

Winner, Winner, Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

New Technomic data mines the mind of your hot-food customer
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Fuel Goes Down, Food Goes Up

The Technomic Q2 2016 Convenience Store MarketBrief study found consumers are buying more hot foods. Just as other in-store profit centers have reaped the benefits of lower gas prices, so too has the hot case.

Hot Foods, Cool Products

What's new for hot foods? Flavors are pronounced, there's a focus on globally inspired ingredients from Latin American and Asian cuisines, and hand-helds—while still portable—are becoming heartier and more filling. Leading retailers are best exemplifying the trends.



Nice N Easy Grocery Shoppes

The new Beef Balboa Melt features roast beef, melted provolone and mozzarella, banana peppers, black olives, tomatoes and northern Italian dressing.



RaceTrac

Spicy empanadas filled with beef or chicken have become a signature hot-case item.



Stripes

Jalapeno flavors stand out on the menu, with new Jalapeno Poppers and Mesquite Jalapeno Sausage on the roller grill.



Wawa

Its Sriracha Cheese Bites and Buffalo Chicken Bites put the emphasis on heat for grab-and-go snacks.



Retailer Gut Check

"Our hot-food consumer is the blue-collar oil field/manufacturing worker as well as on-the-go business professionals," says Jared Scheeler, managing director of The Hub Convenience Stores, Dickinson, N.D. "Our foodservice programs have resonated very well with both of these groups." In addition to QSR brands Schlotsky's and Godfather's Pizza, The Hub offers proprietary hot foods, including its signature line of appetizers and hot HubWich sandwiches.

The Takeaway

Whenever consumers perceive that their discretionary income is slightly on the rise, they typically increase their spending on foodservice. It's important to strengthen marketing messages—particularly at the pump—in order to further boost the likelihood of them coming into the store for hot prepared foods.

Methodology

Technomic Q2 2016 Convenience Store MarketBrief data came from a survey of 500 U.S. c-store consumers, conducted via the internet by Technomic Inc. in April 2016. Margin of error +/-4.4%.

88%



Amount of c-store foodservice consumers* who say they buy hot foods at convenience stores

Most of the consumers surveyed (nearly nine out of 10) say they purchase hot foods from c-stores. These consumers also report visiting more often—at least once a week—and spending more money on foodservice throughout the day than they did in the past.

44%



Amount of c-store foodservice consumers who say they're purchasing hot foods from c-stores more often than they did just a year ago

Hot-food purchases are highest and most frequent among males and millennials. At least once a month, 79% of male c-store foodservice consumers and 89% of millennials buy hot meals or snacks at c-stores.

30%



Amount of c-store foodservice consumers who say their spending on c-store foodservice has increased due to falling gas prices

Thirty-six percent of consumers say their financial situation has improved in the past six months. With more money in their pockets after stopping at the pump, your customer is now spending more on prepared food in the store.

* C-store foodservice consumers are defined here as convenience-store customers who visit for foodservice at least once a month.