

Takeaways and fast food take off

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Takeaways and fast food take off as time-strapped consumers stop cooking, by Euromonitor International

The market for takeaways and fast food is booming as on-the-go consumers increasingly look for quick meal solutions, according to the latest report from Euromonitor International, Consumer foodservice in the UK.

Takeaways and fast food reap the benefits Home delivery takeaways, fast food outlets and street stalls are currently benefiting from the growing focus on leisure time and increased disposable incomes of UK consumers. Euromonitor International's latest research shows that in 2005, home delivery/takeaway sales increased by 5.1% while fast food sales grew by 8.8%.

The convenience and speed offered by fast food and takeaways are particularly attractive to modern day consumers, who are increasingly finding themselves eating on the move. Even in the home, people are now more likely to buy a takeaway rather than spend hours preparing a meal.

Ian Bell, Senior UK Research Analyst at Euromonitor International explains, "There is a growing number of 'cash-rich, time poor' consumers in the UK, who are turning to foodservice options offering high levels of convenience, as an alternative to getting their hands dirty in the kitchen."

Higher quality also drives sales of fast food An improvement in the quality of food on offer is another important factor driving sales of fast food, according to Euromonitor's Consumer Foodservice in the UK report. In an increasingly health-conscious society, a quick burger and chips will no longer suffice and consumer demand has led to the improved quality and range of convenient food.

Euromonitor's Ian Bell comments, "Fast food in the UK has improved in quality in most sectors to such an extent that it is now often equal to what one would find in a full service restaurant."

Takeaway market is a golden opportunity for restaurants The growing trend for quality fast-food is providing a valuable opportunity for full-service restaurants. While demand for takeaways is increasing, the traditional takeaway market is itself mature and very well-developed. In addition, eat-in meals still account for the large majority of the 4.7billion foodservice transactions recorded in 2005. There is therefore great potential for non-traditional areas to reap the rewards of developing takeaway and home delivery services.

Full service restaurants are in a particularly good position to take advantage of their quality offerings to compete with booming take-away market. Ian Bell comments, "This trend is so strong that many full service restaurants are opting to offer takeaway services, rather than risk losing their business to their rivals."

Mobile phones lead to mobile food Improvements in technology will be another key trend to watch in the UK consumer foodservice market, according to Euromonitor International's new report and will help to drive 35% growth of the home delivery/takeaway market over the next 5 years. Increased penetration of advanced technology will enable consumers to order takeaways over the internet or by mobile phone, further enhancing the convenience factor of this sector. Euromonitor International forecasts that the UK foodservice market as a whole will follow the example of the US market, by fully integrating eat-in services with e-commerce functions and home delivery/takeaway provision.

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