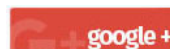


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2 Ways to Tackle Snacking Trends

How to offer what c-store customers are craving



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It seems everywhere you turn, the industry is buzzing about new consumer snacking trends—and there's good reason for the buzz. Snacking contributes to the 5.6% growth convenience-store foodservice sales saw last year, according to NACS State of the Industry Summit. It's no surprise foodservice sales are growing—94% of Americans are snacking daily, says Mintel.

Because of this, snacking now accounts for 50% of all eating occasions, according to The Hartman Group's The Future of Snacking 2016 report. But that's good news! There's ample opportunity for convenience-store foodservice programs to step in and step up with the snacks consumers crave.

But what are they craving? Just about everything.

From healthful fare to indulgent sweets to chicken and meat snacks, there's certainly a trending snack out there for everyone. According to Mintel, 70% of millennials have even gone so far as to say that anything can be considered a snack these days.

Unfortunately, "anything goes" doesn't provide a sound tactical approach to making menu changes. A foodservice program trying to be everything to everyone is bound to fail. So how do we wade through all of the noise and find a way to win? Let's focus on what you can control, no matter which trending route you choose.

Taste

No matter if you take your snacks into the realm of healthfulness, indulgence or ethnic flavors, taste is one of the most important factors. Almost 90% of consumers say taste is important when choosing a snack, according to Mintel. Specifically, 51% of consumers agree taste is more important than health, says Mintel. Invest in taste by offering made-to-order items such as personalized flatbreads or freshly baked cookies.

Size

Many consumers see snacking as a pitfall for overconsumption. Even though nearly everyone is snacking regularly, 36% of consumers report actively trying to limit the amount they snack. Snacking is defined by its size and its departure from traditional meal times. Help curb consumer snack attacks by offering portion-controlled options such as sliders or mini sandwiches. Appeal to health-focused consumers by offering small versions—think bite-sized warm brownies for indulgent items.

Whether you choose to specialize in health, indulgence or everything in between, there's an oven for you that can offer unmatched culinary versatility. From baking sweets, pizzas or tater tots and even roasting vegetables, [Ovention's Matchbox Ovens](#) can seamlessly prepare anything on your menu. Their Precision Impingement® Technology utilizes hot air for a fast, high-quality cook without microwaves—allowing you to control time, temperature and independent blower speeds for every item. These ventless ovens hold in heat, and with up to 1,000 preprogrammed cook settings you can stage each item to its individual specifications to cut down on cook time and prep time between items.

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