

CONDIMENT SOLUTIONS: Can anything be more disappointing?

By Bill Kost, NACC President, Michigan State University
 Retail Food Services Manager

I have been very fortunate to be in the concessions business at Michigan State University for over twenty years. During this time I have been involved with various condiment pump solutions that we have used at small and large events alike with various levels of success.

Our department still has many of the stainless steel variety such as the Server Product unit displayed below. While the durability of stainless steel is desirable the number of small parts that are involved in the pump



system are way too numerous and very easy to lose. The many non-profit organizations that we incorporate in our concession operation have a hard time assembling these units consistently and operation seems problematic with some part always missing and the units looking incomplete. The replacement parts are not cheap either which add to the lack of desirability of these units. One positive is that each unit has decent volume storage with each side able to house a one gallon capacity.

The second type of condiment unit we are using exclusively at Spartan Stadium (Football) is the style shown below.



This style is referred to as the Heinz Pour, Store, and Pump. The quantity contained within this unit is equal to a #10 can. While the free pumps are usually supplied by the distributor there is still limitations to the quantity of ketchup supplied and can make refilling during key times a problem. To circumvent the refilling problem we put out twice as many units but this can cut down on valuable condiment space for napkins and straws. The positives are that no can opener is needed but the pump when cleaned between events can be problematic to pump again without proper priming of ketchup – this is very frustrating.

The last style we have begun to experiment with is the unit shown below.



This unit is referred to the Heinz Keystone Ketchup Dispenser. This unit holds a 1.5 gallon bag of ketchup. It provides a great dispensing option for limited counter space and a large volume of customers, aka Football games. There are also very few pump parts making disassembly and assembly and cleaning of the entire unit is very simple and easy to teach to Non-profit groups and student staff. The only drawback that our department has run into is that the distributor in our area has required a payment of \$80 for each unit. While this condiment solution is better in so many ways than the other options covered we are looking for Heinz to help us lower the price on these units so that we can purchase for our entire systems use. Some NACC members like my good friend Bill McQuerry from University of Arizona have indicated that they get a certain amount of this style of dispensers free each year from their supplier. This exchange of information between schools is just one small example how the NACC can benefit any size school and their operation.

I hope this article has helped illustrate how frustrating determining the best condiment solution can be and I would suggest when looking for your solution that you consider the following when evaluating for your operation:

1. Does the capacity of the unit meet my operation needs?
2. Are the parts of the unit limited and difficult to lose?
3. Are the parts easy to clean?
4. Is the unit easy to disassemble and assemble by the staff?

I believe if you can find a unit that says "Yes" to all the above you will meet the needs of your valued customer and save money in the long run!

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MAINTAINING VALUE

By Joe Carney, University of Wisconsin

Now more than ever before consumers are looking to receive the most out of every dollar they spend. The never ending pursuit for a great deal has never been more apparent in today's society. Knowing our industry receives a 'black eye' regarding the prices we charge, it's important we satisfy our customer base by providing value while protecting our bottom line.

A recent trend in the fast food industry is to expand selections to their "dollar menus". While creating a "dollar menu" is not a viable option for most concessionaires, there are several ways to maintain volume and your revenue stream without affecting the bottom line. Many of the ideas below can be done with little or no additional cost yet adds overall value to your products.

Customer service – The backbone to any successful business is the service they provide. Maintaining quick speed of service is key but adding basic personal touches by your staff can go a long way. Making eye contact and a simple please and thank-you leaves a positive impression with customers.

Combo meals -This is certainly not a new idea but still a great tool to market your products and maintain, or even increase, your overall sales volume. Even a small 25-50¢ discount on your combo pricing creates a perceptible value to the customer. Adding variety to your combo menu will also generate sales of your core high profit items.

Condiment variety – Ketchup and mustard goes a long way but adding regional favorites will help ensure customers can prepare their sandwich exactly the way they want it.

Keep artwork fresh – Many of our customers purchase our custom printed products (cups, mugs, etc.) as an inexpensive souvenir that they will be able to reuse in the future. Using multiple designs during the season entices the customer to purchase and keep the latest of what we have to offer. Customers lose attraction to a souvenir item once they already have it. Give them a reason to buy a new one.

Small touches can go a long way in maintaining customer satisfaction. Anything you can do to increase product value without adding substantial expense will pay dividends in the long run.

MARYLAND BASKETBALL BLIZZARD 2010

By: Chuck Aldridge, University of Maryland

The University of Maryland had a unique situation on February 7, 2010. The Maryland Terrapins were scheduled to play The North Carolina Tar Heels at 2 PM on a Sunday afternoon. This game would have been the best game of the year due to the time of day and the team. We had one major problem, that problem being a major snow storm with some initial predictions of up to 40 inches of snow. That's right I said 40 inches of snow!!

The entire Washington Metropolitan Area was in a panic for what was being called the "snowpocalypse" or "snowmagedden"! A major winter storm was predicted to

hit the entire area with anywhere from 24"-36" of snow with higher amounts in some areas. This blizzard started on Friday February 5 and ended in the late afternoon of February 6th. The entire area was blanketed with record breaking snowfall. After another snowstorm that came on February 9th, it was the most snow on record since they started in 1893 with a total snowfall of 65.6 inches. We still have 5 weeks of winter!!

With the impending snow storm on the way, the UNC team had already made their way to College Park. Seeing the team was already in the area, along with the officials, the game would be played as scheduled. So with all of this excitement, come the many questions from a Concession Manager. Do we have our product in? How are we getting our staff here? The list of questions can go on.

Knowing the potential for significant snowfall, we made sure we had our product in several days in advance of the storm and that the stands were stocked and ready to go. We coordinated with our business office to have our banks for the UNC basketball game and the other events we had schedule for the weekend, which included 2 women's basketball games, gymnastics and wrestling delivered prior to Friday February 5th.

Staffing was by far our biggest concern. We have 12 concession stands in the Comcast Center. Our main focus was to staff as many stands as possible, but work on having 8 locations open. With 12 groups scheduled, we had 2 student groups as backups just in case we have some unexpected cancellations. On Saturday night, I stayed in the beautiful Comcast Center Suites location inside of the Comcast Center where I was communicating with our groups, advising them that the game was still being played and that we were hopeful that they would make it. Many of our groups were worried about any deductions of pay or termination of their group for not showing up with enough people or not reporting at all. We told them that we understand, but we needed to staff the event.

Most of our immediate staff was not going to make it in on their own. The amount of snow on the ground created power outages and left many people stuck in their neighborhoods, because snow plows couldn't keep up with the snow. With our department (Dining Services) ready for the storm, we had 4 wheel drive vehicles available to pick up our employees.

Game day came and went off without a hitch. We had 8 groups show up with plenty of people. We had a crowd of 12,403, of which 7000 of them were students. Of course they announced a sell out of 17,950! Our per-cap was about \$4.50.

So if you are expecting a blizzard with a basketball game scheduled to follow, be sure you have enough product, ensure your staffing is adequate, keep communicating with your athletic department and have a back up plan just in case. Good luck!

NACC 2010 Conference and Tradeshow

Hosted by: University of Notre Dame

June 8 - 11, 2010

For more information visit our web site at:

www.NACC-Online.com

HOW DO YOU HANDLE PRODUCT WASTE AT YOUR BIG EVENTS?

By Bill McQuerry UCMT. The University of Arizona

I am curious about the different methods operators utilize to handle, control, dispose of, and generally wrangle the issue of product waste at football games, concerts and other large events. Do you forecast production numbers for your non profits? Thus telling them exactly how much to cook and that's it. Or do you give them a production number and once they reach that number they have to get permission to prepare more? That is what we do at the University of Arizona.

If the NPO's waste is larger than you feel it should be, do you charge them? What do you charge NPO's? The full price of the hot dog? Product cost? Or the percentage they would have made?

Is it clearly stated in their contract? To alleviate problems, it had better be.

What do you do with the wasted product at the end of the event? Do you allow the NPO members to take it home? Do you supply it to a local food bank? Or just toss it.

I know that there are many different methods that NACC members use handle this issue. So I would like to discuss the different methods we use.

We can begin discussing this now via the members forum page on the NACC website at www.NACC-Online.com. There is an open forum titled "Product Waste". Also, I have it from a good source that this will be brought up at the Open Forum Session during the annual conference hosted by the University of Notre Dame, June 8-11, 2010. I Hope to see you there.

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2010 NACC CONFERENCE AT NOTRE DAME

By: Theresa Traulsen, NACC Executive Director

The NACC is a group of individuals dedicated to the promotion of professional and successful operations at venues on university campuses. The NACC provides a forum for members to share new ideas and concepts, promoting personal growth to create efficient and profitable operations.

We have made some changes to the NACC conference format in 2010 that will further embrace this philosophy. The education sessions will include the always popular "open forum". This is where University members and vendors propose questions to all of the members present and receive a variety of answers based on each members personal experiences.

Staff from the University of Notre Dame credit card department will be joining us to answer questions about implementing credit cards at concession stands. Please

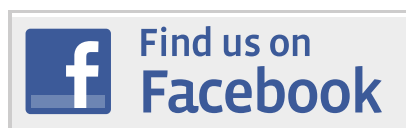
bring your questions if you are looking into adding credit cards.

"How old is your resume?" We have arranged an educational session with the University of Notre Dame's Human Resource Department who will provide tips and ideas for the group on how to update, or create, their resumes. In this economy we can all see a value in this task.

The NACC has invited guest speaker Gar Trusley to explore the topics of effective delegation skills & motivation and work satisfaction. Just like last year's guest speaker, Gar will provide the NACC managers and vendor members attending a full day of practical experience that you can take back to our concession operations and companies and share with the rest of the staff.

We have a short session planed for Vendors at the end of the booth setup time. From 10:00am to 10:30am on June 9th Bob Traulsen, NACC Web Master, will discuss with vendors what they can do to better utilize the NACC website. He will discuss, the product page, forum page and membership directory. This session will take place prior to the tradeshow on the tradeshow floor.

Take a look at the conference page at the NACC website to get details on the entire conference. See you June 8th at Notre Dame. But if you can't make it, look forward to the conference postcards sent out daily, the newsletter in July covering several topics and Archives page at the web site with video of several education sessions. Have you seen the 2009 education session videos?



FIND THE NACC ON FACEBOOK

By: Hope Kaser, University of Notre Dame

Are you a Facebook member? The NACC is also on Facebook. We currently have members and non-members as our friends. You can find us from your Facebook page by searching: "National Association of Collegiate Concessionaires". Then from our group page, click on "Join Group".

What a great way to stay in touch with those you've met at a recent conference or haven't seen in a while. It is also a great way to met new friends who understand the concessions business. Have you hosted a successful event that you think others can benefit from; post the pictures. If you're hosting an event and want to see if others have already had a similar event; ask for advice. Are you visiting or passing near a fellow member and you're interested in seeing how they operate, ask if you can visit. NACC members are all willing to share our information and experiences.

Have a concession related question and are a NACC member? Login to the NACC website at www.NACC-Online.com and use the Forum page. Your question may have already been asked and you can review what responses the members have given.

WHAT'S NEW WITH TECHNOLOGY

By: Chad Weiner, MICROS Systems

We've come a long way from using shoe boxes and calculators to run transactions in concession stands. It used to be a pencil and simple standsheet could get you through an NCAA event, when cash was the only form of tender expected. Times have changed since the early days and venues are now expected to provide value-added features and benefits that will help them compete with other facilities for non-athletic events and additional revenue streams.

One way venues are doing this is through new technologies. Fully integrated point-of-sale systems are now almost considered a staple. Having the ability to take credit cards, student cards and other non-cash forms of payment are essential to a facility's ability to "Keep up with the Jones's". But facilities today are going one step further.

There are many new technology options in the marketplace today for sports & entertainment facilities. These new technologies offer the benefit of increasing revenues from existing operations, helping tap into new revenue streams and offering new ways to help reduce operating costs. Some of these new technologies are discussed below along with financial and operational benefits

Digital menu boards are making inroads into the world of concessions operations all over the country. New buildings are being designed with digital menu boards listed in the spec and existing facilities are looking for ways to migrate their existing menu boards to new digital technology. Digital menu boards provide a new revenue stream for buildings and teams in the form of marketing and advertising. Digital messages and images can be displayed on the menu boards during the event alongside of the concessions menu. After the event, menu boards can be switched to full screen advertisements for companies either inside or outside of the sponsorship base. Digital menu boards also provide a means to reduce the operational requirement of having to manually change each menu board each time menus or prices changes.

Another new technology that's permeating the world of Sports & Entertainment is loaded ticket redemption for food, beverage and merchandise purchases. This technology allows teams and organizations to pre-load value on season tickets and increase the season ticket price by up to the amount of the value loaded. This allows customers to pull in additional revenue up front, bank the revenue and earn interest. Once the value is redeemed, the liability turns into recognized revenue for the client.

Any unused value after the event becomes revenue to the organization. Other clients have chosen to load value on tickets at no additional cost to customers to motivate and incent customers to purchase tickets and attend the events. Teams are more likely to increase revenue for food, beverage and merchandise if they can increase the amount of people pass through the doors.

With technology changing every day, teams and facilities have new avenues to increase revenues and provide value-added benefits to their customers. We've discussed a few in this article but other technologies are also making their way into Sports & Entertainment facilities. Keep your eyes peeled to be sure not to miss the next new technology to make's its entrance!

UCMT - WHAT A DEAL, SIGN UP NOW!

By: Krystal LaReese-Gaule, ECM Kernel Season's Gourmet Popcorn Seasoning National Sales Manager, Foodservice

The NACC is committed to educating our membership and at our annual convention we offer a 3 day extensive training course for concession managers. This year the course will be held after the Notre Dame convention on June 12 - 14th. It was decided by the board at our January board meeting to use part of the Vistar Education funds to pay for half of class tuition cost. There is no better time to bring in your staff for this training at only \$250 per attendee.

This three day course covers a wide variety of topics including: sales forecasting, setting & measuring results of management goals, employee relations (recruiting, training, retaining valuable employees, corrective action), managing concessions stands, inventory controls, and sales reporting. Our financial reporting section covers basic accounting, purchasing, financial reports (weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual), budgeting, and forecasting. We also cover some catering topics: menu management, break even analysis, sales, and set up basics.

Our interactive learning environment encourages each student to share their ideas & experience. A big part of the class is learning from each other and how different concessions operations handle facility restrictions, special events, staff or NPO issues, information related to design problems, and other practical solutions that can be immediately applied.

Each day will end with a quiz of that day's material and the 2nd & 3rd day begin with a question & answer session from topics covered the previous day. Class manual, daily snacks, one dinner, and a sporting event (2010 Cubs Game) are included in your course fee.

Advertising in Concession Bites

If you would like to see your company advertised in this space for the July 2010 Newsletter, please contact Theresa at the NACC office (206) 440-9203 for pricing and size information.

Receiving NACC Emails

If you haven't joined the NACC mail list server you have **NOT** been receiving any email notices from the NACC. To subscribe you will need to login to the NACC-Online Website and go to "My Account". Scroll down the page to find the form to either subscribe or un-subscribe from the email list. The system will then send you an email to verify that you wish to subscribe, click on the link in the email and you will then be added.