Generation X, which represents those born between 1966 and 1976, is the smallest of the four generations because it spans just 10 years. Members of Gen X make up about one-fifth (19%) of the current adult population of the U.S. and are heavy foodservice users. Since Gen X has a spending power of $125 billion, it is important for operators to understand this generation’s attitudes and preferences when dining out for breakfast.

Breakfast Behaviors
Gen Xers are frequent purchasers of breakfast items, with nearly seven out of 10 (67%) stating they buy breakfast from a foodservice location at least once a week. For the most part, Gen X’s ranking of breakfast attributes aligns with the overall population. They prioritize good-tasting food as the most important attribute for foodservice breakfast both during the week and the weekend.

Top four most important attributes to Gen Xers when purchasing breakfast items from foodservice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>During the week</th>
<th>During the weekend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good tasting</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfies hunger until next meal</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to be prepared quickly</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High in quality</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top two box = extremely important and important

Base: 132 Gen Xers and 751 overall respondents who were asked to indicate how important or unimportant each of the following attributes are when choosing a breakfast item from a restaurant or other foodservice operation during the week vs. 152 Gen Xers and 751 overall respondents during the weekend. Consumers indicated their opinion on a scale of 1 to 6 where 6 = extremely important and 1 = not important at all

Source: Technomic’s Breakfast Consumer Trend Report
during the week and on the weekends, and even rank this attribute higher than the overall population for week occasions.

In addition, Gen X prioritizes good value for the money spent on weekend occasions more than any other generation, likely because members of this age group enjoy family breakfast occasions with higher check averages during this time. Gen X also has the highest response for wanting restaurants to prepare breakfast quickly during the week, as they are often on their way to work. Operators can meet this need by offering Gen X guests a selection of pre-made and pre-packaged items such as breakfast sandwiches and parfaits.

Two other attributes fall in Gen X’s top four attributes for both week and weekend breakfast occasions: satisfies hunger until the next meal and high in quality.

To appeal to Gen X guests during both weekday and weekend breakfast occasions, operators can…

✓ Promote breakfast meats and alternative protein sources as filling ingredients in meals

✓ Highlight the craveability of a dish and popular ingredients within it

✓ Emphasize housemade preparations and household brand names like Smucker’s to convey quality

Since Gen X aligns with the overall population on most breakfast attributes, operators can use this generation as a barometer for testing the success of new menu launches.
Breakfast Preferences for Family Occasions

Since many Gen Xers are raising a family and often visit foodservice establishments with their children, it is important for operators to understand what drives Gen Xers to choose a restaurant for family dining occasions.

When thinking of their child’s breakfast occasion at a restaurant, Gen X ranks appealing taste of food and beverage as top of mind. This is due, in part, to many families considering dining out occasions as a treat and wanting their children to enjoy the experience through tasty menu offerings. Gen X also places importance on the use of fresh ingredients in their child’s breakfast (44%), which mirrors the same emphasis of quality and taste that they value for their own morning meals.

Gen Xers look for many of the same breakfast foodservice attributes for their kids as they do for themselves. Marketing taste, quality and affordability in the morning will resonate most with Gen Xers, both with or without families.

Which of the following attributes are most important to you for your child’s breakfast occasion at a restaurant? Select up to three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appealing taste of food and beverage</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of fresh ingredients</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable menu options</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A wide variety of options to choose from</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has food I am familiar with and know my child likes</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A wide selection of better-for-you choices</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of premium items or ingredients</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A variety of portion sizes available</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to customize the meal</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: 146 Gen Xers and 593 overall respondents who have a child who has ordered food or beverage for breakfast from a kid’s menu at a restaurant or other foodservice location in the past year.
1 All-Day Breakfast

More than three-fourths of Gen Xers (77%) said that they find all-day breakfast appealing. For operators, expanding breakfast beyond morning hours is a strategy to increase sales later in the day while appealing to this cohort.

*Tip: Beyond extending the serving time for traditional breakfast dishes, consider also experimenting with savory interpretations of breakfast dishes at lunch and dinner, such as a waffle sandwich with chicken or turkey.*

2 Nontraditional Breakfast Sandwiches

Nearly a third of Gen Xers (32%) are likely to order a breakfast burrito or taco during away from home breakfast occasions, which is the highest response of all generations. These ethnic handhelds feature combinations of proteins (such as bacon or chorizo), cheese, potatoes and condiments like salsa.

*Tip: Since Gen X ranks the ability to customize a breakfast handheld (77%) higher than the overall population (74%), operators should consider offering build-your-own breakfast burritos and tacos using an array of quality ingredients such as steak, avocado and hot peppers.*

3 Cold-Pressed Juices

The interest Gen X expresses for cold-pressed juice (66%) exceeds the interest of the overall population (60%). Cold-press juice is made by applying high pressure to freshly squeezed juice, then placing it in a container and sealing it. For Gen X, part of the appeal of these juices is their high nutritional value.

*Tip: Touting the unique health benefits of cold-pressed juice will target Gen Xers looking to address a specific concern such as cholesterol or immunity.*
4 Alternative Meats

Over half of Gen Xers (56%) are tempted by alternative meats in the morning such as chicken or turkey sausage and turkey bacon. These proteins add new flavors at breakfast and are usually positioned as better-for-you options to traditional pork breakfast meats.

*Tip: Feature alternative meats with added flavors like apple chicken sausage or smoked turkey bacon to increase the appeal of these products.*

5 Nut Butters

Nut butter—which can come from a variety of nuts such as peanuts, almonds, hazelnuts and pecans—appeals to over half (54%) of Gen Xers. Operators can use products like Jif Almond Butter and Jif Cashew Butter to spread atop toast, English muffins and baked goods, mix into batters for doughnuts and waffles, or use as a breakfast glaze for added richness.

*Tip: Try using natural nut butters to promote quality and a better-for-you menu.*

6 Items Featuring Familiar Brands

Familiar household brands appeal to 54% of Gen Xers. Members of this generation grew up and now align themselves with these brands because of positive associations with their taste and quality.

*Tip: Instead of placing generic condiment and sauce containers on the counters at breakfast, spotlight branded packaging with names that Gen Xers know and love at breakfast.*
YIELD: 4 TO 6 SERVINGS

**Ingredients**

- 1 ½ cups Hungry Jack® Complete Buttermilk Pancake & Waffle Mix (just add water)
- 1 cup milk
- 3 tablespoons Crisco® Vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup Dickinson's® Country Pumpkin Butter
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- Crisco Professional® Pan Release Spray
- Smucker’s® Portion Control Breakfast Syrup

**Directions**

**Step 1:** Heat griddle. Stir pancake mix, oil, water and eggs until just blended. Stir in pumpkin butter, cinnamon and vanilla.

**Step 2:** Spray griddle with Pan Release spray. Pour ¼ cup batter onto griddle. Turn when bubbles form on top; cook until second side is golden brown. Remove from griddle and serve with syrup.
Technomic Takeaway: 3 Areas of Opportunity for Gen X

#1 TASTE ABOVE ALL ELSE
The top priority for Gen X during their own breakfast foodservice occasions, as well as those of their kids, is the appealing taste of foods and beverages. Since good-tasting food is a higher table stake during week breakfast occasions for Gen X (92%) compared to baby boomers (89%), millennials (84%) and Gen Z (86%), it is essential for operators to learn the preferences of Gen X guests and provide craveable options to meet their needs.

#2 PROMOTE BETTER FOR YOU
Although Gen Xers do not rank better for you in their top attributes for weekday and weekend breakfast occasions, many of the breakfast trends they express an interest in (like cold-pressed juices and nut butters) signal a propensity toward healthier eating. As Gen X continues to age and nutrition grows in importance, operators have an opportunity to attract this market with better-for-you options like sugar-free and protein-heavy dishes.

#3 EMBRACE EXPERIMENTATION
Gen Xers do not shy away from emerging breakfast trends and neither should operators trying to attract this cohort. Experimentation can be as subtle as new flavors of fruit spreads or syrups or as radical as unfamiliar ethnic dishes and out-of-the-box presentations. Try testing new options as limited-time offers and garner feedback from Gen Xers as to what they find most appealing.