

Generation Y Like Value, Variety in Dining Out Millennials pick restaurants because of price and menu options

Aug. 22, 2011

CHICAGO – Consumers between the ages of 18 and 33 eat at restaurants because of value and menu diversity, a new poll by Y-Pulse LLC found.

“Young-adult diners are eating more often at quick-service restaurants than at any other restaurant type,” said Sharon Olson, co-founder of Y-Pulse, to Nation’s Restaurant News. “At least half of all respondents reported never ordering food and/or drink at coffee shops, fast-casual and high-end restaurants in any given week. Meanwhile, pizza restaurants were the second place they are most likely to dine.”

Respondents put low prices, customer service and location near home or work as the top factors that guided their restaurant picks. The data showed that coupons and loyalty discounts came next in the list.

Millennials like to go to fast-food and pizza chains because of the lower price points and value deals at those restaurants. For example, McDonald’s Dollar Menu and Taco Bell’s Why Pay More! strategy has paid off for those chains. Pizza chains discounting to about \$10 has also been successful, such as Pizza Hut and Papa John’s specials.

Generation Y chose restaurants based on food and menu options, followed by free beverage refills, takeout selection, good assortment of healthy and organic foods, and ethnic food items. Despite its saturation in media and technology, Millennials did not put free Wi-Fi or laptop outlets as important reasons to go to a restaurant.

A whopping 80 percent also indicated that they did not follow restaurants on Facebook or Twitter. Most preferred personal recommendations over social media.

“We found it interesting that high-school-aged respondents replied quite similarly to the older respondents on most every question,” Olson said. “Regardless of age, this generation seeks information from known sources, like friends and family, rather than following restaurants or social-media sites. They are discriminating in the sources that they trust for recommendations.”