

Chicken and Burger Bars (and Takeaway) - UK - March 2010

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What is this report about?

The fast food sector has performed particularly well during the recession. Ongoing demand for convenience continues to drive this market, whilst the wide menu ranges of these outlets also meant that they were well placed to cope with and capitalise on consumers' changing purchasing behaviour during the recession. The gourmet burger bar sector, however, has suffered more from the reduction of family out-of-home dining during the recession and both sectors have felt the effects of consumers cutting back.

Whilst additional factors such as continued government focus on nutritional concerns and rising competition from other fast food/fast casual cuisine types (eg sushi, Mexican, salads) continue to add pressure to current market conditions, growth opportunities are still clearly evident, eg focus on breakfast and snacks food and in-house design options and new product launches. The report looks at current patterns of usage for both eating in and takeaway, identifies current trends, assesses how the chicken and burger market has changed and outlines prospective future developments within the sector. It explores consumer behaviour and attitudes towards chicken and burger bars and identifies key consumer groups within the market.

What have we found out?

- A number of factors have made the chicken/burger bar market relatively resilient to the effects of the recession, such as the informal dining trend that has developed in recent years, and consumers eating out for an increasing variety of reasons. The flexible menus of chicken/burger bars are well suited to these varied consumer demands.
- Only 5% of all consumers (and 9% of regular chicken/burger bar users) have said that they have been cutting back on chicken/burger bar spending recently to save money.
- Over 15m people would rather eat 'proper' food (eg main/sit-down meal, not handheld food), however, 14.6m people will use chicken/burger bars as a last resort.
- Brand differentiation is low in this market: only one in ten consumers have a chicken/ burger bar brand that they prefer over others.
- A quarter of users of chicken & burger bar like this type of food because the product is reliable and "they know what they're going to get", with nearly a third of users tending to order the same thing.
- The image of fast food is gradually improving. Only one in ten consumers now say that the food quality at chicken/burger bars isn't usually very good.

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