

The Sandwich Scoop

Sandwiches are a guaranteed sale. But what types should you sell, and how are you going to get them into your cooler? Find out how four different sandwich spots stack up ... Dagwood-style. By Abbey Lewis

Inside the Hinsdeli



THE HINSDELI

(Hinsdale, Ill.)

Located in a nondescript Shell station at a busy suburban-Chicago intersection, the Hinsdeli is certainly a diamond in the rough. One step inside the convenience store reveals an expansive deli and a huge menu full of breakfast, lunch and dinner options.

Sandwich strategy: "To this day I have people that live in the area and work in the area that come in and say, 'Wow, I never realized there was this huge deli in here,'" says Robin Gabriel, manager of the Hinsdeli. "It's not like this is a little, tiny deli either. It's a good-sized deli ... everything is homemade right here."

Decision to make sandwiches in-house: "We've had a deli at this location since we opened 27 years ago. Originally we had roast beef, ham, turkey, Kaiser rolls and onion rolls, and

that's what we made. I came about and I said we should really have a few other things. We've got lettuce, we've got tomatoes, we could probably make a few green salads. And it just snowballed from there."

Top-selling sandwich:

The deli is famous for its freshly made Nancy's Tuna Salad (\$4.19): Albacore tuna, crispy celery, onion and hardboiled egg. "People come from all over the place, and they're always talking about Nancy's Tuna Salad."

Labor/sandwich type:

Sandwiches are either made to order or premade each morning. In the summer, staffers grill hamburgers, hot dogs and turkey breast outdoors.

Price point/margin: The 60% to 65% margin depends on the sandwich. Clientele varies from those with little pocket change to those with a lot. So sandwiches vary in price as well. A

half-sandwich costs \$2.29, while a custom, double-meat sandwich costs \$5.79.

Cost-saving methods:

The secret, says Gabriel, is employee retention. One employee has been with the Hinsdeli for 17 years, another for five, and two others for four years each. Also, with creative cross-utilization of product, the Hinsdeli wastes very little: Today's pot roast hot lunch becomes tomorrow's pot roast sandwich, served on an onion roll with mashed potatoes and gravy.

Clientele: Customers comprise a mix of office workers, construction workers and well-to-do locals.

Sandwich flops: For Mardi Gras, the Hinsdeli tried a po'boy sandwich. "We were really excited, but I think we sold two or three."

WESTERN CONVENIENCE STORES INC.

(Centennial, Colo.)

Mark Norek, marketing director for Western Convenience Stores, says the company has been waiting for a fresh sandwich product for years. So when wholesaler McLane Co. unveiled its Fresh on the Go sandwich program, this 37-store chain jumped on board. Fresh on the Go takes advantage of McLane's established cold-chain services to deliver sandwiches, yogurt, cut fruit, cheese, ready-made salads and other perishable foods.

Sandwich strategy: The quality is excellent, Norek says, and the ace-in-the-hole is the exceptional roll or bun.

Decision to source sandwiches from a wholesaler:

Norek is all about keeping prices down. A branded concept would have been too expensive, and he didn't like the added labor and food waste costs of an in-house sandwich program. "We're bare bones and we like to keep it simple." Plus, Western Convenience Stores already had a working relationship with McLane.

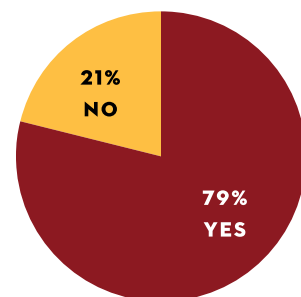
Top-selling sandwich:

Ham and Swiss cheese—no lettuce or tomato, because they can compromise the freshness of the sandwich.

Labor/sandwich type:

Sandwiches are premade and prepackaged, delivered fresh weekly to each store.

Price point/margin: This is a point of contention for Norek. He thinks McLane sets the price point a bit



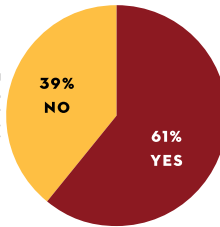
HAVE YOU PURCHASED ANY TYPE OF SANDWICH AWAY FROM HOME IN THE PAST 60 DAYS?

CREDIT: TECHNOMIC, 2009 - 1,500 CONSUMERS

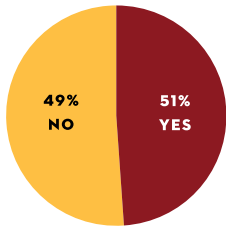


Crustano's Tuscan roast beef panini

ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE VARIETY OF SANDWICHES AVAILABLE TO YOU AT SUB SHOPS AND DELIS?



ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE VARIETY OF SANDWICHES AVAILABLE TO YOU AT SIT-DOWN RESTAURANTS?



CREDIT: TECHNOMIC, 2009

product because “all the work is already done,” says Baird. He was in the midst of a location redesign, and they offered a lot of assistance by providing all the nuts and bolts of recipes, signage, uniforms and the conceptualization of the brand.

Top-selling sandwich: The Cubano sandwich, with ham, pork loin and Swiss cheese.

Labor/sandwich type: Made to order based on menu. Baird procures Tyson meat, but he is responsible for bread, cheese, condiments and any other fixings.

Price point/margin: Sandwiches range in price from \$2.99 to \$5.99 with a sliding margin based on the sandwich. “We have to sometimes bite the bullet if we get a high-end sandwich. So our food costs can be much higher.”

Cost-saving methods: Much of the Tyson product can be used on multiple sandwiches, allowing for cross-utilization of product.

Clientele: ENMU students and faculty.

Sandwich flops: He can't explain it, but Baird says a breakfast sandwich served on a toasted sub roll with scrambled eggs, sausage or bacon, cheese and green chilies “just didn't go. I don't know why.” ♦♦

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