

Convenience Stores Increase Social Media Presence on College Campuses

University c-store foodservice directors use social media to connect with students.



CHICAGO – Convenience retail operations on college and university campuses have more than doubled their use of social media in the last five years to better connect with their customers. A recent **Y-Pulse** study shows that 75% of campus foodservice professionals now use social and digital media tools to engage their customers, compared to 32% in 2010.

More students are purchasing food from on-campus foodservice venues than in 2010, and with the continuing rise of social and digital media, campus foodservice professionals are increasing their use of these marketing tools. **Y-Pulse** found the majority of on-campus convenience and retail stores are on Facebook and Twitter and/or a website to digitally connect with their consumers. The largest digital platform increase occurred with 72% of foodservice professionals using a website to engage their c-store and retail consumers, whereas only 33% reported using one in 2010. Overall, on-campus foodservice operators are showing an increase in understanding of social media technologies since 2010.

“Seventy-six percent of the college students we surveyed reported that they were purchasing food at convenience stores on campus as opposed to only 22% in the previous study. It is exciting to see that campus c-store operators have been so effective in attracting student consumers to their stores,” said **Sharon Olson, executive director of Y-Pulse.**

Top platforms that college and university foodservice professionals are using to connect with c-store and retail purchasers include Facebook (85%), Twitter (82%), a website (72%) and Instagram (54%). Top platforms students choose to obtain information about on-campus food options include Facebook (90%), Twitter (86%), a website (80%) and Instagram (60%). Ninety-three percent of students reported purchasing food on-campus in 2015, a 26% increase since 2010.