Why Daypart Strategy Matters in Convenience Store Foodservice

Matching meals to customer needs

WHERE C-STORES WIN, AND WHERE THEY CAN GROW

25%

of all food purchases at c-stores are breakfast trips, the channel's strongest meal

Circana (2025)

9%

Even c-store breakfast customers spend most of their breakfast money elsewhere: just 9% goes to c-stores, 77% to fast-food chains

Circana (2025)

6 in 100

consumers buy prepared food from a c-store at dinnertime, a meal most c-stores have yet to win

Datassential via NACS (2025)

70%

of Gen Z swap a meal for snacks each week, an occasion c-stores are built to serve

Datassential via NACS (2026)

WHAT CUSTOMERS WANT, BY TIME OF DAY

Breakfast
Speed, habit, one-hand food

Lunch
Value, variety, fast service

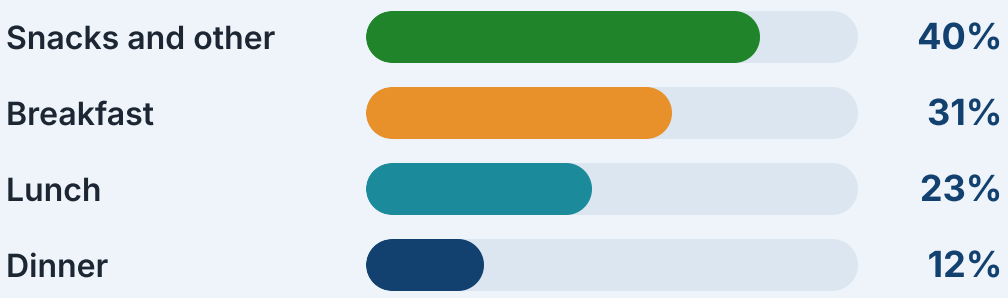
Snacking
Quick bites between meals

Dinner
Hot, complete, feeds a family

Late Night
Hot food that's ready now

Who eats while driving

Share of c-store food customers who ate while driving



Source: Technomic, base of 20,500 c-store foodservice consumers

Signs a daypart fits

- Steady traffic already in the store
- Equipment and staff can handle it
- Menu reuses current ingredients

Signs to wait

- Core dayparts not yet consistent
- Needs new equipment and hours
- No clear gap versus competitors

CHOOSING YOUR NEXT DAYPART

Read your traffic
Sales and visits by hour

Check capacity
Equipment, space, and labor

Reuse the menu
Stretch what you already make

Test and measure
Pilot before rolling out

Sources: Circana via CNBC (September 2025) and CSP; Datassential via NACS Magazine (March 2025, July 2026); Technomic via CSP (2026). Prepared by It's All Goods.