

Third Of Shoppers Shun C-Stores' Foodservice Options

Contributed by Mintel
Monday, 11 April 2011

Consumers are constantly on-the-go these days and as a result, they prefer that restaurants offer quick and convenient meal and snack options that won't slow them down.

However, one foodservice option that is widely ignored by hungry shoppers is the convenience store.

While c-stores position themselves as the ultimate destination for convenience, recent Mintel research found that 33% of consumers who have never purchased food at a convenience store haven't done so because they believe the food is of low quality.

"When consumers think of convenience stores, food quality isn't the first thing that comes to mind," says Eric Giandelone, director of foodservice research at Mintel. "Improved quality" not just for products but for service, location and marketing communications "is needed to bring in or bring back consumers for whom c-stores aren't top-of-mind choices."

Of those who don't purchase processed food at convenience stores, 64% said they never or rarely consider purchasing food from a c-store.

Meanwhile, 32% say the food was not appealing to them and 26% cite high prices as a deterrent. Thirty-five percent reported that there were better food options nearby.

"Convenience stores are always going to face competition from restaurants, especially fast food establishments," notes Eric Giandelone. "Luckily, convenience store foodservice suffered less than restaurants did during the recession and we forecast this \$22.8 billion dollar industry to experience 4.1% growth in 2011."

So what foods are consumers purchasing when they visit convenience stores? It seems c-stores are most popular for their beverage options.

Fifty-eight percent of consumers say they purchase fountain beverages, 52% purchase coffee drinks and 44% purchase "slushies" or other frozen beverages.

When it comes to consumers who purchase c-store food "hot dogs (38%) and pizza (33%) are the most popular choices.

Additionally, 28% go for made-to-order sandwiches, 26% grab nachos and a quarter of shoppers opt for chicken wings or tenders.

Source: Mintel Oxygen Reports

About Mintel

Please visit <http://www.mintel.com/> for more information

Chicago, US - 30 March 2011