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WELCOME



There has been a lot written and said recently about a rise of the robots being accelerated to assist people shortages in our post-pandemic world. Now, to my ears, this may sound distinctly dystopian, but clearly the owners of Big Table Group spent less of their formative years studying Skynet and its ramifications than I did.

The operator behind Las Iguanas, Bella Italia and Café Rouge has just announced that it will be piloting the use of so-called 'retrieving robots'. The 'BellaBot' will (in theory) be able to carry plates to diners and then, apparently, interact with them, making Big Table the largest restaurant chain in the UK to utilise this technology so far.

The move, however, comes just as ePOS Hybrid has released the results of its latest survey. Just 25% of respondents said they'd be happy for robots to play a role in cooking a meal, while a mere 28% would embrace taking a more tech-centric approach to reducing queuing and wait times.

Andrew Gibbon, head of growth for ePOS Hybrid, said: "It isn't quite that a robot is stretching the dough or spreading the toppings, but there is enough there to suggest that the vast majority of people want to interact with human beings in some capacity before being served hot food."

Bad news for the BellaBot then, though surely the human touch has always been integral to hospitality. Let's hope that a solution can be found that is more reliant on immigration than automation.

H Norman

Henry Norman
Editor

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"The 'BellaBot' will carry plates to diners and then, apparently, interact with them"



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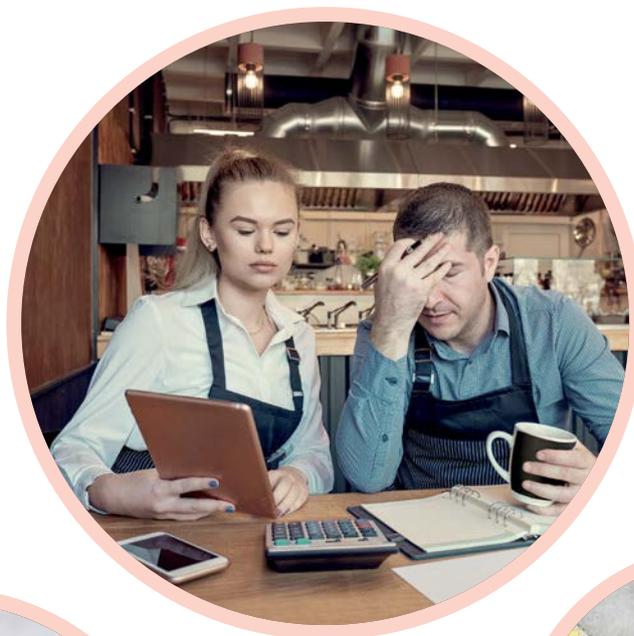
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CONTENTS

JULY 2022



14 The big issue
Rents



19 Grab and go
Going concerns



30 Operator profile: Fast-casual
SushiDog

06 News

All the latest

11 Street food focus

The Joint

32 Healthy snacks

Share the health

34 Dates for your diary

All the upcoming events

35 A coffee break with...

Culinary anthropologist Bee Farrell

36 Breads, buns and bases

Rise to the top

42 Street Food Championships

Rok Kitchen

44 Wholesalers and cash and carry

Wholesale changes

46 Market insight

Soft drinks

47 Recipe

Tomato pie balls

48 What's new

Products and services

50 Savanta column

Ethical products

The n-Oohs

All the latest news and views

TORTILLA COMPLETES CHILANGO ACQUISITION

Tortilla recently announced the acquisition of Chilango for a total consideration of up to £2.75m from investment firm RDCP Group. Chilango operates from an estate of eight premium location UK sites, which offer both eat-in and takeaway options, as well as through its delivery channel supported by delivery kitchens.

Tortilla says it plans to open 45 sites over the next five years (not including the newly-acquired Chilango ones). It intends to retain and continue to operate the Chilango brand at certain locations and via the delivery channel in a number of

Tortilla sites.

Richard Morris, CEO of Tortilla, said: "Chilango is a highly complementary brand that, similarly to Tortilla, provides a fantastic value-for-money proposition and embraces popular and growing sector trends for healthy, customisable food from an estate of restaurants situated in premium locations in London and Manchester.

"We're very excited about this acquisition and look forward to leveraging our combined knowledge and expertise within the Mexican fast-casual dining sector."

TORTILLA VEGAN QUESADILLA



"Chilango is a highly complementary brand"

KERB AND COMPASS SCOTLAND JOIN FORCES

Kerb has partnered with Compass Scotland to promote street food talent at the caterer's venues across the country. This is Kerb's first venture north of the border, following success in England with the contract caterer's sports subsidiary, Levy UK + I. It will bring its expertise to venues including Royal Zoological Society of Scotland's Edinburgh Zoo.

The partnership is launching with the appointment of Amy Campbell as Kerb's Scotland events boss. She joins from Scotsman Hospitality, where she was most recently business development project manager.

David Hay, managing director of

Compass Scotland, said: "We're thrilled to be working with Kerb in Scotland and to have Amy on board to drive the business forward. With more than a decade of Scottish hospitality experience and a great network of contacts, she is well-placed to forge relationships with the country's best street food talent and bring them into the fold at Compass venues.

"We're always looking at ways to innovate our food offering and street food is an ideal way to branch out to diverse, unique and global food choices by using local suppliers already working around



THIS WILL BE KERB'S FIRST FORAY INTO SCOTLAND

the country. It's an exciting next step and we're looking forward to seeing the partnership grow."

JUST EAT FOR BUSINESS WELCOMES GDK

Just Eat for Business has announced partnerships with two new vendors - popular food outlets German Doner Kebab (GDK) and Franco Manca. It says it welcomes them at a time when food orders to the office are at an all-time high, with the business seeing rapid levels of growth as workers gradually return to the office.

These additions mean hungry employees can be treated with a range of possible food options, such as GDK's classic German Doner Kebab or Doner Durum Wrap, or Franco Manca's authentic sourdough pizza. GDK can be delivered to offices across London, while Franco Manca is available in proximity to Tottenham Court Road and Bishopsgate.

Matt Ephgrave, managing director of

Just Eat for Business, said: "Creating an office environment that employees feel excited to visit is so important to business leaders and they're increasingly understanding the need for food and its role in developing workplace culture. That's why we're delighted to welcome Franco Manca and GDK to offer employees what they love, at work."

MCDONALD'S PARTNERS WITH DELIVEROO

McDonald's and Deliveroo recently announced a new, long-term global strategic partnership. They say it will evolve their existing agreement and provide customers with the convenience and value of McDelivery through the Deliveroo platform in markets across the world.

The partnership includes the UK, Deliveroo's largest market, where McDelivery will become available via the delivery company during the second quarter. It is expected to cover a number of McDonald's UK restaurants initially when it begins in the summer, with expansion across the country planned for later in the year.

Alistair Macrow, McDonald's UK and Ireland CEO, said: "More than 1,200 of our restaurants now offer delivery,

and this offer continues to be incredibly popular with customers. We look forward to welcoming Deliveroo and their riders into our suite of McDelivery partners, enabling us to deliver directly to more of our customers across the UK."

Carlo Mocci, Deliveroo's chief business officer UKI, added: "We are delighted to be expanding our partnership with McDonald's through this global agreement. Our mission is to become the definitive online food company and working with McDonald's will help us to achieve this."

"More than 1,200 of our restaurants now offer delivery"

'FLAT-PACK' SHOP JUST THE TICKET FOR GOURMET COFFEE AND KITCHEN

Gourmet Coffee and Kitchen, which provides quality food and beverages for railway commuters, is on track for rapid expansion following the installation of its first 'flat-pack' pop-up shop. The chain recently opened its newest coffee bar at Birmingham Snow Hill Station and is targeting a further five new outlets by the end of the year, as rail passenger numbers edge towards pre-pandemic levels.

Gourmet Coffee Bar and Kitchen was launched by managing director Nick Garnell and his wife Liz after they struggled to find the perfect beverage on their way to and from work. Since opening their first outlet in Stockport, the chain has swelled to 25 outlets, all situated within or near train stations across the UK.

The Snow Hill Station coffee bar was up and running in record time thanks to the use of a flat-pack shop unit supplied by Worcestershire-based pop-up specialist Rapid Retail. Due to its innovative design the shop could be constructed on site, halving the project installation time and reducing costs.

Nick Garnell said: "The new coffee bar at Snow Hill arrived flat-packed and was built on site, making the whole process quick and painless. Importantly, the end result perfectly matches the inviting look and feel of our bricks-and-mortar shops, while still being eye-catching for passing commuters."



GOURMET COFFEE AND KITCHEN
SNOW HILL STATION

BAKERS AND BARISTAS OPENS BRENT CROSS FLAGSHIP



BAKERS AND
BARISTAS AFTERNOON TEA

Bakers and Baristas recently opened its 64th site, and new flagship location, in Brent Cross Shopping Centre in north London. The interior scheme follows the chain's trademark design with a navy colour scheme, wooden fixtures and seating, Moroccan-style floor tiles and LED signage.

The 1,075 sq ft kiosk café with 56 covers is open seven days a week for eat-in and takeaway. Its seasonally changing menu includes freshly baked sweet and savoury pastries, muffins, a summer afternoon tea, paninis, sandwiches and flatbreads.

Group chief executive officer James Fleming said: "Following successful expansion over the last year with the brand's unique offer, we are delighted to be opening in Brent Cross and look forward to establishing a new base in north London in such a popular location."

The brand acquired Love Koffee in 2019 and its estate transitioned to Bakers and Baristas last year. Recent successful renovations include outlets in Cheshire Oaks and Meadowhall in Yorkshire.

The n-Oohs

All the latest news and views

POKÉ HOUSE CONTINUES EXPANSION

Having opened its first location in the UK at the end of 2021, Poké House launched its newest restaurant in the heart of Covent Garden over the Jubilee weekend. The internationally renowned poke bowl chain also announced that five further London stores will open in the coming months.

The new sites announced by the brand are Battersea Power Station, Borough Market, St Paul's, St John's Wood and Mayfair. Poké House now has 100 restaurant sites across the globe.

Matteo Pichi, co-founder and CEO of Poké House, said: "We opened in London in September last year and it's now very quickly becoming one of our key cities across the globe. We're also opening further sites across the capital and cannot wait to see how the locals take to our delicious poke bowls."

"Poké House now has 100 restaurant sites across the globe"

THE NEW STORE IS IN COVENT GARDEN



65 | Another 65 Sainsbury's stores have been brought onto Deliveroo, bringing the total to 336 across the UK.

ISLAND POKE LAUNCHES NEW BREAKFAST MENU

Island Poké recently launched a brand-new breakfast menu. It has been made available at its outlets in Shoreditch and Battersea, before being rolled out across the capital.

The poké operator has introduced a range of breakfast pots, along with a variety of coffee and tea options. The breakfast range features a variety of scrambled egg combinations, such as Pineapple Baked Beans, and cold pots like Apricot and Coconut Overnight, all of which cost less than £5.

Island Poké founder James Gould-Porter said: "Creating a new breakfast menu that incorporates our fresh Pacific flavours felt like a logical step in expanding our offering. We want to provide consumers with a healthy and tasty alternative to the typical morning grab-and-go options."

Island Poké is set to embark on its biggest growth ambition yet, with plans to open 100 locations across the UK in the next five years. The brand currently has 18 outlets in London and nine in France.

TWEETS

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UKHospitality

@UKHofficial

"One in ten jobs remain unfilled" @UKHospKate outlines the skills shortages that exist across the sector. UKH remains committed to working with partners across industry and Government to help alleviate the pressures facing hospitality businesses #UKHSummerConf

Bloomberg Economics

@economics

UK consumers are being urged to brace for inflation getting worse before it gets better as soaring costs force retailers to keep raising prices

Hospitality Action

@HospAction

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McDonald's UK

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ISLAND POKE HOT POTS



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Lamb Weston 
SEEING POSSIBILITIES IN POTATOES

SUPPLIER NEWS

SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS

THE REPORT WAS DEVELOPED WITH
FOOTPRINT INTELLIGENCE

Nestlé Professional recently launched a new report, the Footprint Sustainability Index 2022. Packed with industry insight and interviews with key influencers, it aims to help foodservice leaders adapt their business and operations, enabling them to thrive in this newly evolved landscape.

Developed in collaboration with Footprint Intelligence, the report has been created using consumer surveys, industry insight and in-depth industry interviews. Designed to address all the critical issues faced by the industry, it provides insight and recommendations

on clients and consumers; sustainable diets; energy; emissions and natural resources; waste and resources; policy and supply chain; and employee health and wellbeing.

Katya Simmons, managing director of Nestlé Professional UK&I, said: "Foodservice businesses can reduce costs, comply with legislation and keep consumers happy with effective carbon cutting and resource efficiency. We hope that foodservice businesses find this report to be of value, helping them



to grow their business while reducing carbon footprint."

nestleprofessional.co.uk/sustainabilityindex2022

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Unilever Away From Home has added a Mental Health in the Kitchen course to its recently launched Unilever Food Solutions Academy. This action has been taken in a bid to tackle rising concerns across the industry.

The course comprises a series of training videos to give chefs and hospitality staff practical advice on everyday changes they can make to encourage a better working environment for all. The films include invaluable advice and support across several areas within mental health, such as selfcare,

working environment, teamwork and team management.

They also provide pointers on how to spot signs a team member may be struggling, as well as advice on facilitating conversations around mental health.

Alex Hall, executive chef for Unilever UK&I, said: "The challenges of working in hospitality are well documented. We must do more to support the mental health and wellbeing of all, which is why we have developed a specific course to give people the tools they need to help make positive changes to the kitchen culture."

unileverfoodsolutions.co.uk



CALCULATING CARBON

Users of Civica's Saffron catering management software are set to benefit from a new feature that will allow them to easily calculate and report on CO2 values for their foodservice recipes and menus. Saffron is the first catering

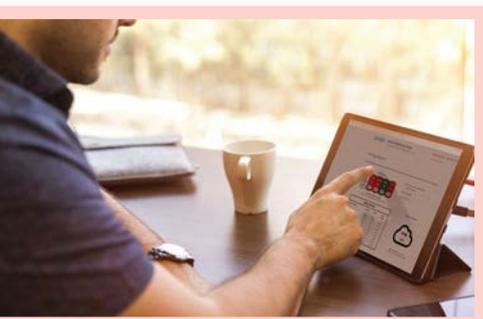
management solution to integrate carbon values, eliminating the need for third-party plug-ins.

The software's new carbon values are based on approved and recognised datasets and provided for all key items in McCance

and Widdowson. Once data profiles are attributed to ingredients, Saffron provides a range of operational reports, enabling clients to identify and measure their carbon impact.

The data can be displayed in Saffron's Wellbeing Portal, a public-facing URL that shows nutritional information, allergen information and CO2 values to help consumers make safer and better food choices. This supports caterers' objectives to show how they are measuring carbon impact to customers.

Andrew Pond, business development director (Saffron) for Civica, said: "We have worked to integrate this solution into the software, with full functionality to link with third-party data sources and provide multiple exports from one single platform. Most importantly, this addition provides caterers with a dashboard that will help support their sustainability strategy."
civica.com/saffron





THE JOINT

Henry Norman checks out the dishes that are being hyped on the high street – are they more than just a flash in the pan?

What?

16-hours-smoked pulled pork and fries.

Where?

The Joint operates its beatific 'brunch, BBQ and bar' concept out of Brixton and Greenwich, plus via a food truck.

How much?

Bun £8.50; fries £3.

The menu says:

'Tender smoked pulled pork, house slaw and buttered bun.'

The hype says:

"Dedicated to the art of real barbecue and they know what they're doing"; Square Meal; "Among the best pulled pork you can get in the capital": The Picky Glutton; "The pulled pork burger was seriously amazing. Best thing I've eaten for a long time": TripAdvisor.

We say:

In my humble opinion, The Joint has been one of the capital's finest pulled pork purveyors ever since it popped up around a decade ago. On revisiting its Brixton

mortar outlet, it's a surprise that this smoking business has never scaled up, though pleasant to see that the prices have remained the same, not only throughout recent hardships but for the best part of 10 years.

We order the pork bun and, in the interest of balance, the Crispy Bird Burger (also £8.50). The latter arrives first and you are immediately hit by the crispy buttermilk chew, offset by the satisfying melted cheese and tangy pickles. The signature dish is, however, more than worth the wait and it's pleasing

to find that pulled pork still takes pride of place here. The meat is pulled to perfection and slathered in sweet sauce, with the requisite contrasting crunch coming from the coleslaw.

For £10 a head (the £3 fries are enough for two), you'll struggle to do better at this price point – or, indeed, in this day and age... though if you case The Joint at lunchtimes, you can take advantage of its daytime offer and get even more BBQ for your buck.

Should you believe the hype?

Join the Q.

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BANKRUPTCIES AND CLOSURES LIKELY BY AUTUMN

As financial pressures mount for out of home operators, experts predict that many will be forced out of business, writes **Jane Renton**

“What’s next, a plague of locusts?” asked a despairing Anne Wallace, who owns Taylors, a fish and chip shop business in Stockport. Having been in the business for almost 60 years it has weathered numerous economic storms, including the inflationary gales of the 70s and the three-day week.

However, she has never seen anything like the current prevailing economic tsunami, as she explained in a recent interview in the Telegraph. Not only is she having to deal with the aftermath of the pandemic, and a whole new raft of taxes

to pay for it all, but also government-fuelled inflation from excess money printing. It is making her life hell and she is now considering shutting up shop for good.

Like many chip shops, the war in Ukraine is forcing her to replace Russian-caught fish, which accounts for nearly 50% of supplies, with alternative sources, something that has added to inflationary pressures. Then there is the price of cooking oil, which has soared over the past year by almost 40%, as well as rising fuel bills. It is small wonder that she questions whether she will remain in business.

“There’s been a real dearth of good people in London since Brexit”

as prices and labour costs continue to soar. ‘You just can’t keep absorbing higher input prices without passing on some of those increases’ is a common refrain among operators right now; but this could only

Operators have in many cases already raised their prices, often incurring backlashes from customers, and they could be forced to increase them again

be the beginning of inflationary price rises, which are already at their highest over the past 40 years.

"It has been widely predicted that we are heading for the deepest recession in many decades, and we are all being told the worst is to come," warned David Abramson, chief executive of Cedar Dean, a property advisory company to the hospitality sector.

While many companies in the out of home sector were benefiting from pent-up demand post-Covid after two years of restrictions, there were many businesses that were struggling: "There are a huge

number who cannot get back to where they were in 2019 and with rising costs, the economics are simply not working," Abramson added.

He described the two parallels as a case of "the quick and the dead". There were those who were not moving fast enough and who were effectively "dead". By contrast, some have moved swiftly to change operations, to get as many customers through their doors as possible with the right offering at the right price points.

These are businesses such as the

"Rent-free periods are simply not going to cut it"

successful micro-coffee chain Caravan, with some seven outlets in London.

The company, which also runs its own roastery, had focused hard on increasing its top line by getting as many people as possible through its doors, and giving them a good time so they would return, said Chris Ammermann, Caravan's operations director. "When you do that, and your restaurants are busy, you have all sorts of opportunities to manage



COSTS ARE GOING UP ACROSS THE BOARD

costs, or get economies of scale," he explained on a recent podcast, 5thWave on the Allegra World Coffee Portal.

But life is far from easy at present, continued Ammermann: "We came to the end of a 24-month contract last September, and our utility prices are now three-and-a-half times what we were previously paying," he said. "So that has essentially hit our profit and loss."

There are further cost increases that have exerted a toll. Haulage prices, particularly from China, have also increased sharply, along with rents,

which in Caravan's case have doubled over the past 10 years, said Ammermann. Wages are another sharply rising cost. "There's been a real dearth of good people in London since Brexit," he said. "We are paying people more, so all these things are having a huge effect on our business."

Smaller businesses than Caravan are especially vulnerable. They do not possess the same purchasing power and struggle to keep costs under control, observed Vicky Lee, who heads the Bristol City Centre Business Improvement District. "They don't have the buying power, the strength

to reduce cost per unit by purchasing on a larger scale," she said.

But the bigger question remains, with consumer price inflation being at its highest level in 40 years, how far can businesses push these prices onto customers before a full-scale recession, if not an actual depression, is triggered? Not very far, appears to be the honest answer.

During the first three months of the year, some 137,000 businesses in the UK closed their doors for good, nearly a quarter up on the corresponding period in 2021, according to the Office for National



FISH AND OIL PRICES HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY HARD HIT



“ Those with focused strategies and great teams will be the ones left standing ”

Statistics. There were also nearly 5,000 voluntary insolvencies in England and Wales, the highest level since the Insolvency Service launched its quarterly survey in 1960.

Restructuring and insolvency firms have generally experienced a relatively quiet couple of years as a result of government support packages for business and a policy that encouraged banks not to foreclose on corporate debtors. But that could soon change, especially when it comes to hospitality as it battles ‘the great disappearance’ of much of the workforce.

Inflation has propelled three in four small businesses to the edge, asserts retail service Klaviyo. Its survey of 500 small- and medium-sized businesses found that some 58% had seen revenues impacted by reduced consumer spending. “Let’s not forget that many city centres are struggling to fill the gap by office workers not doing a five-day week, especially in places like the City and the West End,” said Abramson.



London, Manchester and Birmingham are also having to work hard to attract new customers outside office and tourist markets. "It's said you can make losses forever, but you only run out of cash once," he added.

Rent and leases, sensitive issues at the best of times, are likely to prove the killer for many retail businesses: "We're now heading to a new dimension of discussion whereby rent-free periods are simply not going to cut it," warned Abramson, whose company negotiates on behalf of the hospitality industry with commercial landlords.

Survival will depend, he said, on headline rents coming down for "a large proportion of businesses" over the next 12 months in order to ensure their survival. Abramson also predicted that companies in the health and leisure businesses, the fish and chip shops and casual dining sectors, where sales are down and costs are rapidly escalating, will be among the most vulnerable.

But while business failure would be gut-wrenching for many, a clear-out of 'zombie' businesses, who borrowed heavily from government-guaranteed

loans in a low-interest rate environment, could ultimately create a better business environment for survivors. "Some people would say that it would be very healthy for a relatively large number of businesses to fail," said Simon Bonney, managing director of Quantuma, a London-based restructuring firm. "This would, in turn, increase competition in the market."

Abramson concurred, saying that while it would be hard to see operators go to the wall, there would be benefits in terms of reducing inflation and a slightly looser job market. "Government support has been key for the last two years, but it can't go on forever, and those with focused strategies and great teams will be the ones left standing," he concluded.

For operators such as Anne Wallace in Stockport, it is arguably too late. Like many businesses she has increased her prices, and while most of her regulars have been understanding, some have taken to social media to criticise, which hurts in all sorts of ways. She has simply - and understandably - become exhausted by all of the demands being placed upon her. ☹️

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GOING CONCERNS

Despite the doom and gloom, it's a case of all guns blazing for grab-and-go!

As the post-Covid comeback continues, people are (happily) becoming busy again. And with summer also here, munching on the move is very much a thing again.

"The food-to-go market took a massive hit during the pandemic lockdowns and complete recovery pivots on a full return to the workplace," says Charlotte Kilduff, trade marketing manager for Pan'Artisan. "Footfall in city centre locations and commuter hubs is still not at pre-Covid levels, with many still working part of

the week at home.

"Forecasts from Lumina Intelligence show the food-to-go market is set to bounce back and to grow by 31.8% in 2022 to a value of £21.3bn. Travel, coffee shops, cafés and street food are expected to see the strongest growth in share from 2016 to 2022."

Happily, Kilduff adds that the report goes on to explain that price hikes across food, fuel, utility bills and taxation are less likely to impact this sector, as it's relatively low-ticket and is well placed to capitalise

"The food-to-go market is set to grow by 31.8% to a value of £21.3bn"

Intelligence, saying: "With an estimated value of £22.6bn by 2024, the UK grab-and-go market is big business. The top 10 food-to-go channels can look forward

on tighter budgets.

BIG BUSINESS
Rebecca Dunning, trade marketing manager for La Lorraine Bakery Group, also cites Lumina



MARS-AIMIA

“The UK grab-and-go market is big business”

to a £1bn sales opportunity between 2022 and 2024, with the sandwich and bakery and coffee shop and café

segments poised to lead the way.

“So, there is a big market for convenient grab-and-go products, as people demand tasty, nutritional foods to fuel their on-the-go lifestyles. This is encouraging news for operators looking at grab-and-go as part of their strategy plan going forward.”

As to why consumers just love grabbing and going, Nick Burton, managing director of Celebration Packaging, believes the answer is simple, saying: “It’s all about convenience. Consumers love being able to choose what they want to eat, wherever they happen to be and at any time of day.

“During the lockdowns, consumers turned to home delivery and, while the habit has endured, it has also reinforced the popularity of grab-and-go. According to the latest Lumina Intelligence UK Foodservice Delivery Market Report, 12% of UK adults order foodservice home delivery at least once per week and this peaked at 15% during the third lockdown period.”

Being more specific, there are certain dayparts when people are more likely to be in a position to dine on the run. “For many years, grab-and-go options have centred around lunchtime trade, targeting professionals and students who are after a bite to eat on the move or during their break,” says Alison Smith, global product

developer for Mars Food. “One mealtime that many operators fail to focus on with a grab-and-go offering is breakfast, despite there being plenty of opportunity. To put this opportunity into perspective, a recent survey by IGD Shopper Vista has revealed that 28% of the UK’s adult population has bought a product on the go for breakfast in the past month.

“This is a significant percentage, proving demand for takeaway breakfast options is there for caterers to embrace. This can be done via offering a simple selection of pastries and porridge pots, or more standout options such as breakfast burritos created using Ben’s Original Professional Mexican Salsa or fully-loaded breakfast toasties.”

As well as certain times of day, as Smith alludes to, there are also particular products and meals that

are more naturally suited to this market. “Your range, and the quality of it, is key to a successful grab-and-go offer,” says Cristiana Ballarini, CSM Ingredients marketing director - pastry mixes. “You need to include sweet and savoury products that are suited to the customer’s preferences.

“A major trend that’s coming through this year is a link to flavours and sensory exploration. From flavour bombs to bigger, bolder, more complex flavours to sipping and dunking, there’s an appetite for and appreciation of the sensory stimulation across all age groups, but especially in the over-16s.

“It’s important to apply this across all products, especially the innovative use of topping and fillings on sweet and savoury products across new and existing products. Traditional cakes such as scones can be adapted to meet the trend with new recipes, including sticky toffee scones with delicious toffee flavour and toppings, carrot cake scones and cheese scones. They appeal to all ages and provide bolder, more complex flavours. Doughnuts, cupcakes and muffins can all benefit from it as well with innovative flavours and new variations.”

As if to prove this point, Dawn Foods has further expanded its range of thaw-and-serve products with the launch of a vegan finished frozen doughnut. Available in two classic shapes, a glazed ring doughnut and a jam-filled ball product, the new Vegan Donuts have an artisanal, handmade appearance with a light crumb structure to give a soft eat. You can imply thaw them as needed and sell.

“Both doughnuts are covered with Dawn’s unique Non-Sticky Donut Glaze, which guarantees bakers and caterers



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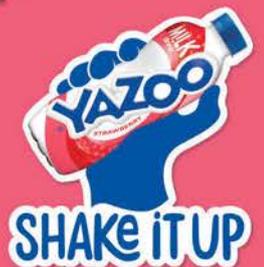


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“It is important to ensure you have the right flavour pairings available “

easier product handling once thawed,” says Jacqui Passmore, marketing manager UK and Ireland for Dawn Foods. “This also means that bakers and caterers can sell them in packaging without the worry of the glaze being smudged.”

PERFECT PAIRINGS

This market is also ripe for upselling – and this doesn’t only apply to the ubiquitous meal deals. “According to recent research, which partnered Schulstad Bakery Solutions’ Thaw and Serve range with a variety of hot and cold drinks, pairing a drink with a sweet pastry is more likely to encourage 87.6% of consumers to make a purchase,” says Kate Sykes, marketing manager for Lantmännen Unibake UK. “But, with 71.6% of consumers considering the flavours that pair well together when making that purchase, it is important for operators to ensure they have the right flavour pairings available.”

On the drinks front, Wayne Thompson, business unit controller, OOH for FrieslandCampina, reports that chocolate remains the most popular flavour across the market. “It enjoys over 50% of the market share,” he says. “But for Yazoo, our strawberry flavour performs about as well as that.

“We’re into our fifth year of limited-edition flavours - these products can create a sense of exclusivity and contribute to brand longevity in the long run, as shoppers are more likely to try new variants and



formats from brands they already know, love and, ultimately, trust. However, classics like chocolate, strawberry and banana will always stand the test of time.

“These are the flavours that consumers have engaged with the longest, across most food and drink, and they form the basis of the relationship between shoppers and brands. People know what to expect and the reputation of the flavour has already attracted a fanbase.”

Following the success of the Robinsons Ready to Drink launch last year, the brand recently added a third flavour to the line-up – Blackberry and Blueberry. “The new addition to the range is full of the great taste of Robinsons, with no added sugar, and joins the already-popular Raspberry

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Malcolm Harling, sales and marketing director for Williams Refrigeration:

The vast majority of grab-and-go sales occur at breakfast and lunch. Therefore, being able to display a range of food in an enticing way while guaranteeing it remains in peak condition is a vital way to serve these markets.

Lee Harding, director of Rational: Get the timing right on your menus. Consumers will want breakfast, elevenses, lunch, an afternoon treat and a grab-and-go snack or meal on the way home. Make sure your offer matches the demand.

Harling: Catch the customer’s eye. A key feature that has made the Williams Multideck range so popular is its enormous flexibility – individual units can be tailored to suit a huge variety of applications. The optional extras available include LED strip lights, which are inset within the ticket holders, enhancing the display while also using little energy and generating minimal heat.

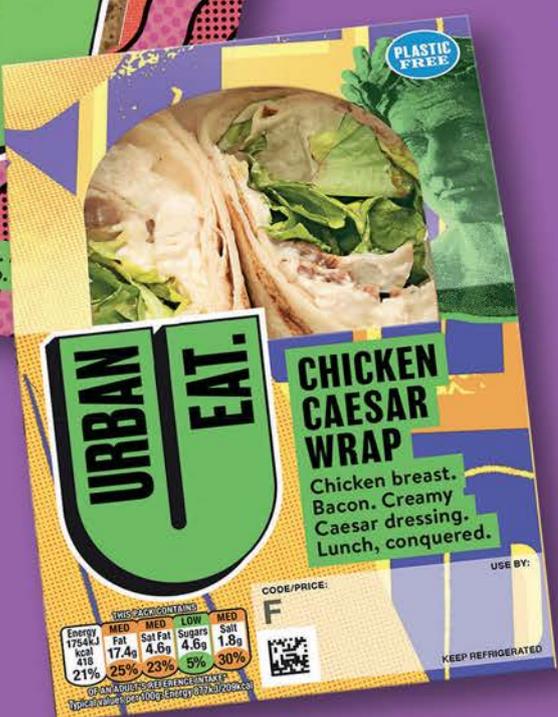
Harding: When it comes to cooking the food, your kitchen needs to be able to produce the wide variety of food grab-and-go consumers want. Multifunctional cooking systems are ideal.

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MAXIMISING MARGINS

St. Pierre offers three top tips to help maximise grab-and-go sales

Create winning combos - Everybody loves a deal - marketing a hot drink with a croissant or caramel waffles as a combo deal in the morning is a perfect way to upsell and drive margins. Morning goods continue to grow year-on-year despite the pandemic; they are universally popular as a morning pick-me-up.

Consider hygiene - Everybody is more aware of hygiene for obvious reasons and individually wrapped products have come into their own as a result, offering speed of service and the highest possible hygiene standards - with the ultimate convenience for bag-laden customers too.

Point-of-sale placement - Remember to position goods at the point-of-sale to drive impulse purchases. Individually bagged snacks provide a fantastic upsell opportunity and St. Pierre's range comes in shelf-ready packaging to easily entice customers at the point-of-sale.

“ Consumers want a little luxury when eating out ”

shoppers even more variety when it comes to choosing soft drinks, with lower sugar variants that don't compromise on taste.

“As the UK's number one squash brand, there is a huge opportunity for retailers to draw shoppers into the on-

and Apple and Peach and Mango variants,” a Britvic spokesperson says. “The new flavour will allow retailers to offer their



ST. PIERRE

the-go sector. In fact, Britvic's research has shown that 55% of retailers have added new soft drinks launches and flavours to their offerings to boost on-the-go sales since lockdown restrictions have eased. Additionally, over two-thirds of retailers agree they are seeing growth in impulse soft drinks sales, and over a third predict that their on-the-go ranges will exceed pre-Covid levels.”

Looking to the future, a spokesperson for Bells of Lazonby is confident that, despite the current gloom, great things are ahead for grab-and-go, concluding: “As we head into this next stage of real uncertainty in the market, consumer confidence is at an all-time low of -22. When looking at the post-pandemic impact of eating out, 45% say they will eat out less.

“However, within the food-to-go arena, this drops to only 30% saying they will eat out less. The ‘lipstick’ effect is behind this trend, with consumers slowly coming back to the workplace or at least hybrid working, so wanting a little luxury when eating out on their lunchbreak, because they are having to eat at home more in general.”

CONTACTS

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aimiafoods.com

Bells of Lazonby

bellsolzazonby.co.uk

Britvic

britvic.com

Celebration

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EXPERT OPINION

Nicola Knight, senior analyst for IGD, tells us about the state of the market

Why is grab and go becoming so popular?

While consumers are getting back to pre-Covid patterns and habits, the proportion of people buying food-to-go is still below pre-pandemic levels, which is most likely linked to working from home. However, frequency is increasing as consumers look to food-to-go as an affordable treat in a period of economic uncertainty.

What products work best as grab and go?

Over half of shoppers are specifically looking for deals when buying food-to-go. The spend assurance of knowing the total cost before reaching the checkout is appealing, particularly among younger shoppers who are generally more price-sensitive.

The value incentive that meal deals provide is an effective way for food-to-go operators to drive sales. And keeping the offer fresh with different products and ranges continues to drive trial.

At what time of day are grab and go items most popular?

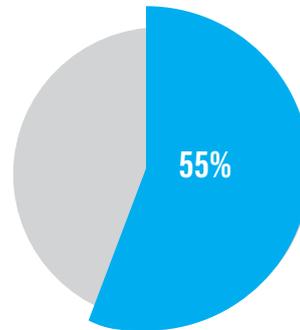
While lunch and evening missions are now above their pre-pandemic levels, snack, leisure and breakfast missions are yet to reach previous levels. With working from home being the norm for so many, it's doubtful that these missions, particularly breakfast, will return to the levels they once were in the short term.

That said, we are seeing the average number of leisure missions - visits where customers choose to sit down and eat their food to go - increase, particularly in city locations where there are higher densities of office and hybrid workers. This suggests that workers are making the most of their food-to-go trips, creating an opportunity for operators.

What one tip would you offer on getting your meal deal right?

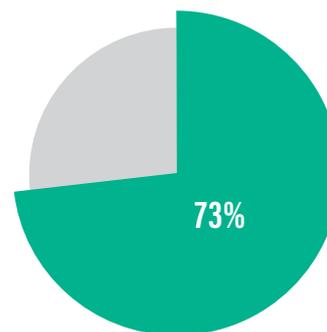
This is all about delivering a great experience at the right price, not about the cheapest price point. I would also encourage operators to drive usage of digital channels to capture customer data to create targeted marketing campaigns. 

"Consumers look to food-to-go as an affordable treat"



"I AM ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR A MEAL DEAL WHEN I CONSIDER BUYING FOOD-TO-GO"

VS 53% Q4'21



"I LIKE THE ASSURANCE OF KNOWING THE TOTAL COST OF THE MEAL WHENEVER I PURCHASE A MEAL DEAL"

VS 71% Q4'21

Source: IGD Shoppervista food-to-go, Q1 2022-Q1,125, Base 1,125 food-to-go Shoppers (Q1'22)

AVERAGE LEISURE MISSIONS PER WEEK





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TOP DOGS

Founder Greg Ilsen tells Henry Norman about his London-based grab and go small chain, SushiDog

PHOTOS: JAMES MOYLE



THE NEW SOHO STORE

It's rare in this job - especially after conducting these interviews for over a decade now - that you come across an idea that is truly innovative and original. It's fair to say, however, that SushiDog is serving up something fresh to the streets of Soho when I visit. As the name implies, the small chain takes the classic Japanese staple and then squeezes it into the (also classic) fast-casual format.

The brand was launched back in 2017 by childhood friends Greg Ilsen and Nick Goldstein. Their eureka moment came

from a desire to replicate the freshness of a sit-down sushi experience with the on-the-go possibilities that are provided by quick-service restaurants.

"We initially worked on evenings and weekends around our previous jobs," remembers Greg. "We created the concept because we felt that grab-and-go sushi lacked choice, freshness and overall quality and we believed we could improve it.

"We left our jobs at the end of 2017 to work full-time on the business. We finally launched it in May 2018 at our first site in Westfield London, where we still trade from to this day."

"We felt that grab and go sushi lacked choice, freshness and overall quality"

This was followed by a second site in Covent Garden, then more recently ones on Brewer St and in Bishopsgate (all in the capital). They all utilise the same grab-and-go format,

which allows customers to personalise their choice, or choose from a range of signature rolls, bowls and salads, all of which are prepared to order.

The best-sellers are the Teriyaki Chicken Katsu Bowl and the Signature Salmon Roll. Both have been on the menu since day one and are described by Greg as being "super-popular", though the latter remains truly representative of what the company is all about.

"Our USP is definitely the SushiDog itself," he says. "It's essentially a large sushi roll, eaten in the style of a burrito or hotdog, hence the name; unfortunately 'sushirrito' was already taken in the US."

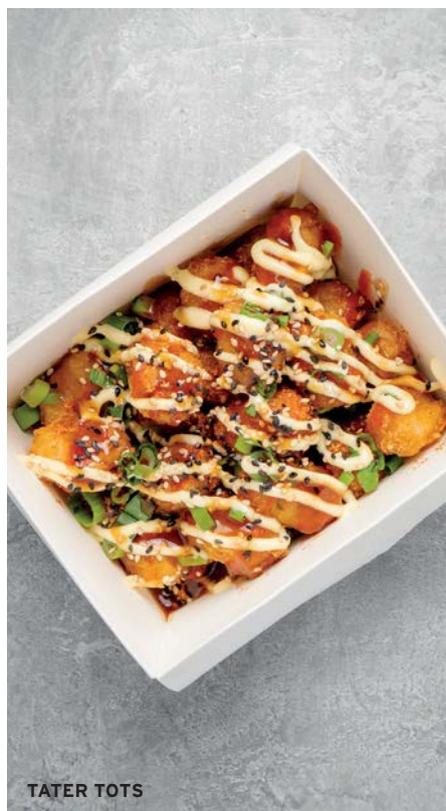
However, it's not just the style of the product and method of eating it that's different. "We pride ourselves on freshness and customer experience," continues Greg. "We don't put out sushi



THE OFFER IS PREPARED FRESH



SIGNATURE SALMON ROLL



TATER TOTS

“ We believe SushiDog has the potential to grow, both nationally and internationally ”

based chocolate ganache.

The two new sites also offer delivery via Deliveroo, UberEats and JustEat, with catering for

offices provided by Feedr and JustEat for Business.

This represents impressive progress at a difficult time for a small business - and it's all the more remarkable when you consider that the duo came into the industry armed with little more than enthusiasm and, of course, a great idea. “When I left university, I joined a graduate scheme at Ocado and eventually ended up working in their logistics development team,” remembers Greg. “Nick was a geography teacher. Both of our backgrounds were completely unrelated to what we do now, so it's been a fast and steep learning curve for both of us.”

Despite their apparently unrelated backgrounds, Greg believes that he and Nick have benefited from the differing routes they have taken to hospitality, as he advises when I ask him for his one tip on operating well: “You need to find a co-founder who has a different skill-set and way of thinking to you.”

Looking to the future, Greg is confident that SushiDog can scale up, saying: “We really believe that this has the potential to grow, both nationally and internationally. We plan to open a further four stores in London in the next 12 months and then we will start to look further afield.”

Keep an eye out if you like great, fresh food fast - there could well be a SushiDog rolling up near you soon.

trays at the beginning of the day that sit in a fridge all day long. We continually cook rice throughout the day, serving it at room temperature or slightly warmer. We then allow customers to tell us exactly which ingredients from our display fridge that they'd like.

“All the toppings and sauces go inside the roll. They can opt to double their main filling like salmon or prawn katsu, they can add as many sauces as they like - it's all in their hands.”

To this end, there is a huge sign in the Covent Garden store that reads ‘However you roll, you're in control’ and Greg emphasises that he genuinely believes that this should be the case for every customer. “They can watch us roll the product - or create a rice

or salad bowl if that's their preference - and at the end they receive something that's really fresh, using high quality ingredients that has just been made for them. We don't pre-prepare anything, because that would just be going against everything we believe in.”

As well as other existing items, such as the popular Japanese tater tots, several new dishes have debuted at the new locations. Pulled yakitori chicken has joined the range of protein options and peanut sauce to the range of dressings. For something sweet, meanwhile, the business has partnered with Ai No Mochi, which specialises in handmade artisanal mochi. The new flavour additions include Nutella and lotus, vanilla cheesecake and a plant-



SHARE THE HEALTH

Combining two of the biggest emerging markets of recent years, healthy snacking is an essential part of out of home

One of the biggest emerging trends in recent years has, of course, been the one towards healthy dining. Another has been a move towards eating while on the go. Put these two together and you have a seller's market for healthy snacks.

BREAKFAST

When it comes to the most important meal of the day, over the last two years, Weetabix has taken a good look at the cereal bar category and the trends that are shaping it. It says it has done this in order to ensure that its Alpen bars are fit for the future.

"It has been a tough 12 months with fewer on-the-go occasions and changing consumer habits," says Darryl Burgess, head of sales for Weetabix. "This affected bar consumption with more people choosing traditional cereals.

"Alpen can play a critical role in helping the cereal bars category build back up - we're a top 10 player and have the plan to help bars recover by leading with tastier products and backing the right trends. There's a big opportunity for cereal bars and the category has recently returned to growth - up 6% in the last three months. Therefore, it's the ideal time to maximise our plans and bring new product development [NPD] to the market, such as the new Alpen Oat Blends [more on which shortly]."

Although Weetabix has seen a slower recovery in the diet segment post-Covid, which has impacted sales of Alpen Light bars, it is expecting health to be a growing consideration for on-the-go consumers. The arrival of high fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) regulations will place further emphasis on healthy snacking, with retailers reviewing their store layouts

"There's a big opportunity for cereal bars"

and placement of snacking items.

"Alpen Light bars are the only fully compliant HFSS range in the

bars top 10, and with 10% of the category sales coming off fixture, we have a role to play to mitigate some of these potential losses when the new legislation comes in," says Burgess. "We're updating our packs in 2022 to bring our health and taste credentials to life, as well as leading the way with our on-pack traffic lights and shouting about the permissibility of the range."

Weetabix knows that when it launches on-trend NPD, it can support category growth. It introduced Alpen Light White Chocolate and Raspberry flavour last year and it's now worth more than £1m retail sales value - indeed, it was the biggest

cereal bar launch in the last six months.

"The Alpen masterbrand celebrated its 50th birthday in the summer with the launch of our biggest campaign in recent years, Up and Alpen, including our first TV advert in four years," says Burgess. "We'll be running this across muesli and bars in out of home, in-store and online in the year ahead around key snacking moments in the calendar, as well as returning to TV in 2022. This will put Alpen bars in the spotlight across the shopper journey in a way we haven't in the past.

"With more people than ever looking for both tasty and wholesome foods, and not wanting to compromise on health, there was a clear opportunity to deliver products that meet these needs and drive real choice and excitement in the category, which is why we launched Alpen Oat Blends in October, initially in Asda."

Available in three flavours - Salted Caramel, Dark Chocolate Orange, and Cocoa and Peanut - Alpen Oat Blends are a wholesome blend of oats, nuts and fruits with a caramel centre, topped with crunchy nuts or nibs. The Alpen Oat Blends bars also deliver best-in-class nutritionals compared to their competitors, being both high in fibre and having no red traffic lights.

"We now have three distinct ranges, Alpen Light, Alpen Bars and Alpen Oat Blends," sums up Burgess. "All are anchored in healthy and wholesome snacking, are high in fibre and have no red traffic lights."

DAYTIME

Rootles, meanwhile, are a new brand of chocolate-covered, veg-based biscuits that are just 121 calories per pack. They were developed by founder Helen Yates, who says: "The Covid pandemic has brought health into sharp focus and, while many people enjoy treating themselves, they are more mindful of what they are eating now. Snacks that are indulgent but aren't as calorific or have a perceived health benefit, or are in some way better for you than traditional confectionery and snacks, are proving to be popular with consumers."

Rootles is the first sweet vegetable-based snack to hit the market. Baked with 35% root veg and covered in chocolate, the brand has been specifically developed to satisfy demand for indulgent, guilt-free treats. As previously mentioned, each pack has 121 calories, which is fewer than many other chocolate snack bars, because

the biscuits are naturally sweetened by nutritious root vegetables including carrot, beetroot and sweet potato.

"The trend for vegan products remains strong and we've just launched a vegan version of Rootles, to cater for the increasing demand for vegan and plant-based snacks," says Yates. "We've also just unveiled a white chocolate and beetroot flavour, which is a truly innovative product and bound to catch the eye of customers looking for something a bit different. Each pack of Rootles contains three crunchy biscuits and they're perfect accompaniments to coffee or tea, or as an addition to a lunchtime meal deal to take out or sit in.

"Place healthy snacks in the impulse or takeout section and try teaming them with other healthier items to attract customers who are mindful of their health. If you have a coffee machine, pop snacks next to this to attract impulse buys."

Customers certainly shouldn't be able to resist a product like this, as Yates reasons: "Chocolate is a real feel-good snack and it's the go-to snack for many consumers.

"The Covid pandemic has brought health into sharp focus"

Ensure your range has guilt-free chocolate options available, both for sit-in and take-out customers. Options like Rootles are not only lower in calories than many chocolate brands, they're also eye-catching and innovative."

And the good news is that sales should continue to increase, as customers continue to prioritise health and convenience, as Yates concludes: "The value of the UK's food-to-go markets is expected to rise by 31.8% to £21.3bn this year, according to Lumina Intelligence's annual UK Food To Go report. Healthy snacks will form part of this market, so it's certainly a sector to consider when stocking up on snacks for your customers." ^{6/24}

CONTACTS

Rootles [rootles.co.uk](https://www.rootles.co.uk)

Weetabix [weetabixfoodservice.co.uk](https://www.weetabixfoodservice.co.uk)



DIARY DATES

The biggest industry events coming your way

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THE TIME OF
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8TH - 10TH JULY

Pub in the Park Tunbridge Wells
Dunorlan Park

Pub in the Park is now the biggest food and music festival tour in the UK. Impressively, over 130,000 punters ate, drank and danced their way around eight locations in 2021.

The brainchild of Tom Kerridge, each festival celebrates everything there is to love about the British pub. There will be delicious food, award-winning chefs, music, great drinks - but, above all else, a fantastic time to be had with friends and family.

At the Tunbridge Wells leg, you can join chefs Kerridge and Simon Rimmer; party to Supergrass, Aswad and Sophie Ellis-Bextor; and tuck into dishes from The Hand and Flowers and Atul Kochhar Restaurants.

pubintheparkuk.com/tunbridge-wells



15TH - 17TH JULY

Foodies Festival Winchester
North Walls Rec

Foodies Festival is a celebration of top chefs, tasty food, delicious drinks and live music. Watch MasterChef Champions, Michelin-starred and top local chefs cooking their signature summer recipes in The Chefs Theatre. Foodies favourite and MasterChef 2012 champion Shelina Permalloo returns to the festival to share her top tips, alongside fellow champion Thomas Frake.

You can also learn how to make show-stopping cakes in The Cake and Bake Theatre with expert bakers. Great British Bake Off star Jürgen Krauss will share his best baking tips live on stage, with easy-to-make recipes that are as delicious to look at as they are to eat.

foodiesfestival.com/events/winchester



16TH - 17TH JULY

Great British Food Festival Hertfordshire
Knebworth House

GBFF will have a line-up of top chefs and bakers this year. It will combine some names you may recognise, alongside some of the best chefs from local restaurants and pubs. Each will showcase a different dish and techniques.

Let them inspire you in your kitchen and learn how to create and perfect dishes at home. They will take you through one (or two) of their favourite recipes while sharing shortcuts and tips of the trade.

Elsewhere, there will be live music, a BBQ Stage, street food, bars and an artisan market. All this and the Cake Off comp for those budding bakers!

greatbritishfoodfestival.com/knebworth



5TH AUGUST

International Beer Day
Worldwide

International Beer Day is a global celebration, taking place in pubs, breweries and backyards all over the world. It's a day for beer-lovers everywhere to raise a toast to our brewers and bartenders and rejoice in its greatness!

A spokesperson says: "If you were thinking about spending International Beer Day by yourself, think again! Drinking beer may be the most important part, but we're pretty convinced that it goes best with a little conversation.

"So, drag your friends out to an IBD celebration or invite them into your home... but make sure you have some camaraderie to go with your brews."

internationalbeerday.com

A COFFEE BREAK WITH...



BEE FARRELL

Bee Farrell is a culinary anthropologist with an MSc in anthropology of food. Food consultant, writer, researcher and academic, she has worked with the Sustainable Food Trust, Harper Collins and the University of East Anglia. As a food anthropologist, she specialises in the social themes of food and eating, and its evolving role in everyday life. During Covid, Farrell was awarded a PhD to research healthy and sustainable food choices using digital ethnography.

What does your job typically entail?

As a food anthropologist, I have to be curious and ask questions that help to uncover the cultural stories behind our everyday food choices and habits. It's hard to say what this typically entails as it has so much variety. But one thing that's always the same is my effort to make information and robust research engaging.

How did you get into the industry?

I was brought up living above, and working in, my mum's restaurant, and I became fascinated by the way food brings us together. After working for many years with community health and heritage food projects, I studied for an MA in the anthropology of food and then began researching and writing. This led to me receiving doctorate funding to investigate eating together and the reactions of the hospitality industry during the Covid-19 pandemic.

What's your favourite part of your working day?

Early mornings are the best for me, as I love the quiet and can make the most of not being distracted. It's the time when I do the bulk of my writing work that can last up to about three hours. All of this is done with a big mug of tea and a few digestive biscuits!

And your least favourite?

Mid-afternoon is sometimes my least favourite. It is often

when there is a lot of admin to do. It's great to hear from colleagues and clients, and to think through new projects and presentations, but it's the time I also tend to catch up with digi-filing and forms that can be onerous.

What's your favourite food and beverage?

Overall, my favourite cuisine is Persian, I just love the mix of gentle spices, fruit and floral ingredients like rosewater. For a food and beverage combination, my go-to is always a cardamon bun and a flat white with oat milk.

And your least favourite?

It has to be marmite on toast and grapefruit juice - though not necessarily together! Marmite is a fascinating ingredient as it clearly divides taste: you either love it or you don't. I don't.

What is the biggest factor currently affecting the industry?

There are many factors negatively affecting the industry that are wrapped

up in politics, economics and skill shortages. These all put hospitality, an already vulnerable industry, under greater pressure.

One positive aspect for hospitality that my PhD research investigated is the vitalness of eating together out of the home. The pandemic's physical distancing measures meant that hospitality shut down, or was severely limited, and so extra-domesticity - eating out of home - stopped. My research found that social and mental health suffered because of this distancing, and the reaction post-pandemic is that all kinds of people in health industries now recognise the healing and supportive aspects of social eating outside the home.

What one piece of advice would you offer someone working in the industry?

One thing in my 'industry' of anthropological research is to always be open to new ideas, cultures and dilemmas. Plus, you need to make time for reading every day, preferably from books. 📖

“People now recognise the healing aspects of social eating”





DÉLIFRANCE

RISE TO THE TOP

The popularity of bread continues to grow, with speciality breads offering health benefits in high demand

Bread and pastry products have been popular staples in Brits' diets for centuries. However, the bounty of breads hailing from around the globe has seen the UK market go from strength to strength.

According to IRI, this growth is set to continue, with retail experiencing a 5.8% year-on-year increase for speciality loaves. The same report also showed that seeded and brown loaves increased by 27.4%, while sourdough remains a high performer, up 15.5% from last year. In fact, Nielsen figures from February 2022 show that moving

annual total sales of breads, rolls, morning goods and baguettes almost tops £3bn.

The pandemic fuelled popularity in this sector, with UK consumers' spending on bread and bakery in supermarkets jumping 11% from 2020 to 2021, an increase of £388m (Kantar). The ever-worsening cost of living crisis also means that demand in this category is likely to continue to accelerate.

"Buns account for an estimated 8% of the UK bread market - and the segment's current trajectory hints at significant growth over the coming years," predicts Ben Ledger, bakery marketing manager

"The Covid-19 pandemic has shifted the consumer focus to healthy eating"

for Puratos UK. "Burgers consistently top the list of most popular meals eaten outside of the home, therefore driving demand for delicious, fluffy

burger buns to carry both meat and plant-based patties. Also, with people embracing more working from home opportunities, shoppers are turning to buns rather than

pre-packaged sandwiches as they create tasty lunches in their own kitchen.

“Sourdough, with its nod to novelty and widespread consumer appeal, also saw exponential growth in the pandemic. Keen to capitalise on this trend, we are seeing bakers increasingly incorporate sourdough into other non-traditional formats, such as burger buns.”

Variety is key to consumer engagement and is driving interest in the speciality bread sector, which has grown in value to £824m (up 15.3%), with morning and snack bakery also in growth of 8.5% to £1.09bn, according to Kantar. Despite the strong growth in demand for speciality breads, traditional white loaves remain the most popular choice, making up more than 50% of the bread market. However, sales have dropped a little.

Demand for quality is driving the sector, as consumers look for healthier products that use ingredients that are perceived to be better for them. Today’s consumers are simply more concerned about the ingredients in the products they are going to eat.

“The demand for baked goods using high-quality ingredients has risen among

consumers, especially in the artisan breads category,” explains Erwan Inizan, Northern Europe sales director at Bridor. “With more consumers seeking an authentic tasting experience coupled with a heightened awareness of the ingredients used, the market has had to evolve to keep pace and comply with the latest trends to satisfy the needs and wants of the end consumer.”

WORLD FLAVOURS

With a diverse population, the UK is a melting pot of cuisines from around the globe. Flatbreads are particularly popular with consumers and out of home outlets thanks to their versatility.

“Wraps have become very popular in the foodservice sector, both as a food-to-go item and as part of sit-down menus,” says Gordon Lauder, MD of Central Foods. “There are many alternative flatbreads that can also be used as wraps, and this gives operators the option of dialling up their sandwich menu to ensure they stand out.”

Flatbreads are ideal for the out of home sector, as they lend themselves well to countless flavours and a wide range of exciting options for consumers. Soft and pliable, just like wraps, they are a great

“Bread that has additional nutritional value is a key trend for 2022”

alternative to traditional sandwiches. In fact, they can be used for multiple dishes on menus, from pizza bases to garlic bread, or for dipping.

“A quick and easy, traditional way of serving is to top with herbs, such as za’atar, feta cheese or minced meat, and slice or fold to serve for a Middle Eastern version of pizza,” says Lauder.

Innovation in this sector has seen the introduction of a variety of flatbreads that are flavoured with vegetables such as beetroot, carrot and spinach. Not only do these products pack a flavour punch, but their bright colours add visual interest that’s sure to catch consumers’ eyes too.

GOOD FOOD

Consumers are keen on purchasing products that they perceive to be good for them and this trend has been reinforced following the pandemic, which put a greater focus on people’s health.

“Over the past 12 months, we’ve seen an acceleration in the demand for healthy and clean ingredients as the Covid-19 pandemic has shifted the consumer focus to healthy eating, which has become a higher priority for more than 30% of people, according to Mintel,” points out Inizan. “The impact of consumers making healthier lifestyle choices can be seen in the most popular products, such as those found in the ancient grains category. These products offer various health benefits, while breads that are rich in fibre, protein and mineral content are proving to be increasingly more popular than the traditional loaf.”

The bread and bakery industry has invested in new product development to create products that offer health benefits. From seeds and nuts to wheat-free flour, there are a whole host of products on the market that appeal to this demographic.

“Now more than ever, consumers are seeking products that are not only healthy but also unique and premium,” says Rebecca Dunning, trade marketing manager for La Lorraine Bakery Group. “Each and every one of our products offer this plus much more, and I am excited about what the future holds as we have lots in the pipeline when it comes to new product development.”

Nutrition plays a key role in the bakery industry, with seeds, grains, ancient grains, sprouted grains and added fibre being popular among consumers. In fact,



BRIDOR



“It’s necessary for bakers to differentiate their offerings”

according to Mintel, fibre is a sought-after element for 31% of people purchasing bread.

“Bread that has additional nutritional value is a key trend for 2022,” says Cristiana Ballarini, marketing director – pastry mixes for CSM Ingredients. “This includes added fibre, grains and sprouted grains.”

The sector has also seen increased demand for plant-based products as consumers’ concern for the environment grows. As a result, there is more call for products that are made from nutritional pulses.

TRENDS

Breads that are a cry from the norm are increasingly popular with consumers and can therefore provide out of home operators with a great opportunity to drive sales and increase margins. The likes of sourdough and rye breads present operators with a way to increase interest on the menu.

“The speciality and seeded bread category is thriving and transforming at such a record pace,” says Dunning. “Consumer behaviour has changed in so many ways over the past 18 months and has undoubtedly had an impact on the industry – and for the better.

“The rising popularity of flexitarian diets is shaping the out of home market, along with the demand for more free-from, gluten-free, plant-based and vegan

products. And as consumers continue to seek more adventurous options than a simple ham sandwich, this offers up plentiful opportunities for caterers to innovate with their product ranges.”

The trend towards premiumisation continues to drive the bread market, with customers being willing to pay more for products that they perceive to offer greater benefits and value, such as speciality breads.

“With intensifying competition, it’s necessary for bakers to differentiate their offerings through new flavour, format and ingredient innovations,” says Ledger. “We’re already seeing consumer demand for healthier, better for you buns for instance – and we expect this market to follow the loaf sector by using more ‘power ingredients’, such as seeds and sprouted and ancient grains.”

According to FMCG Gurus, demand for bread containing ingredients with specific health attributes is growing. In fact, the market research company’s recent research found that some 40% of participants found high in fibre appealing and 54% found high protein attractive. When making a purchase, 45% favoured high in fibre and 47% high in protein.

“The market has witnessed a steady increase in the popularity of seeded and sourdough breads over recent years, with the latter particularly spiking during lockdown as people took to their kitchens to bake their own bread,” says Stéphanie Brillouet, marketing director for Délifrance. “With gut health and immune system becoming a growing concern, sourdough has also risen to the fore as a digestible alternative offering premium flavour and texture.”

It’s therefore not surprising that retail sales of sourdough are performing strongly in the category, with a 15.4% market increase year-on-year (IRI 52 w/e 30th April 2022). Seeded and brown speciality breads are also up, by 11.2% year-on-year.

“With this healthy retail growth for speciality loaves, it’s likely that this demand will trickle down into foodservice too,” adds Brillouet. “With seeded sourdough experiencing even stronger growth at 21.1% year-on-year, food operators should consider offering sourdoughs with wholegrains, grains and seeds, which appeals to health-conscious bread lovers.”

Bread is a nutritious and delicious option for consumers. From sourdough and multigrain breads to premium brioche buns, it’s vital that operators offer a good selection.

“When it comes to buns specifically, brioches and soft seed-topped buns are proving the most popular currently,” reveals Ledger. “Interestingly, vegan brioche buns

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*Nielsen Rolls & Baguettes, Total Market MAT to 15th Jan 2022 **Minimum guaranteed life from delivery to depot

“The speciality and seeded bread category is thriving”

are also on the up, especially among the 8% of UK consumers who are following a plant-based diet. For this market, there is an exciting

opportunity for bakers to expand their portfolios with delicious-tasting, egg- and dairy-free brioche-style buns that are the perfect carriers for better-for-you options.”

Aesthetics are increasingly important to consumers, which is why brioche has become established as a premium option. Its golden colour and high sheen not only make for a tasty bite, but it looks visually appealing too.

For consumers who are looking for an even healthier option, there are now reduced fat and lower sugar brioche and brioche-style buns available thanks to new product development.

When it comes to offering speciality breads, unless outlets have a skilled baker among their team, producing a range of different breads can be a challenge. For outlets that want to try baking a selection of bread themselves, mixes can be the perfect solution.

Operators can purchase a basic mix and make a wide range of options using different grains, seeds, nuts, olives, sundried tomatoes, onions and herbs. They just need to let their creativity take over. “Mixes allow bakers to meet the demand for healthier breads and drive sales by offering a premium option with a fantastic flavour, texture and smell,” says Ballarini.

The popularity of bread in all its forms will undoubtedly continue to rise. However, as the cost-of-living crisis hits consumers hard, it’s essential that out of home outlets prioritise nutrition and affordability. 🍞

CONTACTS

Bridor

bridor.com/en-uk

Central Foods

centralfoods.co.uk

CSM

csmingredients.com

Déifrance

delifrance.com/uk

La Lorraine

llbg.com/en-en

Puratos

puratos.com

St. Pierre

stpierregrroupe.com



CENTRAL FOODS/KATERBAKE

TOP TIPS FOR INCREASING REVENUE

VALUE OFFERING - “Brioche offers that perfect balance between a premium option, known for its quality and taste, but not so niche that consumers are put off by trying something new,” says Scott Oakes, commercial manager for St. Pierre Groupe. “Many of our customers will market the fact that items are served on brioche because it adds value to the menu.”

SPREAD THE WORD - “To help increase revenue, it’s important to let the customers sample the range and also ask for feedback so the range is just right,” says Ballarini. “Tell the story about the different ranges and ingredients used via eye-catching marketing materials such as point-of-sale kits that tell the story of the brand and feature specific benefits to help customers make an informed choice.”

EYE CANDY - “Visual appeal is an often overlooked but equally important element to freshness and potential opportunity,” says Ledger. “In the era of Instaworthy everything, consumers are increasingly choosing bread for its ‘crafted’ style or ‘artisan appearance’. Aesthetically appealing is a priority across all food categories, with 60% of UK consumers believing that food that looks good is tasty too, according to Taste Tomorrow.”

STAY ON TREND - “The aftermath of the pandemic has resulted in a big shift in consumer behaviours, particularly when it comes to health and wellbeing,” points out Inizan. “Reinventing baked products through innovative solutions to meet changing trends is an effective way to bolster bakery sales. It is essential to keep on top of new market trends such as clean labels, healthy ingredients or sustainable choices to have a constant and clear understanding of what the consumer is looking for in a baked product.”

GOOD FOOD - “Our research showed that buyers of seeded rolls or multi-seed loaves are more likely to be interested in ingredients than the average bread consumer,” says Brillouet. “They’re less concerned about price too, indicating their willingness to pay a premium for healthier products. To show added value to these consumers and to boost profits, operators should make sure they promote ingredients and health benefits.”

KEEP IT SIMPLE - “Many foodservice operators have streamlined or simplified their menus as a result of the Covid pandemic due to staff shortages, supply chain issues or uncertainties over demand,” says Lauder. “Frozen bread is particularly useful for foodservice operators, as it ensures that there is always a supply of ‘fresh’ bread to hand.”

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STREET FOOD CHAMPIONSHIPS

We catch up with **Steve Chatfield** of Rok Kitchen, who among other awards, won the Wings round at last year's event

"We will be opening our first premises"

What have you been up to since the awards?

How's business?

Rok Kitchen Street Food has been incredibly busy at events, pop-ups and festivals and we have been having a great time. It's been great to get back out and return after the tragedy of the Covid pandemic.

We feel very privileged to be in this position.

Given the current economic circumstances making things difficult, what with massive increases in the costs of produce, fuel and energy, it sometimes feels tempting to retreat into a more secure working environment, but thankfully every event and festival we've traded at this year has been incredibly well supported, which means we can continue doing what we enjoy.

An exciting new venture for us is that we have been working in partnership with Essex County Council to provide meaningful work for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism. This year we will be opening our first premises, at which point we will be employing adults who have had difficulties in finding employment due to their learning difficulty and/or autism being their barrier.

When the council approached us we were at a nucleus stage of developing this initiative already. Our son was diagnosed with autism and ADHD and we have always had it in mind to find ways of helping him to function in a mainstream environment and eventually provide a job for him ourselves where others might not. We're happy to be able to use our experience to provide work opportunities for those with additional

needs and hope that we will encourage other businesses to follow suit.

You've won a lot of awards in the past and not just with us! Can you outline those for us please?

I love competing because it pushes me to develop higher standards of food every year. My first competition was at the British St Food awards in 2018. In our first attempt, we made it to the final on a wildcard. However, it was a while before we actually won, which felt disappointing, but on reflection, it was for the best. The food we serve now is 10 times better than it was in 2018, and that's because we kept challenging ourselves to improve.

My first taste of success came at the Street Food Challenge, hosted by you guys, back in 2019. At the time, again I was going in as a wildcard, up against some well-known high street brands. Winning Street Food Chef of the Year felt like an amazing achievement and spurred me on to go for more accolades.

In 2019, I was runner-up in the Essex Chef of the Year competition, hosted by Essex Life magazine. On that occasion I missed out to a chef with a Michelin Bib gourmand, but I definitely want another go at that title.

STEVE CHATFIELD



CHATFIELD'S WINNING WINGS



CHATFIELD IN ACTION



Then it all went quiet while we waited patiently for the pandemic to settle before getting going again.

We ended 2021 with three titles: Southern Champions at the British Street Food Awards; Best Burger at the British Street Food Awards Grand Final; and, of course, as Frank's Wings Champion at your Street Food Championships.

You're obviously very good at competing! What tips would you offer on doing it well?

I try to treat the competition like any other day at work. Every day, I cook great food for happy customers. Treat the competition the same and you can't go wrong. Also, be organised - this is something I struggle with, there's always an item I forget, including one year the duck for my main dish - so make a list, and check it before you head off.

It can be intimidating to cook with people watching on, so try to get as much experience doing that as you can. If you work in street food, it's an everyday thing, but chefs hidden away in kitchens with little or no sunlight might find it a shock to the system to be observed so closely.

Cook the food you love. Don't compete with others, compete with yourself. Always try to improve your food for yourself; when it's good others will let you know.

Try to get unbiased feedback, loved ones and friends are always supportive. Ask a stranger to tell you what they think of your food

"Cook the food you love"

and accept any criticism or feedback gracefully, and as a chance to improve.

I see you've commendably been doing your bit for the Ukrainian appeal. Tell us about that...

It's important to have empathy for people with struggles in all walks of life. On this occasion, like many others, we wanted to do something to aid those who are struggling due to circumstances that are no fault of their own, so we pitched up at a local pub and donated the takings to the Disasters Emergency Ukraine appeal.

How did you find the event and the competition?

At the time, after a long lockdown, I was grateful to be back out on the circuit trading and competing again. It was well organised, I had the opportunity to try some great products and had the chance to watch some of the other chefs create some great dishes. I was thrilled to pick up the Wings award, but I'm yet to win the Best dish category... looks like I may have to enter again this year!

Would you encourage others to enter?

Very much so! You find out a lot about yourself and your food by going through the competition process. It's a chance to learn, grow and develop. 

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THOMAS RIDLEY

WHOLESALE CHANGES

You can save money and increase efficiency with wholesalers and cash and carry

With costs continuing to increase, one solution could be to buy in bulk. With convenience and consistency being other advantages, it's no wonder that wholesalers are more popular than ever.

"Wholesale, or the act of buying products in bulk at discounted price to sell on to retailers, is very popular in the hospitality and catering industry," says Paul Knight, commercial director for Thomas Ridley Foodservice. "According to Ibis World, the size of the wholesale market in the UK surpassed £36.6bn in 2022."

Patrick Mitchell-Fox, senior business analyst for IGD, is similarly convinced, saying: "Cash and carry wholesaling - i.e. purchasing on a self-service basis from warehouses such as Booker, Bestway - in the UK food and drink sector remains extremely popular. Moreover, the challenges of the last two years have given the channel a notable boost versus delivery service."

INDEPENDENT ADVANTAGES

While it may appear that these economies of scale are only really available to much larger catering

"The size of the wholesale market in the UK surpassed £36.6bn in 2022"

operations, Mitchell-Fox insists that they are accessible in out of home too.

"The number one advantage of the cash and carry

is flexibility for the smaller or independent operator," he says.

"It enables operators to purchase in smaller quantities, in a 'need it now' capacity without the restrictions of a minimum order value, which

“The number one advantage of the cash and carry is flexibility”

are required by delivered wholesalers.

“This reduces costs, minimises waste and reduces the need for significant storage capacity.

The flexibility also

gives operators the freedom to stop, start and pivot in a market that has been full of unknowns.”

“Aside from the obvious savings involved with wholesale, Thomas Ridley Foodservice offers a one-stop-shop for everything operators could ever need,” adds Knight. “This includes nationally recognised brands, making it an ideal alternative to the time-consuming process of buying direct from suppliers.”

When it comes to bulk buying, the benefits are undeniable, according to our experts. “The key advantage, is of course, the financial savings,” says Knight. “But for environmentally conscious businesses, buying in bulk will result in fewer trips back and forth, and therefore a lower carbon footprint.

“Thomas Ridley is committed to taking responsibility for its environmental impact, which is why we offer several advantageous sustainability initiatives. These include helping operators dispose of cardboard and plastic recyclables, and partnering

with Arrow Oils to convert operators’ cooking oil into biodiesel.”

“Buying goods in bulk that are core to the operator’s business model is a good way to reduce costs and improve margins,” continues Mitchell-Fox.

“Another benefit is the reassurance of maintained stock levels of items that are key to the business, while giving the flexibility and freedom to top up or change other items.”

Despite all these undoubted advantages, one question that has to be asked is whether the quality of product can be maintained when purchasing products in this way. “Historically, delivered wholesale has provided the reassurance of protecting the chill chain,” says Mitchell-Fox. “However, thanks to significant innovation in moving food, accelerated by the growth of delivery, solutions such as cold boxes and the equivalent are readily available to transport short-life food and products to customer premises while maintaining quality.”

“We offer multi-temperature deliveries, through our innovative fleet of vehicles, meaning ambient, chilled or frozen products arrive in perfect condition,” agrees Knight.

TOP TIPS

When it comes to getting the most from wholesaling, Knight says it’s all about the human touch. “A good business relationship between wholesalers

and operators should be based on mutual success and benefits, including aligning in terms of business values,” he says. “Operators should research which wholesalers complement their ethos, whether that means stocking big brands, fresh and seasonal produce, or innovative new products.

“Thomas Ridley offers brands local to our base in Suffolk - including Aspall Cider, Adnams Brewery, Havensfield Happy Hens Eggs, and Stokes Sauces - as well as national and international ones.”

“Check the ranges and compare prices and promotions online before selecting which cash and carries to visit,” advises Mitchell-Fox. “Also note that in some localities warehouses are quite close to each other, so visiting more than one is easier in some locations than others. Always check product shelf-life, even on ambient products, to ensure any unnecessary waste and cost to your business can be avoided.”

Mitchell-Fox concludes that wholesalers are too advantageous to ignore in out of home, saying: “As cost pressures become increasingly prevalent, smaller operators and independents can benefit from the raft of promotions and cost savings that can often be found at cash and carries.” 

CONTACTS

IGD igd.com/eatingout

Thomas Ridley thomasridley.co.uk





STATS AND FIGURES

- 66%** think price is the most important factor when ordering in
- 56%** base their decisions on past experiences
- 53%** of consumers choose where to order from based on cost
- 42%** decide based on cuisine type
- 39%** consider delivery time
- 35%** order based on delivery cost
- 53%** would order a family feast bundle that included soft drinks

DELIVERING RESULTS

Delivery and takeaway services are driving permanent soft drink revenues in foodservice, according to Britvic's latest report

Foodservice businesses have found strong and growing revenue streams in delivery following the pandemic, according to Britvic's 2022 Soft Drinks Review. This in turn has unlocked a significant opportunity to bolster soft drinks sales from consumers who have incorporated the format into their everyday lives.

After moving into delivery out of necessity to continue trading during the pandemic, foodservice outlets have opened new and permanent revenues, which grew by 50% in 2020. Volume sales rose by a further 6.5% in 2021, adding £0.7bn of additional revenue.

Nearly a third (29%) of delivery occasions now contain a soft drink, with a high proportion of orders including a combination of food and drink, as consumers add on sales to justify delivery fees or negate them by reaching a value threshold.

Food and drink delivery is expected to grow by 5.3%

in 2022, showing the format isn't slowing, providing foodservice businesses with £13.3bn of revenue. Even after lockdown restrictions eased, consumers made delivery part of their repertoire, increasing orders by 9% in the 12 weeks to 23rd January 2022.

Delivery accounted for £2 in every £10 spent in foodservice in 2021 and is on an upward trajectory as many consumers maintain their order-in habits post-pandemic. In the past, foodservice delivery had relied on the 'treat' occasion, usually in the evenings and at weekends, but now Brits are ordering meals to their homes during the day and are doing so on most occasions to have a better work/life balance.

The number of people ordering lunch at home to spend more time with their partner has increased by 27% since 2020. Almost a third (29%) are ordering at dinner time because they have no food in the house, while another 26% are

ordering in to spend more time with family and friends.

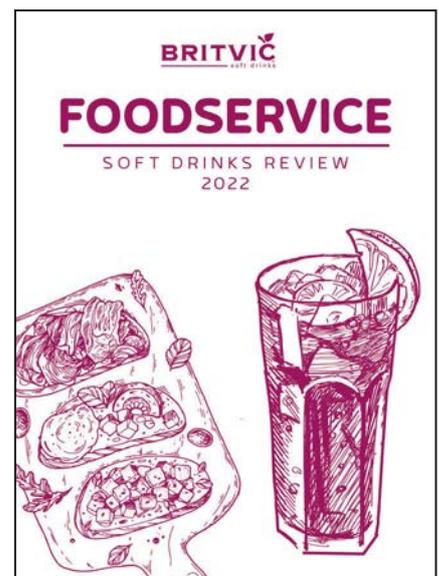
"Clearly, foodservice has changed its relevance in households across the UK following the pandemic," said Katy Watts, head of channel development (foodservice and licensed) for Britvic. "It has become a part of people's everyday lives as more options and delivery services have emerged, making it more accessible and permissible for people to order in the brands they'd buy from when out of home.

"There is more room for growth within the format, especially when it comes to meal deals, as big brands with long-established presence in the market are dominating, achieving 57% share of delivery occasions, increasing to almost 80% when soft drinks are included.

"Quick-service

restaurants capitalise on soft drink delivery due to the availability of meal deals that often include soft drinks. Meal deals and box formats continue to prove popular and are easier for customers to order than selecting multiple options." ¹

"There is more room for growth within the format"



To read the full report, go to britvic.com/soft-drinks-review

DEEP FRIED TOMATO PIE BALLS WITH CHILLI SAUCE

MCCORMICK AMBASSADOR DJ BBQ CREATED THESE AS A VEGETARIAN OPTION WITH ADDED OOMPH FROM CHOLULA HOT SAUCE



METHOD

To make the tomato pie:

- In a large bowl, add the cheese, onion and mayonnaise. Add a glug of Worcestershire sauce, oregano and a pinch of salt and pepper. Mix well.
- Grease a medium-sized ovenproof dish with butter, making sure you hit the sides so the pie doesn't stick.
- Cover the base of the pan with some of the bread.
- Cover the bread with a layer of sliced tomatoes, slightly overlapped. Season with salt and cracked pepper.
- Add another layer of cubed bread.
- Using a spatula, cover the bread with half the cheese mix.

- Save your best-looking tomato slices for the top and layer them with a slight overlap onto the cheese mix.
- Slather the rest of the cheese mix on top of the tomatoes.
- Scatter on the red chilli and spring onion slices.
- Crack a bit more pepper on top.
- Make sure your cooker is at around 190°C and cook for 35 to 55 minutes.

For the tomato pie balls:

- On a BBQ, dirty cook the onion, garlic and chillies.
- First, place the onions on the coals and once the onions are tender, place on the garlic bulb.
- After two minutes, add the

chillies. Take everything off the coals once charred and smokey.

- Once cooled, remove the onion flesh and garlic flesh, and add to a blender with the rest of the ingredients and spike with Cholula.
- Season with a good amount of sea salt - this will keep in the fridge for a good few weeks.
- Spoon 50g chunks out of the tomato pie and roll into balls.
- Place your flour, egg and breadcrumbs into wide bowls, coat each ball into the flour, egg and breadcrumbs and rest on a tray.
- Get your oil hot (180°C) and deep fry until golden and crispy.
- Serve with the chilli sauce.

INGREDIENTS

- Knob of butter or olive oil
- 100g mayonnaise
- 150g mature cheddar cheese, grated
- 1 onion, peeled and grated
- 1 tsp of dried oregano
- Salt
- Cracked pepper
- A good glug of Worcestershire sauce
- 6-8 large ripe tomatoes sliced, ends removed
- 10 slices of day-old white bread or use a sourdough. Cut the hard edges off. Cut or rip into cubes
- 1 spring onion, sliced
- 1 red chilli, sliced (optional)
- 200g plain flour
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 200g panko breadcrumbs

CHILLI SAUCE

- 2 red onions, whole
- 2 bulb garlics, whole
- 16 red chillies
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 100ml tomato juice
- 1 lime, juiced
- Cholula

WHAT'S NEW

The latest products and services

KATERBAKE KHOUBZ

Central Foods has launched a new range of KaterBake Lebanese flatbreads for its foodservice customers. It features eye-catching beetroot, carrot and spinach flatbreads, along with plain versions. The flavoured options are available in 10" diameter, while the plain is available in 8", 10" and 12".

Also known as khoubz, the Arabic word for bread, the KaterBake Lebanese flatbreads are extremely versatile and more than earn their keep in any kitchen. They can be used as wraps, pizza bases, traditional accompaniments to hummous and dips, or for dipping into olive oil flavoured with herbs.

Gordon Lauder, managing director of Central Foods, said: "Many foodservice operators have streamlined or simplified their menus as a result of the Covid pandemic due to staff shortages, supply chain issues or uncertainties over demand. Products like the KaterBake Lebanese flatbreads can be a blessing in any kitchen, as they are so versatile and can be served in a number of different ways at different points in the day."

centralfoods.co.uk



HOT RECIPES

To celebrate the addition of Cholula Hot Sauce to its portfolio, McCormick has created a new recipe book. It brings together 11 of the UK's top chefs to showcase the exceptional flavour of Mexico's number one hot sauce brand.

Entitled *Fusión Mexicana*, the selection unites some of the

UK's most exciting chefs, including Nathan Outlaw and Lisa Goodwin-Allen. Each takes Cholula and blends it seamlessly with their own signature cooking style, using it to elevate and put their own unique stamp on dishes.

Ian Craddock, senior research chef for McCormick, said: "Dishes rooted in flavours from as far apart as Vietnam, Cornwall, Sri Lanka and Spain are showcased beautifully in *Fusión Mexicana*. Cholula's capacity as a sauce, marinade or dip is demonstrated perfectly by the recipes we've collated and is real testament to its versatility as a product."

mccormickforchefs.com



CREED CAFÉ

Creed Foodservice has launched a new café innovation space at its High Wycombe base. The Hub has been designed to emulate the customer experience for café and leisure brands. Completely adaptable, it has been created to allow businesses of all sizes to simulate and scrutinise their offering.

Designed to mimic modern café spaces, the space is decked with cosy sofas, neon signs and planting. It can be utilised by any of Creed's customers who are looking for support evolving their food and drink offer.

Anna Clapson, insights manager for Creed, said: "At Creed we really do believe that the best way to evolve, develop and improve your offering is to experience how it could feel for yourself. It's for this reason that we created The Hub. Now, our customers really can live the experience that they are trying to create themselves."

creedfoodservice.co.uk



SUNSHINE ON A PLATE

A government study has estimated that more than one in 10 adults in the UK are deficient in vitamin D, which is required to maintain healthy bones and muscles. In a bid to combat this, Major has launched a range of gravy granules with added vitamin D.

Completely unique to the industry, Major Gluten Free Gravy Granules with added Vitamin D are available in a choice of meat or poultry flavours, free from allergens, suitable for vegetarians and vegans, and meet 2024 salt standards. They create a gravy that is thick, flavoursome and, importantly, a great source of vitamin D.

majorint.com

RELIABLE REFRIGERATION

Aquilo Refrigeration has launched a brand-new, future-proof range of hydrocarbon cooled commercial fridges and freezers, developed to deliver high-spec refrigeration at entry level prices. With a focus on sustainability, reliability, functionality and easy maintenance, Aquilo aims to produce the refrigeration that caterers demand.

The entire range exclusively utilises R290 hydrocarbon refrigerant which possesses the naturally occurring, non-toxic qualities that have made it one of the most climate-friendly and cost-efficient refrigerants available today. This means that all the fridges and freezers are non-ozone depleting and have a global warming potential rating of under five. Temperature recovery is also enhanced and energy consumption is reduced.

aquilorefrigeration.co.uk



CONSISTENT COOKING

Using innovative technology, Cuisinequip's new High Capacity LightFry cooks food with the same great taste, texture and consistency as an oil-based fryer. This has the potential to achieve a healthier menu that is also better for the environment and eliminates the need to purchase cooking oil.

The new LightFry offers a greater output of 32kg/hour (up from 22kg/hour in the standard unit) and can produce 600g of French fries in just three to four minutes. A capacity of 200g to 2.5kg makes the unit ideal for high footfall sites and those looking to cook multiple menu items in a short space of time.

cuisinequip.co.uk



ETHICAL EATING

Edward Weston, sales and marketing executive for Savanta, on how gen Z continues to shop ethically – despite the cost-of-living crisis

As the pandemic subsided and climate change returned to the forefront of everyone’s vision, becoming environmentally friendly continues to hold vast potential for businesses. Positioning sustainability as a core attribute of a brand’s makeup has been an effective way for brands to ‘tick the box’ for corporate social responsibility and generate positive buzz, with increased numbers of consumers being willing to pay more for products that meet their ethical standards.

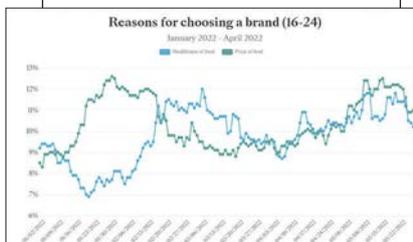
A previous study by Savanta found that food is the area where green credentials most likely affect consumers’ purchasing decisions. And, as consumer consciousness around climate issues has grown exponentially, the opportunities for businesses in the eating-out sector to harness this cannot be ignored.

Here, gen Z is a particularly powerful audience for brands to focus on. Representative of ‘the future’, this audience is the most likely to consider the environment when

shopping for food and groceries, with millennials being the most willing to spend more on average to be environmentally friendly.

Sustainable purchases typically place a greater strain on the wallet. On average, organically produced foods cost three times the amount compared to those that are higher in sugar and fat. And with inflation causing supermarket prices to soar, it will be tempting to forfeit ethical eating for a cheaper food shop.

The onslaught of increased living costs in the UK from mortgages/rent to travel and food will impact consumers’ ethical consumption choices. Looking at gen Z food attitudes in the last year, the availability of ‘vouchers or discounts’ as a deciding factor to dine out has increased by 13%. This highlights that this audience has become more cost-conscious when choosing



where, and what, to eat.

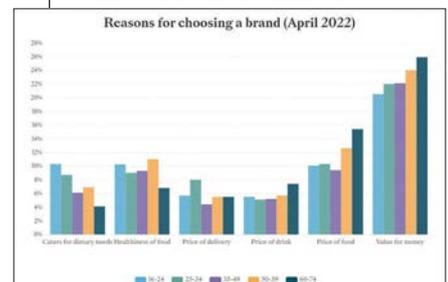
Nevertheless, this hasn’t affected gen Z’s choice to eat healthily. For this demographic, ‘healthiness of food’ has increased alongside ‘cost of food’ in consideration as a reason for choosing a brand since January. Notably, gen Z is the most engaged with alternative diets to improve their carbon footprint, with 11% identifying as vegan or vegetarian in 2021.

Data below-left from BrandVue, Savanta’s market intelligence platform, shows that despite the Russian invasion of Ukraine forcing UK price rises, gen Z is yet to compromise its healthy shopping habits to save money.

Younger generations are willing to pay more for products that meet their ethical standards, with data from YouthSight’s State of the Youth Nation, the UK’s leading gen Z insight tracker, highlighting that one in five young people believe that having ethical values is the most important brand attribute. In addition to this, gen Z rates ‘value for money’ the

“Gen Z is a particularly powerful audience for brands to focus on”

least out of all generations in the eating-out sector. This further highlights that this audience is more willing to endure rising inflation prices to continue eating ethically.



Being more likely to feel strongly about environmental or welfare issues, gen Z remains more able than older generations to be ‘ethically conscious’ and therefore continues to be an important audience for health-conscious brands to engage with.



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