

**Trending
Now**

5 TRENDS TO WATCH

January 2022

Operator:
Robot Ordering

Consumer:
Social Justice Activism

Menu:
Gen Z Loyalty

New Items/LTOs:
Breakfast Beverages

Global:
Price Sensitivity

 **Ventura Foods®**

Operator

ROBOT ORDERING



16% of Gen Z consumers say robots that can take their order are very appealing



Image Source: Shutterstock

What to Know

Technology in restaurants has grown rapidly in the pandemic but perceptions of technology and robot usage in foodservice continue to evolve.

Among the two primary digitally savvy generational cohorts, the appeal of robots and unmanned means of delivery for restaurant operations has diminished over time.

Gen Zers see a **greater two-year percentage-point decrease in appeal of robots** taking orders compared to millennials.

What's Next

Operators should consider consumer ordering habits and demographics when incorporating technology into the ordering or delivery process.

As consumers get more accustomed to seeing technology in foodservice, they may be more observant of what it adds to or takes away from their experience.

SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISM



44% of Gen Z consumers believe restaurants should play an active role in climate change issues



Image Source: Shutterstock

What to Know

Younger consumers have always been socially conscious, but **relative to the consumer average, Gen Z diners tend to overindex for the number who say restaurants should play an active role in various social justice issues.**

Issues closely related to the foodservice industry—fair wages and food insecurity—matter most to consumers. Climate change and LGBTQ+ rights are the issues where the Gen Z gap is highest relative to the consumer average.

What's Next

Supporting social justice in either passive or active ways resonates strongly with many consumers and carries potential to build brand loyalty with current and future frequent guests.

Select brands, like Shake Shack and Smoothie King, which enjoy a high proportion of younger diners among their guest base, feature core users with above-average interest in social justice issues.

Menu

GEN Z LOYALTY



27% of Gen Z consumers visit fast-food restaurants monthly or more often



What to Know

Gen Z consumers continue to have the highest monthly-plus visitation at quick-service restaurants. This is likely due in part to life stage and income. Many **quick-service operators are appealing to Gen Z consumers through celebrity meals and endorsements to help build loyalty and draw in consumers on their apps.** This is seen at McDonald's with the Travis Scott meal, and at Dunkin' through a collaboration with TikTok star Charlie D'Amelio.

What's Next

Expect to continue to see celebrity collaborations at quick service especially as app downloads and consumer loyalty continues to become top of mind. As Gen Z consumers continue to gain income, their loyalty will become increasingly important.

Considering both menu and brand innovation will be important in continuing to engage with this generation.

BREAKFAST BEVERAGES



Mocha Iced Coffee
from Del Taco

indexes at **233**
among consumers
ages 18-29, much
higher than the
average (100)



What to Know

Younger, Gen Z consumers are known for their higher interest in unique and trending innovation at restaurants. **Looking at breakfast beverages specifically, sweet-flavored ingredients and cold coffee beverages index highest for Gen Z consumer purchase intent.**

Examples like the Iced Matcha White Chocolate Tea Latte from Caribou Coffee and Mocha Iced Coffee from Del Taco showcase very sweet, indulgent flavors.

What's Next

LTOs are a great way to drive sales and traffic, especially among Gen Zers. Shifting breakfast beverages to highlight sweet ingredient add-ons or changing a signature beverage to include a cold version as an LTO can help to draw in Gen Z consumers or test appeal among the brand's audience.

Global

PRICE SENSITIVITY



30% of global Gen Z consumers say they are seeking a good value at foodservice because they are on a budget



Image Source: Shutterstock

What to Know

Globally, **Gen Zers think that the price for the overall dining experience and quality of the food are the most important components of the value equation. Budget constrictions are particularly prominent with Gen Z consumers in Southeast Asia.**

The top countries in which Gen Zers report that value allows them to more easily justify spending money on eating out are the Philippines (64%), Indonesia (60%) and Singapore (55%).

What's Next

When seeking to attract Gen Zers by offering a good value, **operators should focus on quality and price. For members of Gen Z, quality meals do not have to be overly complex, unique or customizable.**

For these consumers, consider tried-and-true flavors that are bold and exciting rather than exotic or unfamiliar.