

Short Takes

Dining Insights, Spring 2010

How much will customers pay for lunch in the company café?

Five to eight dollars, more than 70% of respondents said in separate surveys of employees' dining preferences at two companies. In both cases, a 500-employee technology company and a larger pharmaceutical company, the surveys were part of planning processes for new staff cafes.

But not everyone is going to spend that much. At one company, 70% said they bring lunch from home. At the other, 94% say they have lunch at their desks at least a few times a week. It's likely lunch sales will average about \$4.00 to \$4.50.

HEALTHY DINING NOTES

Americans slowly are making up their minds to eat more healthful meals at least part of the time. In a survey by *Restaurants & Institutions*, 45.8% of respondents said they choose more healthful meals when dining out. - *Restaurants & Institutions*

"If you look at where the consumer is regarding the sourcing of food and the production of food, they have become much more riveted on learning about where their food comes from, as well as the different production methods."

- Hudson Riehle, Sr. VP, National Restaurant Assn., quoted in *QSR* magazine

A new national template for providing healthier foods and sustainable facilities in federal building dining centers has been introduced by the General Services Administration. The first café is in the State De-partment. - GSA press release

Portion Off the Pounds, a new wellness initiative at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base shows military and civilian personnel "how to use portion control instead of always counting their calories" to lose weight. - USAF press release

Prompted by customer preferences and shifting dining trends, some chain restaurant chains have begun offering lower-calorie and more healthful menu choices. - *Los Angeles Times*

Adding calorie counts to menu signs at a student dining center resulted in an increase in sales of lower-calorie entrees, a study at Ohio State Univ. Found. When the calorie information was removed, sales returned to their previous pattern. - *Nation's Restaurant News*

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Whoppie pies – sweet, white icing sandwiched between two cakelike chocolate cookies – has become a full-blown foodie phenom, desired by fashionable Man-hattanites, noted in gourmet magazines and reinterpreted with sophisticated ingredients - *The Baltimore Sun*

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Four in 10 U.S. Consumers said they became ill due to something they ate in the past two years, according to a poll by Harris Interactive. - *Food Institute Report*

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Letter grades resulting from health department inspections will have to be posted at dining facilities entrances in New York City, beginning in July. - *Nation's Restaurant News*

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A new generation of vending machines features an imbedded, networked computer and 46-in. LCD screen where a consumer can get a 360° view of the snack and nutritional information.

- *Automatic Merchandiser*