



# OFFICE COFFEE

## TREND REPORT

**Criteria for Great Work  
Coffee that Keeps  
Employees On-Site**



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that Keeps Employees On-Site*



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Employees now want much more than solid benefits and paid time off from their places of work, particularly younger consumers entering the workforce. Free and dynamic office coffee programs are not only a job perk but an expectation that benefits the employer by keeping staff on-site. In this report, you'll learn:

- Employees' work coffee consumption habits, trends and evolving needs
  - Different generational expectations of office coffee
  - How to maximize appeal of your office coffee program for all employees
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**1 in 3** consumers say that they work in a facility that provides coffee to employees

**From large corporate agencies to small startup firms, coffee programs are staples in many an office environment, the vast majority of which are complimentary to employees.**

In fact, a third of consumers polled (33%) say that they work in a facility that provides coffee to employees. For Millennials and Gen Xers—who make up the brunt of America’s workforce today—those stats jump significantly. Some 45% of Millennials and 41% of Gen Xers work in offices that provide coffee to employees. Although Gen Zers are just starting to enter the workforce, their offices are clearly aboard the office coffee train, as 43% of this generational set say their workplace provides coffee.

The vast majority of consumers in an office setting stick to drinking two or fewer cups of coffee during a workday. Some 69% of consumers say they consume one to two cups of coffee on average, while 29% drink three or more cups of coffee.

**Coffee Consumed Throughout the Workday**



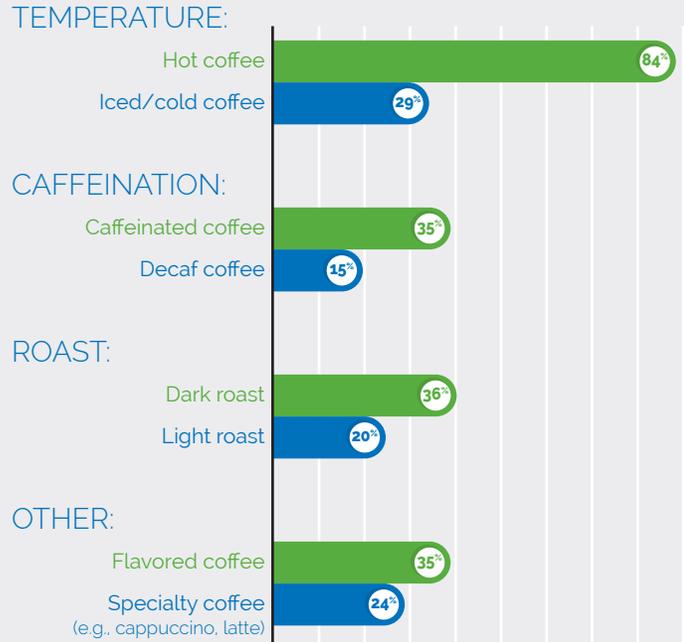
■ Drinks 1-2 cups of coffee on average daily

■ Drinks 3+ cups of coffee on average daily

**Q:** Which of the following statements are true regarding your coffee consumption at work? Select all that apply.

**Base:** 251 consumers whose workplace provides coffee to employees

**Coffee Preferences at Work**



**Q:** What types of coffee do you prefer to be offered at work? Select all that apply.

**Base:** 251 consumers whose workplace provides coffee to employees

**When it comes to coffee preferences at work, there are clear generational skews.**

Gen Z consumers skew the greatest for iced or cold coffee (49%); both caffeinated (49%) and decaffeinated coffee (29%); flavored coffee (48%); and specialty coffee (33%). Although many consumers in that age group are not yet full-time employees, this is a generation that will increasingly enter the workforce full time in the coming years and thus intensify demand for these types of offerings.

On the other end of the generational spectrum, Baby Boomers polled show the greatest opinion regarding roast type. They skew highest for both dark roast (45%) and light roast (26%). However, Millennials are not far behind—40% of 25- to 34-year-olds prefer dark roast and 23% of the same age group say the same of light roast. This proves that providing dark roast, most especially, in the workplace will continue to be important.

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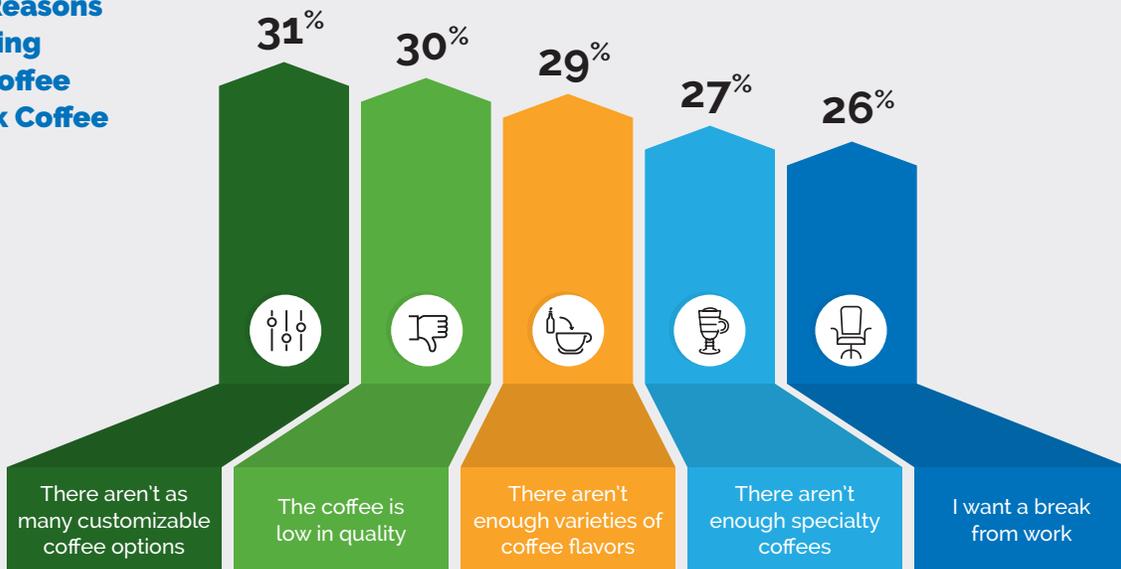
Despite the fact that over three in five consumers (64%) consider having coffee provided at work to be one of the perks of their job, 86% of consumers say that they at least sometimes purchase the beverage off-site over drinking their work-provided coffee. So, what's going on? Why is there a discrepancy?

The leading reason consumers choose to purchase coffee from an off-site restaurant or other foodservice establishment instead of drinking what is provided by their company is because there are not as many customizable coffee options at work (31%). In fact, more than half of consumers (58%) would like for their work to offer more options for customizing coffee, including a variety of creamers, milks, sugar alternatives and more. Low coffee quality (30%), lack of flavor variety (29%), lack of specialty coffees (27%) and wanting to get out of the office (26%) round out the top five reasons consumers choose off-site coffee.

**86%**  
of consumers say that they at least sometimes purchase coffee off-site over drinking their work-provided coffee

**We understand how tough it is to expand your office coffee programs.** You're strapped for means and space and you have to appeal to a wide demographic in most office settings. But there are a number of solutions to try to keep employees satisfied. Because coffee clearly is a perk for most employees and because 58% of consumers consider on-site coffee to be an important contribution to their job satisfaction, keeping employees happy via office coffee needs to be a priority.

## Leading Reasons for Choosing Off-Site Coffee Over Work Coffee



**Q:** Why would you choose to purchase coffee from an off-site restaurant or other foodservice establishment instead of drinking the coffee provided at your work? Select all that apply.

**Base:** 251 consumers whose workplace provides coffee to employees

## How to Keep Employees from Going Off-Site for Coffee

**Because lack of customization and variety are the leading reasons consumers leave work to get coffee, offering more options within the scope of your office setting is essential.**

Over half of consumers (58%) say having a variety of coffee options at work is important to them.



**1**  
Vanilla



**2**  
Chocolate



**3**  
Caramel

LEADING  
COFFEE  
FLAVORS



**4**  
Hazelnut



**5**  
French Vanilla

Presenting variety via sweeteners should be the first step. When we asked consumers which specific branded coffee-related products that they would like to see provided at their work, three of the top five responses (out of 20 brands covering six product types) were sweeteners, including turbinado cane sugar and granulated saccharin. This proves that consumers prioritize specific branded sweeteners for their office coffee programs.

Another way to increase variety is to offer more flavored coffees. Office coffee programs that provide similar coffee flavors as restaurants and other foodservice locations would better compete. Because the leading coffee flavors at restaurants are vanilla, chocolate, caramel, hazelnut and French vanilla, respectively, offering similar flavors in your office coffee program would give you a leg up on your off-site competition. You should consider adding flavor with syrups and creamers, which also provides a customizable aspect for your employees.

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Because Millennials are the dominant generational group in today's workforce and even make many of the buying decisions for the office breakroom, knowing their needs with regard to office coffee is critical. A notable skew for this group regards specialty coffees. Some 26% of those ages 25 to 34 wish that their workplace would offer more specialty coffees, such as cappuccinos and lattes. Here are a few notable trends within the specialty coffee segment.



Focusing on what Gen Z wants with regard to office coffee is also crucial. Born between the years 1993 and 2001, Gen Z is starting to make their imprint on businesses. The generation accounts for 61 million people in the U.S., which is larger than Gen X and two-thirds the size of Baby Boomers, according to consulting firm BridgeWorks. Companies looking to recruit and retain Gen Z employees need to appeal to them in different ways than prior generations. Here are a few office coffee-related statements that this generational group skews highest for.



Two key themes emerge from these declarations: access and sustainability. Gen Zers want numerous coffee stations around the office for better convenience and productivity and they want sustainable and waste-reducing practices. To handle both, suggest designating a coffee maker in the office—someone who knows how to work the coffee machines and will refill coffee at various stations at appropriate times. Specify a hard-stop for new coffee making at 3 p.m.—only half of consumers drink coffee during the workweek after 3 p.m., so this will likely cut down on waste.

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Sure, there will be times when consumers select an off-site restaurant or other foodservice location to purchase their coffee instead of getting it at their places of work. However, there are specific reasons why consumers select their work coffee over going off-site.

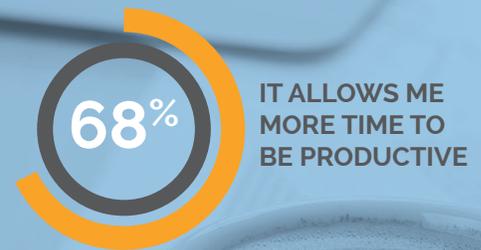
Over three-quarters of consumers say they prefer to drink their work's coffee instead of purchasing it off-site because it's more convenient. This convenience factor goes hand in hand with the 68% of consumers who also say that choosing to obtain coffee from work allows them more time to be productive at the office. It also saves money, as some 73% of consumers point to.

Interestingly, Gen Zers skew the highest when it comes to selecting their work's coffee for convenience (83%), money-saving tactics (81%) and productivity reasons (73%). Plus, 18- to 24-year-olds are more likely than 25- to 44-year-olds to say they never purchase coffee off-site over their work-provided coffee. And further, Millennials skew the highest when it comes to selecting their work's coffee for taste reasons (47%).

**This is good news!** This means that office coffee programs are already more attractive to younger consumers—both Gen Zers and Millennials—than their older counterparts. What you need to do is play up these benefits more in the office.

**73%** of consumers say they prefer to drink their work's coffee instead of purchasing it off-site because it saves them money

## Leading Reasons to Choose Work Coffee Over Going Off-Site



**Q:** For each statement regarding coffee in a workplace setting, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement, "I prefer to drink my work's coffee instead of purchasing it off-site because..." on a scale from 1-5, where 1 = Disagree Completely and 5 = Agree Completely. (Top Two Box = Agree Completely and Agree)

**Base:** 251 consumers whose workplace provides coffee to employees

## Key Takeaways

01

### **Coffee = Workday Necessity**

Lots of coffee is devoured throughout the workday. In an office of 100 people, well over 200 cups of coffee are consumed daily. With that much output, offices need to be placing more attention on the coffee consumers want, starting first with hot dark roast coffee.

02

### **Stimulate Through Variety**

Standard hot coffee is far and away the leading preference among all demographics at the office. However, offering variety is very important, and younger consumers entering the workforce are drinking a wider variety of coffee beverages than their predecessors. Operators can offer variety through different methods, such as via sweeteners or coffee flavors, to appeal to this group. Plus, the growing specialty coffee sector means you need to stay on top of trends.

03

### **Waste Not**

Sustainability is a big issue for younger consumers. Gen Zers skew the highest when it comes to preferring their workplace to offer multi-cup pots or canisters and sustainable coffees. And Millennials skew the highest when it comes to noticing waste, such as making unnecessary pots, spills, etc. Marketing your sustainability efforts in offices will appeal to these younger consumers and help everyone get on board with eliminating waste.

04

### **Don't Just Stir Coffee, Stir Excitement**

Speaking of marketing, creating promotional or educational tools around office coffee programs will help boost consumption and excitement. Consider creating a placard of step-by-step instructions or offering tutorials on how to turn traditional coffee into specialty drinks. This will help create conversation and experimentation around office coffee services.

05

### **Youth Perks**

Staying on top of the preferences of Gen Zers and younger Millennials is crucial to the operation of your business. More consumers than not say that office coffee programs are important to them and are considered a perk of their job. So you need to stay with the times.

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Office coffee programs rely on quality coffee, sweeteners and more. You have all the tools available to address the changing dynamics around office coffee. Now go do it!

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