



PIZZA FOR AI

With AI on the rise and robots powering up in the pizza kitchen, the future of the industry looks very (artificially) bright.

BY RICK HYNUM AND KEVIN McINTYRE

ensuring they have the right stock on hand to create their customers' favorite pizzas."

Kat Campbell, a data scientist and author of a Substack newsletter called Data Science and Machine Learning 101, notes that AI can drill down to uncover and employ data in surprising ways, such as "analyzing past consumption patterns and factoring in variables like local events, weather forecasts and seasonal trends" to optimize inventory and control food costs. She also recommends using AI-driven analytics "to understand customer preferences better, tailoring the menu based on popular choices and even predicting future culinary trends."

Coppell, Texas-based Cicis Pizza found a more novel use for the technology this past summer: leveraging AI as a social media "intern." Over the summer, Cicis' marketing team used ChatGPT and Midjourney to create social media posts, including graphics and captions, across all platforms. The first post created by the "AI intern" went live on Instagram on July 17. It depicted an AI-generated robot bearing pizzas and a simple caption: "Meet our AI intern slicing up pizza posts this month at Cicis!"

As a copywriter, AI leans a bit too hard into clichés, but it generates some splendidly weird graphics; after all, it lacks the artistic and design sensibilities that humans possess and often doesn't understand or prioritize esthetic principles. That's just part of the fun. Case in point: Cicis' July 19 post, depicting a football player leaping above a crowd of fans, mouth open wide to bite into a floating pizza—even though he's still wearing his helmet. (And a couple of fans have caveman-like eyebrows, but is that really so off-base?)

All in all, the Cicis initiative was successful, but it won't replace real, live social media managers anytime soon, says Maria Trujillo, the brand's senior vice president of marketing. "When it comes to our in-feed content for Facebook and Instagram, posts featuring our AI intern's creations yielded average engagement rates that were at least 15

"[AI is] a tool we're employing to help drive efficiency and assist with brainstorming. But unless we're creating something wildly imaginative, like a mac and cheese robot, it will be used day to day as needed."

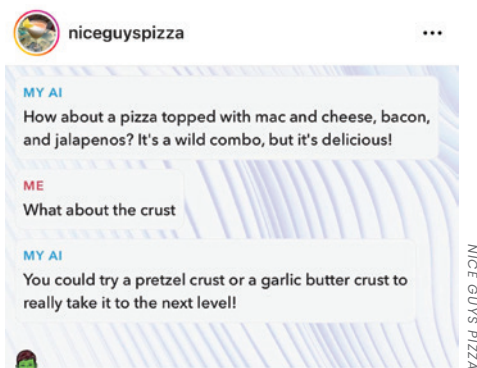
Maria Trujillo, Cicis Pizza

times higher than the industry average," she explains. "For us, these results are in line with our typical social engagement, so, while not a huge boost from a metrics standpoint, it successfully opened up new creative possibilities, allowing us to try new things without any additional investment—like reimagining our brand mascot as an anime character."

Moving forward, Trujillo adds, "[AI is] a tool we're employing to help drive efficiency and assist with brainstorming. But unless we're creating something wildly imaginative, like a mac and cheese robot, it will be used day to day as needed. Our food means everything to us, so even if AI could replicate our pizza's appearance perfectly [in a social media graphic], we wouldn't want to do that. Authenticity matters, and we often went back in and incorporated our actual product shots into the AI images so that it better reflected the food our customers could find on the buffet."

Regardless, Nilsson believes AI tools should no longer be thought of as optional for restaurant chains. "We see them as key competitive differentiators that position us as a market leader," he says. "With this type of technology, we've been able to significantly elevate our brand."

Cicis' marketing team will continue to incorporate AI into social media "when it makes sense," Trujillo says. "However, like in all industries, I'm sure AI will find its way into every little corner of our operations at some point. But there are no grand plans just yet."



Jovana Batkovic and Greg Gebhard, owners of Nice Guys Pizza in Cape Coral, Florida, picked an AI tool's "brain" for a recipe that proved a hit with guests.



Marco's Pizza is gearing up to test self-driving electric delivery vehicles that can reach 20 miles an hour.



MARCO'S PIZZA

MAKING PEACE WITH ROBOTS >>>>>>>>

Lee Kindell, on the other hand, has a grand plan: incorporating robots into his operations at Moto Pizza, with four stores in Seattle. He's starting with just one—the Picnic Pizza Station—at the newest Moto location in the city's Belltown neighborhood. But he has his sights set much higher.

Drone delivery? He's working on it. Barista bots? Ditto. *Star Trek*-style food replicators? Well, not yet, but Kindell is hopeful.

He and his partner, Nancy Gambin, sell out of pizza—a lot. Eater Seattle says Moto's pies “might be the best in all of Seattle,” but they're not easy to get. Moto just stays too busy, and pre-ordering is a must. A traditionalist in many respects, Kindell works with a sourdough starter (called “Betty”) that's more than 100 years old. The art and craft of making pizza by hand are important to him. But after he injured his arm, he changed his perspective.

“I thought I'd be a one-man shop forever,” Kindell tells PMQ. “When I realized I can scale a high-quality pizza that matches the best of 'em [with a robot], it was game on.” As he sees it, a robot can do what he does, but faster and more efficiently—at least as far as prepping a pie is concerned. “Whether you like it or not, robotics is a positive certainty in our food future,” Kindell says. “I truly

believe we can still attain a superior artisan food product using this new technology.”

So has 2023 seen an explosion of pizza robotics? Not really. But there have been a few interesting—and even surprising—developments, such as DiGiorno, the frozen pizza brand, testing a pizza vending machine at a Walmart in Colorado, and BRIX Holdings, which owns the RedBrick Pizza

THE REVIEWS ARE IN

The charts on the opposite page reflect food critics' and the general public's reviews of their favorite pizzerias nationwide. Using a simple algorithm, we based the Critically Acclaimed ranking on 2023 “best-of” lists from 50 Top Pizza, the *Washington Post*, *Food & Wine*, *Infatuation.com* and *Gayot.com* as well as the Michelin Guide. For the People's Choice ranking, we averaged out ratings for highly reviewed pizzerias (1,000 reviews or more) on Google, Yelp, TripAdvisor and Facebook.

CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED PIZZERIAS

RANK	Pizzeria	LOCATION
1	Pizzeria Bianco	Phoenix AZ
2	Ken's Artisan Pizza	Portland OR
3	Una Pizza Napoletana	New York NY
4	Del Popolo	San Francisco CA
5	Don Antonio	New York NY
6	L'Industrie Pizzeria	Philadelphia PA
7	A16	Oakland CA
8	Razza Pizza Artigianale	Jersey City NJ
9	Milo & Olive	Santa Monica CA
10	Pizzeria Sei	Los Angeles CA
11	Nouvelle Kitchen & Brewery*	Robbinsdale MN
12	Tony's Pizza Napoletana	San Francisco CA
13	Ribalta	New York NY
14	O' Munaciello	Miami FL
15	800 Degrees	Los Angeles CA
16	Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana	New Haven CT
17	Al Forno	Providence RI
18	Jay's Artisan Pizzeria	Kenmore NY
19	Song' E Napule	New York NY
20	Casey's Pizza	San Francisco CA
21	Kesté	New York NY
22	La Leggenda Pizzeria	Miami FL
23	Pasquale's Pizzeria Napoletana	South Kingstown RI
24	Ops	Brooklyn NY
25	Spacca Napoli Pizzeria	Chicago IL

* Originally reviewed as 'Pig Ate My Pizza at Nouvelle Brewing'

PEOPLE'S CHOICE PIZZERIAS

RANK	Pizzeria	LOCATION
1	Mister O1	Grapevine TX
2	Simon's	Des Moines IA
3	Vito's	Bountiful UT
4	Zeneli Pizzeria	New Haven CT
5	Crust	Miami FL
6	Orsi's Italian Bakery & Pizzeria	Omaha NE
7	Ciao! Pizza & Pasta	Chelsea MA
8	Saverio's Authentic Pizza Napoletana	Massapequa NY
9	A Little Pizza Heaven	Scranton PA
10	Pizza e Birra	San Diego CA
11	Horst Sub & Deli	New Waterford OH
12	Sapori di 786 Degrees	Pasadena CA
13	Steve's Pizza	Battle Creek MI
14	Di Pasquale's Marketplace	Baltimore MD
15	Smiling With Hope Pizza	Reno NV
16	Domenick & Pia Downtown Pizzeria	Waterbury CT
17	Nolita Pizza	New York NY
18	Riccardo's Pizza Restaurant	Browns Mills NJ
19	Pizzeria Lui	Lakewood CO
20	Terita's Pizza	Columbus OH
21	Fatto a Mano	Redondo Beach CA
22	Tasty Pizza	Omaha NE
23	L'Industrie Pizzeria	Brooklyn NY
24	Great American Pizza and Subs	Golden Valley AZ
25	GoodFellas Pizzeria of L.I.C.	Long Island City NY

chain, undertaking a similar initiative with its new Pizza Jukebox concept at a Walmart in Frisco, Texas. Not so surprisingly, Columbus, Ohio-based Donatos Pizza—a longtime tech innovator under founder Jim Grote—also plans to open a “fully autonomous pizzeria” (i.e., a vending machine) in its hometown at some point in the not-so-distant future.

On the independent side, Alessio Lacco and Sofia Arango, owners of Atlanta Pizza Truck, unveiled a pair of Quickza vending machines that could grow into an empire, as PMQ reported in last October’s issue. “We’re establishing relationships in Atlanta, and we want to franchise our model by partnering with other pizzerias in the United States and in other countries,” Lacco told PMQ. “We can work with them to create their own recipe for the vending machines, or they can use our recipe.”

Making peace with robots will pay off for visionary pizzeria operators, Kindell believes. “It’s gonna take the outliers and risk-takers to get first to market, with a few flops along the way,” he says. “Those who hold on and get to the finish line win. I hope to be one of them. Being early requires a lot of patience and tenacity to fine-tune these technologies to work to scale—and what a ride!”



WATCH YOUR BACK, PAPA JOHNS >>>>>>>>>>

Of course, the quick-service pizza chains won’t likely give a lot of ground in the tech race. As previously mentioned, Domino’s and Jet’s Pizza have already taken the AI plunge, along with Yum! Brands, Pizza Hut’s parent company. But, all in all, 2023 was a mixed year for the industry’s leading quick-service brands. For one thing, while Domino’s hasn’t surrendered its spot as the world’s largest pizza chain—not by a long shot—its executive leadership had to make some tough decisions to stay on top this year.

Most notably, Domino’s finally yielded to the seemingly inevitable: third-party delivery. For years, the company had shunned aggregators even as its rivals embraced them. That changed this summer when Domino’s entered into a global agreement with Uber Eats that included stores in four pilot markets in the U.S. “Now that aggregators are at scale, the next logical marketplace for us to enter is order aggregation,” Domino’s CEO Russell Weiner said in a July 12 announcement.

Since then, Weiner told investors in an October earnings call, “Our integration into the Uber Eats platform is proceeding as planned. We’ll achieve our goal of Uber Eats providing delivery orders to all our U.S. stores by the end of the year. We expect this initiative will drive incremental delivery volume from new customers, increase our share of the pizza delivery market and create stronger economics for our company and franchisees.”

Competitors like Papa John’s and Little Caesars obviously felt the aggregators had reached scale in 2022 or earlier, but never mind that. The fact is, Domino’s has been struggling to hire drivers since the pandemic. In 2021, then-CEO Ritch Allison said the company had been “experiencing one of the most difficult staffing environments in a long time,” adding, “The real pinch point is the drivers.” But the company might have found at least a partial solution to that problem this year: Since many potential drivers don’t have their own cars,

the chain plans to put more than 1,100 Chevy Bolt electric vehicles on the road for select franchise and corporate stores by the end of 2023.

The combination of more in-house drivers and third-party delivery could ease Domino’s same-store sales woes—Weiner thinks so, anyway. Although the brand logged an impressive 3.6% growth in U.S. same-store sales in the first quarter of 2023 compared to Q1 2022, the second quarter saw growth of just 0.1%, followed by a decline of 0.6% in the third quarter. To boost sales again, the chain unveiled a “new and improved” Domino’s Rewards program that makes it easier for customers to earn free food. Then, in a headline-generating move in October, Domino’s promised free “emergency pizza” to customers who joined the loyalty program and placed a digital carryout order of at least \$7.99. They followed up that same month with a promise of free “emergency pizza” for anyone with student loans to pay off.

Papa John’s, the No. 4 pizza chain, prefers menu updates to pizza giveaways; the company hailed

its Cool Ranch Doritos Papadia, launched in May with a star-studded marketing campaign, as its “biggest innovation ever.” And in March, the brand announced it was expanding its use of OptiPrice, a pricing gap analytics platform, “to ensure that our products remain price-competitive and that our customers are receiving great value from each of our restaurants.”

But Papa John’s had better watch its back: Marco’s Pizza has made no secret of its goal to claim that No. 4 spot, and it could turn into a dogfight. Already this year, Marco’s has opened more than 50 stores and announced the signing of 50-plus franchise agreements. Over the last six years, the brand has doubled its store footprint and shows no signs of slowing down.

In late October, Gerardo Flores, Marco’s chief development officer, said the company has identified more than 4,200 locations where it could open new stores over the next five to 10 years. “We have a five-year development plan in place that we’re trying to hit,” Flores told Restaurant Dive.



Domino’s hopes to attract more drivers with its fleet of new Chevy Bolt electric delivery cars. DOMINO’S

TOP 10 PIZZA BRANDS BY UNITS, SALES (PLUS 5 TO WATCH)

Chain Name	2022 U.S. Sales (Millions)	2022 U.S. Units	2021 U.S. Sales	2021 U.S. Units	Total Change in Units YoY
Domino’s	\$8,752	6,686	\$8,641	6,560	126
Pizza Hut	\$5,500	6,561	\$5,500	6,548	13
Papa John’s	\$3,698	3,376	\$3,486	3,339	37
Little Caesars	\$3,520	4,173	\$4,185	4,187	-14
Marco’s Pizza	\$968	1,067	\$899	1,002	65
Papa Murphy’s	\$753	1,168	\$809	1,230	-72
MOD Pizza	\$605*	531	\$590	506	25
California Pizza Kitchen	\$569**	159	\$571**	166	-7
Hungry Howie’s	\$479	536	\$478	534	2
Round Table Pizza	\$422*	417*	\$421	416	1

5 “Contending” Brands To Watch

Mellow Mushroom*	\$419	175	\$401	173	2
Cicis Pizza	\$340	279	\$286	291	-12
Mountain Mike’s	\$279	265	\$254	246	19
Sbarro	\$226	351	\$196	315	36
Toppers Pizza	\$82	73	\$78	70	3

Data courtesy of QSR magazine. *Estimate. **Data courtesy of FSR magazine.



Marco's Pizza expects to open its 1,200th location in 2023 and is on track to add 150 new stores next year.

MARCO'S PIZZA



MARCO'S PIZZA

ARE HANDHELDS GETTING HOTTER?

After offering individually sized, handheld Pocket Pies as an LTO from mid-March through early June, MOD Pizza added them to the menu permanently in September, thanks to “overwhelming demand.” Customers can choose between the Italiano, Four-Cheese and the Chicken Bacon Ranch. In October, Marco's Pizza rolled out its own handheld, the Pizzoli. It's a combination of pizza and stromboli and is available in four varieties: Pepperoni, Buffalo Chicken, Pepperoni & Sausage, and Chicken Bacon Ranch. Papa Johns scored a handheld hit with its Papadias flatbread sandwiches back in February 2020. It's starting to seem like portable is preferable when possible!

“We are going to hit our 1,200th location this year. We are on track to do 150 stores next year and then increase it thereafter, year after year. The goal is, over the next couple of years, to get to 300 store openings per year.”

On the fast-casual side, Blaze Pizza won't pose a threat to Papa Johns or Marco's anytime soon. But the brand did score a huge coup with a Pi Day promotion on March 14, adding 500,000 new members to its Blaze Rewards program and raising total membership to an astonishing 3.5 million. Not bad for a chain with about 330 stores in 38 states and six countries.

How did they do it? On March 1, Blaze announced the return of its \$3.14 deal for Pi Day. Customers who downloaded the Blaze Pizza app were automatically enrolled as Blaze Rewards members, which qualified them to purchase any 11” pizza with unlimited toppings for \$3.14 on March 14 only. That pizza usually sells for \$11.25. Customers were required to visit a Blaze location to take advantage of the offer. Thanks to that move, the Blaze Pizza app was the fourth most downloaded app on March 14, even edging out TikTok.

Like Domino's, Seattle-based MOD Pizza also jazzed up its loyalty program, MOD Rewards, to allow members to earn rewards faster. With more than 540 stores in 29 states and Canada, MOD says it's now the largest fast-casual pizza concept. It's certainly one of the most socially conscious. In April 2023, the brand announced it was partnering with nonprofits across the country to create the MOD Opportunity Network (MOD O.N.), dedicated to hiring and supporting people with barriers to employment, specifically justice-involved individuals and those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

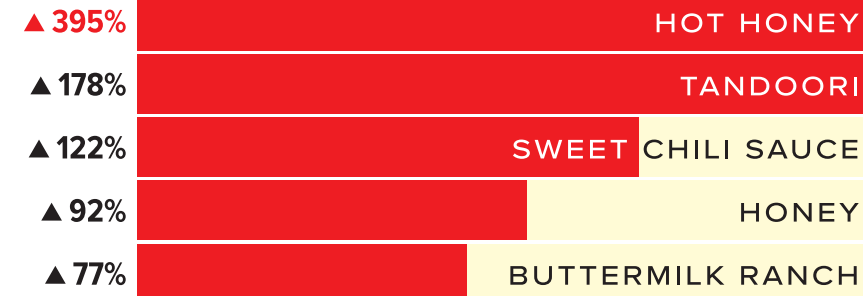
Back in 2021, Scott Svenson told PMQ that he and his wife, Ally, founded MOD Pizza as “a crazy social experiment,” aiming to “combine the best of a for-profit business with the heart of a nonprofit, whereby the more successful we were, the better and bigger social impact we would make.” So far, so good.



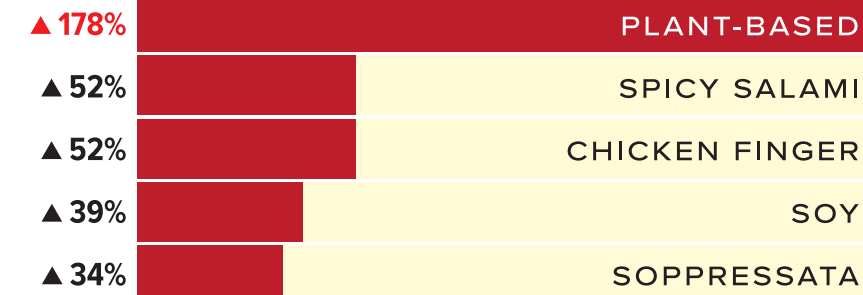
2024'S FASTEST-GROWING PIZZA INGREDIENTS

Source: Datassential

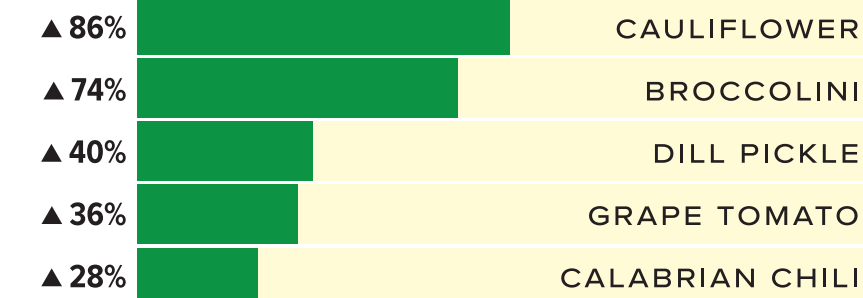
SAUCE/FLAVOR



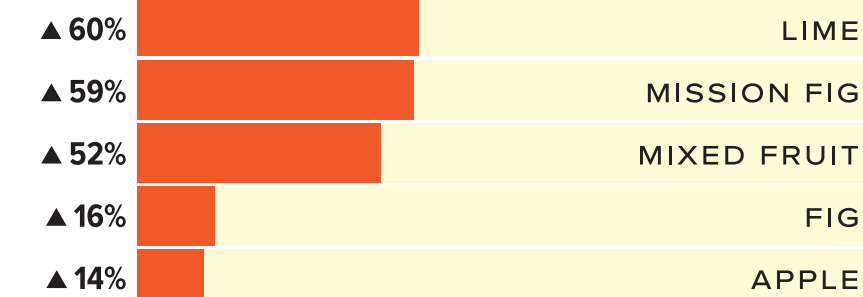
PROTEINS



VEGGIES



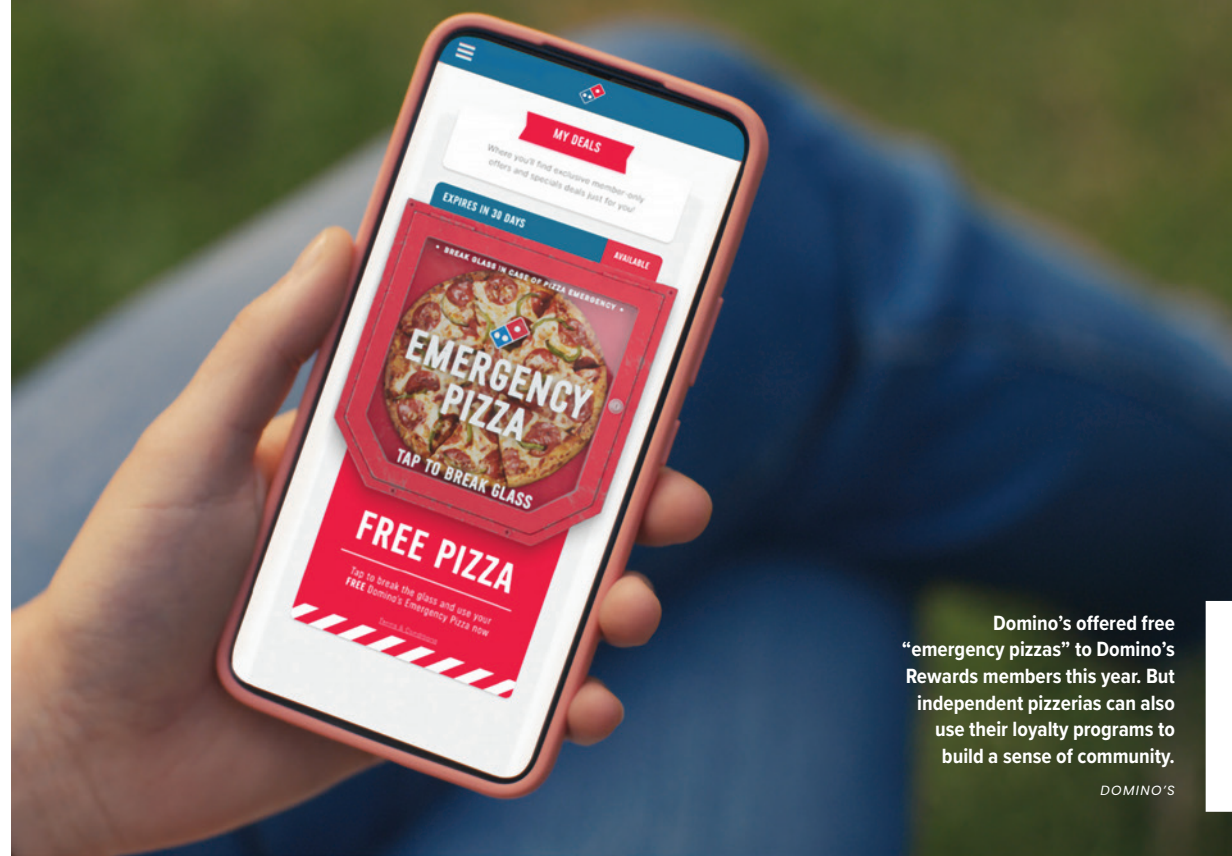
FRUIT



GETTY IMAGES/JAMIN AMIRULLAH

PLANT-BASED MEATS PEAK

The market for plant-based meat alternatives peaked in 2020, according to an August 2023 report from CoBank's Knowledge Exchange, and “the initial period of exceptional sales growth appears to be over.” Mintel reported that fewer than half of Americans who tried those products at the time purchased them again. “Whatever their reason for purchase, plant-based offerings appear to have fallen short of consumers' expectations in terms of either cost or performance,” said Billy Roberts, senior food and beverage economist for CoBank. “Market participants should be able to address the cost issues with greater economies of scale and minimized supply chain expenses. However, innovation around taste, texture and mouthfeel will be essential to capture more mass-market consumers.”



Domino's offered free "emergency pizzas" to Domino's Rewards members this year. But independent pizzerias can also use their loyalty programs to build a sense of community.

DOMINO'S

LOYALTY AND COMMUNITY

Are you starting to notice a pattern with the pizza chains? Many have been continually fine-tuning their loyalty programs to drive sales and attract new customers, who will, ideally, stick around for more deals and, ultimately, free food. According to an August 2023 report, "The Evolution of Loyalty Programmes in Foodservice," from Euromonitor International, the Domino's loyalty program ranks in the top 20 worldwide—specifically, No. 11, sandwiched (so to speak) between Chick-fil-A and Sonic Drive-In. But is the points-based approach taken by these big brands (and most other restaurant loyalty programs) the only way to go?

The Euromonitor report notes that 23% of digital consumers have three to five apps for ordering directly from restaurants, not counting third-party delivery apps. These apps take up a lot of space on the phone. And Rocio Franco, who authored the Euromonitor report, says they're all strikingly similar, because they "primarily revolve around transactional benefits."

To meet evolving consumer preferences, she wrote, restaurateurs need to introduce "next-generation" features to their loyalty programs that

will "add substantial value and adapt to consumers who actively seek an emotional connection to the brands they love."

What, exactly, does that mean? "Next-gen features, such as gamification, experiential rewards, hyper-personalization, decentralized structures and community-driven programs, go beyond the transactional aspect of loyalty programs," Rocio tells PMQ. "For independent pizzeria owners, I personally would focus on the community-driven program feature."

Food, including pizza, makes for "captivating fandom topics," she says. "Consumers seek communities around their passions, and loyalty programs catalyze fandoms and brand connections....Brands can leverage this connection to shift toward a more customer-centric innovation process."

Franco points to Taco Bell as an example. "The brand is interacting with its loyalty program members, offering a chance to co-create a product. Members can vote on fresh hot-sauce slogans through a fan poll for each packet type, contributing to the redesign rollout process and feeling part of the Taco Bell community."

Granted, there's a big difference between Taco Bell and an independent pizza shop. But any pizzeria can create a poll and ask for customer input on, say, a new specialty pizza or appetizer

"Companies with engaged workforces experience higher profitability—21% higher, in fact. Which means prioritizing company culture can have a significant impact on your organization's financial returns."

Belle Wong, Forbes.com

to be added to the menu. "Another type of community-driven program is from La Cage, a sports bar in Canada, which cultivates a community centered around sports, specifically [the Montreal Canadiens] hockey team," Franco says. "Members of their loyalty program receive discounts whenever the Montreal Canadiens score five goals."

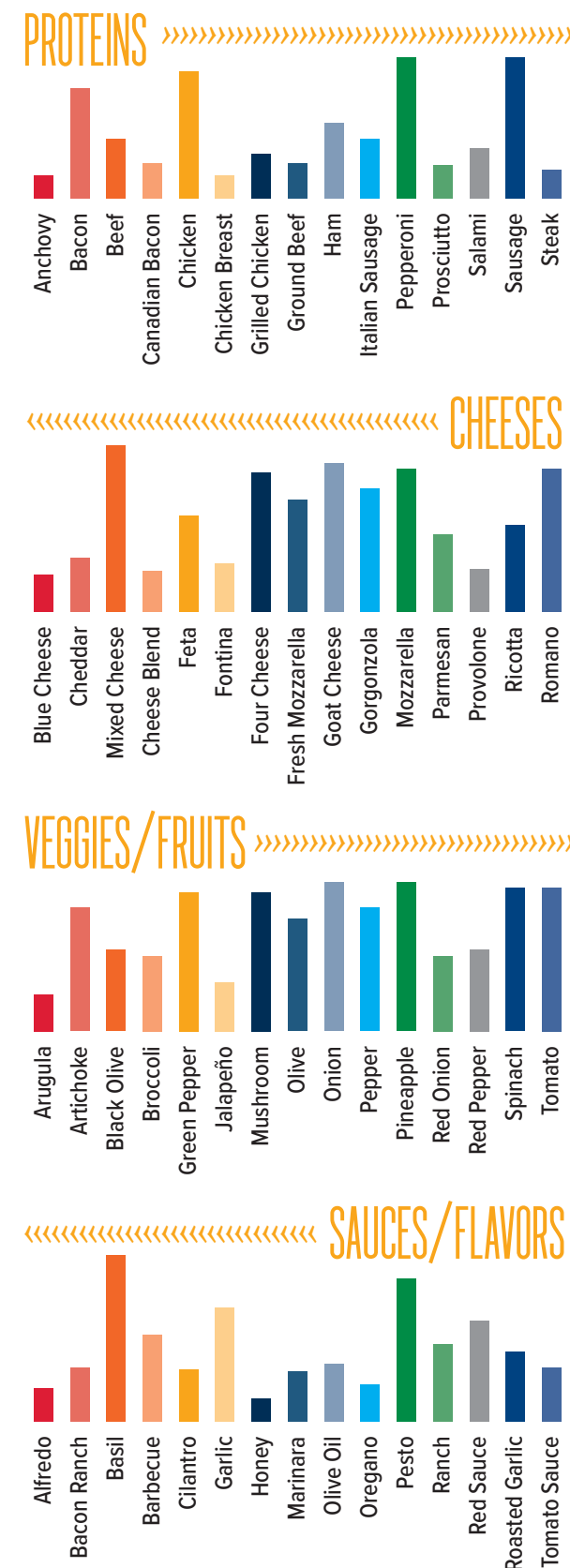
Pizzeria operators understand community building better than most. Your rewards program offers another way to do it, while showing your customers that their opinions matter. And you don't need a hometown pro sports team for that. Virtually every pizzeria has customers who love their local high school football or basketball team. Give them a reason to sign up for your loyalty program, and then show them that you share that passion.

Pizzeria operators can boost their loyalty programs—and community spirit—by tying rewards to local kids' sports.



MOST POPULAR INGREDIENTS BY MARKET SATURATION %

Source: Datassential





Owner Alex Koons engages employees at Hot Tongue Pizza in part by showcasing their comedic talents in his Instagram Reels.

MIRIAM BRUMMEL

day—in part because they never know what crazy idea their boss hatched the night before. He might plop a wig on their head, tell them to wiggle their bottoms and spotlight them in his comedic Instagram Reels. At the same time, he holds monthly company-wide meetings to hash out problems and “make sure everyone is happy,” he says. “These meetings provide great opportunities to get feedback, course-correct, and hear out any employee who needs to get something off their chest.”

In other words, engage your Millennial and Gen Z employees, and they will, in turn, become more engaged and productive employees. And they’re less likely to skip out on you for a job that pays an extra one buck an hour. “Companies with engaged workforces experience higher profitability—21% higher, in fact,” Belle Wong noted in an August 15 article on Forbes.com. “Which means prioritizing company culture can have a significant impact on your organization’s financial returns.”

Your pizzeria’s success largely depends on today’s younger workers, so you need to make

“[Gen Z is] not motivated by money. I know it sounds counterintuitive, but they want to feel like they’re a part of something bigger than themselves.”

Bianca Calascibetta, Cam’s Pizzeria

them feel as valuable as that regular who comes in every Thursday for a meat lovers pie. Get to know them, find out what makes them tick and what they want to do with their lives, Giuliana says.

“I tell my employees, ‘I hope you don’t come into work just thinking you’re going to get a paycheck and leave,’” she says. “The most valuable thing everybody has is their time, right? So I say to my employees, ‘You’re working 40 hours a week and

making money, and, of course, it’s great. But what about the value of you working on yourself and your personal goals while you’re at work? Maybe you’re not confident. So let’s work on speaking to customers more and learning their name and having them learn your name.’ There’s so much value in that. Money’s replaceable. Your time is not replaceable. And I think that’s the most important thing. I believe that. And my employees know I believe that. So they apply that to themselves.”

Rick Hynum is PMQ’s editor in chief. Kevin McIntyre is the online editor for C-Store Decisions, PMQ’s sister brand.

TOP PIZZA WEBSITES (BY TOTAL TRAFFIC)

Estimates of web traffic and website rankings have always been dicey at best. For years, we've noticed that PMQ.com's traffic was underreported by some public sources. Nevertheless, trends in web traffic reporting can help us better understand how the pizza industry is moving forward in the digital space. We reviewed web traffic estimates from multiple third-party sources to arrive at our own estimates and provide a snapshot of leading pizza chains' digital presence and power. Maybe this is the kind of traffic you can expect when you take over the industry in 2024!

RANK	Pizzeria	WEBSITE	AVG. MONTHLY TRAFFIC
1	Domino's Pizza	dominos.com	21M
2	Pizza Hut	pizzahut.com	14M
3	Papa John's	papajohns.com	11M
4	Little Caesars	littlecaesars.com	7M
5	Marco's Pizza	marcos.com	2.6M
6	Chuck E. Cheese's	chuckecheese.com	1.4M
7	Hungry Howie's Pizza	hungryhowies.com	1.3M
8	Papa Murphy's Pizza	papamurphys.com	1.2M
9	Jet's Pizza	jetspizza.com	1.1M
10	MOD Pizza	modpizza.com	1M
11	Cicis	cicis.com	830K
12	California Pizza Kitchen	cpk.com	720K
13	Mellow Mushroom	mellowmushroom.com	650K
14	Lou Malnati's Pizzeria	loumalnatis.com	640K
15	Round Table Pizza	roundtablepizza.com	630K
16	Giordano's	giordanos.com	580K
17	Pizza Ranch	pizzaranch.com	470K
18	Buca di Beppo	bucadibeppo.com	460K
19	Mountain Mike's Pizza	mountainmikespizza.com	450K
20	Donatos Pizza	donatos.com	410K
21	Blaze Pizza	blazepizza.com	390K
22	Peter Piper Pizza	peterpiperpizza.com	380K
23	North Italia	northitalia.com	360K
24	Imo's Pizza	imospizza.com	350K
25	Godfather's Pizza	godfathers.com	300K

DIGITAL DOMINANCE (BY PER-UNIT WEB TRAFFIC)

Obviously, an independent pizzeria or small chain—even those that have found their niche or are poised to grow—can't hope to match the digital reach of a major chain. When we look at web traffic for smaller operations on a per-unit basis, we get a very different picture of what it takes to get your business to the next level in an increasingly data-driven economy. There are many factors involved in the digital success of these pizza companies, but it's worth checking out their sites to discover what they're doing right—and to use their best practices to bolster your own digital presence.

RANK	Pizzeria	WEBSITE	UNITS	EST. AVG MONTHLY TRAFFIC	EST. MONTHLY TRAFFIC/UNIT
1	Joe's Pizza (NY)	joespizzanyc.com	7	200K	29K
2	John's Incredible Pizza Co.	johnspizza.com	9	150K	16K
3	Mario's Pizzeria	mariospizaonline.com	7	110K	16K
4	Toppers Pizza Place	topperspizzaplace.com	11	170K	15K
5	Pizza Luce	pizzaluce.com	9	130K	15K
6	Incredible Pizza Company	incrediblepizza.com	6	86K	14K
7	Goodfellas Pizzeria	goodfellaspizzeria.com	10	140K	14K
8	New York New York Pizza	nynypizzeria.com	8	100K	13K
9	Frank's Pizzeria	frankspizzeriaomaha.com	3	38K	13K
10	Joe's Pizza (CA)	joespizza.it	6	68K	11K
11	Buddy's Pizza	buddyspizza.com	16	180K	11K
12	Bertucci's	bertuccis.com	23	240K	10K
13	Zachary's Chicago Pizza	zacharys.com	5	50K	10K
14	Jules Thin Crust	julesthincrust.com	7	69K	10K
15	Frankie's Pizza	frankies-pizza.com	6	59K	10K
16	Mamma Mia's	mammamias.net	6	56K	9.3K
17	Giordano's	giordanos.com	64	590K	9.2K
18	Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana	pepespizzeria.com	16	140K	8.8K
19	Gallagher's Pizza	gallagherspizza.com	4	35K	8.6K
20	Ian's Pizza	ianspizza.com	9	77K	8.6K
21	Pie Pizzeria	thepie.com	6	51K	8.5K
22	Franco's Pizza	francospizza.com	5	41K	8.2K
23	Lou Malnati's Pizzeria	loumalnatis.com	81	640K	7.9K
24	Maria's Italian Kitchen	mariasitaliankitchen.com	8	61K	7.6K
25	Green Lantern Pizza	greenlanternpizza.com	11	81K	7.4K