

# CStoreDecisions®

Solutions for Convenience Retailers

## THE KENT COS. SETS SIGHTS ON NEW MARKET GROWTH

*Bill Kent, CEO of The Kent Cos., is targeting \$1 billion in revenue as the company ventures into new operating areas, while elevating foodservice and testing self-checkout.*

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# QUICKBITES

## EVOLVING CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR AND OUTLOOK

*The COVID-19 pandemic's latest surge has waned, allowing customers to return to spring gatherings and a to-go lifestyle, but the pandemic continues to influence shopper trends. Meanwhile, inflation is rising, impacting the overall economic outlook.*

### TOP NEEDS DRIVING EATING OCCASIONS



1. Fueling



2. Wellness



3. Connecting



4. Gratifying

**33%** of all eating occasions are influenced by the need to fuel the body.

**21%** of all eating occasions are influenced by wellness.

Source: NPD Group's recent report "America's Health Pulse: Closing the Gap Between Wants and Needs," 2022.

### INFLATION WON'T HALT SPRING HOLIDAY GATHERINGS

Spring holiday gatherings are expected to make a comeback in 2022 after COVID-19 impacted gatherings over the last two years.



**90%** of respondents notice that the cost of food is higher than last year

**30%** plan to prepare a special meal only for themselves or their family, down from 38% in 2021. More customers plan to host or attend a meal with extended family in 2022 compared to 2021.

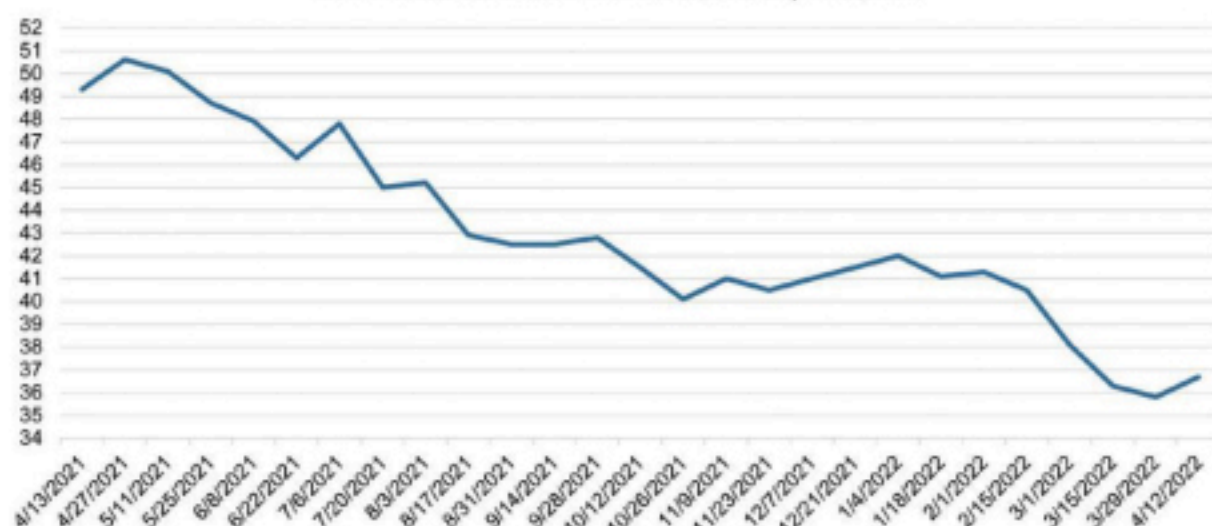
**26%** expect to pay much more or some more for their spring holiday gatherings compared to 2021.

Source: "Spring Holiday Report 2022," Information Resources Inc. (IRI)

### ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

After hitting record lows, economic sentiment grew slightly over the two weeks ending April 13, 2022. The Hamilton Place Strategies (HPS)-CivicScience Economic Sentiment Index (ESI) increased 0.9 points to 36.7. The only economic indicator to decrease during the week ending April 13, 2022, was confidence in the housing market, which dipped 0.6 points to a record low of 22.4. Confidence in the U.S. economy grew 0.2 points to 34.9.

HPS-CS Economic Sentiment Index, since April 13, 2021



### THE TO-GO LIFESTYLE

A recent nationwide Y-Pulse survey polled customers ages 18-34 on takeout and delivery program preferences.



**83%** of respondents were willing to drive a distance to pick up food from a restaurant they really liked.

**72%** would buy grocery items at a local restaurant.

**70%** have learned about new restaurants because of a unique takeout offering.

**79%** like to try new things on the restaurant's menu when they order meals to go.

**82%** prefer to order directly from a restaurant rather than a delivery service.

Source: Y-Pulse, a division of Olson Communications

### PRICE TRENDS

IRI reported that price trends in the top 25 edible categories compared to one year ago range from increases of 26.3% for powdered milk to 13.8% for shelf-stable spaghetti/Italian sauce.



IRI predicted that weakening unit demand will lead retailers to increase promotion investments, and that growing price inflation and price sensitivity will result in consumers shopping more aggressively on deals.

Source: "Spring Holiday Report 2022," Information Resources Inc. (IRI)