



Serving the Total Convenience & Petroleum Retailing Industry

2013 Foodservice at Retail Handbook

The C-Store Consumer

The Culinary Visions Panel consumer research panel for Chicago-based Olson Communications explores culinary topics and helps foodservice businesses test products and concepts. In a recent survey, it asked more than 2,100 consumers about their c-store foodservice expectations and habits. Of those who completed the questionnaire, 40% were female and 60% were male. Age was fairly evenly distributed, with baby boomers (48 to 66 years old) having slightly more respondents at 33%.

Forty-one percent of the consumers said they eat hot food from a convenience store about once per week. In addition to roller-grill items, the most popular items purchased by the various age groups are:

- Millennials said they typically buy breakfast sandwiches (58%), pizza (49%) and nachos (44%).

- Gen X's favorites were breakfast sandwiches (56%), nachos (49%) and lunch/dinner sandwiches.

- Baby boomers typically buy breakfast sandwiches (47%), lunch/dinner sandwiches (30%) and pizza (24%).

Following are some highlights of the c-store research. For more information about the Culinary Visions Panel, contact Olson Communications at (312) 280-4757 or e-mail info@culinaryvisions.org.

C-Store Food Purchase Motivators

The top reason consumers visit a c-store is for convenience, with no significant differences when it comes to age, shown below, or gender.

Reason	18-35	36-47	48-66	67+
Combo meal	41%	23%	8%	0%
Special sandwich	33%	36%	23%	22%
Coffee program	37%	43%	29%	22%
Convenience	64%	68%	70%	93%
Hot foods	42%	46%	36%	19%
Roller-grill items	40%	44%	36%	6%

Typical C-Store Purchases by Gender

More than half of the consumers surveyed said they typically purchase roller-grill items such as taquitos, hot dogs or sausage (61%). Breakfast sandwiches and lunch/dinner sandwiches followed at 51% and 34%.

Female consumers (65%) typically purchase roller-grill items, while male consumers were slightly lower at 62%. Males were more likely to purchase breakfast sandwiches and lunch/dinner sandwiches. Significant differences between males and females were nachos and chicken strips or wings, with females' tendency to purchase higher.

Food item	Male	Female
Roller-grill items	62%	65%
Breakfast sandwich	58%	47%
Lunch/dinner sandwich	38%	34%
Burger	30%	25%
Pizza	36%	31%
Chicken strips/wings	19%	26%
Nachos	28%	41%
Soup	16%	14%

Reasons for Purchasing Hot Food by Age

Fewer millennials considered convenience a top reason for purchasing hot food at a c-store, compared to other age groups.

Reason	18-35	36-47	48-66	67+
Good value for the money	59%	56%	46%	41%
Taste/flavor	48%	45%	39%	26%
Quality of items	33%	27%	21%	19%
Convenience/speed	62%	70%	81%	82%
Location/close proximity	29%	38%	41%	56%
Variety of flavors available	13%	14%	9%	11%

Source: The Culinary Visions Panel