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# Autumn – time for reflection

Summer is gone, autumn is here, and as we know that's the time to think again about ideas for the future. There are many things to which the baking industry can or even must give thought. Who will eat which baked goods and in what quantity in the future, where will they eat them, where will they buy them, who will they buy them from, who supplied them to the vendor, who manufactured them, exactly what did he/she produce, how, from what, why, and what makes the products unique?



++ Hildegard Keil, Editor-in-Chief

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Every one of these questions on its own is worth a long, thorough study. The world of baking is in a phase of change more now than ever before, and as is well-known it's not the big that eat the little ones, it's the quick that devour the slow. Anyone who doesn't anticipate these changes must constantly look over his/her shoulder. "We've always done it that way," is not a motto for the future.

One question in particular interests me at present: how are new products created nowadays, who develops them, why and for whom? The cronut hype, which is still causing unrest in the bakery market worldwide and now has so many imitators they could form a club, showed one thing above all. It wasn't done by market researchers, strategists, product developers, market specialists and goodness knows who else, it was a single small baker called Ansel in New York's creative Soho district. He dreamed up a really novel product that had good prospects of holding its ground permanently in the market, and he started an ingenious PR campaign through social media.

Is that the future of product development, and if so, who is it for? For bakers, for raw materials suppliers or for machinery builders? Like the bakers, the cronut took them all completely by surprise, and even now no one has been able to find a solution to make the cronut freezable and thus viable on an industrial scale.

Let's consider whether it's really still acceptable for innovative developments to need years of advance preparation before they see the light of day in the marketplace, or whether we must create new pathways for this in corporate businesses. Pathways into which we can incorporate for example customers' crowdsourced intelligence, as McD is doing, where consumers are allowed to send in new ideas for burgers and these are subsequently tested in pilot markets. However, maybe the industry also needs scouts who scour the world looking for Ansel's and buy their ideas from them?

"Carry on as usual" is probably not a good strategy in this field either.

Yours sincerely,



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