

## Trade show tips

By Max Jenvey of strategic marketing agency Oxygen, which focuses on brand development within the bakery, coffee and café, retail foodservice and convenience sectors

As food-to-go consultants, we often get asked about where you should turn to as a business for new insights or strategies on how to sell more products – from bakers and café owners to independent retailers.

Never has this been more important than in these harsh economic times.

Exhibitions can be an inspirational source of market insights, and we even picked up a few tips ourselves when we got involved in organising the seminars at the Café+ show in March. For example, did you know that people leave the house 13 times a month without eating breakfast, but 60% said they would consume bakery products if they were available to them out of home? That nugget came from BB columnist Georgina Wild of market research firm him!, one of the speakers at the Birmingham NEC.

Or how about this one: three-quarters of convenience store customers are men and, on average, they buy 2.1 items per visit. If the product they had in mind is not available, 44% of them would still buy an alternative product, providing they could find it in the store. This proves that ensuring the availability of your products in-store makes all the difference to your success. Another presenter, Marco Arrigo from Illy Coffee, believed bakery retailers and independent cafés could challenge, and beat, the big coffee chain brands by innovating and focusing on delivering three best-of-class hot beverages – espresso, cappuccino and café latte – with an emphasis on the art of barista coffee theatre and linking sales to bakery and confectionery categories.

Another top tip was the potential to increase coffee sales by over 30%, through using a good bean-to-cup machine, such as the one demonstrated by coffee machine supplier Melitta, or with a barista offer.

People are prepared to pay a price premium for a hand-crafted hot drink, which can help push your customers' average bakery food and hot drink spend through the £5 barrier – a price point that is all the more challenging as people continue to tighten their purse strings.