

# Appetite, the social marketplace facilitating great hospitality experiences

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to James Green, Co-Founder and Director of Appetite, about enabling exceptional dining experiences, working with your brothers and learning from your team.

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## What was the catalyst for launching Appetite?

*Appetite* stemmed from the tedious process of arranging an evening out with my friends. The process felt fragmented, frustrating and often outdated. Navigating from WhatsApp to coordinate schedules with friends, then to Google for often unreliable restaurant reviews and then to a booking site — only to discover the chosen restaurant is fully booked — creates a disjointed and frustrating user experience.

We recognised a gap in the market for a product that not only facilitates discovery, but also allows for planning and booking too. We wanted to create an all-in-one platform where our users could get real-time, personalised

suggestions of where to eat, which they can book right at the point of discovery, ultimately enabling exceptional, hassle-free dining experiences.

## Tell me about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with

At its core, Appetite is a social marketplace, connecting users, food and beverage brands and restaurant vendors to facilitate the discovery, planning and booking of great hospitality experiences. We aim to increase the conversion from discovery to restaurant visits by creating a community-based ecosystem where like minded foodies and brands can connect over a love of food and dining.

We work with a large number of restaurants, ranging from local independents to large established brands. As well as up and coming F&B brands and experts in the food and hospitality industry.

## How do you reach your customers?

Mostly through word of mouth and our community building. Food and dining is inherently a social and collaborative experience, which has meant that a lot of our early stage growth has come from friends referring friends to use the platform together. We have a strong brand and voice, and communicate with our growing user base mostly through brand and customer marketing channels at the moment, with little to no spend on paid advertising.

## How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

The idea for Appetite as you know it today was born in April 2023, with a beta testing stage then starting in August. From there, we launched to the public at the start of November and have been refining and streamlining the product off the back of data and user feedback ever since. We're working hard to create the best discovery tool in the market!

# Tell us about the working culture at Appetite

We're proud to foster an agile working environment, with a policy of 'no bad ideas' and 'no egos'. It's often the throwaway comments or suggestions that arise in our ideation sessions that actually end up becoming a much loved part of the product or a marketing campaign. Appetite is made up of a diverse team, who have come together over a love of food and dining and are passionate about creating something better than what is currently in the market!

## What are your experiences of AI and what is its impact on the hospitality industry?

AI has been transformative for the hospitality industry in recent years. As an industry that is highly competitive, it has allowed brands and vendors to offer a level of personalisation of recommendation that they couldn't have previously, which in turn benefits their customers.

## What is it like being founders and brothers?

Having not just your brother, but your triplet as your co-founder is a unique experience to say the least! It allows for complete transparency and honesty in the work we do, in turn expediting decision making, and cuts out the unnecessary back and forth or miscommunications that may occur in other non-related leadership teams!

It does however mean that work isn't just confined to the office and talk of Appetite frequently finds its way into evenings, weekends, dinners, family gatherings... haha. Although I'm sure the same can be said for all passionate co-founders, brothers or not!

## How are you funded?

Our funding is made up of Angel Investors only. This decision was made with the intention of bringing together a variety of different advisories, with a combined knowledge that covers a wide range of industries and experiences.

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

Building the right team to deliver the value proposition. Working in an early stage startup environment is not for everyone, and it took time to find individuals with the right experience and personalities to match the fast pace of growth at Appetite.

# How does Appetite answer an unmet need?

At present, there is a very low conversion rate from customers discovering a new restaurant, to actually visiting. Following research that shows that 92% of Gen Z brits are willing to travel to dine at a social media famous venue and 38% of Brits would spend more at a restaurant that has gone viral, Appetite aims to leverage this virality to allow diners to rave about their favourite spots to eat. We're centred around creating an authentic, non-marketing driven food community for people to share their restaurant insights with the people they trust the most.

# What's in store for the future?

In the short-term, expansion into different cities in the UK, starting with Manchester and Bristol. Following that into Europe and the US.

We've got a number of new and exciting features in the pipeline, all aimed at making the process of discovery, planning and booking more seamless and enjoyable. One of which, Appetite Drops, has just launched, which looks to reward our community of users by giving away free restaurant dishes, table tabs and more. Whilst also enabling exposure to our restaurant partners, resulting in return bookings. What better way to discover your new favourite place to eat than trying it for free? We're excited to continue rolling this out over the coming months with exciting drops from many of our favourite restaurant partners.

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

To remember to be adaptable, dynamic, and learn from the team around you

and their experiences. Listen to your users, build in public (if an app), and always be improving your product! Lastly, contrary to popular belief, raising an excess amount of capital can actually be a disadvantage rather than a benefit.

## And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

For rules, I like to not take myself too seriously, and always learn something new everyday. Work hard, but make sure to celebrate your successes when they come. For my routine, exercise is a must and eating well as much as I can – healthy body, healthy mind!

James Green is the Co-Founder and Director of *Appetite*.

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