and cultures and in many cultures preparing food and sharing recipes has been a predominantly female activity. Cooking, eating, and recipe sharing have long been social hobbies and activities of daily life, connecting friends and family — especially women — so with the rise of blogging and social media it is no surprise that food blogs and visual social media would become popular expressions of these traditions. In particular, highly visual social media that naturally translates well to food posts is also predominantly used by women. According to the Pew Research Center's *Social Media Update 2014* both Pinterest and Instagram are used mostly by women: "42% of online women are Pinterest users, compared with just 13% of men" and 29% of online women on Instagram vs. 22% of men (2). This complements the high concentration of women running and using recipe blogs, a highly visual form of blogging since visuals are used to make up for the lack of ability to smell or taste food written about online.

Through the use of tailored Google searches paired with findings from Google Trend we can see that the topic of Cooking & Recipes has a consistent cycle and continues to trend upwards

(and is predicted to only continue to grow).



According to the State of Food Blogging Survey (2012) 84.5% of bloggers are female and 89% of food blogs share recipes (Foodista.com). Additionally, 73% of the bloggers that responded to the survey stated that they are American. The food blogs that are focused on in the original research for this paper are American women bloggers that share recipes as a main feature of their blog. Additionally, the blogs focused on for this research were homegrown blogs that became professionally run blogs.

In 2012, the organizers of the International Food Blogger Conference (Foodista and Zephyr Adventures) conducted the State of Food Blogging survey and had 694 food bloggers complete the survey. This survey resulted in many more interesting findings including a description of the prototypical food blogger as "...a married woman in her 30s or 40s living in the United States [73% American]. While she is either a parent or perhaps on the way to being so, she is likely to be employed full-time, part-time or working on her own business." 45% of the respondents had no background relevant to food blogging and the remaining 55% had experience in professional writing, editing, marketing, food/food service or a drinks background.

Beyond continuing traditions of sharing the social experience of food, food blogging has also become a cottage industry and for some big business. According to the State of Food Blogging survey results, only 1% of bloggers make “anything close to an annual salary” and 75% make no money from blogging. A similar survey conducted by Kelly Senyel, The State of the Food Blogosphere, found similar results with only 1.6% of 135 total bloggers replying that they make more than \$5,000 from their blog each month. Senyel also found in her sample that 25% make less than \$25 a month (with another 25% declining to answer), 32.8% make \$25-\$500 a month, and 10.9% make \$500-\$5,000 a month.

88% of the bloggers responded to the Foodista The State of Food Blogging survey that they blog because they have a passion for food. Success was defined primarily as “personal satisfaction” while revenue ranked last at 11% which is not entirely surprising when you consider that most of them are blogging without any income, yet they still are doing it. This being said 49% of the food bloggers stated that they blog because they wish to make a name for themselves in the food world and 41% hope to turn their blog into a job.

Publically most bloggers are hesitant to discuss finances according to a 2012 Forbes article, *Is Blogging Really a Way for Women to Earn a Living?*

There are 18.9 million women who write blogs, according the the Pew Research Center, and while these women chat openly about their lives online, discussions regarding how much merchandise or money they generate from these blogs remain noticeably unaddressed. (Faw)

When The Pioneer Woman, Ree Drummond, was interviewed for The New Yorker in 2011 writer Amanda Fortini noted:

Whenever I brought up the subject of ad revenue, Drummond grew acutely uncomfortable. She said that she is “reticent to quote numbers.” Eventually, she told me that her revenue for 2010 was “solidly one million dollars,” a portion of which goes to overhead and expenses. (This sum doesn’t include her book advances, royalties from her best-sellers, and revenue from Hollywood for the movie option.)



The wife and husband duo of the blog Pinch of Yum took a very different approach and found a lucrative opportunity that was being untapped by other food bloggers. They decided as an experiment to post monthly reports on their income and lessons learned. They are incredibly open on their finances and how they went from making about \$20 a month to upwards of \$30,000-\$40,000 a month. They are active in conversations with their readers and often answer questions on SEO, affiliate marketing, and other aspects of their business. Eventually they spun this off into a subscription based website for food bloggers

(FoodBloggerPro.com). Although a recent survey they did in 2015 did not cover what percentage of their readers at Pinch of Yum are also food bloggers, it is clear that that is who they are gearing towards as their niche. Their story is an inspiration to individuals that want to turn a blog into a business.

With the vast majority of food bloggers not making money, but a significant percentage blogging at least in part to make a name for themselves and/or turn their blog into a job, there is a great opportunity for research. The original research of this paper seeks to shed light on what qualities are common in homegrown blogs that are now professional blogs. While there are general understandings about what a good food blog will look like the research here will either codify or refute these understandings without relying on speculation. Furthermore, understanding what qualities differentiate different kinds of readers and how they as a whole interact with food blogs and their feelings about them also could help shed light on ways that amateur food bloggers can communicate strategically. By using a uses and gratification approach, motivations of readers can be understood in a way that can help bloggers communicate in a way that addresses their readers' desires; including differences between invested foodie readers and those that may read food blogs, but do not follow them as closely.

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## Uses and Gratification Applied to Blogs

Uses and gratification theory, or framework, has been used to better understand the results of the original research in this paper. Uses and gratification is a typology of user motives that was first published by Blumler and Katz in 1974. According to uses and gratification the audience actively chooses the media and this choice is made over others (such as reading one food blog over another). Audience members are doing this to fill various wants and needs and there have been many variations over the years used by various researchers. Audience members are also

“sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interests and motives...or at least recognize them when confronted with them” (Katz et. al., 510-511).

Although there has been much work done to describe further motives the uses and gratifications that arose from the original research in this paper fell into four basic motive categories that Blumler and Katz identified: diversion, personal relationships, personal identity, and surveillance. As they relate to food blogs they are described broadly as such:

- **Diversion: escaping the routine**
  - Taking time for the sake of looking at the blog or their social media (not solely with intent to specifically make something), but for the entertainment of looking
  
- **Personal relationships: including substitute companionship**
  - Connection with others that use food blogs or the blogger themselves, and connection to people in their lives (cooking for others)
  
- **Personal identity: value reinforcement**
  - Finding commonalities between themselves and the blogger (or even readers of the blog), relating to their lifestyles or values
  
- **Surveillance: information seeking**
  - Finding a new recipe or how to make something better or to try a new technique

In the limitations and future research sections we will touch on ways that we could potentially integrate more nuanced gratifications such as by investigating if there are new and distinctive gratifications due to being in the form of a blog or social media (see *Uses and Grats 2.0: New*

*Gratifications for the New Media* by S. Shyam Sundar and Anthony M. Limperos), but the point of this research was not specifically why people choose to read blogs instead of another kind of media (where digging into motivations specific to using a blog vs. another type of media would be more appropriate).

The originality of this paper is application of uses and gratification to understand food blogs and their readership and certainly there are many directions in which one could approach this research. Certainly with further research there may be other motives that do not land within these four areas, but the main themes that came in the original research done here do fit these four categories and there is no need for more for this analysis. Also, some of the proposed categories done in other studies do not get to the heart of why someone is getting gratification from an action and would be better served if put into one of the categories selected for this paper. For instance, Sepp et al., “identified four studies that discuss gratifications or motivations of blogging” and within those two of the four indicated *commenting* or *forum-participation* as motives, however, while commenting certainly was discussed in the original research in this paper what is more interesting than if someone cares about their being commenting or forum-participation or not from a uses and gratifications framework is what need or gratification is that filling (for instance this would be more helpful if it was in either surveillance or personal relationships, or both, to truly get at what was being gained by having a comment section or forum) (1482). “According to the original tenets of U&G, gratifications are rooted entirely in social and psychological origins of needs (Katz et. al., 1974)” (Sundar et. al., 2013).

Additionally, this is a common way to do this kind of research. Uses and gratifications is often used as a framework for understanding why individuals choose one media over another and typologies often look like those used before.

Overlap in gratification typologies is very common across the communication literature. For example, the research on the uses and gratifications of video games identified such gratifications as competition and challenge (Lucas & Sherry, 2004), which were noted 60 years earlier as gratifications derived from listening to radio talk shows (Herzog, 1944). In the earliest studies involving U&G of television, Greenberg (1974) and Rubin (1981,1983) identified gratifications like entertainment, social interaction, and information seeking. Roughly 35 years later, the same gratifications have been identified for a variety of new media like blogging (Kaye & Johnson, 2002)...(Sundar et. al., 2013)

In considering where this paper fits within context of uses and gratifications research it is important to recognize that while there are many variations on the framework, there is also a place for moving towards condensing these various gratifications into broader categories and indicating the individual gratifications that fall within each, as has been done for this paper.

When one examines the larger body of gratification typologies and how scattered it is, the suggestion of condensing the multitude of gratifications into three or four broad typologies is certainly a sensible one. In fact, integrating typologies seems to be emerging as the primary and most parsimonious way to apply U&G to new communication technologies. (Sundar and Limperos 2013).

Although it is fairly unique to apply a uses and gratifications to *food* blogs and their readers, it is not unique in being used for understanding the internet or blogs specifically. In fact, in the 2011 article *Private bloggers' motivations to produce content: a gratifications theory perspective* calls for more papers such as this one. The authors state that while “[m]uch of past research has treated bloggers, even including blog readers, as one homogeneous sample...each study has

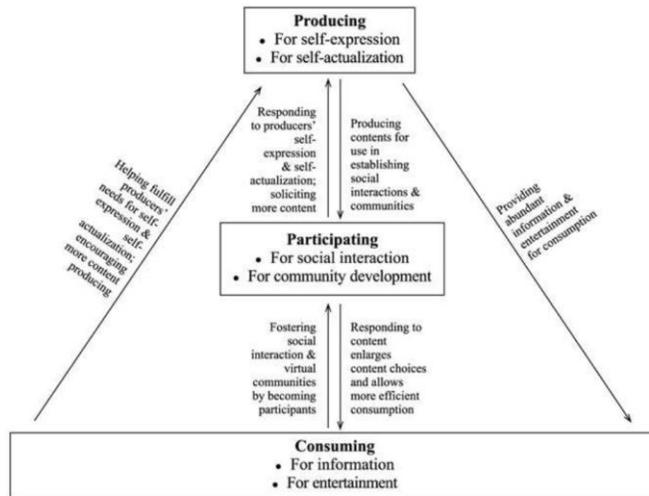
also presented unique findings, which may be partly due to studying different types of bloggers” (1498).

Armstrong and McAdams (2009, p. 435) note that definitions of blogs are quite broad. They concur with other researchers who suggest that we should not study blogs as if all were alike, but instead study, for example, diary blogging, corporate blogging, community blogging, and political blogging. We agree but suggest that a typology of blogs should be created that goes even deeper, for example, dividing diary blogging into further categories based on blog content (e.g., professional/non-professional, expert/amateur, specialized interest), blogger motivations, interest in marketing activities, and engagement in marketing activities. (1498)

The food blogs described in this paper are examples of user-generated content (aka user-generated media). In the article *Understanding the appeal of user-generated media: a uses and gratification perspective* Guosong Shao describes the interdependence of three purposes people have for user-generated media (2008):

1. They consume contents for fulfilling their information, entertainment, and mood management needs
2. They participate through interacting with the content as well as with other users for enhancing social connections and virtual communities

3. They produce their own contents for self-expression and self-actualization (7)



This is mentioned, because it is interesting to note that we will see throughout this paper, as the results of the original research are discussed in the context of what we now know about food bloggers, that food bloggers often have the same, or related, motivations as their readers. As applied to strategic communications for a blogger it should be understood that there is a close interplay between the content they create, how users interact with it, and the shared/similar motivations for both parties.

## Research Questions

1. **What attributes do food blogs have in common that started out as amateur homegrown blogs and became professional food blogs?**
  - a. These will be referred to as *homegrown professional blogs*

- b. Blogs specifically looked at:
  - i. The Pioneer Woman Cooks (established 2006)
  - ii. Smitten Kitchen (established 2006)
  - iii. SkinnyTaste (established 2008)
  - iv. Pinch of Yum (established 2010)
- c. Creators have:
  - i. Notoriety derived from their food blogs (not previous celebrity or chef status)
  - ii. Substantial followings including large social media accounts (thousands to millions of followers)
  - iii. Full-time job blogging with their site
  - iv. Published bestselling cookbooks (exception for *Pinch of Yum*, included for uniqueness and age of blog)

## 2. What motivates readers of food blogs to use these blogs?

- a. Readers are described as the following
  - i. Foodie: *I enjoy certain blog brands. I love reading food blogs and following them on social media. I also use social media (Pinterest) and other sites (Food Gawker, Yummy, etc.) to find and share recipes and food blogs.*
  - ii. Casual Reader: *I am aware of certain blog brands and revisit sites I like, but I don't have any strong favorites. I do use food blogs regularly. I also use social media like Pinterest and/or other sites like Food Gawker or Yummly to find and share new recipes.*

- iii. Uncommitted Reader: *I don't have a strong interest in using a particular blog. I might find a recipe online, but I don't revisit any site in particular. I don't follow any blog brand on social media, but like the other categories I might use social media.*
  - iv. Non-Reader: *I do not read food blogs.*
- 

## Research Methods

The research done for this paper started with a content analysis done in May 2015. This helped in developing the questions for the survey which went out in July 2015. To get further information to better understand the content analysis and a handful of interviews were done with food blog readers later that month. From there the survey data was further explored in conjunction with the results of the interviews and content analysis. As we discuss the content analysis and survey results we will also discuss the interview results as they help us better understand what we are seeing.

## Content Analysis

A content analysis was done in May 2015 for blog posts in the month of April 2015 from four blogs: The Pioneer Woman Cooks, Smitten Kitchen, SkinnyTaste, and Pinch of Yum. These particular blogs were selected due to fitting the criteria laid out above (see Research Questions) and were known to the researcher prior to the project starting.

This analysis included a survey of the look of the blog (navigation/search, social media icons, photography/graphics), frequency of posts, general topics discussed, and methods for revenue. Social media presence was also looked at for these blogs. In the case of those with best-selling cookbooks at least one book was included. Blog posts done in April 2015 were coded based on general topics to understand better how much content was about cooking, what kinds of cooking posts, and how much was about lifestyle or posts other than recipes themselves (such as family, travel, and fitness).

## Survey

The survey was sent out online over a one-week period in July 2015 using Qualtrics. 237 users' responses were included in the final analysis for comparing different types of readers to their responses. More responses were kept in the analysis where appropriate on questions where being a foodie or not was not part of the analysis. In those cases, the total number of responses to that question will be described. The survey was a convenience sample that used the Snowball Method via Facebook, Instagram (with appropriate hashtags), Pinterest, LinkedIn and email. Participants were typically educated, middle to upper-middle class, women.

The questions focused were written to help find user motivations for using or not using food blogs that was considered within a uses and gratification framework and potential differences based on their self-identified status.

In the survey participants were asked to self-identify their level of engagement with food blogs and asked specific questions to social media usage and a wide range of activities related to food and social/personal activities.

## Interviews

Five interview subjects were included. They knew the researcher prior to the interview and volunteered to be included in the study based on their interest in reading food blogs. Although they were interviewed after the survey, they all agreed to the study and were selected to participate prior to the survey. Notes were taken by hand and reviewed with the subjects at the time to check for accuracy. Interviews took place in person (3) and over the phone (2) over the course of one week.

In terms of demographics the women interviewed were similar to each other (and for that matter similar as well to the previously mentioned demographics of typical food bloggers). The interviewees can be described as middle-class American women living in the Midwest (four live in the Twin Cities metro area and one lives in Central Illinois). They also were all in long-term committed relationships (including four of five married women). Four out of five identify as white/Caucasian and one as black/African-American. All are also well educated with a minimum of a master's degree (with one working towards a Ph.D.).

Other specifics that came up during the interviews in how they use or don't use food blogs included that one has a young child, another has a partner with dietary restrictions, and another has dietary restrictions herself. These differences helped show potential nuances in how readers may think of the food blogs they use.

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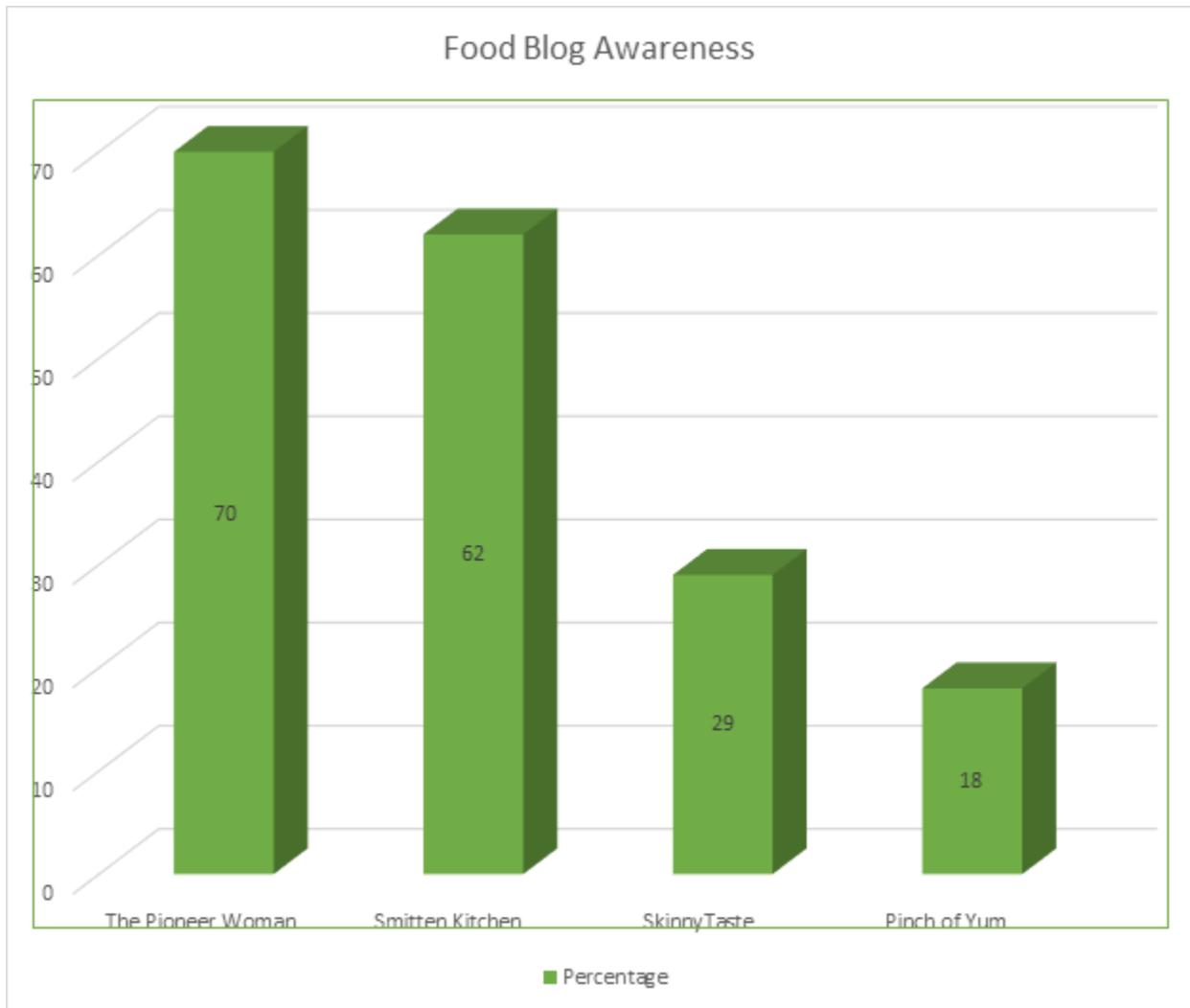
## Discussion of Findings

Looking at the content analysis, interviews, literature review, and the survey in concert with one another we get a clearer picture of what qualities the most successful food blogs have and why people follow those blogs over others. Through the research we will see that the best blogs fill several needs or gratifications — often at once — including both being practical trusted guides for finding recipes that work and are easy to understand, but also giving readers a diversion; enhancing personal relationships; and reinforcing personal identities.

One of the most successful food blogs of this kind is *The Pioneer Woman Cooks*. Mentioned in the literature and in several of the interviews with foodie readers, Ree Drummond's empire is vast with many best-selling cookbooks, a television show on the Food Network, children's books, and of course her website and social media presence.

The *New Yorker* described Drummond as “mak[ing] an average life look heroic. Because the Pioneer Woman's housewifery is distinctly rural, it is exotic to her readers, many of whom log on from suburban or urban locales” (Fortini, 2011).

Of the blogs specifically looked at in this paper it is the best known with 70% of survey respondents stating they were previously aware of *The Pioneer Woman*.



Ree Drummond is one of the most successful food bloggers and her website is clearly about more of a lifestyle than just recipes and it has a well-defined voice and brand:

Nested between narratives about home and gardening, homeschooling her four children, and photography are recipes for egg and avocado salad sandwiches, Knock You Naked Brownies, Pig Cake, and Milky Way Cake. Gender norms (albeit with a ranching touch) are firmly set on this blog, as Drummond bakes, barbecues, entertains old friends, goes

shooting, and “keeps it real” with photographs of “what’s around the house to sweep up after ignoring housework for a week.” (Salvio, 2012)



One of the interviewees was a fan of The Pioneer Woman and reiterated this sentiment stating that reading about Drummond’s idyllic country life was an entertaining escape from her urban life

(diversion) and that she feels inspired by the blogger’s story (personal relationships, personal identity).

The reader stated:

I like her blog because I like her backstory. It looks very slick, professional. And so I looked at the About Me and found out about her background as a marketer in LA...She uses it as a way to say ‘I’m just like you and you can follow your dreams too.’ Also, I like her big kitchen and the idea of her cooking for lots of people because it is intimidating...Cooking is scary.

Every time this reader makes white chicken chili she returns to The Pioneer Woman website. The reader does not see herself as a good cook, but she feels good when she succeeds by making recipes from The Pioneer Woman (self-identity). With this she also trusts Drummond to give her recipes that will work time and again (personal relationships, personal identity, and information seeking).



“You know I really, really like Ree Drummond because how she writes. I thought she was cute. Her written voice I like. It is a little too cutesy in the show.”

They also told a story about making a flatbread that did not turn out because of the recipe did not have good photos to show each step. She liked that The Pioneer Woman Cooks website shows step-by-step photos. It gave her more confidence (personal identity, information seeking).

Another reader in the past read The Pioneer Woman Cooks, but now feels “there is not enough that is relevant. She uses a lot of meat, they are heavy, and she writes blog posts about her family and [laughs] I just don’t care!”

The same interview subject is a fan of the Smitten Kitchen and pointed out that Deb just had a baby and she was interested in seeing baby photos. She liked Deb as a person and mentioned that she felt like an old friend she doesn't have enough time to really keep up with, but that she

still is interested.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2015  
look what else we baked!

It has always amused me that despite being a species with only two options, we get so excited to learn that the next member of it will be one or another. But there I was blubbering like I had never heard news so unusual and wonderful when they told me it was a girl, because like my favorite childhood movie that we dusted off a couple rainy weekends ago, we've never had a little girl. We hope she's going to like it here.

The screenshot shows the Smitten Kitchen website layout. On the left is a sidebar with the 'sk' logo, a search bar, and sections for 'Welcome!' (About, FAQ, Recipes, Surprise Me!), 'Resources' (Conversions, Good Reads, Tips, Topics), and 'July Agenda' (a grid of food images). The main content area features a date and title, a top photo of a baby's feet, a paragraph of text, and a bottom photo of a baby lying on a patterned blanket.

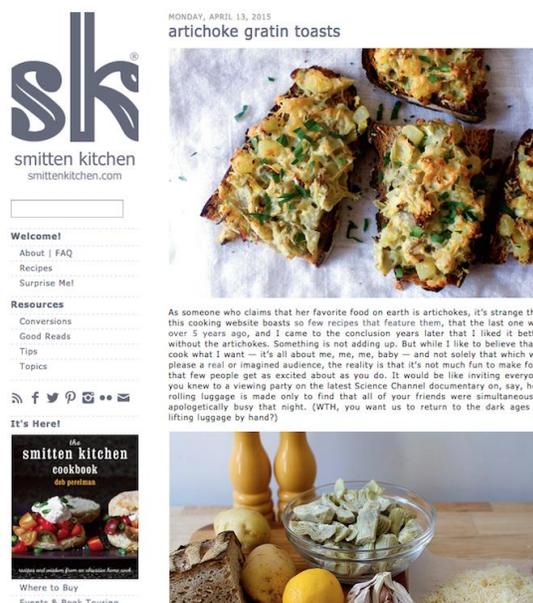
blogger is like "a friend").

We can see that these blogs are clearly about more than just gratifying a need to find a great new recipe (although that certainly is a very important part). Part of why finding a good recipe is important though also lends itself towards the reader's personal identity (such as gaining confidence and relating to the blogger) as well as personal relationships (being able to cook good things for loved ones as well as potentially feeling like the

According to the interviewed food blog readers writing is a huge reason for reading specific blogs and it would appear from their answers that personality is also important. Several people mentioned Deb Perelman of Smitten Kitchen and specifically pointed out that they love her writing. Her detail in her recipes and her style of writing was appealing. Furthermore, the writing in these blogs are entertaining (diversion), make the readers feel kinship to the writer and enhance existing relationships through creating great food experiences for their loved ones (personal relationships), and personal identity (inspiring them to create and making them feel connected to their identity as a home cook).

One reader that goes to the Smitten Kitchen blog daily and stated that Deb felt like a sort of friend and three readers mentioned that when you read a blog for a long time they almost seem like a friend or someone you could be friends with in real life.

One mentioned another blog that they read, but don't make recipes from that he (the author) seemed like someone she would be friends with and she enjoyed hearing about his life because he is Canadian and she likes Canada.



The image is a screenshot of the Smitten Kitchen website. At the top left is the 'sk' logo with 'smitten kitchen' and 'smittenkitchen.com' below it. To the right of the logo is a search bar. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with links: 'Welcome!', 'About | FAQ', 'Recipes', 'Surprise Me!', 'Resources', 'Conversions', 'Good Reads', 'Tips', and 'Topics'. Below the navigation menu are social media icons for RSS, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Email. At the bottom left of the screenshot is a book cover for 'the smitten kitchen cookbook' by Deb Perelman. The main content area shows a recipe for 'artichoke gratin toasts' dated 'MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015'. There is a large photo of the finished dish and a smaller photo of ingredients including artichokes, lemons, and bread. A short paragraph of text is visible below the photos, starting with 'As someone who claims that her favorite food on earth is artichokes, it's strange that this cooking website boasts so few recipes that feature them, that the last one was over 5 years ago, and I came to the conclusion years later that I liked it better without the artichokes. Something is not adding up. But while I like to believe that I cook what I want - it's all about me, me, me, baby - and not solely that which will please a real or imagined audience, the reality is that it's not much fun to make food that few people get as excited about as you do. It would be like inviting everyone you knew to a viewing party on the latest Science Channel documentary on, say, how rolling luggage is made only to find that all of your friends were simultaneously, apologetically busy that night. (WTH, you want us to return to the dark ages of lifting luggage by hand?)'

The young mother that was interviewed loves Smitten Kitchen stated that with a small child she doesn't hardly have time to keep up with her real friends so she doesn't use blogs as community, but she does see that other people might and she does feel a connection to certain blog writers like Deb (as they all referred to her by her first name). This reader does not go to

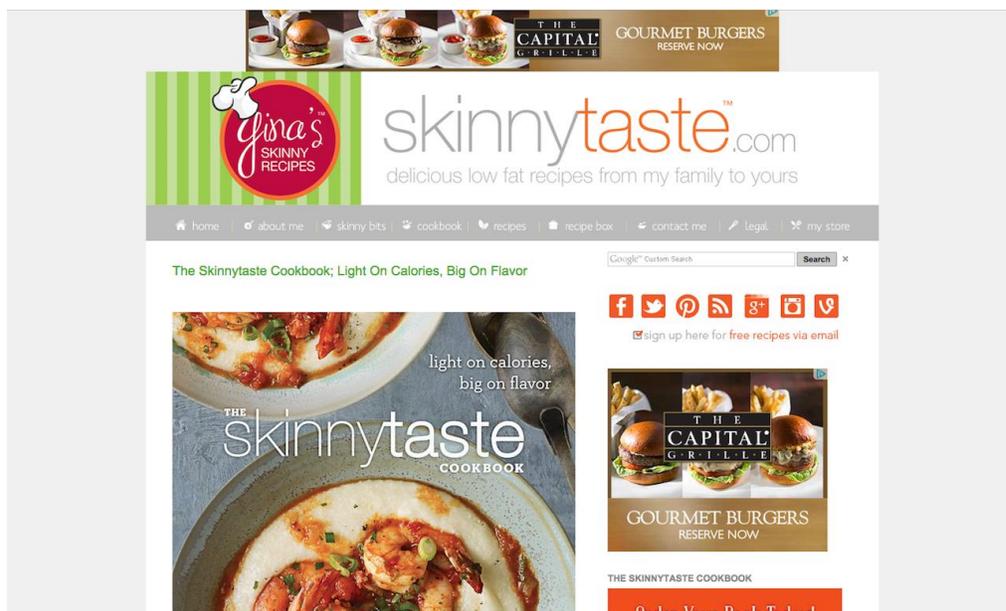
Smitten Kitchen as often anymore because she feels the recipes are not fast enough nor would her daughter eat them, but that she said she would go back in the future. She enjoyed knowing what was going on in Deb's life.

All three of the readers that mentioned the blog Smitten Kitchen trusted her. One stated that if she was doing a Google search for recipes online and she saw a recipe was from the Smitten Kitchen she would trust it and pin that one on Pinterest over another and she only pins recipes that she trusts. She is very particular with what she pins. The words "trust" and "inspiration" came up a lot for the foodies interviewed as reasons they read the blogs that they do. One reader also pointed out that she enjoys cooking because it is an expression of love to her loved ones, which showcases how finding a good recipe can be about love for self-and/or others.



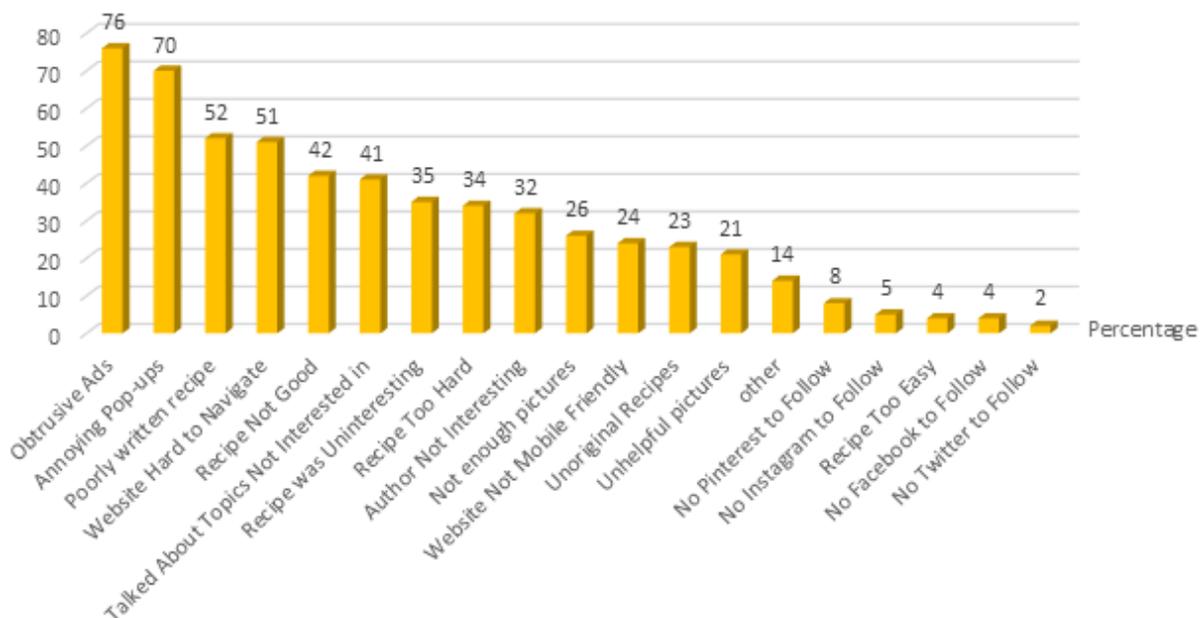
In addition to The Pioneer Woman Cooks and Smitten Kitchen, analysis was also done on the blogs SkinnyTaste and Pinch of Yum. SkinnyTaste is written by a mom that wanted to make healthy meals that were tasty and fast to make and Pinch of Yum focuses on the business of blogging. Like the other two, these blogs feature prominent beautiful large photos of the recipes. This was the leading answer from foodies when asked what they look for in a good food blog.

The only person that did not answer that first said “recipes” and then they answered “photography” so clearly the visual appeal of the website also plays into what is desirable. It aids in understanding steps in the recipe as well is visually enjoyable in and of itself.



Readers were turned off by websites that were hard to navigate. Related to this one aspect of blogs that turned off readers in the interviews were when ads felt obtrusive to the content of the blog or if a sponsored product seemed to be promoted for money alone. However, a couple of the respondents agreed that they would be more willing to try a product if it had come from a blogger they trust mentioned it because it could make cooking better. If the post is viewed as authentic vs. a grab for money readers felt comfortable with making a choice to try out a new product. Readers that trust the blogger and like them as a person feel a bond to them that can translate into them being more willing to spend money that supports the blog financially.

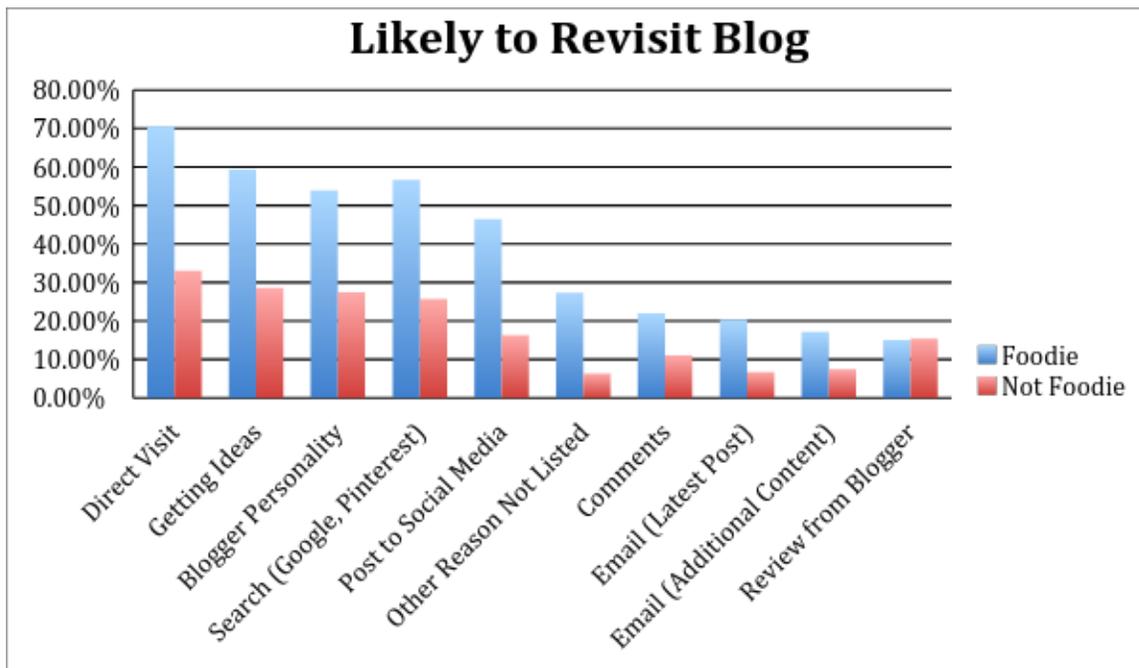
## Reasons to Not Return to a Food Blog



When we look at the survey results for reasons why all surveyed readers would not return to a food blog we can see they echo what the individuals in the interviews said (note: this question had 242 total responses and all users are compiled in this graph without difference to the kind of reader, foodie or not). The top four answers all relate to impeding the information seeking of readers. Although it is clearly important that people that wish to enter into this kind of writing understand the importance of connecting to their audiences, this can seriously be hampered by over-zealous ad placement, a website that is hard to navigate, or an unclear recipe.

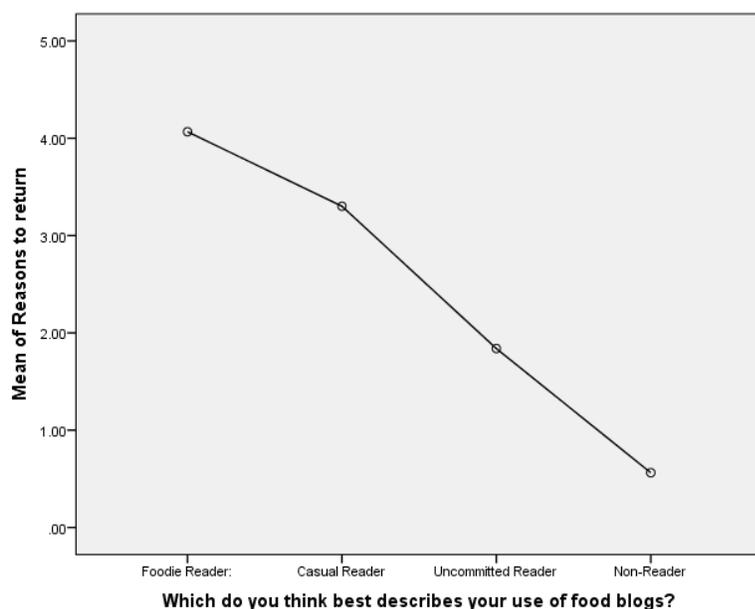
When we look at the responses foodies and non-foodies give as likely reasons for returning to a blog we also can see how important it is for foodies to feel they can trust the blogger to give them good information that is easy to navigate and follow (as mentioned in the interviews a direct visit to a site comes with knowing that the source will be trustworthy, inspiring, and entertaining), that it is a place they can be inspired, that they like the blogger as a person, and

that the blogger's content is findable through social media and search engines. We can start to see in the chart below that foodie readers have a high interest in revisiting blogs through a direct visit, to get ideas, because they personally like the blogger, and through social media usage.



## Revisit Food Blog by Self-Reported Engagement with Food Blogs

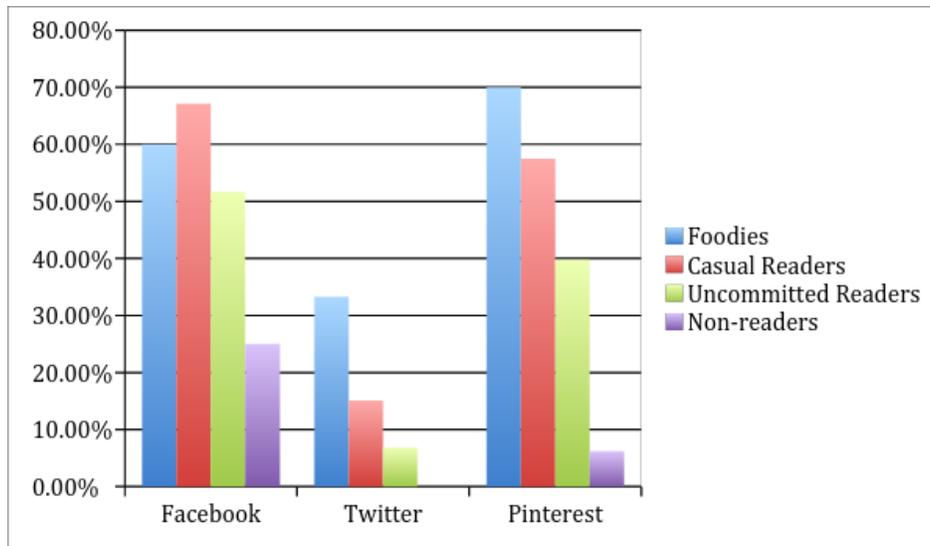
		Foodie or Not Foodie			
		Foodie		Not Foodie	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
Directly to site to find another recipe	Not Likely	0	0.0%	23	16.9%
	Somewhat Likely	30	29.4%	68	50.0%
	Likely	72	70.6%	45	33.1%
-Getting Ideas (Not planning a specific meal)	Not Likely	6	5.9%	25	18.8%
	Somewhat Likely	35	34.7%	70	52.6%
	Likely	60	59.4%	38	28.6%
-Blogger is Inspiring, Interesting, or Someone I Can Relate To	Not Likely	5	4.9%	36	26.7%
	Somewhat Likely	42	41.2%	62	45.9%
	Likely	55	53.9%	37	27.4%
-Enjoy Reading and/or Making Comments	Not Likely	27	27.0%	61	44.9%
	Somewhat Likely	51	51.0%	60	44.1%
	Likely	22	22.0%	15	11.0%
-Read a Review from the Blogger on a Product or Service	Not Likely	28	28.0%	59	43.4%
	Somewhat Likely	57	57.0%	56	41.2%
	Likely	15	15.0%	21	15.4%
-Blogger Posted to their Social Media Account	Not Likely	16	16.2%	49	36.3%
	Somewhat Likely	37	37.4%	64	47.4%
	Likely	46	46.5%	22	16.3%
-Found them through another search (Google, Food Gawker, Pinterest)	Not Likely	6	6.1%	20	14.7%
	Somewhat Likely	37	37.4%	81	59.6%
	Likely	56	56.6%	35	25.7%
-Interesting Email with Additional Content (such as a ebook giveaway for subscribers)	Not Likely	36	36.4%	77	57.0%
	Somewhat Likely	46	46.5%	48	35.6%
	Likely	17	17.2%	10	7.4%
-Interesting Email with the latest post or posts (RSS feed)	Not Likely	34	34.7%	76	56.3%
	Somewhat Likely	44	44.9%	50	37.0%
	Likely	20	20.4%	9	6.7%
-Other reason not listed	Not Likely	5	45.5%	18	56.3%
	Somewhat Likely	3	27.3%	12	37.5%
	Likely	3	27.3%	2	6.3%



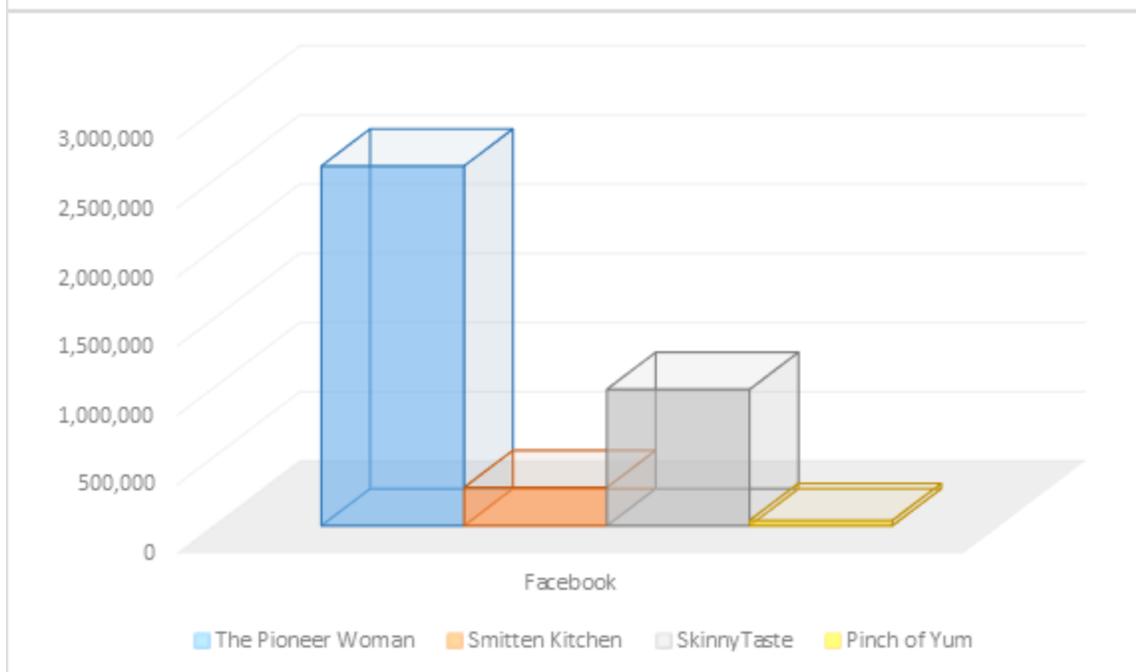
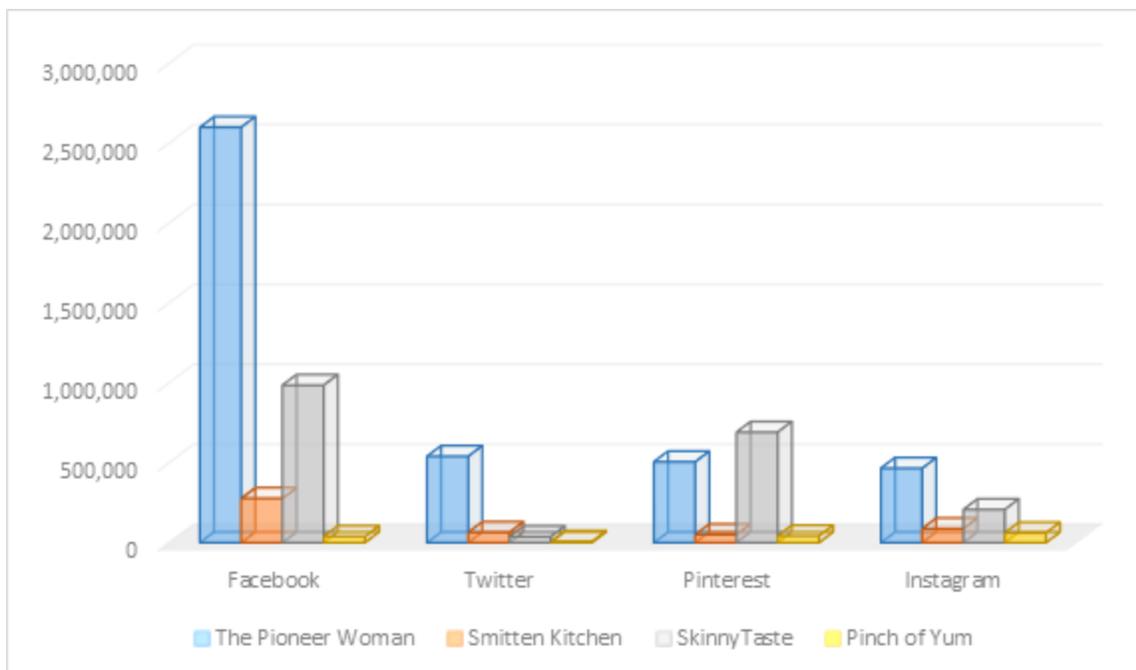
As we look at the data we also can see that more casual readers of blogs are still likely to have several reasons for returning to a food blog, but it is clear that the foodie readers have the most number of reasons to return to a blog. This may be as we see in the interviews that they are returning

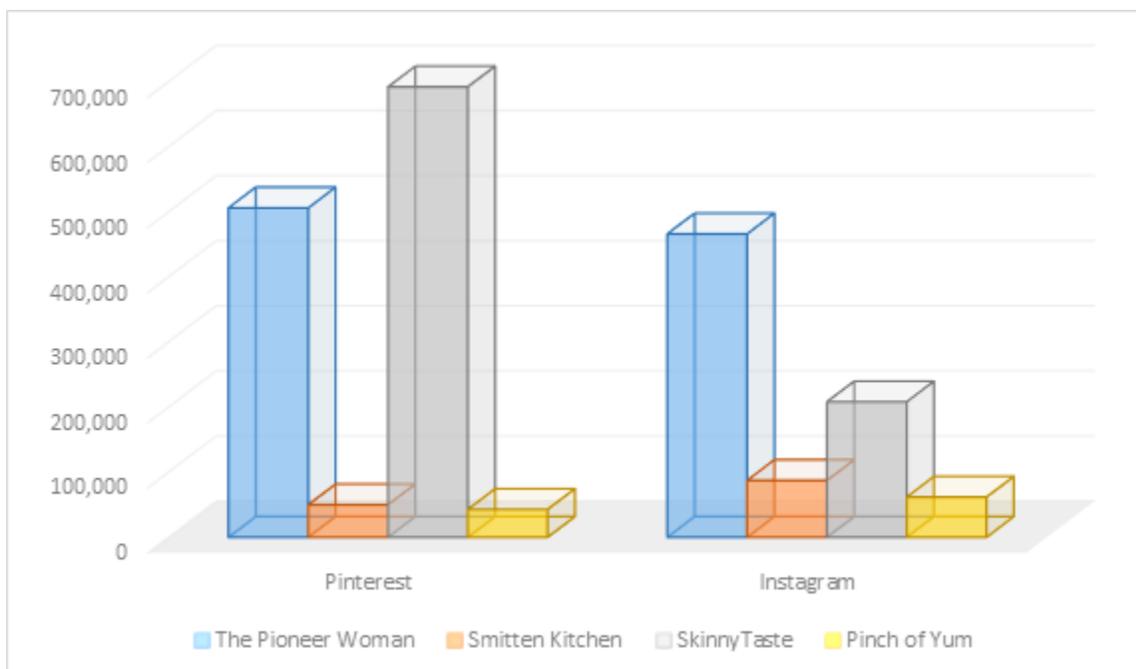
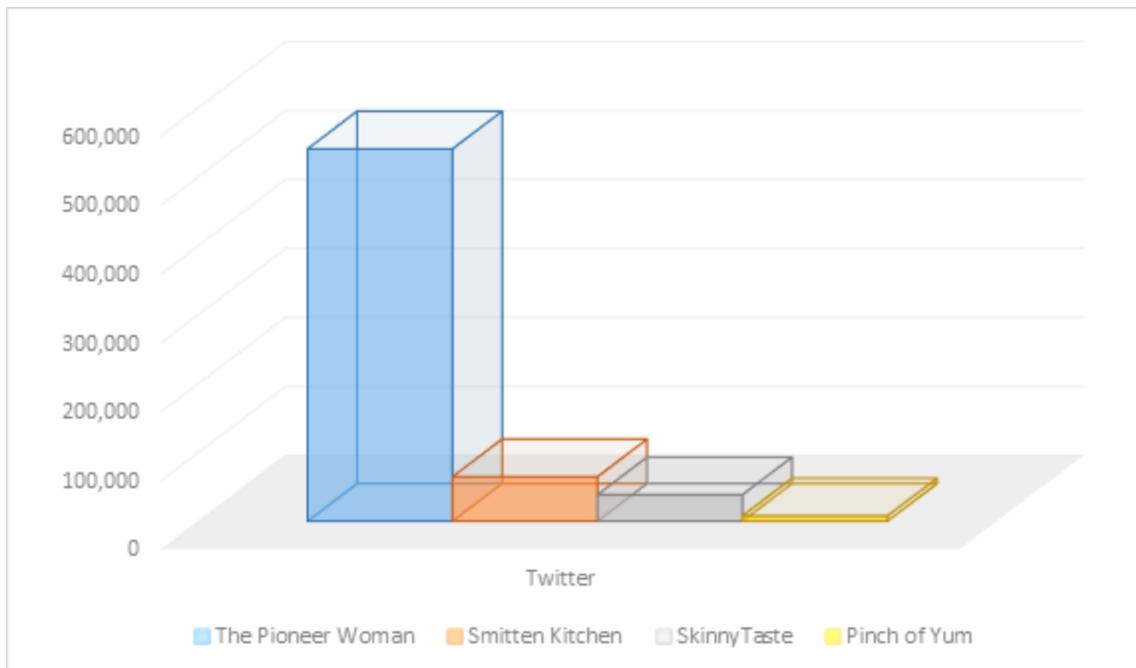
based on filling several gratifications, often at the same time. This also shows that casual readers are close to foodie readers and could become foodie readers if they found the right connection to the right blog. Foodie readers are differentiated because they have more reasons to go back to a blog.

The audiences for food blogs are also active on social media. This next graph shows the likelihood of sharing content posted by food bloggers by self-identified category. Facebook is important because more people are on this platform in general. Twitter on the other hand is not very important for food bloggers to use in comparison. Pinterest of course is full of beautiful photography, much of which are for recipes from blogs.



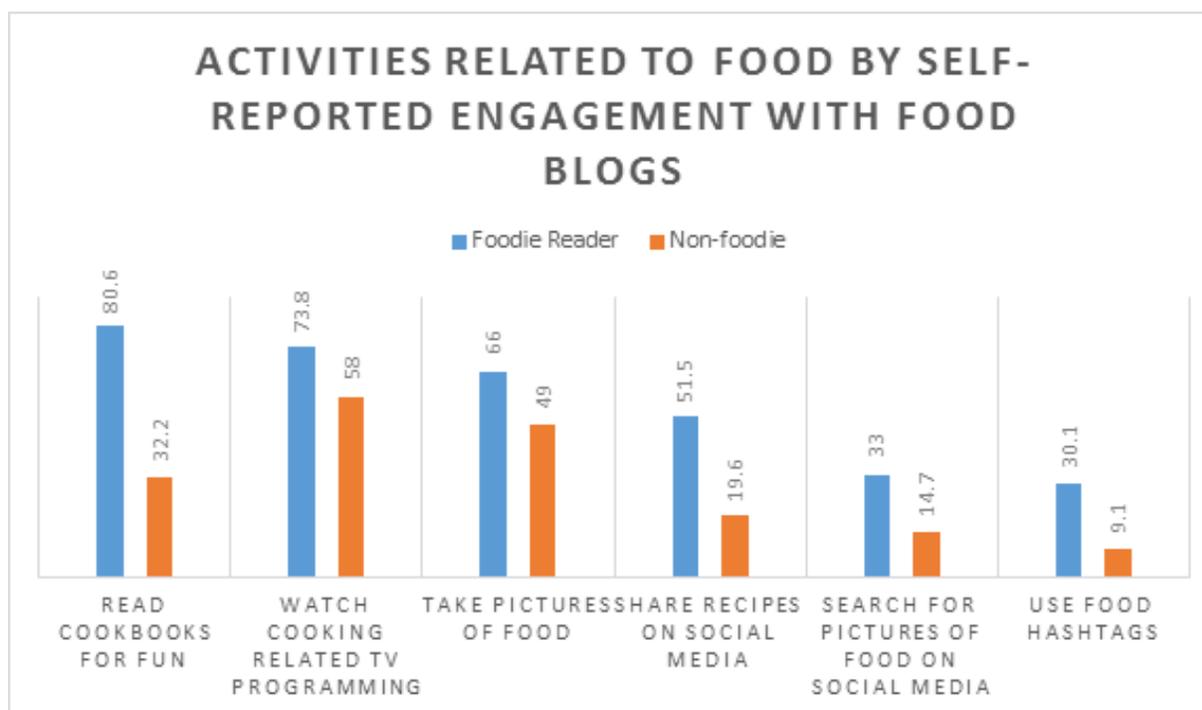
When we look at the four blogs followed in this paper we can see that their social media followings are significant and we can see that The Pioneer Woman by far has the most social followers on Facebook, generally known as a platform with a wide array of people. The following charts show the number of social media followers each had as of April 2015 for Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram.





As we look at the data from the survey further we can clearly see that self-identified foodie readers are more likely to use food blogs as a source of entertainment, identity, and are more likely to use social media to share food imagery and recipes. Food related activities are more a part of their personal identity, a way to connect to other people, and entertainment.

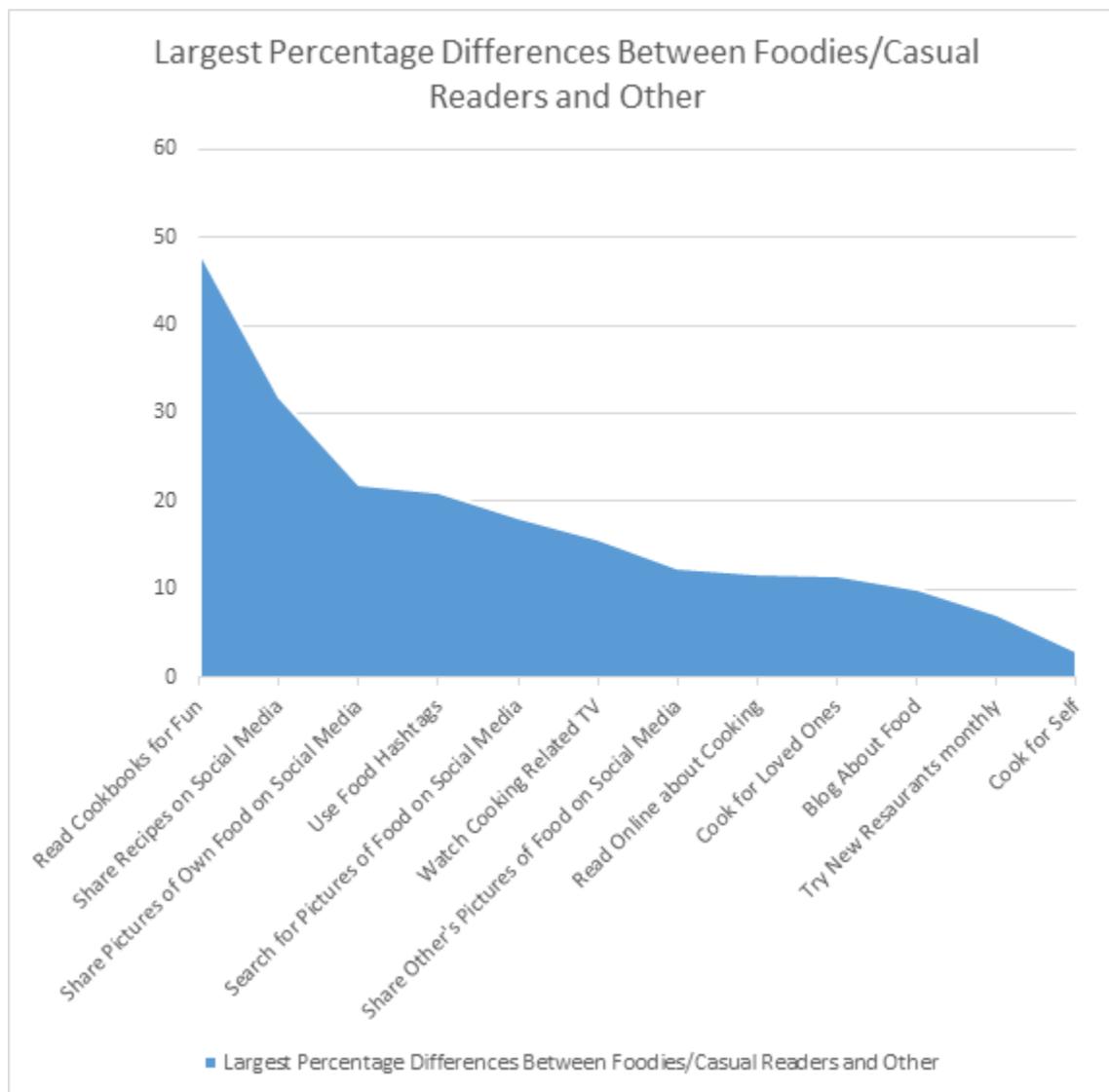
As we can see in this chart if we look at top activities that self-identified foodie readers participate in are about these other gratifications and not simply information seeking. This chart shows a selection of activities related to food and how foodie readers are more engaged than others taking the survey. The biggest difference is that about 80% of foodie readers read cookbooks for fun compared to only about 32% of people that do not self-identify as foodies.



In this question participants were asked to check a box for every activity that is true for them related to food (not specifically just food blog reading). When we compare the results for readers that self-identify as foodies with others we see that not only are they more engaged, but they are more likely to do activities related to their identities such as sharing pictures of food on social media. For instance, even though only about 30% of foodies use food hashtags on social media to share this is compared to about 9% of others doing that activity.

When we look at these activities as expressed as percentage differences we can see that foodies and others are not different in activities such as cooking for themselves. The largest percentage differences are that foodies read cookbooks for fun and engage in social media around food.

Foodies are engaged in more activities and those activities are mostly ones that relate to the gratifications around personal identity.



## Limitations

Given the time limitations of this project there are many areas that could be further explored. For instance, there is a great deal of data from the survey results over the one week it was live and although results were considered before the interviews ideally there would have been more time to dissect this data to then use more of that information in interviewing subjects.

This research also was limited due to only interviewing individuals that the researcher knew prior to the study and were the most engaged group of readers. The most significant data of interest that could not be gained due to time constraints is interviews with individuals that are not foodie readers, but who are more casually engaged with the content as it would be pertinent to the research goals here to not only have the survey results understood within context of foodie blog readers, but also those that are engaged with the topic yet have yet to find a blog to which they have a connection. Through this we may have a better idea of not only what separates foodie readers from the more casual readers, but what is missing for them.

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## Future Research

Now that we have a good sense of what attributes these blogs have in common and what qualities separate foodies from those that do not self-identify as foodies future research could focus on interviewing casual readers to learn more why they are not in the foodie camp. It could focus more specifically on how to convert less committed readers over. It would be interesting to

understand the relationships uncommitted readers have to foodie readers as we know that people trust the word of their friends and family before others. As such, friends and family that have a foodie in their social media circles (in person and online) could have many reasons for not being foodie readers themselves and future research could look at how casual readers as a group does or does not fit within various subcategories such as those that are being cooked for and thus have less need to cook themselves, people that do not enjoy cooking, and to further unearth social media habits and other forms of referral. For instance, do casual readers share or use content more readily if someone they know and trust shares a recipe from a particular blog?

As mentioned in the literature review, further research could include focusing on the format of the blog over other forms of media to see if there are special gratifications not found in this research when specifically focusing on blogs versus other methods of communication.

Along the same lines of understanding the blog as format, further research could look specifically at the format of cookbooks (and specifically the subgenre of those written by bloggers). Additionally, while the research here focused on a certain kind of blogs the survey results showed that many people also listed different kinds of internet sources and future research could include a wider net to understand why people use other sources to find recipes online in addition to (or instead of) blogs.

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## Conclusion

When looking at brand archetypes the food blogs discussed here all are the *Regular Guy/Gal*, *the Average Jo(e)*. Archetypes are useful for understanding what makes a brand interesting to the consumer. The goal of this particular archetype is to build a connection and to be supportive, just like a friend. Although the women behind blogs like the Pioneer Woman or Smitten Kitchen have launched themselves into professional blogging they remain true to their archetype of the *regular gal*. Traits that align with this archetype are about being the person next door, a friendly neighbor, a relatable character. The archetype of the regular gal could be too limiting and grow stale if the blogger tried to be relatable to everyone or try to post what they think readers want instead of what they would want to read themselves, but we only need to look at the most successful bloggers that have moved from hobby to professional blogging to see that while they are the *regular gal or guy* they also have a niche and their blogs are full of personality: people that follow them are like them or want to vicariously be like them. Bloggers should be themselves and they will find their audience if they keep this in mind throughout marketing their brand.

If a blogger wants to go from being an amateur with a blog to having a brand they must embrace the qualities that make blogs interesting to readers on various levels and fundamentally that that all comes from a strong brand archetype and understanding the unique point of view and experiences that the blogger brings to the table is integral to creating effective communications that build and support the brand.

Through the research discussed in this paper we can see that the very reasons people write food blogs are often very closely aligned to why people read them such as a passion for food, entertainment, and a way to share and gain knowledge. From the literature review it is clear that this is not unique to food blogs. Blogging is about self-expression and relationship building. At its core what makes blogs interesting are that they give normal people the ability to share their thoughts, feelings, and knowledge and to connect to an audience in a genuine manner. The fundamental role of a food blog is to empower users with confidence and to enrich their lives and interpersonal relationships through food and when it comes to the food blogs discussed here it is done through the lens of friendship. Similar themes are found in other kinds of blogs such as fashion blogs, DIY blogs, and weight-loss blogs (to name just a few genres).

When looking at the most engaged users we see that their relationships with blogs they follow is core to their personal identities and relationships. This translates to readers becoming brand ambassadors. By crafting a blog that someone strongly can identify with and trust, bloggers can grow their reach significantly and further gain loyalty to those that already know them. It certainly is important to tactically be hitting the marks such as having good SEO and a Pinterest page, but to understand why those tactics are working (or not) has a great deal to do with understanding the fundamental importance of a strong brand and in the area of food blogging that predominant archetype is the regular gal or guy, the friend, and how important that is to the reader and meeting their needs.

Blogs in general often have this archetype of The Regular Gal/Guy. It should be noted that there are blogs that better map to other brand archetypes. For instance, an expert blog such as a blog from a well-known photographer could fall into the category of The Sage if they are giving

advice on how to take amazing photos or The Creator if the blog is focused on sharing their photography more so than talking about how they made their work.

However, a huge section of blogs truly come from The Regular Gal/Guy archetype. Some blogs even are a collaboration of many authors that are 'just like you;' such as Hello Giggles, a humor/pop culture/feminist/lifestyle blog that was started by actress Zoey Deschanel and her friends. It has blossomed into a very popular website where average gals/guys can submit articles. Zoey herself as a brand is a Regular Gal.

In terms of qualities that blog readers are looking for we find in the research done for this paper that trustworthiness and reliability are cited as top reasons to read blogs, which easily could also be listing qualities of a friend. Any communications need to be grounded in this context and the identity as the trusted friend. Specifically, many food blogs are written by women for a predominately female audience that looks like the blogger in terms of relationships, age, income, and other demographics. There is a plethora of food blogs so set themselves apart a blogger needs not to worry what other people are doing, as that is easier to understand, so much as maintaining their unique identity. A blogger should be true to themselves and honest with their audience while providing understandable and beautiful instructions through text and photography that allows the user to achieve their goals without impediment from the blog.

This truthfulness includes finding revenue through means that are seen as genuine and in the spirit of the blog. Attempts at moving from a hobby to a professional blog should always check in with what the blogger stands for and the image that they have built based on their trustworthiness and likeability. For instance, the blog readers interviewed for this paper were supportive of bloggers making money, but bristled at the idea of bloggers that promoted something just to make money or advertisements that got in the way of the experience. This

violates the *friendship* based feelings and trust that needs to be core to the blogger's brand. Similarly, contests can be a great way to get attention from people that do not know of a blog, but to be something more than a gimmick this also needs to fit the brand. If the blogger genuinely supports a corporate brand's products it is seen as helpful, but if they are not careful they can tarnish their brand by supporting products or services that do not seem to be intended to make the reader's life better.

Brand personas are created for organizations to help understand how a brand can relate to people by personifying it. In the context of a personal blog the brand persona is the blogger (or at least the portion of their life they are willing to share). There is no need to personify the brand. However, it still is a useful exercise to think out who is the blogger in context of a brand. This is helpful in understanding what makes one blog different from all the rest.

While it could be tempting to merely know the audience vaguely as being people that want good recipes and tactics for growing that audience, what the strategic opportunities bloggers have are in their ability to be average people and do extraordinary things. They are able to inspire and become a friend figure for people. This is powerful and cannot be pushed aside.

Fundamentally, trust and likeability are the most important factors to repeat visits and to the brand beyond the blog. Interviewed subjects even read blogs when they did not have time to cook because they cared about the blogger and valued their opinions. It is the relationship that readers have to the blogger that makes blogs special. The tone is conversational and can be witty, self-deprecating, informational, and in the best blogs, inspiring.

This conversational style goes beyond the blog itself. For example, when you open up a cookbook you don't always see an introduction that talks about the background of the author,

but with blogger cookbooks it is customary to find a backstory setting the stage of how they started their blog with tales of why they started blogging, often to share what they were learning and to document the self-discovery they were experiencing. It reads like a memoir and in some ways it is just that. Within the recipes themselves often there is an introduction to the recipe talking about how it was developed, family, friends, and travel just as in the blogs themselves. They are sharing personal details about their lives and their journey while giving recipes that will hopefully enhance the reader's life and relationships.

Not only do the recipes on food blogs need to result in a good meal, but following that through to gratifications and needs of readers they are getting confidence, sharing recipes with their loved ones or as an expression of self-care, and finding a connection with a blogger that is someone they can relate to and understand as another human being in their life that is giving them truth, not just another corporation out to make money or a random person without credibility. This cannot be understated. The very core of a blogger finding an audience is being true to themselves and building a brand around their individual universally human experiences and what sets them apart is that they are trusted friends. Bloggers need to have beautiful photography and clear/compelling writing, but beyond that they need to be likeable and honest through having those attributes of being well designed and written. Bloggers can talk about failures and their personal lives and it does not take away from their credibility generally. It can enhance it, because this kind of honesty is what readers are looking for from a blog beyond the recipe itself.

Bloggers need to remember this in their communications. Writing a blog is about creating a relationship between the reader and the blogger founded on trust and relatability. By being smart they can grow an audience and build revenue. The most successful do not lose sight of what is most important: content that helps the reader and fundamentally being trustworthy by

extension. Beyond the information seeking gratification, this also leads to the user having a stronger connection to the blogger.

Trying one or two recipes from a food blog successfully makes readers feel confident and inspired. It also will make the blog reader loyal. This can be translated to other kinds of blogs. Readers will trust a site they trust over another if it pops up in a search result because it helped them reach their goals. To a certain extent what blogs a reader will follow is based on personal taste and style. Although there is no guarantee, it would be wise for bloggers to keep the following recommendations in mind (specifically food blogs, but these can be translated to other kinds of blogs, especially those that focus on empowering users to create).

1. Beautiful, but not extraneous photography (show what is important)
  - a. This is entertaining and instructional, but also gives the user confidence
  - b. The goal is to inform and bolster the confidence of the user with something that is visually appealing
  
2. Recipes that are a balance of being challenging and unique enough to be of interest, but not so hard to include too many or rare ingredients or take hours
  - a. Users want to feel they accomplished something (for some that is an easy recipe and for some it is a challenging one) which relates to their sense of self, while it is information seeking it is also about the sense of accomplishment and through this often enhancing personal relationships through those they are cooking for in their lives
  - b. As with other areas the user should be true to themselves to connect to users. The Pioneer Woman and Smitten Kitchen are both very popular brands, but they connect with different kinds of home cooks

3. Well-written, the writing itself is interesting apart from the recipe and shows the personality of the blogger and gives insight into the blogger's life
  - a. This gives the reader a connection to the blogger (both personal identity and relationships) and is also a source of diversion (entertainment)
  - b. Writing skill, just as photography, are key to successful food blogging as many of the most serious readers are interested in reading blogs and cookbooks as entertainment
  
4. The life of the blogger is still a side note to the recipes. It is easy to find the recipe for those in a hurry, but when there is more time readers like to hear about the history of the recipe/the backstory or if there is anything unique about this process that makes it better than other ways of making it
  - a. Looking at those most engaged with reading food blogs, they seek entertainment from cookbooks and care about the bloggers as people they can relate to and/or aspire to be like and/or escape through hearing about a different life than their own
  - b. Clear and concise writing of recipes with additional information included gives the reader the ability to pick and choose if they want to read about the backstory of any recipe which allows different kinds of users as well as the same user in different scenarios to choose how they wish to interact (such as in a hurry or having time to read up on the blogger's life)
  
5. Content is consistent and high quality (engaged readers try new recipes once a week and search between once a week and once a month and cited one or two good recipes as a reason for returning)

- a. Not only is this information seeking, but it also gives the reader trust in the blogger and helps build that substitute relationship (described above as being like a friend)
  - b. Maintaining consistency of blogging is a key element to creating a brand from a hobby
  
6. Active on social media (especially Pinterest), because readers are more likely to be using social media and more often. Pinterest is the most important social media for food bloggers as it is part of discovery of new blogs as well as a way for saving favorites and sharing (notably interview subjects did not speak about sharing recipes with Pinterest for others and instead spoke about how they like to create their own cookbook via the site and use it for discovery and recall)
  - a. Pinterest is a place of diversion/entertainment as well as information seeking (specifically foodie readers used it to find recipes and curate a list for cooking), as with all social media this also is a reflection on the personal identity of the user
  - b. While food bloggers can pick and choose from many social media platforms they should stay in touch with what kind of users they will find on each. In this research we found that Pinterest continues to be a key source for information and entertainment for food blogs while Twitter is not as influential despite there being a lot of people on the platform and Facebook will reach a more general audience. Instagram is also a growing platform for food bloggers. Making recipes pin-friendly for Pinterest and having a social media presence to interact with users on Instagram (where users share their own cooking and use hashtags for others to find similar food) should be priorities.

7. Relatable and inspiring personalities, readers enjoy feeling inspired to be better cooks and to try new things and they also want to be able to see the blogger as someone they could be friends with in real life
  - a. By seeing themselves in relation to the blogger, readers want to read about people like themselves (or that they can aspire to be like) which both is part of the reader's sense of self as well as building that substitute relationship with the blogger as a trusted source
  - b. This again points to the importance of compelling writing beyond simply recipe sharing
  
8. Clear organization of website and ads that do not impede on the experience or hurt the credibility of the blogger (if a blogger happens to love a product or brand it was looked at favorably, but if it looks like the recipe or product mention was simply created to promote a brand it is looked at negatively) – pop-up ads and ads inside the post were viewed negatively in comparison to ads on the side which were more likely seen as helpful
  - a. The structure of the blog can help users feel like they can trust the blogger and that they are confident in their own abilities to find information
  - b. Readers that have a substitute relationship with the blogger will be happy to hear what the bloggers are using/suggesting and seem to feel okay with ads as long as they do not impede the experience. For new users that don't already trust the blogger, less obtrusive ads can help them also get to the information and entertainment which fundamentally is more important than any gains from an individual gain
  
9. Contests and other giveaways are not very important to readers and not a factor in loyalty or readership (this should only be seen as a potential way to gain new readership)

and not a way to engage with current readers as it was not an important factor in reading a blog for serious readers of food blogs)

- a. This is something that can be used as entertainment for new users, but since it is not tapping into a need related to personal identity or relationships it is less important
  - b. Contests, if done, should be used with the intent to bring in new readers and not to further engage those already aware of the brand and connected to it. Although this allows users to feel entertainment, it is not sustaining unlike someone feeling a personal connection to content.
10. Having a cookbook is an indication that the blogger was able to reach serious foodie readers (readers of food blogs are different from other people in that they read cookbooks for fun) and these cookbooks stay on brand and also infuse the same writing style as their blogs
- a. Cookbooks tend to have the same style as the blogs they come from and when looking at a selection of blogger cookbooks in comparison to their blogs they have the same qualities of making it clear where the recipe is, where the background information is, clear steps to the process, and an introduction that talks about their story and motivations as a blogger
  - b. While certainly it is not as easy as just deciding to publish a cookbook, bloggers with aspirations of being a published and potentially best-selling cookbook author should look at how cookbooks and blogs of the most well-known food bloggers contain the same elements of easy to follow directions, photographs, storytelling, personality, and entertainment and information seeking in combination with building (and building upon) relationships and personal identity

If a food blog has these ten factors it has a better chance of finding an audience and becoming successful. Food blogging is hard work, but if the author has these elements success is more possible.

The key is that the most dedicated readers of blogs are finding in those blogs enhanced personal relationships, personal identity, and entertainment in addition to information seeking activities. Overall it is important that the blogger remains true to their archetype (in many cases as the regular guy/gal). The popularity of the blogs discussed in this paper all stem from their strong branding as everyday people, even if they have far surpassed their peers. It is vital that bloggers stay true to why they want to share and not simply follow trends blindly.

Food blog readers want a good meal, but it is in relation to wanting to feel a stronger sense of self and/or to show the people they care about and expression of love through food. When a blogger gives readers that experience they can become a trusted *friend* and very well are on their way to creating a business out of a hobby. If that is their goal and they follow the recommendations in this paper they will have a very strong foundation towards become a professional blogger as it is the combination of skill in the kitchen, visual appeal, writing style, consistency, social media savvy, and ultimately the personality and relationship the blogger cultivates that all the successful (former hobby and now professional) blogs have in common.

Readers look like the bloggers. They care about the same things and they become invested when bloggers create quality content from the heart. When bloggers are someone a reader can like and trust and maybe even consider to even be like an old friend, they have tapped into what makes a blog, and their brand specifically, special. They are able to not only reach the gratification of finding good information, but also of creating a bond and loyalty. It is the combination of skill and of being a unique, but relatable, friend that set a blog apart.



Image from March 2015 Pinch of Yum Survey Results (survey done by the blog, results posted online)

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## Appendix

### Content Analysis Notes

#### Posts from April 2015

- The Pioneer Woman
  - 13 posts total: 6 recipe posts and 7 posts without a recipe
- Smitten Kitchen
  - 8 posts total, all sharing recipes
- SkinnyTaste
  - 12 posts total, all sharing recipes
- Pinch of Yum
  - 16 posts: 12 recipe posts and 4 of them not recipe posts

### Summary

Commonalities included:

- Large, beautiful photography
- Posts included personal information and recipe development information, but information other than the recipe was written in a way so you could skip over that and go directly to the recipe
- Comment section included questions and comments from users on how dishes were made
- Clear personal, conversational tone, with personality

### Interview Questions

1. What food blogs do you follow?
2. Why do you like blog [insert name of blog they enjoy]?

3. Tell me more? Can you expand on that? Why did you say...?
4. How often do you visit that food blog(s)?
5. Do you follow them on social media? What social media do you follow them on?
6. Why do you (or don't you) follow them?
7. How did you hear about them originally?
8. How often do you try a new recipe from these sites or site?
9. Are there any sites you dislike that you recall? Why did you not like them?
10. How do you feel about reading about other things on their blog such as family life or travel or fashion? Do you enjoy those posts or not and why?
11. Have you ever clicked on an ad on a food blogger's website that you can recall? If so what was it and why did you.
12. Do you purchase cookbooks from these bloggers?
13. How do you feel about that blogger as a person? Do you like them? What interests you in them?
14. What is most important to you in a food blog? What is not important?
15. Do you have a food blog? Does someone you know have one? If not do you plan to do one someday or know of someone that does?
16. Can you state for me your basic demographics?
17. How do you feel when you read a food blog you enjoy?
18. What makes you return to a food blog?
19. Are there blogs you read, but never make recipes from really?
20. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?

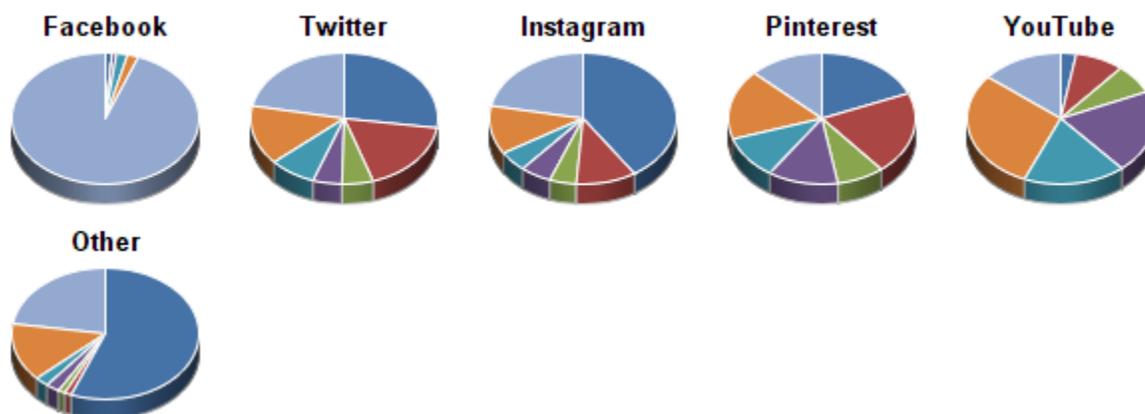
## Survey Questions

### Raw Data Food Blog Survey

Last Modified: 07/17/2015

#### 1. How often do you use the following social media?

■ Never   
 ■ Less than Once a Month   
 ■ Once a Month   
 ■ 2-3 Times a Month   
 ■ Once a Week  
■ 2-3 Times a Week   
 ■ Daily

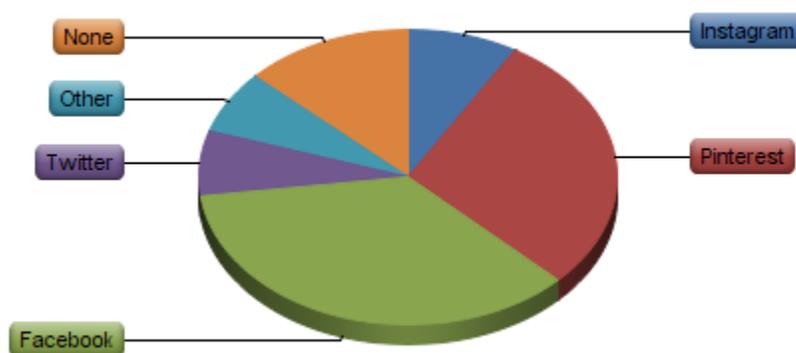


#	Question	Never	Less than Once a Month	Once a Month	2-3 Times a Month	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Week	Daily	Total Responses	Mean
1	Facebook	3	0	0	2	5	5	246	261	6.85
2	Twitter	71	46	14	13	21	38	57	260	3.80
3	Instagram	106	27	12	14	13	31	57	260	3.47
4	Pinterest	48	52	21	31	27	44	33	256	3.79
5	YouTube	7	22	19	53	46	77	37	261	4.87
6	Other	47	1	1	2	2	12	19	84	3.27

Other
Feedly
Tumblr
Feedly
various blogs
LinkedIn
Tumblr
Tumblr
Reddit
LiveJournal
I used the Wellness food blog for the cooking class
Feedly
tumblr
Google Communities
Tumblr
Ravelry
NA
Periscope, Snapchat
Tumblr
Snapchat
Ravelry.com
Reddit
Goodreads
Goodreads
LinkedIn
Tumblr
Imgur, Reddit
Snapchat
Tumblr
Tumblr
Line
blogspot & livejournal
tumblr
Tumblr
Google+, Reddit, LinkedIn
ravelry
linked in
LinkedIn
Tumblr
Vimeo
Google +
Podcasts

Statistic	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Pinterest	YouTube	Other
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	7	7	7	7	7	7
Mean	6.85	3.80	3.47	3.79	4.87	3.27
Variance	0.56	5.84	6.37	4.51	2.54	7.47
Standard Deviation	0.75	2.42	2.52	2.12	1.59	2.73
Total Responses	261	260	260	256	261	90

## 2. What social media do you follow food bloggers that share recipes on (select all that apply)?



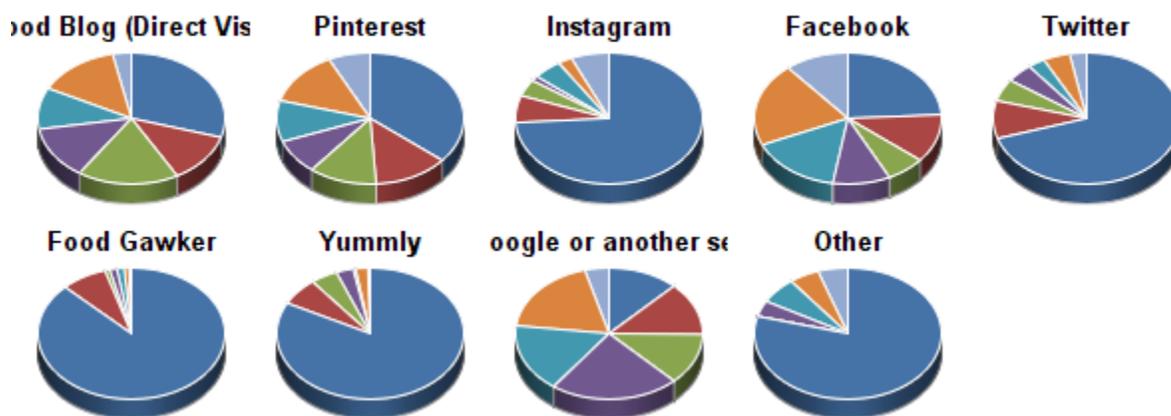
#	Answer	Response	%
1	Instagram	36	14%
2	Pinterest	121	47%
3	Facebook	150	58%
4	Twitter	30	12%
5	Other	29	11%
6	None	55	21%

Other
Feedly
Feedly
Yummly
Tumblr
Reddit
only during the cooking class
Feedly
feedly (rss reader)
email subscribe
individual blogs
Tumblr
Feedly
Wordpress blogs
blog aggregators
Flipboard
googling and other bloggers
Visit their blogs.
Tumblr
The blogs themselves
Feedly
livejournal & blogspot
Tumblr
Google +
Feedly
Feedly
Internet
Tumblr

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	6
Total Responses	260

### 3. How often do you see content created by a food blogger because you opt in to see it from these sources?

■ Never   
 ■ Less than Once a Month   
 ■ Once a Month   
 ■ 2-3 Times a Month   
 ■ Once a Week  
■ 2-3 Times a Week   
 ■ Daily

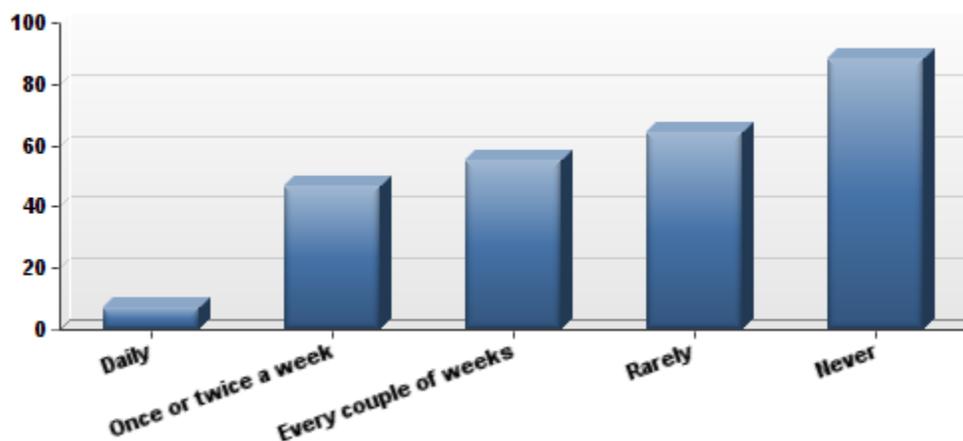


#	Question	Never	Less than Once a Month	Once a Month	2-3 Times a Month	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Week	Daily	Total Responses	Mean
1	Food Blog (Direct Visit)	73	30	43	32	25	35	8	246	3.17
2	Pinterest	89	32	29	21	25	33	18	247	3.13
3	Instagram	179	16	10	3	12	6	16	242	1.90
4	Facebook	61	30	17	25	40	52	28	253	3.87
5	Twitter	166	22	13	11	7	11	7	237	1.87
6	Food Gawker	209	19	2	3	3	2	1	239	1.25
7	Yummly	195	16	11	7	1	5	1	236	1.40
8	Search on Google or another search engine	29	31	30	53	40	45	10	238	3.92
9	Other	61	0	0	3	5	4	4	77	1.95

Other
Feedly
Newsblur
Tumblr
email subscription
looked at sites provided by Create Your Weight and the blog for the Wellness cooking class
Allrecipes - sends email
feedly (blog reader)
Tastepotting
Feedly
Email subscription to blogs
Tumblr
Email
Reddit
Google +
Feedly
Tumblr

Statistic	Food Blog (Direct Visit)	Pinterest	Instagram	Facebook	Twitter	Food Gawker	Yummlly	Search on Google or another search engine	Other
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Mean	3.17	3.13	1.90	3.87	1.87	1.25	1.40	3.92	1.95
Variance	3.63	4.43	3.33	4.69	2.68	0.73	1.12	3.05	3.71
Standard Deviation	1.91	2.10	1.83	2.17	1.64	0.85	1.06	1.75	1.93
Total Responses	246	247	242	253	237	239	236	238	80

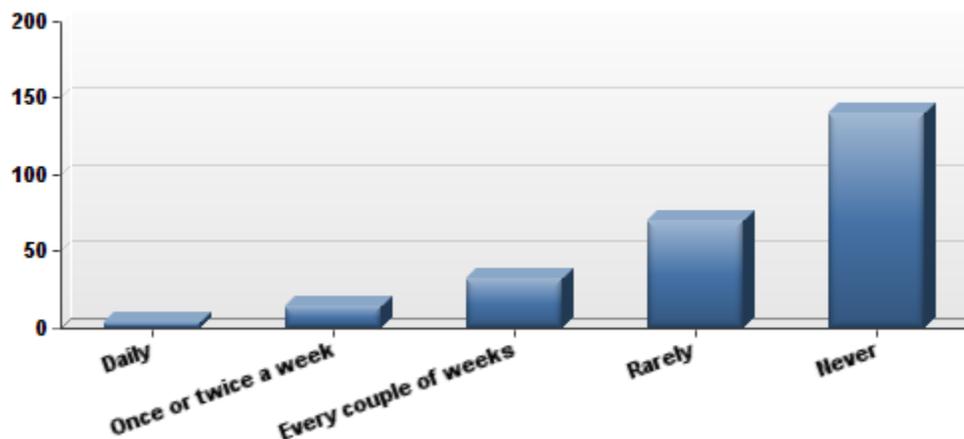
#### 4. How often do you search for recipes on Pinterest?



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Daily	7	3%
2	Once or twice a week	47	18%
3	Every couple of weeks	55	21%
4	Rarely	64	25%
5	Never	88	34%
	Total	261	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	3.69
Variance	1.42
Standard Deviation	1.19
Total Responses	261

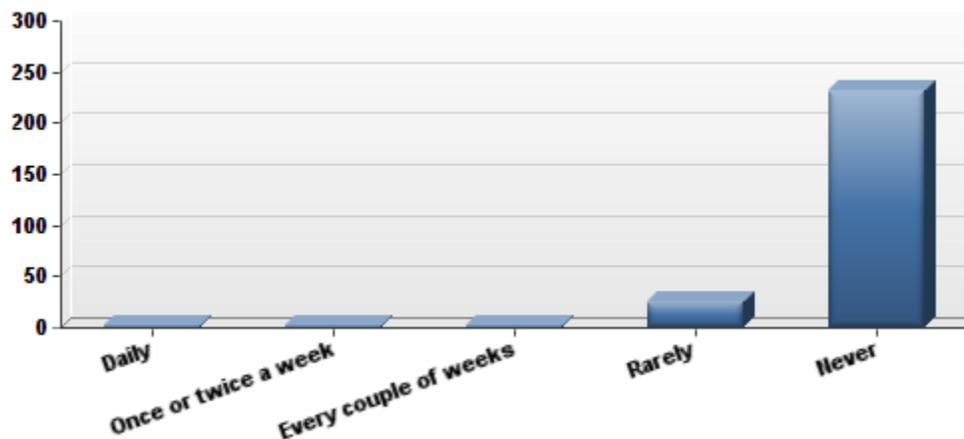
## 5. How often do you search for pretty pictures of food on Pinterest (not specifically looking for recipes)?



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Daily	4	2%
2	Once or twice a week	14	5%
3	Every couple of weeks	33	13%
4	Rarely	70	27%
5	Never	140	54%
	Total	261	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	4.26
Variance	0.95
Standard Deviation	0.98
Total Responses	261

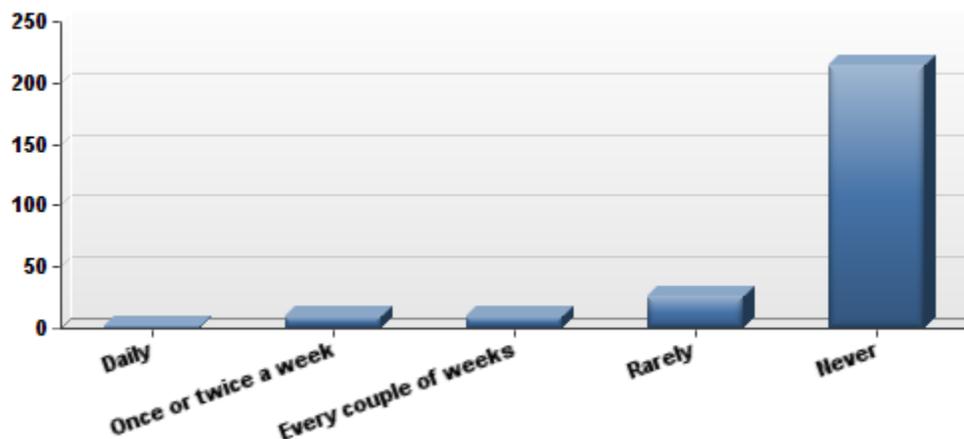
## 6. How often do you search for recipes on Instagram?



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Daily	1	0%
2	Once or twice a week	1	0%
3	Every couple of weeks	2	1%
4	Rarely	25	10%
5	Never	232	89%
	Total	261	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	4.86
Variance	0.20
Standard Deviation	0.45
Total Responses	261

## 7. How often do you search for pretty pictures of food on Instagram (not specifically looking for recipes)?



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Daily	1	0%
2	Once or twice a week	10	4%
3	Every couple of weeks	10	4%
4	Rarely	26	10%
5	Never	214	82%
	Total	261	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	4.69
Variance	0.57
Standard Deviation	0.75
Total Responses	261

8. If you use Instagram, if you chose to follow a food blogger how likely or unlikely would it be that you would follow them for these reasons. If you do not use Instagram you may proceed to the next page of the survey.

Very Unlikely   Not Likely   Neither Likely or Unlikely   Likely   Very Likely

od ("food porn" witTry ("food porn" winal Messages (such ts (Travel, Fitness, IPictures (such as M



1 their posts and/or to Win Products or ther Reason Not Li:



#	Question	Very Unlikely	Not Likely	Neither Likely or Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely	Total Responses	Mean
1	Beautiful Food ("food porn" with no recipe)	4	8	2	19	11	44	3.57
2	Recipes to Try ("food porn" with a recipe)	1	3	2	23	16	45	4.11
3	Inspirational Messages (such as quotes)	16	11	8	6	3	44	2.30
4	Lifestyle Posts (Travel, Fitness, Fashion, etc.)	7	7	12	17	1	44	2.95
5	Funny Pictures (such as Memes)	7	7	14	11	5	44	3.00
6	Commenting on their posts and/or tagging friends	11	13	11	8	2	45	2.49
7	Contests to Win Products or Services	14	9	15	4	2	44	2.34
8	Another Reason Not Listed	3	0	2	1	0	6	2.17

Another Reason Not Listed

To see pix of their kids

Statistic	Beautiful Food ("food porn" with no recipe)	Recipes to Try ("food porn" with a recipe)	Inspirational Messages (such as quotes)	Lifestyle Posts (Travel, Fitness, Fashion, etc.)	Funny Pictures (such as Memes)	Commenting on their posts and/or tagging friends	Contests to Win Products or Services	Another Reason Not Listed
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
Mean	3.57	4.11	2.30	2.95	3.00	2.49	2.34	2.17
Variance	1.69	0.87	1.65	1.30	1.53	1.39	1.35	1.77
Standard Deviation	1.30	0.93	1.29	1.14	1.24	1.18	1.16	1.33
Total Responses	44	45	44	44	44	45	44	6

## 9. Please select all activities you do related to food:



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Cook Food for Myself	251	96%
2	Read Online About Cooking (including recipes, how-tos, etc.)	243	93%
3	Search for Pictures of Food on Social Media	58	22%
4	Take Pictures of Your Food	147	56%
5	Cook for Loved Ones	232	89%
6	Read Cookbooks for Fun	139	53%
7	Share Other's Pictures of Food on Social Media	45	17%
8	Share Pictures of Your Own Food on Social Media	121	46%
9	Blog About Food	21	8%
10	Use Food Related Hashtags on Social Media	45	17%
11	Watch Cooking Related Television Programming (Food Network, etc.)	169	65%
12	Try New Restaurants for Fun (no less than once a month)	150	57%
13	Share Recipes on Social Media	87	33%
14	Another Related Activity	22	8%

Another Related Activity
Gardening
Eat food.
only did food blog during cooking class;use google to find what I need for recipes and techniques
Member of Allrecipes
make food gifts
Write for other publications about food
Browse recipe websites
Share recipes in person or via email.
Use Eat Your Books to learn about new recipes and search for recipes in my own cookbooks that the site indexes: <a href="http://www.eatyourbooks.com">http://www.eatyourbooks.com</a>
talk about food on a newsgroup online
Check out the newest cookbooks at my library
read recipes in newspaper
I have a cooking group. We meet at each other's houses and must cook a new recipe from another county. Then we eat!
Subscribed to Cook's Illustrated
restaurant reviews on trip advisor
Attend cooking classes
Cook for community
Discuss cookbooks as a collector
pick fresh veggies/fruit at CSA farm
Read cooking magazines
Try New Foods as Often as Possible

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	14
Total Responses	261



#	Question	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Undecided	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely	Total Responses	Mean
1	Went Directly to the Site to Find Another New Recipe	12	11	18	20	68	73	51	253	5.15
2	Getting Ideas (Not planning a specific meal)	13	18	24	15	75	72	32	249	4.87
3	Blogger is Inspiring, Interesting, or Someone I Can Relate To	21	21	27	18	70	65	30	252	4.63
4	Enjoy Reading and/or Making Comments	50	40	31	26	63	30	11	251	3.58
5	Read a Review from the Blogger on a Product or Service	40	51	31	34	57	31	7	251	3.55
6	Blogger Posted to their Social Media Account	36	30	24	29	58	54	18	249	4.11
7	Found them through another search (Google, Food	15	13	11	33	82	64	32	250	4.90

	Gawker, Pinterest)									
8	Interesting Email with Additional Content (such as a ebook giveaway for subscribers)	76	43	34	31	35	22	8	249	3.02
9	Interesting Email with the latest post or posts (RSS feed)	77	39	27	35	37	26	7	248	3.09
10	Other reason not listed	22	3	0	15	1	2	3	46	2.74

#### Other reason not listed

RSS feed unrelated to emails (if I added the blog to my RSS reader)

Sometimes the writeup before the recipe is too long or website has too many ads, pop-ups

Na

I liked their content from a past visit and wanted to check them out more.

Creative, unique presentation of food, particularly party themed and if coupled with fun names too success of a recipe

Giveaways/contests on social media

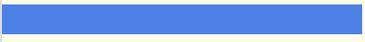
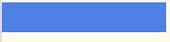
Already tried a recipe that I liked from the site

Friend

A lifestyle blogger I follow writes about a particular post by the food blogger

Statistic	Went Directly to the Site to Find Another New Recipe	Getting Ideas (Not planning a specific meal)	Blogger is Inspiring, Interesting, or Someone I Can Relate To	Enjoy Reading and/or Making Comments	Read a Review from the Blogger on a Product or Service	Blogger Posted to their Social Media Account	Found them through another search (Google, Food Gawker, Pinterest)	Interesting Email with Additional Content (such as a ebook giveaway for subscribers)	Interesting Email with the latest post or posts (RSS feed)	Other reason not listed
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Mean	5.15	4.87	4.63	3.58	3.55	4.11	4.90	3.02	3.09	2.74
Variance	2.60	2.73	3.19	3.52	3.15	3.63	2.50	3.40	3.54	4.04
Standard Deviation	1.61	1.65	1.79	1.88	1.78	1.91	1.58	1.84	1.88	2.01
Total Responses	253	249	252	251	251	249	250	249	248	49

**11. Please select all the reasons you did NOT return to a food blog. Please select all that apply to why you visited any food blog only once and never returned.**

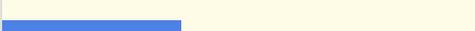
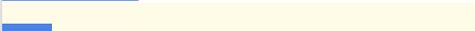
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Recipe I tried did not taste good		102	42%
2	Author was not interesting/funny/etc.		77	32%
3	Advertisements were obtrusive / was hard to view the content because of too many ads		184	76%
4	Recipe was too hard		82	34%
5	Recipe was too easy		9	4%
6	Talked about other topics that do not interest me such as travel, fitness, family, or fashion		100	41%
7	Recipe was poorly written and was missing steps or otherwise unclear		127	52%
8	Pop-ups were annoying (advertisements or asking to sign up for email list)		169	70%
9	Recipe was uninteresting (never cooked/baked it)		84	35%
10	Did not have a Pinterest account to follow		19	8%
11	Did not have an Instagram account to follow		13	5%
12	Did not have a Facebook account to follow		9	4%
13	Did not have a Twitter account to follow		6	2%
14	Other		33	14%
15	Not enough pictures		62	26%

	(did not show enough of the steps)			
16	Unhelpful pictures (pictures were pretty, but did not show the process)		51	21%
17	Hard to navigate/search website		124	51%
18	Recipes were unoriginal		56	23%
19	Website was not mobile phone friendly		59	24%

Other	
Too much description, flowery language- get to the point!	
Posted a large amount of text about the recipe before actually posting the recipe. I want the recipe to be the first thing I see, because that is why I clicked on the link - to get the recipe!	
Had to scroll through several screens of description and pictures to get to recipe.	
I haven't really utilized food blogs for recipes with the exception of Steamy Kitchen (really great). I've had good luck with this one, so I don't have a negative food blog experience to share here.	
I don't follow food blogs. If it came up again in a search, I might go back. Otherwise, I just don't.	
I wouldn't return to a blog if it didn't show up in my search results on Google or Pinterest.	
Recipe too complex (too many very specific ingredients which had to be purchased specifically for the recipe; uncommon ingredients)	
time to do this social media stuff	
Looking for specific dietary needs, and they didn't meet that criteria	
I forgot/busy :)	
I don't follow enough food blogs to think of any that I have stopped following	
Content showed a poor level/understanding of cooking in general.	
Religion overdose	
They blah blahed about a random topic that was longer than the actual recipe. Also showed all the pics in the beginning, before the recipe. It made it cumbersome and long.	
Weird ingredients	
Recipe was not printer friendly or did not provide recipe and only provided a video	
Too many pictures of every step in between steps without unfettered directions in the beginning.	
Used canned soup. No thanks.	
Just get the recipe & don't return. Never read the blog stuff. Quick in there & outta there.	
Too many pictures	
Just used it for the recipe and don't care about the blog.	
Did not have a way to subscribe via e-mail	
Pictures were unappetizing; recipes were inauthentic	
Paucity of vegetarian-friendly content; in general, though, I don't return multiple times to a food blog unless it's very compelling.	
They wrote so poorly that I didn't understand the steps.	
slipped down google search ranks, couldn't find it.	
Just randomly found them the first time, never truly engaged them.	
Usually I've ended up at a blog while searching for something specific. I've returned to exactly one food blo: fxcuisine. He's not writing new entries any more, alas!	
I'm just not that religious about checking food sites or blogs related to food	
Ingredients unfamiliar	
Too much fluff before the recipe. I don't care about your vegan yoga boyfriend, I'm trying to cook	
Too many pictures, details of steps. Too much narrative in the recipe. (Tmrather than before or after the recipe.)	
Too much unrelated text/preamble to the recipe	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	19
Total Responses	242

## 12. Which of the following food blogs are you aware of:

#	Answer		Response	%
1	The Pioneer Woman Cooks		155	70%
2	Deliciously Ella		19	9%
3	Smitten Kitchen		137	62%
4	Pinch of Yum		40	18%
5	The Thug Kitchen		83	38%
6	SkinnyTaste		63	29%
7	Big Girls, Small Kitchen		23	10%
8	Chocolate and Zucchini		27	12%
9	The Post Punk Kitchen		29	13%
10	Minimalist Baker		69	31%
11	Another blog or blogs not listed here:		69	31%

Another blog or blogs not listed here:

Heavy Table

Closet Cooking

food network

David Lebovitz

Budget Bytes

Steamy Kitchen - <http://steamykitchen.com/>

Oh She Glows

Happy Herbivore. Fat Free Vegan.

retro gelatin blogs, for the entertainment factor

food blog for U cooking class

Cravings of a Lunatic, Food O Dell Mundo

Joy the Baker

Super Healthy Kids; Your Cup of Cake

Food 52, My New Roots, Nutrition Diva, Yahoo Food

Orangette, Hungry Healthy Happy

Punk Domestics

Oh She Glows

101 Cookbooks, Joy the Baker, Food52, NYTimes Cooking, various blogs on Indian cooking, Fresh Loaf

orangette, joy the baker, white on rice couple

Tori's Kitchen (was Shiksa in the Kitchen blog, but now, it's a website)

The Kitchn

Serious Eats, Food 52, The Bitten Word

Budget Bytes

Can't recall specific names

gluten free in vermont

Drunk Kitchen, Cooking Comically

Happy Herbivore

Joy the baker

Paleo Mom (don't like), Spontaneous Tomato,

101 Cookbooks

Nom Nom Paleo, The Clothes Make the Girl, Paleo Table

the art of eating

Food in jars and other canning bloggers

PaleOMG.com

Irish American Mom

This space is not large enough. Tatertots and Jello, Oh she glows, many many more.

A Couple Cooks, Iowa Girl Eats

SkinnyMom

Serious Eats, Dara Moskowitz Grumdahl, Cooks' Illustrated, MPR, NPR

Joy the Baker

Marilyfe As We Know It

Damndelicious, lacremedacumb, love and lemons

Paleo Mom

Thekitchn.com 101cookbooks.com

sweetapolita.com (BEST CAKES EVAH)

White on rice, artisan bread in 5 minutes, etc...

Tons! ;)

Noble pig
Serious Eats, OhSheGlows, The Fresh Loaf
None
Food in Jars
Joy the Baker
Beeroness, Little House Living
None
Fx cuisine (now archival only)
Low carb lovers
Chef Paul, King Arthur Flour, CHOW
Nom nom Paleo; Against All Grain
Vegan Dad
Orangette
Ben and Birdy
Serious Eats, Simply Recipes
Mydiversekitchen and Liete's culinaria
Budget bytes
Heavy Table, NomNom Paleo, The Clothes Make the Girl

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	11
Total Responses	220

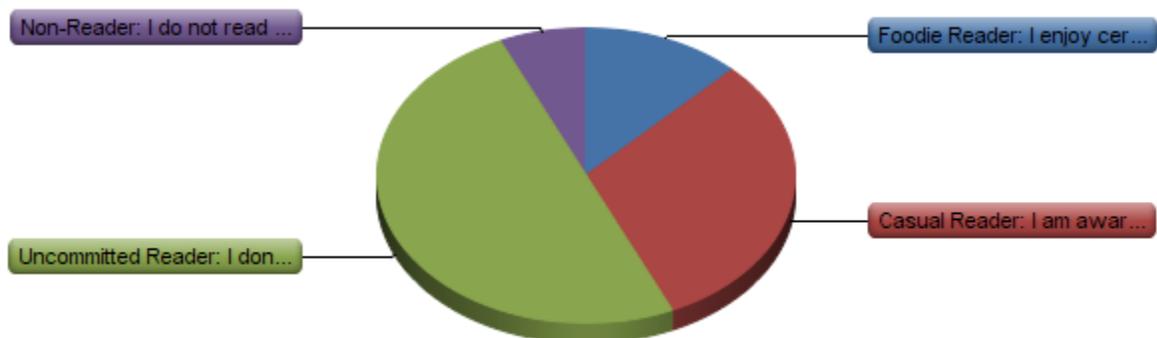
### 13. I have purchased a book authored by the following blogger(s):

#	Answer	Response	%
1	The Pioneer Woman Cooks	37	44%
2	Deliciously Ella	1	1%
3	Smitten Kitchen	26	31%
4	Pinch of Yum	2	2%
5	The Thug Kitchen	11	13%
6	SkinnyTaste	5	6%
7	Big Girls, Small Kitchen	0	0%
8	Chocolate and Zucchini	5	6%
9	The Post Punk Kitchen	11	13%
10	Minimalist Baker	2	2%
11	Another blog or blogs not listed here:	30	35%

Another blog or blogs not listed here:	
David Lebovitz	
Happy Herbivore.	
I got rid of all my cookbooks and just use online	
artisan bread in 5 minutes a day	
101 Cookbooks	
joy the baker	
The Food Lab from Serious Eats (pre purchase)	
Chloe Coscarelli	
Happy Herbivore	
101 Cookbooks	
Melissa Joulwan--Well Fed (The Clothes Make the Girl blog)	
None	
Rachel Khoo	
Oh she glows	
I work for a library. I purchased them for the library.	
The Kitchn Cookbook	
Paleo Mom	
Heidi Swanson. 101cookbooks	
Artisan bread in 5 min, canning in mn book ( don't remember exact title)	
Herbivoracious	
Herbivoracious	
Food in Jars	
none of these	
None	
The Clothes Make the Girl; Against All Grain; Everyday Paleo	
Orangette	
None	
Budget bytes	
The Clothes Make the Girl ("Well Fed")	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	11
Total Responses	85

#### 14. Which do you think best describes your use of food blogs?

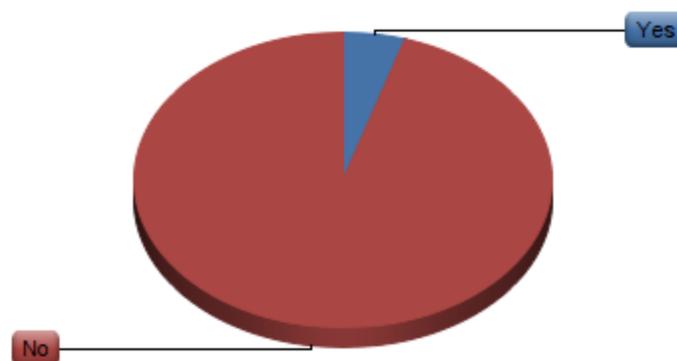


#	Answer		Response	%
1	Foodie Reader: I enjoy certain blog brands. I love reading food blogs and following them on social media. I also use social media (Pinterest) and other sites (Food Gawker, Yummy, etc.) to find and share new recipes and food blogs.		31	12%
2	Casual Reader: I am aware of certain blog brands and revisit sites I like, but I don't have any strong favorites. I do use food blogs regularly. I also use social media like Pinterest and/or other sites like Food Gawker or Yummly to find and share new recipes. I do not actively follow any food blogs on social media.		78	31%
3	Uncommitted Reader: I don't have a strong interest in using a particular blog. I might find a recipe online, but I don't revisit any site in		126	50%

	particular. I don't follow any blog brand on social media, but like the other categories I might use social media (such as Pinterest) or sites (like Food Gawker or Yummly) to find recipes.			
4	Non-Reader: I do not read food blogs.		17	7%
	Total		252	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.51
Variance	0.63
Standard Deviation	0.80
Total Responses	252

## 15. I am a food blogger.



#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		12	5%
2	No		238	95%
	Total		250	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.95
Variance	0.05
Standard Deviation	0.21
Total Responses	250

## 16. Do you have any further comments you would like to be considered about food blogs?

### Text Response

I am not currently blogging about food, but I did previously.

I actually forgot about "Chocolate and Zucchini." I read it years ago but quit when she totally fell in love with herself. That's bad writing. I'm trying to read Ruth Reichl but that has quickly descended into food porn and I'm not interested. America's Test Kitchen I will look at if the headline grabs me; otherwise, no. I really enjoy Lebovitz, who just went from email subscription to Blog, but the man knows how to write. Writing well is a prime consideration for me.

I mostly notice food blogs when someone on Facebook re-posts a really cool looking food item, such as a rainbow cake. Otherwise I only go to food blogs when I am trying to find a recipe for something very specific, like how to make your own meatballs. I will pick the result that has the easiest or most sensible sounding instructions and the least amount of extraneous text and pictures.

grew up with the Kirschner's ... well connected with the family and eating history  
none

I normally stumble upon food blogs by looking for a recipe. I rarely revisit them unless I am following the creator on Facebook.

How do "food blogs" compare to "recipe sites"? I return to recipe sites frequently, including sometimes ones based around a specific ingredient, or much less often, some celebrity chef or tv show. I don't generally associate recipes with people with -online- personas/celebrity/followings. (I do associate other topics iwth individuals with online personas.)

training for people to use blogs

I have an account on Allrecipes where I save recipes and they send e-mail suggestions. I have also used cooks.com and others.

I hate when the recipes is at the very bottom of several long paragraphs unrelated to the recipe. The best is when the recipes at the top--then I can decide if it's something I might make and whether or not I want to read all that content.

I use food blogs as a way to find recipes that meet my dietary restrictions. I have a few favorites to read/search/visit, but I don't really use any social media to share recipes often.

I wonder if I'll start subscribing to foodie podcasts; I find them a little easier to find and organize than blogs. I forget about returning to blogs if I've not kept up. (Like, I just reminded myself to re-read Orangette tonight!)

Not sure what counts as a blog these days. I subscribed to emails from New York Times Cooking, which sends out daily updates with links. Some of them go to blogs, others to the Cooking area of their site. I think there are lots of cooking resources that are bloglike, but not strictly blogs.

I first got interested when I started reading the well-known blog on cooking through Mastering the Art of French Cooking.

The only food blog I really go to directly (outside of finding recipes on Pinterest) is The Kitchn

It seems a lot of food blog readers want personal stories from the authors, feel like they know them, etc. I don't mind some of that, but my interest is really about the food - finding new recipes and learning about new techniques.

I don't search for recpies on instagram, but I follow a lot of food bloggers/chefs. Also I follow food bloggers with Feedly, a blog reader app

I can't see myself following a food blog unless the author is funny, witty, and writes about more than just food. Family, community, travel, etc., I would want to see discussed in a food blog.

I'm not sure if this counts as a Food Blog, but a few Twin Cities outlets created a following on social

media and their website to feature new restaurants and food hot spots. They don't necessarily have recipes, but it's neat they share pics and posts "Eat. Drink. Dish Mpls"- they are heavy on Instagram, and I believe they have a blog, too.

To clarify the above, I am a blogger who sometimes blogs about food. (My focus is life as an expatriate). I love following food blogs- but not on social media. Just the websites for recipes and such. This might be outside your area of research but I'm a big fan of My Drunk Kitchen on YouTube. It's more life advice/inspiration/philosophy than learning to cook, but Hannah Hart is an awesome human being. Many post way too many pictures of the food. Some I've stopped following because of the increased emphasis on photography and not the food.

I like it when a food blogger includes their lessons learned and any suggested adjustments.

I don't use Pinterest for food often, only by mistake when looking for things for crafting, I find Pinterest to be awful for recipe seekers, it is only good for food porn.

What I look for the most when searching for recipes is clear and step by step instructions. Ability to convert measurements on spot, or adapt the servings as I need them.

Food blogs can be much more than just recipes. The majority of food blogs I follow are about restaurants, celebrity chefs, and the food industry

I also have followed the food truck map. Jane and Michael Stern. Anything without canned soup.

None of your final categories really fit. I am loyal to certain sites that have exceptional recipes, but I don't follow the authors on social media, largely because I already have enough accounts to juggle.

Mostly I search Pioneer Woman first and if she's not crazy, I'll use hers. If it sounds crazy, I'll Google and use the recipe with the most ingredients I already have on hand.

Like ones that are interactive, ask questions, do giveaways, encourage input that keeps them in your FB feed

I use Pepper Plate to save recipes my family and friends might like. Often go through the recipes in Pepper Plate to find the source and look for more.

I don't consider myself to be a reader of food blogs in general, but I have a list of favorites that I dip into voraciously when I'm looking for a new recipe to make.

any writer putting political opinions in his or her recipe is a huge turn-off. humor is fine if it doesn't obstruct the directions.

My whole purpose in reading food blogs is to be a better home cook. To that end, I focus on blogs that have clear recipes, attractive photos, and no agenda.

no

I use Google to search and.....cookbooks in my home!

I like food! I'm sort of a foodie (but vegetarian-can vegetarians be foodies?). The reason I don't read or subscribe more is because my husband does 100% of the shopping and cooking!

Sorry...no comment!

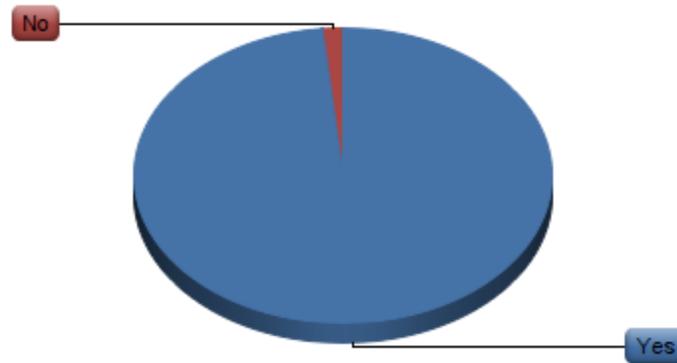
Anytime I have gone to one, the last thing I want to do while trying to cook after a long day is close all those dumb ads. Make the ads on the side top or bottom so they don't block the content.

I don't pay attention who is writing food blogs. I only stay if I like the recipe idea.

TMI embarrasses me

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	41

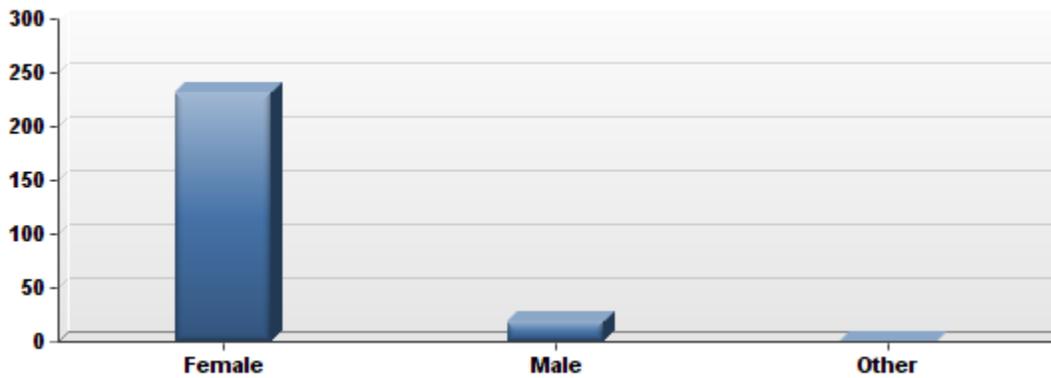
## 17. Are you a US Citizen?



#	Answer	Response	%
2	Yes	248	98%
3	No	4	2%
	Total	252	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	3
Mean	2.02
Variance	0.02
Standard Deviation	0.13
Total Responses	252

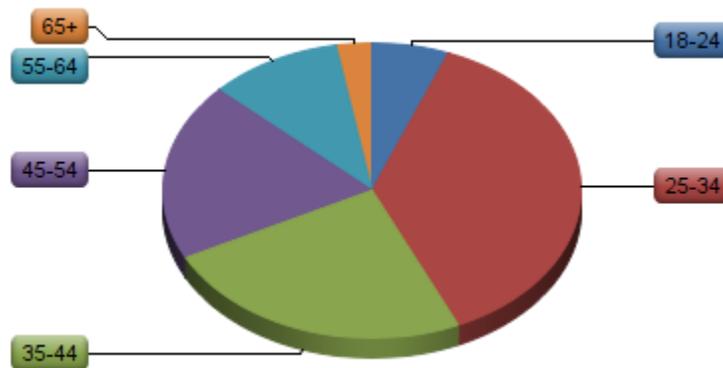
## 18. Gender Identity



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Female	232	92%
2	Male	19	8%
3	Other	0	0%
	Total	251	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.08
Variance	0.07
Standard Deviation	0.27
Total Responses	251

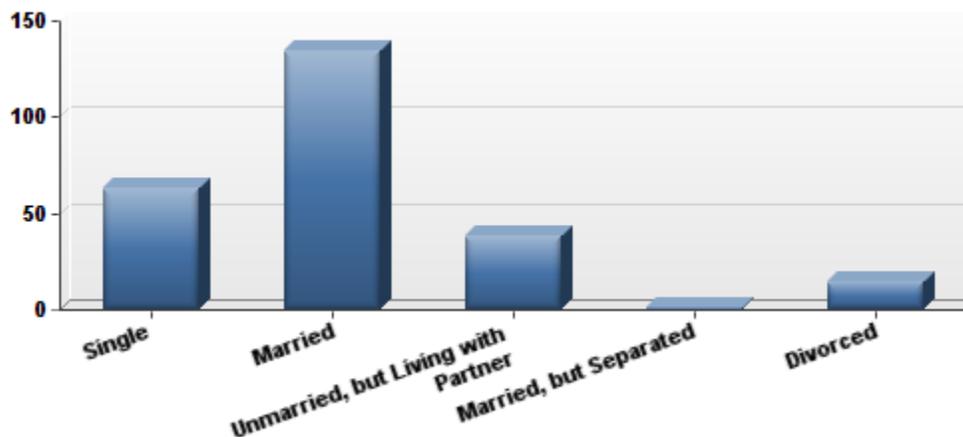
## 19. Age



#	Answer	Response	%
1	18-24	15	6%
2	25-34	94	37%
3	35-44	61	24%
4	45-54	49	19%
5	55-64	26	10%
6	65+	7	3%
	Total	252	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	6
Mean	2.99
Variance	1.47
Standard Deviation	1.21
Total Responses	252

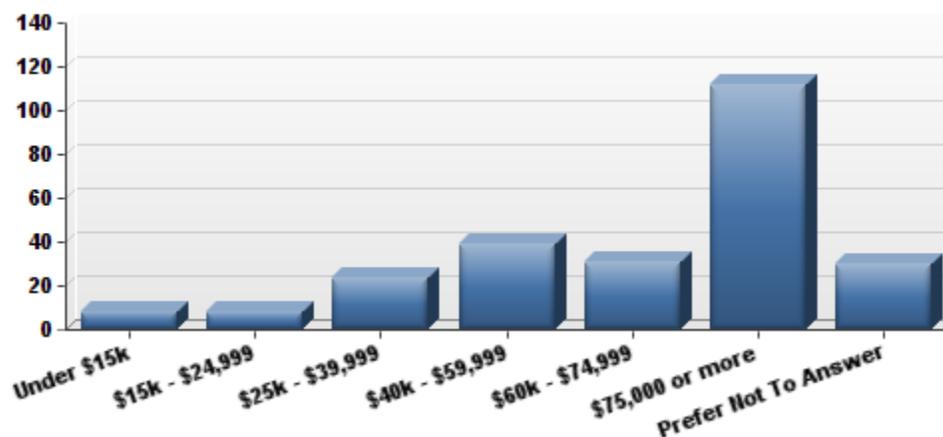
## 20. Marital Status



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Single	63	25%
2	Married	134	54%
3	Unmarried, but Living with Partner	38	15%
4	Married, but Separated	1	0%
5	Divorced	14	6%
	Total	250	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	2.08
Variance	0.92
Standard Deviation	0.96
Total Responses	250

## 21. Annual Household Income



#	Answer	Response	%
1	Under \$15k	8	3%
2	\$15k - \$24,999	8	3%
3	\$25k - \$39,999	24	10%
4	\$40k - \$59,999	39	15%
5	\$60k - \$74,999	31	12%
6	\$75,000 or more	112	44%
7	Prefer Not To Answer	30	12%
	Total	252	100%

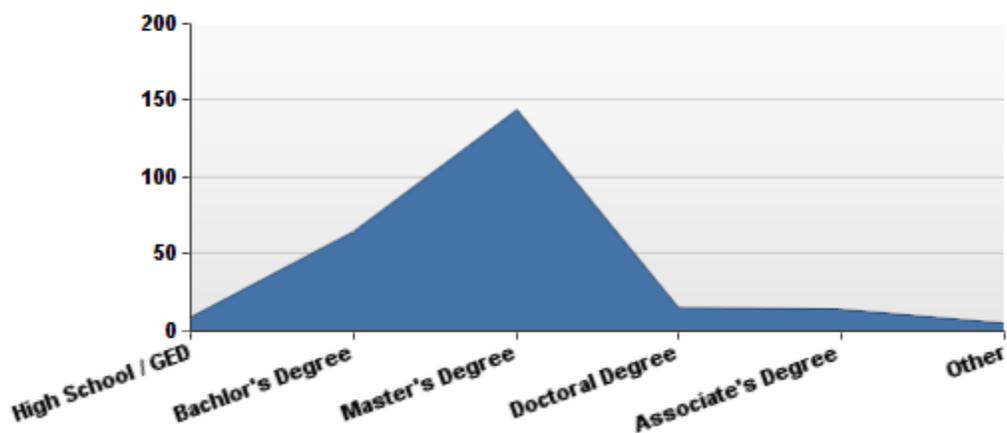
Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	5.12
Variance	2.25
Standard Deviation	1.50
Total Responses	252

## 22. Do you consent to taking this survey?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	281	100%
2	No	0	0%
	Total	281	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	1
Mean	1.00
Variance	0.00
Standard Deviation	0.00
Total Responses	281

### 23. Highest Level of Education



#	Answer	Response	%
1	High School / GED	9	4%
2	Bachelor's Degree	65	26%
3	Master's Degree	144	57%
4	Doctoral Degree	15	6%
5	Associate's Degree	14	6%
6	Other	5	2%
	Total	252	100%

#### Other

5 years of college

2 Master's degrees

Some college. Bachelor's Degree is misspelled above, btw.

current grad student

Currently working on masters degree

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	6
Mean	2.90
Variance	0.85
Standard Deviation	0.92
Total Responses	252