

Healthy Food on the Go

By Max Jenvey of Oxygen Marketing Partnership, a strategic management consultancy that focuses on business and brand development within the foodservice, bakery and convenience sectors.

Picture this: You've left home without eating breakfast and, on the way to your second or third meeting, you realise that if you don't grab something now, you won't eat until dinner. Does this sound familiar? Or, more importantly, is this what your customers experience throughout the week?

Fortunately for bakery retailers, the answer is "yes!" and therein lies your opportunity to sell them the breakfast, lunch and snacking products they need. The key question is, how do you, as independent retailers, bakery or café owners help your customers get it right? It's simple: with the healthy eating trend growing ever stronger, customers are looking out for low carb, highly nutritional value options, so why not help them by introducing fresh fruit, nuts and cereal bars right at the front counter? These products are ideal for impulse purchases and will increase your average spend.

Major UK manufacturers, such as Greencore, produce and supply prepared salads, sushi and healthy balanced sandwiches – an ideal solution if you don't have production facilities in-house. Obviously freshly prepared is always preferred by customers, so is it time to review your fillings? Could you introduce more healthy protein-based options such as chicken, tuna, egg and beans?

Leading UK nutrition and health consultant Yvonne Bishop-Weston (Foods for Life) recommends nutritionally enhanced value added choices: "Mood-balancing and energy-sustaining higher-protein, higher fibre, essential fat rich and nutrient-dense rather than calorie-dense snack options are still in short supply on our high streets."

Clearly there are times throughout the day when everyone needs a more filling, yet tasty snack. Make your offer complete by including favourites such as sausage rolls, Cornish pasties and cheese & onion slices; bake little and often to ensure the freshest products available. And remember, not everybody's lunch is from 12 to 2pm, so be prepared and have your healthy snacks and customer favourites ready throughout the day.