



Serving the Total Convenience & Petroleum Retailing Industry

Category Management Handbook

Consumers and Foodservice

The Culinary Visions consumer research panel for Chicago-based Olson Communications explores culinary topics and helps foodservice businesses test products and concepts. In the latest iteration of its C-Store Consumer survey, Olson asked 1,010 participants about their motivations for purchasing food from a c-store. In the 2013 survey, 55% of participants were female and 45% were male. Age was fairly evenly distributed, with baby boomers—those 48 to 66—contributing slightly more respondents than other age groups.

Thirty-four percent of consumers in Olson's 2013 survey stated they eat hot food from a c-store about once per week. Survey participants ages 49 to 67 had the highest propensity to eat from a c-store at least once a week, at 42%.

What follows are highlights of the c-store Culinary Visions Panel 2013. For more information about the panel, contact Olson Communications at (312) 280-4757 or info@culinaryvisions.org.

C-Store Food Purchase Motivators

The No. 1 reason consumers choose to purchase hot food from a c-store is convenience, with location a distant second, according to the Olson Communications research.

Reason	Percentage
Convenience/speed	74%
Location/proximity to home or work	49%
Good value for the money	41%
Taste/flavor of hot food items	34%
Quality of hot food items	19%
Variety of flavors available	15%
Other	6%

Most Important Hot-Food Attributes

Price, c-store quality and time-saving capability topped the list of "very important" attributes consumers seek in a hot-food purchase.

Attribute	Percentage overall who consider it "very important"
Price	69%
C-store quality	68%
Time-saving	67%
Flavorful	61%
Past experience with c-store	52%
Homemade taste	38%
Healthy menu options	21%
Brand name	19%
Ethnic flavor	13%

Reasons for Purchasing Hot Food at C-Store by Age

Regardless of the age group, convenience and speed were the top reasons why consumers said they purchased hot food from a c-store.

Reason	19-36	37-48	49-67	68+
Good value for the money	47%	39%	37%	34%
Taste/flavor	36%	38%	33%	34%
Quality of hot food items	21%	15%	20%	17%
Convenience/speed	69%	79%	72%	79%
Location/proximity to home or work	43%	53%	51%	51%
Variety of flavors available	15%	18%	12%	19%

Typical C-Store Purchases by Gender

Roller-grill items are favored by more men than women, according to Olson Communications research. The other hot-food type women tended to clearly favor is soup, with 13% of females vs. 7% of males citing it as a common c-store purchase.

Food item	Male	Female
Roller-grill items	60%	47%
Breakfast sandwich	45%	40%
Deli sandwich	33%	30%
Pizza	31%	27%
Burger	22%	15%
Chicken strips/wings	19%	17%
Nachos	19%	25%
Taquito	18%	20%
Soup	7%	13%

Source: Olson Communications