Digital and Social Media Influence on Shopping Behaviors

Insights on Using Digital and Social Media to Drive Hass Avocado Sales at Retail
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Objective and Methodology

**Objective:**
Uncover insights on how shoppers use and are influenced by digital and social media along their food shopping journey, and how marketers and retailers can take advantage of the new media to drive Hass avocado sales. Specific areas to be explored include:

- Types of digital and social media used in food and fresh produce shopping
- Role of digital and social media platforms in planning and shopping for food and fresh produce
- How and why digital and social media influence purchasing of food and fresh produce
- Insights on digital and social media influences on avocado shopping to find out what’s working and why

**Methodology:**
This study was designed and conducted as a qualitative research study.*

**Respondent Specifications:**
- N=39 (21 women, 18 men: 29 respondents ages 21-35, 10 respondents ages 36-55)
- Primary grocery shopper
- Bought avocados from a grocery store in the past 3 months
- Heavy avocado buyers (37+/year)
- Heavily engaged in digital and social media
- From high category development regions (IRI West, California and South Central)

This project had two phases:
1. A five-day journaling activity to capture digital content that inspired participants to purchase fresh produce, and specifically avocados
2. A two-day, online moderated discussion board with the participants

*Qualitative research seeks to generate insights by discovering and exploring what people think and feel and do with respect to the topic studied, whereas quantitative research seeks to provide statistically sound measurements pertaining to the topic. Both play a role when seeking to understand shopper behavior. In this case, a qualitative design best fit the research objective. Please note, that as a qualitative study, the findings and insights presented here should be regarded as directional.*
Executive Summary

Digital and Social media platforms have become integral resources for marketers and retailers to bring new information about products to shoppers and to influence purchase. This study shows that digital content, especially content shared on social media, is an integral part of shoppers’ everyday lives. Throughout their day, shoppers toggle their attention across different sources, including apps, emails and internet searches (e.g. Google), and it is important to them to feel connected and in-the-know.

Retailers and marketers can take advantage of these trends to optimize their avocado marketing strategies in this rapidly evolving digital landscape. Digital avocado content that captivates, educates and inspires can build shopper engagement, increase usage and influence the purchase of avocados.
Captivate to Pique Interest

Shoppers want to be captivated by digital content

• Successful avocado-centric content features quality photography. Bright colors, good layout, and clever presentation draw shoppers’ eyes. This is one of the most motivating attributes of digital content and helps build shopper engagement and influence purchase.

• When an image features avocados, it is important that the color be bright and prominent to connote freshness. Appetizing recipes are well received by shoppers.

• Digital and social media channels that have a colorful and visually appealing layout are more likely to captivate shoppers. Respondents mentioned Pinterest and Instagram as visually appealing social media sites.

Opportunities to CAPTIVATE

Optimize for Mobile: All digital content should be mobile-optimized; this is particularly important for heavy social media/digital users, for whom smartphones are the main interface with the internet.
Educate to Drive Usage

Shoppers utilize digital content as a source of information

- Shoppers desire more information on the nutritional benefits and ways to prepare avocados. Most respondents in this study appear to have limited knowledge in these areas. Continuing to build awareness of the nutritional benefits and unique ways to prepare avocados can increase interest and usage occasions, which leads to increased purchases.

- Shoppers do internet searches (e.g. Google) to look for nutritional information on familiar health-specific websites, like The Mayo Clinic and Livestrong. Occasionally, these websites are linked through channels such as Facebook or Pinterest.

- Shoppers rely on retailer apps, digital circulars and websites for specific information about retailer promotions and in-season produce.

Opportunities to EDUCATE

Digital Store Circulars: Featuring avocados in digital store circulars increases avocado visibility. Adding links to “find out more” about the product can increase knowledge and usage.

Sponsored Posts: The study indicates that Pinterest and other platforms have successfully integrated sponsored content; respondents were receptive to sponsored content and often followed the links found within these posts.
Inspire to Purchase

Shoppers seek motivation to use avocados in new ways, which drives purchases

• Shoppers are interested in new ways of using avocados, and recipe ideas featuring avocados drive shopping trips. Incorporating avocados into foods or dishes that respondents already like, is particularly appealing.

• Shoppers find inspiration on social media sites, such as Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram
  - Facebook was the most frequently mentioned platform. Shoppers utilize Facebook for its breadth of ways to view new or different content.
  - Shoppers cite Pinterest as a go-to resource for food-related information due to its visual format, variety and ease of customization.
  - Shoppers look to Instagram for inspiration rather than information as it doesn’t provide the same functionality as other platforms.

Opportunities to INSPIRE

Promotional Emails: Shoppers are open to informational emails from retailers. A “featured ingredient” email, with preparation instructions, recipes, and nutritional content could be well received.

Content Partnerships: The study indicates that working with popular content-creators like BuzzFeed and Tasty can help promote avocado-forward recipes that could be seen and shared by existing and potential avocados shoppers.
DETAILED FINDINGS
MEET THE PARTICIPANTS - FOOD AND NUTRITION PHILOSOPHY
Shoppers have integrated digital and social media into their lives and typically view digital content on their smartphone throughout the day while at work, at events and at home.

- We spoke with 39 shoppers between the ages of 21 to 55. Despite their age differences, their interaction with digital content and social media proved to be quite similar.
- Shoppers are adept at multitasking and will often spend time looking through websites and social media while at work, watching television, attending events, etc.
- Some of the most frequently visited sites include Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram and personal email. Shoppers also visit Twitter, blogs, recipe and magazine sites.
- Shoppers typically browse digital content on apps and the browser on their smartphone; and as a secondary device, they utilize their PC or tablet as well.

“At work, in my cubicle, at my desk… went to make tea and I decided I needed a little break. Did the usual, which is find a new song to put on (I listen to my headphones, helps me work faster) and scroll briefly through my Instagram.”

To Consider:
Since most content is accessed via smartphone, it is important for content to be mobile-optimized.
Most respondents claimed to be making a conscious effort to eat healthier, but don’t follow strict rules or diets.

In the past few years, respondents have made a conscious effort to transition to healthier eating habits. This has resulted in more meals made at home and less convenience-oriented food choices, although they still crave conveniences when possible. They have done some research and are following loose guidelines in order to stay balanced in their nutrition.

Nutritional goals and areas of interest that were mentioned...

- **Limit Sugar & Sodium**
  - While all maintain the importance of occasional indulgence, they try to limit added sugar and sodium intake in their daily habits

- **Limit Processed Food**
  - During their transition to a healthier lifestyle, many shoppers have attempted to limit processed food in their diet in order to avoid added ingredients/chemicals

- **High Protein & Fresh Produce**
  - The low-carb fad diets have cycled out of shoppers’ lives and they are instead focusing on diets high in protein and fresh fruits and vegetables
Shoppers are expanding their palate by trying new types of produce and usage ideas. Many shoppers are also interested in organic and “superfood” items.

Many shoppers have incorporated some produce into their diet, but they have been playing it safe with basic choices. Due to the influence of social media and the internet, they’ve been motivated to try some new items, such as:

- **Avocados**
- **Mango**
- **Kiwi**
- **Kale**
- **Peppers**
- **Green Onion**
- **Mushrooms**
- **Eggplant**
- **Bok Choy**

Shoppers say that social media and other digital platforms have made them more likely to purchase or experiment with unfamiliar produce:

- As they are exposed to other types of produce, they also seek out ways to prepare and serve them.
- Several of them have recently begun experimenting with grilled fruits and vegetables and other variations in cooking techniques.

“Superfood” and Organic are popular buzzwords among respondents. Shoppers like to see supporting details about the items they buy.

To Consider:

Since shoppers are eager for inspiration, consider showcasing new ideas for serving and preparing avocados.

“I have been using more avocados. I think I have been inspired by all the advertising and calling it a ‘super food.’ The craze got to me and the versatility of it makes me use it more!” - Millennial
Respondents were inspired by appetizing, approachable recipes

The idea of cooking “from scratch” can feel cumbersome for everyday meals - even for those who cook at home more frequently. Unless they are on a specific diet or aim to go “all natural,” respondents found recipes that use modern shortcuts like mixing prepared foods with fresh ingredients as more approachable.

Non-millennial respondents showed interest in more advanced dishes, embracing their heritage, exotic flavors and spicy foods. Likewise, they also shared more examples about making dishes from scratch.

Even the least confident of the millennial respondents indicated they could be spontaneously motivated to prepare a moderately simple yet appetizing recipe seen on social media, like Facebook or Pinterest.

“On weekend mornings, I make a veggie, egg scramble. I mix egg whites, cabbage, onions, avocados, tomatoes, homemade hummus, bell pepper and celery… Once complete, I add a touch of feta and hot sauce. It is very healthy and filling and my family loves it.”

“I am a recipe follower. But if I see a good visual with my recipe I feel 100% confident that I can replicate it and don’t mind taking risks with flavors!”

“My favorite is stir-fry because there are so many components that mesh together and make it a quality dish. I also make many desserts from scratch, like peach cobbler. I buy the crust from the store, but the peaches and the filling is prepared by techniques I’ve learned from family members.”

To Consider:
Share flavorful avocado-forward recipes that are not overly complicated, and that include common ingredients
Respondents drew inspiration from recipes that used simple and familiar ingredients

Appealing recipes influenced respondents to purchase ingredients to cook at home. Millennial respondents had a less strict definition of cooking and considered anything made or prepared at home as cooking. Non-millennial respondents and those with families tended to engage in more food preparation and scratch cooking.

**COOKING AT HOME: BARRIERS**

- Expensive and time-consuming to buy multiple ingredients to make a single dish
- Recipes that call for too many uncommon or unusual ingredients (e.g., $$$ spices they can’t easily re-use)
- Less confident in cooking unfamiliar cuisines
- Eating out can be cheaper

**COOKING AT HOME: MOTIVATORS**

- Can customize recipes into robust, flavorful dishes
- Ability to “make it healthy” (low calories, sodium, sugar, etc.) by controlling the ingredients
- Can use leftovers for an extra meal or two

“Nowadays, it is actually cheaper to buy premade foods 99% of the time. When I make something from scratch, only part of it is actually consumed before the rest of it goes bad. In the end, I am saving money by not cooking from scratch.” — Millennial

“When it’s made from scratch you control the ingredients… you get to choose what taste you’re looking for and what taste you want to create… I’ve learned a few shortcuts.” — Non-Millennial

“I almost always cook enough for 2-3 meals, so I can have it again for lunch the next day and/or dinner.” — Non-Millennial
Non-millennial shoppers are making bigger changes in their eating habits as they age; millennials are maintaining their current habits.

Non-millennial respondents were more likely to have made a change in their diet due to health concerns as they age. A few mentioned that they grew up eating more traditional, home-cooked/heavier meals and as a result have undergone significant changes to lose weight and maintain health.

"My family has changed our eating habits by cutting down on sodium, replacing ‘bad’ fats with ‘good’ fats and limiting our intake of fried foods when possible. We eat more salads, fish, lean meats, nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruits.” – Non-Millennial

"I changed my eating habits about three years about when I lost two brothers…I have made it my mission to eat lots more fruits and vegetables. I take time to research which foods prevent certain illnesses, better food choices for women, and how certain foods target a certain area of the body.” – Non-Millennial

In contrast to non-millennial respondents, millennials reported they were making fewer changes as they are already somewhat mindful of the importance of a healthy diet. However, as their lives change, e.g. entering the workforce, having children, they feel added pressure to keep up this lifestyle while balancing their new responsibilities.

“My guideline is pretty simple: everything in moderation. That is how I would sum up my motto in a short phrase. I like to eat healthy and I also like to indulge and I feel that maintaining a balance of these two is the best thing for me personally.” - Millennial

“Nothing has really changed. I’ve always tried to cook every night but one and I’ve always tried to be healthy with cooking. I do feel that since having my daughter I’m not as creative as I used to be.” - Millennial
DIGITAL CONTENT – FOOD AND FRESH PRODUCE
Shoppers noted that Facebook is easy to use and informational, while Pinterest and Instagram are used more for inspiration through visual content.

Summary of the role of digital and social media channels in respondents’ food and fresh produce planning and shopping

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<th>Platform</th>
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<th>Pinterest</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
<th>Other (food blog, recipe site)</th>
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| **Connectivity:**  
Resource for information & pictures linked to other sites | ![Facebook](facebook.png) | ![Pinterest](pinterest.png) | | | ![YouTube](youtube.png) |
| **Well Organized:**  
Easily searchable, clear layout, smart functionality | ![Facebook](facebook.png) | ![Pinterest](pinterest.png) | | ![YouTube](youtube.png) | ![YouTube](youtube.png) |
| **Clear Direction:**  
Step-by-step directions; removes the guesswork | ![Facebook](facebook.png) | | ![YouTube](youtube.png) | ![YouTube](youtube.png) |
| **Inspiring:**  
Jumpstarts the search; great photos and layout | | ![Pinterest](pinterest.png) | ![YouTube](youtube.png) | ![YouTube](youtube.png) |
| **Lots of Information:**  
Educates about food benefits and nutrition | ![Facebook](facebook.png) | ![Pinterest](pinterest.png) | ![YouTube](youtube.png) | ![YouTube](youtube.png) |
| **Visual:**  
Eye catching and engaging | ![Facebook](facebook.png) | ![Pinterest](pinterest.png) | ![YouTube](youtube.png) | ![YouTube](youtube.png) |
Shoppers utilize Facebook for its crowdsourcing approach and breadth of information

- As one of the most frequently mentioned platforms, shoppers regularly check Facebook throughout their day
- Shoppers use Facebook for the breadth of new or different content available:
  - **Friends** – Facebook friends’ posts can serve as a source of inspiration, and they are usually paired with a compelling post or status update. Shoppers see their friends post photos, recipes and ideas and will sometimes consider incorporating it in their own meal/plans
  - **Pages** – Shoppers follow a variety of pages on Facebook, some of which are food or recipe-related, that appear in their news feed
  - **Groups** – Some shoppers have created, or belong to, groups which encourage healthy eating or share recipes and new ideas

“**Tasty**” is one of the most popular pages mentioned, (and its videos are also found on YouTube). Shoppers find this to be a great source for not only inspiration but for clear directions in an easily digestible format.

“I was browsing Facebook tonight and one of those Tasty videos that I love popped up on my feed, always a nice surprise!”

“I belong to a Facebook group that encourages women to eat a certain amount of fruits and veggies and post how we got creative with them.”

“Online sites like Facebook show me many pages and resources that come with great visuals and comments of other people trying new foods or recipes. For example, this past week I came across a healthy hash made with rutabaga. I don’t think I had ever eaten rutabaga, but when I saw the comments on Facebook about the recipe, I figured why not.”

To Consider:

**Target messaging using Facebook pages, like Tasty, to help spread the word about avocados and their benefits/uses**
Examples of Facebook content respondents found to be inspiring…

“Sitting in rush-hour traffic I decided to look at my phone. Saw this on Facebook. It looked so simple and healthy. And filling, too, like a complete meal. The wrap looked like it was made from sundried tomatoes – yummy! Everything looked like it was made from natural ingredients. I really want to eat better and stop eating junk food and greasy fast food. Made me want to buy bananas, apples and nuts.”

“I follow a lot of pages regarding fresh fruits and vegetables in social media websites that gives me a lot of valuable information regarding how best to utilize the fresh fruits and vegetables in my home and also come up with innovative ideas.”

“This is a screenshot of a Facebook group I was invited to join by a friend who is a registered dietician…this is a group of people who are striving to be healthier. Today I checked the group in the morning at home. The group motivates me to include more fruits or veggies in my daily routine.”

“I was at home and scrolling through my wall and saw this content shared by a friend on Facebook and the video caught my attention…the video is pretty much informative on how to make this recipe and it shows all ingredients needed. I needed to get ham, cheddar cheese, onions, milk and all-purpose flour from the store.”
Shoppers enjoy the visual layout, engagement and food-related information available on Pinterest

- Many respondents were browsing and actively pinning ideas to Pinterest
- Shoppers cited Pinterest as a go-to resource for food-related information due to its visual format, variety and ease of customization:
  - **Visual Format** – The highly visual experience of Pinterest keeps shoppers’ engagement level with the platform high. Rows upon rows of compelling photography is a major driver in clicking/exploring Pinterest
  - **Variety** – Shoppers can find an array of recipes, tips, tricks, inspiration and nutritional information all in one location
  - **Customization** – Pinterest is easily searchable, so shoppers can put very little effort in and yield a high number of results. Additionally, as they pin more items, the content on their home page becomes more tailored to their interests

“Pinterest is one of my main sources too. It is such an easy viewing experience and creates a lot of inspiration.”

“I actually prefer Pinterest as I have specific PIN to boards and by doing that, the information that I get is specific to me. I guess I don’t have to search through so much to find what I’m interested in.”

“I was at the park with my youngest it was almost noon time. The sun was shining & it was such a warm beautiful day. The ice cream truck came by as we were heading over to the pond to feed the ducks. He wanted a blueberry Popsicle but of course they did not have any. That got me thinking why not make homemade ones! I jumped on Pinterest to look for a recipe & get a little inspiration.”

To Consider:
Pinterest offers sponsored pins that seamlessly integrate with shoppers’ home pages. Promotional pins featuring recipes/nutrition are an easy and acceptable way to reach shoppers
Examples of Pinterest content respondents found to be inspiring…

“As I was scrolling through IG at home, an alert came across my phone with the sweet potato photo from Pinterest. Thought I should head to the grocery store and grab some sweet potatoes.”

“I was looking through my freezer trying to decide what to make for dinner and found stew meat. I looked on Pinterest for a recipe that I could throw in my crockpot and let cook all day and came across this stew. I was happy that the recipe was easy to make and I had most of the things. I just ran to the store to pick up some carrots and some fresh fruit for dessert.”

“Scanning through my Pinterest boards, I came across these gems…The content was motivating and allowed me to reimagine vegetables in a new way.”

“I was at home and was looking for recipes for the holiday weekend. I found this wonderful recipe on Pinterest, looks awesome. Trying to find something different and refreshing but that will also go a long way. Bought potatoes, sour cream, cheese, bacon and mayonnaise.”
Respondents cited Instagram as a source of inspiration

• Respondents cited Instagram as motivational, however it doesn’t provide the same functionality of other platforms. It is best used for inspiration rather than information. Some benefits include:

  – **Easy Format** - Instagram is a platform primarily used during downtime as a source of distraction. It doesn’t require any extra clicking, typing, etc.; shoppers can easily scroll whenever they have free time. Hashtags and references to @usernames are integral to content-sharing. (However, since this platform is used casually, shoppers don’t typically search for content here and can easily miss posts if they haven’t logged on in awhile.)

  – **Inspiring Photography** – Quality photography is one of the most motivating attributes of digital content; Instagram provides plenty of this. Shoppers do not rely on an Instagram post to contain information so they use the photos as a way to inspire them to seek out new recipes/ingredients.

  “I have a friend who is a registered dietitian and I also follow her on Instagram. Her posts about food constantly inspire me to eat healthier and go to the store to load up on fresh fruits and veggies. This post is an example of something that motivates me to go out and buy some fresh produce.”

  “While checking my Instagram news feed, I ran into one photo of the pages I follow and opened my appetite and drove to the market to get some strawberries.”

  “I am at home alone around 11 am and was scrolling through Instagram before I started making work calls. I came across this post and the smoothie made me want to go to the store and get ingredients to make a smoothie. I like my smoothies with kale, bananas, orange juice and mixed berries.”

**To Consider:**
Shoppers are responsive to sponsored posts provided they have attention-grabbing photography.
Example of Instagram content respondents found to be inspiring…

“I was scrolling through IG at home. You know that emoji with the heart eyes, that was my exact feeling when I saw the caprese salad. It inspired me to make this salad for dinner instead of burgers. I already had most of the ingredients on hand, just ran to the store for asparagus.”

“This picture was uploaded by one of the accounts I follow on Instagram… I feel this was a very cute picture. The cute sayings about kale and beets were great inspirations for adding both of these vegetables into your diet.”

“I was at home watching TV with my family. This is a Triscuit ad that appeared on the Instagram news feed. I am really impressed that the brand is being more creative with their advertisement approach. I have now put the brand on my radar for grocery shopping. This ad inspired me to buy the crackers, smoked salmon and avocados so I can try some of the recipes.”

“While checking my Instagram newsfeed this morning [at home], I ran into one of the pages I follow…it inspires and motivates me to keep filling my body with fresh nutrients like fruit. The color and freshness of the fruits caught my eye. Bought strawberries, I already had the other ingredients.”
While some respondents looked to YouTube personalities as a source of inspiration, information and instruction, most respondents found YouTube links through other websites.

- **YouTube** is a video-centric platform. While its videos are often linked on other websites and social media sources, specific “channels” can cater to a more specific audience, as follows:

  - **Links** – Most respondents viewed YouTube videos via links from Facebook and other web/social media. These viewers are intrigued by the ability to watch someone prepare a dish. Tasty videos (made by Buzzfeed), are one of the most commonly cited sources of inspiration, as they are often found streaming on Facebook, which are linked from the channel on YouTube.

  - **YouTube Personalities** – Respondents who are highly passionate about cooking or are engaged in a specific fitness/diet/health regime (e.g., vegans, bodybuilders, etc.), or those who aspire to, look to YouTube personalities as a source of information, instruction, and honest opinions.

  “I was searching on YouTube for new diets that people are trying. After I came across a video that talked about The Military Diet, I googled it and found the website.”

  “I find the best content by searching on YouTube. I like seeing REAL people talk about their REAL experiences. I am very skeptical when I see anything from actual advertisements and companies because I know they just want my money and don’t really care about me.”
Respondents occasionally used recipe-related sites like Allrecipes; they appreciated the layout and organization of these sites, as well as the comments from fellow shoppers.

- There are a variety of other sources that shoppers rely on for new recipes, nutritional information and inspiration:
  - **Allrecipes** – This is the most commonly mentioned, non-social, source which is appreciated due to the seemingly endless amount of easily searchable recipes. Additionally, shoppers love seeing reviews from other people, this allows them to gauge how well the recipe will turn out as well as any suggested modifications.
  
  “I like to go to Allrecipes.com and FoodNetwork.com because you can browse for what you want a recipe for specifically. I will usually download favorites that I find online in a folder, on Facebook or pin them on Pinterest.”

  “Allrecipes because you can search by ingredient or look at the different tabs for recipes. They have lots of recipes and each one has helpful reviews.”

- Some other sites shoppers frequent:
  - Rachael Ray
  - Shape
  - Tasting Table
  - Cooking Light
  - Martha Stewart
  - Food Network
  - Epicurious
  - Women’s Day
  - Mayo Clinic
Examples of content respondents found to be inspiring via other sources...

“Today while looking through my emails, I noticed I received my digital copy of SHAPE magazine. It was around 5:30 and I was alone working online and decided to check my emails. I noticed this great article that was incredibly informative. Inspired me to add items to my list that I don’t have in the refrigerator: radish, scallion, spinach, hearts of palm, green beans and lots of different types of fruit.”

“Sometime ago I signed up to get emails from Women’s Day. Today’s email contained a picture of what looks to be the most delicious, healthy, and colorful Popsicles I have ever seen. Of course I clicked on the link in the email to find out more. Now I need to get the fresh fruits and popsicle molds.”

“My nephew and I were texting up and back and he sent me this idea and I found the recipe online. The Mayo Clinic website is a website you can trust. The site gives information on specific types of food you can eat that give you energy, protein, vitamins and minerals. The content inspired me because it was my goal to eat more fresh vegetables. I needed to get Portobello mushrooms, squash, tomatoes and eggplant.”

“I saw this on TastingTable.com. This article about grilling pizza inspired me to go shopping to buy the ingredients so I can try this myself… I was looking for meal ideas for the rest of the week. Needed to buy tomatoes, arugula, pizza dough, spinach, green pepper, onion and cheese.”
Shoppers rely on retailer apps, digital circulars and websites for information about retailer promotions and in-season produce

- Shoppers rely on and were inspired by what they saw in digital store circulars and apps
  - Email – Shoppers often receive their promotional store circulars via email and will scroll through it to see what is on sale or in season. Many will consider altering their meal plans for the week in order to accommodate a special item seen in the circular
  - App – Some shoppers utilize their local store’s app to see the circular or browse while they are shopping to see if there are any specials they should be aware of

- There were a few mentions of the Cartwheel app by Target which sends out deal notifications and can be used in-store to help direct shoppers towards deals

“Every day my Cartwheel App by Target will alert me of new deals. Normally they include the fresh produce department…I love my cartwheel app. It always reminds me what I need at the store. I usually go through the whole coupon section to see what I can save money on.”

“I was at work and thinking about the weather getting nicer and what I would like to start making now that fresh produce will be coming into season…so I decided to go check out the Duke Farms site to see what I could find.”
DIGITAL CONTENT – AVOCADOS
Successful avocado-centric content features quality photography, educates shoppers on the nutritional benefits and uses of avocados, and motivates them with inspirational recipes

**Desired avocado-centric content provides...**

**Quality Photography**
This is a baseline requirement for all social media and digital content to catch their eye

**Nutritional Benefits and Usage**
Shoppers desire more information on the nutritional benefits and how to prepare avocados. Nutritional information is commonly sought out on familiar, health-related websites (e.g. The Mayo Clinic and Livestrong), which are often linked through sites such as Facebook or Pinterest

**Inspirational Recipes**
These are commonly encountered on recipe-sharing websites or sponsored posts on social media
Photography is very important; seeing the avocado and its vibrant color connotes freshness and helps shoppers visualize the dish.

“Shows an excellent view of the food being advertised. It showcases the avocado in the quiche very well. The plain white plate also makes the quiche stand out.”

“I love the creative shot and that you can see the avocados…Again, great photography with food that looks yummy.”

“This color photo of justforvegan on Instagram, looking at this photo makes me want to try to prepare this appetizer when my friends come to visit, it looks so healthy and delicious.”

“I searched Instagram for avocado dishes that I would like to try. The colors and the lighting does it for me.”
Shoppers desire more education on the nutritional benefits and uses for avocados

Millennial shoppers are more adept at using avocados, and therefore, are willing to get even more creative with them.

**Nutrition**: Respondents felt they had limited knowledge on the nutritional benefits of avocados; a few felt highly educated while most only knew very basic information.

**Usage**: Respondents said they craved variety but tended to struggle with unique ideas for avocados – that they might pass over avocados due to their lack of knowledge.

“Content that would inspire me to eat more avocados would explain the benefits of eating avocados and healthy fats in general.”

“I am a fan of avocados. I would love to cook with them more. If I could find a recipe that made it worth the time it takes to pit an avocado, I would buy them more. Pinterest has a lot of good avocado recipes that look worthwhile.”

“I would just like to see more recipes using avocados or more ways to use them than just slicing them up in a salad. I know they can be so versatile but I sometimes struggle to think outside the box on how to use them so if I had more ideas that would be great.”
Shoppers are always seeking more information; sharing the nutritional benefits of avocados increases their interest.

“The facts about the avocados drew my attention, and made me more inclined to buy avocados.”

“Livestrong.com article: I have been using this website for years and trust the information they provide. The key words that catch my eye are ‘benefits of eating avocados’.”

“A Whole Foods magazine article about avocados. Has good content, a store linked to avocados and a really great visual picture of avocados from a trusted source.”

“Ok, first we have an article on the Nutriliving page where it shows you a great recipe for a blast that includes avocados and it is good for us. This is the type of thing that catches my eye because that’s what I want to learn; more about nutrition.”
Shoppers are delighted by new and unique takes on avocados, including adding avocados to dishes they already eat

“Pinterest always has my favorites! My all time favorite avocado breakfast is the egg and cilantro one. So good and healthy!”

“I was drawn to the idea of incorporating avocados into some of the foods I already like and enjoy, like hummus. It’s cool to be able to use a food you love in a different way…I also like that it shows me what the end result looks like and lets me know how much time is required on my side.”

“This white bean avocado salad is something I would never have come up with on my own, but looks so delicious!”

“I’ve made the avocado fries for family as an appetizer. They are a hit and so good. When something can be so good with just a few ingredients it’s an A in my cookbook.”
A variety of other avocado-forward ideas caught respondents’ attention on social media and via email.

A few respondents were intrigued by some unique avocado usage and shared examples in their journal entries, unaided. Some examples include:

- Avocado Banana Bread
- Avocado Enchiladas and Quesadillas
- Avocado Chocolate Shake
- Avocado and Smoked Salmon Poached Eggs

There were also mentions of guacamole recipes and salad toppings as a more typical use for avocados.

“I was going through my inbox tonight… and came across an email from Cooking Light…I was really intrigued by the headline and would have never thought of having avocados as an ingredient in bread.”

“First of all, I am an avocado aficionado and I am always looking for new ways to utilize them in my diet. I use avocados in my carne asada burritos and tacos but, have not tried them in enchiladas yet.”

“Avocado quesadilla. Like, really?! As soon as I saw this on my Facebook feed I was immediately wanting to make my own.” – Non-Millennial

“I’ve never made spicy guac before, so I am very eager to make this!! It inspires me to be more creative with things I already make. In this case, my guacamole.” – Millennial
Some digital content with unique recipes that caught the attention of respondents …

“I found two terrific recipes on Tiphero.com another great website which I found through Facebook. The first is avocado pasta which looks amazing… I love the idea of using the avocado to make the sauce. I think it’s a creative use for avocado.”

“Ramen is pretty good to me. So, this avocado take on the dish catches my eye because I think of the creamy avocado texture with the rest of the chicken Ramen dish I usually buy. The second image is something I couldn’t have fathomed had I not seen it. It’s a spicy chocolate cake with avocado chocolate buttercream frosting. It’s something so different, I feel like I have to try it.”

“Mensjournal.com has an article about a variety of ways to make avocados new and exciting… This is actually the first article I remember reading that actually convinced me to give them a try.”

[Yummly] “I’m somewhat intrigued by the idea of an avocado smoothie. While I might not be a fan of the flavors that plain avocado bring, placing it in a sweet drink with yogurt is a bit of a concept I would definitely like to try.”
Unique recipes and usage ideas continued…

[AllRecipes] “What caught my eye about this recipe was it was something NEW! I have never considered combining avocado with chicken before, but after looking at this recipe I see that it is something I will have to strongly consider in the near future.”

“The first image came directly from Pinterest. I liked the reimagined way of including avocados with egg – a frittata! How brilliant!”

“Tasting Table has a unique blog and it has great articles on avocados. It represents a unique way to deal with an avocado and get the most out of it.”

“Frozen avocado. A great way to keep them from going bad. Plus an easy way to put them in a smoothie.”
Thank You