

Winter Warmers!

By Max Jenvey of Oxxygen Marketing Partnership, a strategic management agency that delivers business acceleration processes and brand development within the foodservice, bakery and convenience retail sectors.

With all that wind, rain, sleet and snow it's a miracle any one ventured out over the holiday season but thankfully they did and most of them were looking for winter warmers! Our colleagues from HIM! found out that 78% of the café & coffee shop customers enjoy their food in-store, spending up to 45 minutes to relax and unwind.

Knowing that our customers spend a little longer in store during the winter months it's important to increase their average spend. HIM! told us that 49% of café and coffee shop visitors would take advantage of a discounted re-fill; that's half of your customers who would spend more with us by combining two or more items for as little as a 10% discount off the total price.

Turn the coldest and wettest time of the year into your opportunity to sell more than the competition with comforting winter warmers along with hot drinks – if you don't already sell coffee now is the perfect time to start.

Warm up your customers with some traditional British winter warmers, some popular favourites are soup & a roll, toasted sandwiches, porridge and always the classic sausage roll.

Consider your different day-parts as it's important that we promote the right products, at the right time in the right place. Starting with the morning, you should know that on average people leave their homes 13 times a month without breakfast (HIM!) which means promote your porridge and hot bakery from outside your store right up to your front counter. Why not offer different toppings and fillings for croissants - baked beans, cheese, bacon or sausage to improve your breakfast menu – think warm and filling.

Regarding lunch our colleagues at HIM! remind us that not everyone eats between 12 and 2pm, therefore we should promote our winter warming baked potatoes, chicken soup and toasted sandwiches between 11 and 3 daily.

At supper time it's the combination of comfort food with a healthy twist – vegetable hash or sticky warm flapjack made with fresh oats and honey or capitalise on the nations weakness for apple and cinnamon combinations – a real opportunity to become our customers' favourite winter fuel allowance.

Start 2010 off with a BANG! Review your offer now, look at what you are selling, what sells well, what are your opportunities to increase sales. This is an ideal time of year to plan ahead and rest assured we'll be right here to support you every step of the way!