## Reach Young Consumers WITH GLOBAL FOODS

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**Consumers are always craving variety** and now, as more are getting back to their pre-pandemic routines, including commuting to work, convenience stores can encourage foodservice purchases by offering newer and more exciting options.

Global cuisines offer retailers the opportunity to strike the perfect balance between novelty and approachability as they expand the menu—making sure that shoppers don't need to visit a competitor's store or a local quick-service restaurant in order to try something new. And when it comes to global foods, Mexican-inspired fare offers the perfect opportunity for innovation.

## Demand for international flavors

Mainstream global flavors (i.e., broadly popular cuisines such as Mexican, Italian and Chinese) make for a great addition to the c-store foodservice menu. The vast majority (84%) of consumers say they anticipate purchasing mainstream global foods at least as often as they already do, if not more, in the future, according to Technomic's 2020 Global Food and Beverage Consumer Trend Report. Importantly, consumers are seeking these foods outside of traditional restaurants, with 55% of consumers saying they order global foods from grocery or convenience-store prepared food sections at least monthly—up from 47% in 2018.

Among the aforementioned popular global cuisines, Mexican is hard to beat in terms of sales-driving power. Technomic's *Global Food* report identifies Americanized takes on Mexican food (e.g. Tex-Mex) as a growing trend. Consumers' most-preferred LatinAmerican foods include familiar dishes such as quesadillas, burritos and tacos with burritos ranking among the fastest growing offerings in terms of menu penetration.

It's no coincidence that the bestselling Mexican dishes are all handheld foods that are as easy to take on the go as they are to enjoy on premise. And for younger generations, foodservice offerings that help them keep up with their busy schedules are always in demand.

## Reaching younger consumers

Millennials and Gen Z are especially important demographics for foodservice operators of all stripes to target. According to Technomic's 2020 *Generational Consumer Trend* Report, millennials and Gen Z report eating meals away from home more than any of the other generations.

Younger consumers' higher frequency of away-from-home dining occasions may lend itself to their greater demands for variety; 55% of millennials and 51% of Gen Z—more than any other generations—say they enjoy trying



different foods. Similarly, most millennials and many Gen Zers say they prefer to visit foodservice operators that offer new or innovative flavors and ingredients. In short, novelty and variety are paramount for retailers who want to compete for younger consumers' loyalties.

The popularity of Mexican-inspired fare among younger generations offers yet another opportunity for future growth. Mexican food's mainstream success is especially prevalent among younger consumers; it's Gen Z's No. 1 most-preferred cuisine and is millennials' No. 2 (following American), with most Gen Z and millennial consumers saying they would likely order Mexican if it was available when they're dining out.

## Keep it convenient

Beyond flavor preferences, when it

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comes to preferred formats and service styles, younger generations tend to prioritize convenience. Millennials order takeout for 40% of foodservice occasions—more frequently than any other generation—and Gen Z says they opt for takeout nearly as often at 37% of occasions, according to Technomic's *Generational* report, so it's crucial for retailers to take that into account.

Finding fare that accommodates their

busy schedules is important to these consumers, especially those commuting to work or school. Thirty-seven percent of Gen Z and 31% of millennials say they snack instead of eating a traditional meal when they're stressed. For c-stores catering to consumers on the go, crafting menu items that offer the satisfaction of a full meal with the convenience of a snack is a formula for success.

Quick, portable foods such as E.A. Sween's San Luis<sup>®</sup> line of individually packaged burritos, quesadillas and breakfast wraps are the perfect solution for shoppers seeking a quick bite. Importantly, the heat-and-eat formula doesn't just offer quick service and convenience for consumers, but also minimizes prep time for c-store employees behind the scenes.

Made with quality ingredients and fresh-Mex flavors inspired by authentic fare, San Luis burritos, quesadillas and breakfast wraps offer the bold flavors and portable formats consumers love. Available in a number of crowd-pleasing options, including spicier recipes (such as the Spicy Red Hot Beef & Bean Burrito), meatless meals (such as the Bean & Cheese Burrito and Three Cheese Quesadilla) and easy all-day breakfast offerings (including the Breakfast Scrambler Wrap and Sunrise Breakfast Burrito), the line's variety of on-trend eats helps ensure the selection never gets boring-even for the most frequent shoppers.

As c-stores edit and expand their foodservice menu to leverage trends and cater to younger shoppers, solutions that keep costs and labor low are crucial. With E.A. Sween's San Luis line, offering a variety of quality Mexicaninspired eats requires no prep work beyond heating and serving.

To learn more about E.A. Sween's San Luis fresh-Mex foods, <u>CLICK HERE.</u>



