



# GHRA In Action

OUR MEMBERS ARE OUR MISSION!

VOL. 10 | APRIL 2023

## Consumers' Desire for Affordable Treats Lifts Candy Category

## Risk Factors for Foodborne Illness (and How to Avoid Them)

## *Federal Appeals Court OKs \$5- to \$6-Billion Swipe Fee Settlement for Retailers*



# In Store SIGNAGE

DETAILS	SIGNAGE TYPE	MESSAGE
Ferrero - Tic Tac	Shelf Wobblers	New Flavor: Strawberry & Cream
Haribo		New Items: Funtastic Mix, Rainbow Worms, Sour Kicks
Barcel - Takis		New Intense Flavors
Bimbo - Mrs. Baird's Donuts	Shelf Cards	Mrs. Baird's Donuts 6ct & Honey Buns, \$1.99
Frito Lay Flamin' Hot XL		Flamin' Hot Doritos XXL, 2 for \$9.00 (reg \$5.99)
Hershey's - Reese's King Size		Reese's King Size, 2 for \$5.00
Pennzoil	Static Clings	Choosing the Right Oil
KDP Ashoc		Ashoc 16oz & Accelerator 12oz, 2 for \$4.00
KDP Snapple		Snapple 16oz, 2 for \$4.00
Pepsi Gatorade		Gatorade & G Fit 28oz, 2 for \$5.00
Pepsi Brisk		Brisk 1-liter, Buy 2 Get 1 Free
Pepsi Muscle Milk		Muscle Milk 14oz, 2 for \$6.00
Pepsi Aquafina		Aquafina 1-liter, Buy 2 Get 1 Free
Red Bull EDLP		Red Bull 8.4oz, \$2 for \$4.59
Yumi		Best Brands Available Here! (Dreyer's Nestle, Drumstick, HD)



*Coming Up:*  
**MAY**  
**PROMOTIONS**  
**SPANNER**  
 Gatorade 28oz &  
 Pepsi 20oz  
**POSTERS**  
 Vitamin Water 20oz  
 (from Coke)  
 Brisk 1-liter  
 Red Bull 8.4oz



# A NOTE FROM THE CEO

BRIAN TROUT, CEO

Greetings Members and, welcome to April!

GHRA will be holding the Annual General Body Meeting on Thursday April 27th at the Stafford Center. Please make plans to attend. I look forward to seeing you there.

As we enter the second quarter of 2023, I want to review some achievements of the first quarter. The cooler vault resets continue, the warehouse operations and inventory in-stock positions are improving significantly, and our Warehouse ordering app is significantly improved and continues to evolve for the better making it easier for our members to order the products they want.

We are seeing impressive results for the stores that are using the SKUPOS platform. The most recent report shows the average monthly financial rebate to be \$1000 per store. This platform is free for member stores to use and is generating significant cash for members. For those of you who have not signed up, please consider it – there is good money out there for you.

As you know our cooler vault rebate program is extremely valuable to our members and generates over \$20 million of hard cash for members annually and provides reduced cost of goods and promotional product offers to improve customer counts at your stores. This platform has been the basis for GHRA operation for the past 20 years. With the significant advancement of technology, readily available mobile phone access and Wi-Fi/5G capable networks; consumer loyalty platforms and targeted individualized marketing have created a new pathway for CPG companies to target their trade spending. This approach is called “retail media networks”. A retail media network is an advertising infrastructure that comprises a collection of digital channels (e.g., websites, apps) that are offered by a retail company to third-party brands for their various advertising purposes.

This retail media network opportunity is an avenue GHRA will invest in as we develop our Information Technology infrastructure that will support and propel member profitability.

The GHRA team is putting the final touches on the annual golf tournament on April 24, 2023 and we look forward to this opportunity to raise funds for the families of fallen police officers that serve and protect our communities in which we operate. I am truly proud of the work GHRA does to support our Police and first responders.

Thank you for your trust and your continued support, and as always, continued blessings!

Sincerely,

*Brian Trout*

OUR MEMBERS ARE OUR MISSION!

# In This Issue

■ APRIL 2023



- 15 *Innovation* IN ACTION
- 21 *Warehouse* IN ACTION
- 29 *In Store* IN ACTION
- 39 *Brands* IN ACTION
- 45 *Partners* IN ACTION

# Welcome Members

*On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff at GHRA,  
please welcome our new members:*

**FUZZY'S**

**B & J FOOD VALERO**

**PANCO FOOD MART #2**

**PALM EXPRESS**

**AIRPORT PRIMETIME**

**SWIFT FALLBROOK**

**LANDMARK**

**B & J EXPRESS**

**TESCO STOP**

**TEJANO MART #1**

**BRENHAM FOOD STOP #4**

**HARDY EXPRESS**



# Annual General Body Meeting 2023

GHRA will be hosting its Annual General Body Meeting on **Thursday, April 27, 2023**

**Place of Meeting:** The Stafford Centre

10505 Cash Rd. Stafford, TX 77477

<b>Time:</b>	Registration/Lunch	2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
	Meeting	3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
	Q&A	4:00 PM
	Tea/Snacks	4:15 PM

Only registered GHRA Authorized Representatives are permitted to attend.

If you have any questions, please call our office at (844) 777-GHRA.



# BUILDING A BIGGER BRAND FOR

## FIRST 25 STORES ONLY

MARKETING FEE - **\$0.00** LICENSING FEE - **\$0.00**

OPENING A KUDOS - **PRICELESS**

## THERE'S MORE! **ONLY 1% USAGE FEE**

In addition to waiving the licensing and monthly fee, you will enjoy a fee of only 1% of gross sales not to exceed \$1000/month.

\* The usage fee will remain unchanged for a period of sixty months from the date of execution of an agreement.

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL US AT  
**Jeffrey Reeder - [jreeder@ghraonline.com](mailto:jreeder@ghraonline.com)**



# Consumers' Desire for Affordable Treats Lifts Candy Category

Shifting consumer behaviors combined with inflation saw confectionery reach \$42.6 billion in sales last year.

By Convenience Store News

In 2022, confectionery category dollar sales grew 11.1 percent over 2021 and 22.1 percent over 2019, according to a new report from the National Confectioners Association (NCA).

The fourth annual State of Treating report found that consumers view chocolate and candy as a fun part of life (81 percent) and as an affordable treat (74 percent), which combined with inflation reaching a 40-year high, helped to drive \$42.6 billion in sales last year. Growth projections take the total category to \$54.3 billion in 2027.

“With high marks for favorability and permissibility, along with the majority of consumers agreeing that confectionery is an affordable treat, chocolate and candy sales grew despite economic pressures,” said John Downs, NCA president and CEO. “Consumers continue to treat with chocolate and candy to enhance their emotional well-being, celebrate holidays and enjoy everyday moments.”

The sales numbers support previous data seen in earlier customer analyses. Candy ranked at the top of online buyer search trends in 2022, while shifts away from eating out and out-of-house entertainment mean more consumers are snacking at home.

Other key findings from the NCA report include:

- 79 percent of consumers agree that physical health and emotional well-being are interconnected, and 86 percent agree that it is fine to occasionally treat yourself with chocolate or candy;
- 78 percent believe confectionery sharing and gifting are great traditions;
- 61 percent of shoppers look for confectionery products they have never purchased before, prioritizing innovation; and
- 43 percent of consumers prefer to learn about a brand’s environmental, social and governance efforts from the package label.

The report offers insights that fuse proprietary NCA consumer survey findings with syndicated category and channel performance data. Shopper information was collected using an online survey conducted in December 2022 among a national sample of 1,567 consumers between the ages of 18 and 75. The survey findings are overlaid with IRI retail measurement and household panel data. Future market predictions are provided by Euromonitor. The study was conducted by 210 Analytics. ■



# Looking Good! Appearance Standards in Your C-Store

By Ready Training Online

Appearance standards and customer service go hand in hand. Customers want to be greeted by employees who are well groomed and in uniform. They want to fuel up at a neat and tidy pump area. They want to quickly find items in organized and well-stocked shelves. And, of course, they want to grab their self-serve food and drinks from spotless areas. What if this doesn't happen? What if the trash can by the pump is overflowing, employees look like they just rolled out of bed, the shelves are bare or messy, and the last guy who got coffee left a filthy mess? Chances are good that customers who encounter problems like these will give your competition a try next time.

## Set Appearance Standards and Enforce Them

Remember to think about your customers as “guests,” and train your staff to do the same. When it comes to the appearance of your employees and your store, the details matter. It's up to you as a convenience store manager to set appearance standards for every facet of your business, train your staff members to meet and exceed those standards, and enforce them throughout every shift. Focus on these areas, at a minimum:

- Clean and professional personal appearance. Make sure your dress code and other personal appearance

standards are clear, and don't let employees slide if they don't meet expectations. Stand your ground, and send them home if you have to.

- Neat and clean store. Keeping both the interior and exterior of your store looking sharp inspires confidence from your customers. Make sure spills are cleaned up quickly, keeping in mind that this is an issue that relates to both appearance standards and safety. Slips and falls due to spills can be dangerous and costly.
- Well stocked shelves. Keep “convenience” top of mind by ensuring that customers can quickly find what they're looking for. This goes for end caps and promotional areas as well as general merchandise shelves and coolers.

## Appearance Standards Start and End with You

You must set a good example, not only with your own appearance, but also in how you deal with issues in the store. Do you walk past trash in the parking lot on your way in? Do you wait for staff members to notice and clean up spills? Lead by example. When you take a pro-active approach to exceeding appearance standards, your staff will do the same. ■





# Risk Factors for Foodborne Illness (and How to Avoid Them)

Offering foodservice options in your convenience store can mean a big increase in profits. That potential reward, however, comes with potential risk.

By Ready Convenience

If food is served and sold on your premises, you and your staff have a responsibility to ensure that basic food safety practices are followed. If they are not, you could give a customer a foodborne illness or even be at the center of a full-blown foodborne illness outbreak.

## What is Foodborne Illness?

Foodborne illness, also commonly called food poisoning, occurs when a person develops an infection or irritation caused by contaminated food. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines a foodborne illness outbreak as “an incident in which two or more persons experience a similar illness resulting from the ingestion of a common food.” The CDC estimates that foodborne illnesses affect 48 million people per year and result in 3,000 deaths. Approximately 800 outbreaks occur each year.

## What Causes It?

There are a variety of ways food can become contaminated and lead to foodborne illness. These contamination sources are broken down into three main categories: biological, chemical, and physical.

Biological contamination occurs when harmful pathogens

spread to food and are consumed. These include bacteria, viruses, yeasts, molds, and parasites.

Chemical contamination of food occurs when a chemical agent comes in contact with food, such as pesticides or cleaning agents.

Physical contamination occurs when a foreign object comes into contact with food. Examples of physical contaminants include hair, fingernails, plant stalks, pieces of plastic, or fragments of metal.

## How Can It Be Prevented?

The good news for food service providers is that most instances of foodborne illness can be prevented. The CDC has identified the five most common risk factors that you can manage with these actions:

1. Purchase food from safe sources.
2. Keep food at the correct temperatures.
3. Cook foods properly to the correct temperatures.
4. Clean and sanitize equipment properly.
5. Ensure personal hygiene practices are followed by all employees. ■



# Federal Appeals Court OKs \$5- to \$6-Billion Swipe Fee Settlement for Retailers

Merchant fees imposed by Visa, Mastercard at issue in case.

By CSP

A federal appeals court has given its preliminary approval for \$5 billion to \$6 billion in settlement money for retailers in a class-action lawsuit over the fees Visa and Mastercard charged merchants for accepting their cards as payment.

In the case called *In re Payment Card Interchange Fee and Merchant Discount Antitrust Litigation*, which dates back to 2005, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit agreed with a U.S. District Court's orders to settle the case and grant relief to retailers and other plaintiffs after the credit card giants violated antitrust laws by fixing interchange fees at excessive levels.

Stay up to date on the latest developments by visiting the official court-authorized settlement website:

**PaymentCardSettlement.com**

*It will be updated as new information is available.*

Convenience-store operators covered by the settlement can apply for an award at [www.PaymentCardSettlement.com](http://www.PaymentCardSettlement.com), which will be updated as new information is available. Those entitled to the award must have accepted Visa or Mastercard payments at any time from Jan. 1, 2004 to Jan. 25, 2019, and may not be on an excluded list of dismissed cases or late objectors, according to the website. Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, Murphy Oil USA, Sheetz, Kum & Go, Kwik Trip, QuikTrip, Wawa and RaceTrac Petroleum are among the convenience stores and fuel centers on the list of cases dismissed or settled earlier.

But the class-action case isn't finished. The district court has been told to reduce the size of the service awards for retailers in the case. Besides this, defendants and companies denied the opportunity to participate in the litigation are likely to file appeals. Several oil companies and fuels-industry associations were objectors and weren't part of the settlement. Recent motions were denied, in an effort to contain the case. The lawsuit involved \$523 million in legal fees, according to Reuters.

The case reflects how onerous the challenges are for convenience stores and fueling centers in their fight over what they considered to be excessive interchange fees from Visa and Mastercard.

Swipe fees continue to be an ongoing point of contention for retailers hit by COVID-19 and other economic issues affecting their sales. In September 2022, about 1,700 companies and more than 200 merchant trade groups asked the U.S. Congress to support the bipartisan Credit Card Competition Act of 2022, legislation that aims to enhance competition and choice in the credit card network market.

The case was filed in 2005 alleging Visa and Mastercard fixed their transaction costs—also called swipe fees or interchange fees—“at supracompetitive levels” in violation of the Sherman Act. These are the costs merchants pay to accept Visa and Mastercard payments at the register. The merchants have had little say in how much the credit card companies take in fees. Over 30 class-action lawsuits have been brought to court on behalf of retailers who said the fees were unfair, according to court documents.

While the class-action settlement includes about 12 million retailers, not all retailers were part of the settlement as some cases were settled or dismissed previously. For more information on which retailers are included, view the list of Dismissed Plaintiffs

As the lawyers involved argued over exactly which retailers would be included in the class-action case and how much they would receive in the settlement, new legal motions were spawned, but the courts denied many of these, such as a motion to intervene filed by attorneys for Jack Rabbit and 280 Station earlier this month. The fueling centers wanted their case to be decided before the settlement funds were awarded to ensure they would receive some of the money, but a district court deferred to the appeals court. ■



# BIG MADRE IS PARTNERING WITH DOOR DASH

We are ready to launch the 3rd party delivery program through DoorDash for Big Madre members. Below are the details for the program.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

- 🔥 Member will get a \$200 credit for marketing for the first 30 days after signing up.
- 🔥 We will roll 10% commission into the retail of the Big Madre Menu.
- 🔥 GHRA Food services team will build the menu for all locations. You will get a Free Setup and a Free Tablet for your location.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOUR CUSTOMER

When a customer goes to the Big Madre website and places an order online for delivery or pickup they will enjoy saving the 10% doordash direct fee. As a store owner, you only have to incur 2.9% credit card processing fee + \$.30 transaction fee.

**ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS FILL THE ORDER AND COLLECT THE MONEY!**

**For more information contact: Doug Boone - [dboone@ghraonline.com](mailto:dboone@ghraonline.com) | 281-295-5363**

*All information in this document is subject to change with notice.*



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