

## **Appendix on Gourmet Food Trucks as Craft Organizations**

### *Tweet data*

We conducted a systematic analysis of more than 3.6 million tweets from the 3661 GFTs in our sample to identify which kind of authenticity is most central to these organizations. As a first approach, we applied the dictionary developed in O'Connor et al. (2017) and based on Carroll & Wheaton (2009) and Kovács et al. (2014), which contains values for 91 keywords for each of four authenticity scales: type, craft, moral, and idiosyncratic. In the averaged scores for each truck, the craft scale was the highest. However, in examining a random sample of 100 tweets for each keyword, we found that context-specific meanings limited this approach. For example, the word “usual” is an indicator for type authenticity but GFTs routinely used it to refer to their locations (e.g., “we’re in our usual location”).

We then developed a second inductive approach of identifying the 1000 most common keywords used by GFTs. Most of these words were functional, such as “today,” “food,” and “lunch.” We identified a subset of 41 words with potential relevance to authenticity and analyzed a random sample of 100 tweets for each of these. GFTs’ use of a craft appeal strongly emerged from this analysis, with words like “hand” and “home” referring to craft production processes (e.g., made by hand or home-made), “farm” and “local” referring to craft sourcing of ingredients, and “small” and “community” referring to a craft scale and orientation. Likewise, “fast” was often used in a negative sense to disparage industrial fast food.

### *Interview data*

Our interviews with GFT entrepreneurs also emphasized the importance of craftsmanship. When asked what it meant to be “gourmet,” many informants emphasized the handmade and often laborious process by which they cooked their food. For example:

For me, gourmet means that we make everything ourselves. And nothing comes out of the can. The recipes are curated and researched and developed... We’re not selling anything that we didn't make ourselves. And it also means a certain level of taste sophistication to appreciate. (R2, Austin)

Selling craft authenticity for this entrepreneur, and many others meant not selling premade foodstuffs but instead food that had been personally touched and crafted. Another GFT entrepreneur echoed:

We didn't go down and buy frozen food and repackage it as our own. We made everything from scratch, we grinded our own meats, we made everything by hand, made our own slices, down to caramelizing the onions, everything was done by hand. And to do everything like that, it's an expensive proposition. And a lot of labor goes into it. There were no frozen hotdogs (laughter) on our food truck. Probably should have done that, you know deep fry it with batter or something and that would have made a lot more money, but we didn't do that. We did everything from scratch and that I'm proud of. We never had a frozen hamburger patty on our truck, not once in nine years. (R6 Miami)

Finally, several entrepreneurs spoke of the laborious process of cooking for their GFT, sacrificing ease and convenience for a better quality product:

...there were no shortcuts...it's a lot of work...one of our bestselling dishes, it takes forever, I want to say like three days to where I can sell it to people...It's a cold and spicy chopped grilled chicken dish, but the treatment of the chicken you have to let it sit in a marinade for a couple of days and then on that second day it goes on the grill and it gets cooked, and then after that it gets chilled, and then we debone everything, chop it all up, and then there's a whole bunch of other ingredients that go along with it, like onions and green onions, grated coconut, chili peppers and lemon juice. And then I serve it with the coconut milk flatbread, and I make all that from scratch too. It takes a couple days. (R18, Portland)

In contrast to these appeals to craft authenticity – to the artisanal and handmade nature of their food – our respondents often defined themselves against type authenticity entirely. This was especially the case for those doing ethnic cuisine, where expectations of type authenticity can often be high. For instance, one truck explained: “you know, from a Korean perspective, obviously it's not authentically Korean.” (R14, Washington). Another truck noted, “what we are serving isn't exactly precisely what you would have in any particular country of Scandinavia because we are doing a twist on it because we are taking a flat bread that they normally eat plain and we are using it like a burrito and wrapping it up” (R12, Portland). In sum, type authenticity was rarely the goal of GFT entrepreneurs, as one interviewee summed up: “what we're doing is not to just do authenticity, we're not trying to just kind of recreate what others have done” (R17, Portland). If audiences demanded a conventional type performance, these entrepreneurs would have likely faced greater barriers.

## *Interview Guide*

### Introductory questions/Motivations for founding:

- When did you start your food truck?
- Thinking back to when you founded, what was your motivation for starting a GFT?

### Influence of Geography:

- Why [city]? - Did you put much thought into the location of business?
  - Did you ever consider opening your food truck in another city?
- Do you feel [city] was receptive/open to gourmet food trucks at the time? Why or why not?
  - What was the general vibe towards food trucks in those early days?
- Did you think what you were doing was new or novel for [city]?
- What have been some of the challenges you faced operating a GFT in [city]?
- What kind of food trucks do you think are more likely to succeed in [city]?
- How do you feel the GFT scene has evolved in [city] since you founded? Do you think it has become more or less receptive?

### Audience Members/Community:

- Did you ever partner with other organizations (e.g., craft breweries, wineries, festivals, farmer's markets etc.)?
  - Did these other organizations help support your business? If so, how?
- Describe your typical customer.
- What type of relationship did you have with your customers?
- What do you think was most appealing/attractive about your truck for customers?
  - Was that different than what you expected?
- Were there any customers who voiced confusion or complaints in the early days?
- Was it hard to find customers in your early days of founding? Or, were people immediately receptive? (or confused?)

### Categorizing "Gourmet" Food Trucks:

- Were there many traditional street vendors in [city]? What were they like?
- How do you think gourmet food trucks differ from traditional street vendors?
- Do you think the label "gourmet food truck" is an appropriate way to characterize your business?
- Do you feel your gourmet food truck is "authentic" in any way?

### Demographic/Concluding questions:

- What is your age?
- Where did you grow up?
- Before running a gourmet food truck, what were you doing for a living? / What are you doing now?
- How long had you lived in [city] before founding your food truck?
- Did you have culinary experience before starting this food truck?