

newsworthy trends

Grazing The Day Away: Fast-Paced Lifestyles Have Americans Munching Around The Clock

(NAPSA)—Americans seem to be in a constant state of motion—always somewhere to go, something to do. Amid day planners packed with appointments and errands, the traditional meal times of breakfast, lunch and dinner have been bumped from the schedule for many people.

A recent study by Information Resources, a sales and marketing research company, found that 35 percent of Americans eat two or fewer traditional, sit-down meals a day, with an increasing number of people skipping meals altogether. The study also showed that more Americans have turned to “grazing”—eating snacks or small meals throughout the day, sometimes up to six times in 24 hours.

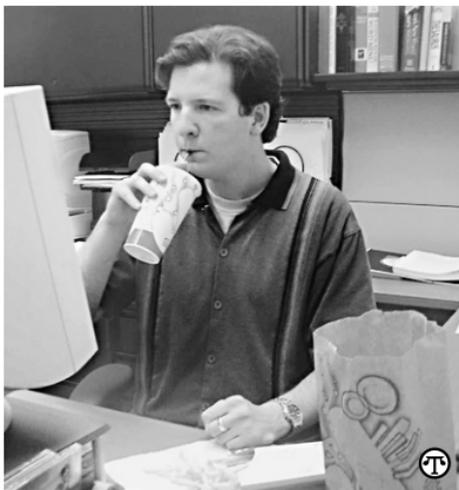
Tammy Bailey, director of product marketing for Jack in the Box restaurants, said the chain has seen an increase in the percentage of sales transacted during less traditional meal times, including mid-afternoon and late-night hours.

“We are quickly becoming a society of grab-and-go eaters,” said Bailey. “We eat what we can, when we can. That could mean stopping for a bagel and coffee in the morning, ordering a salad to eat at your desk, or grabbing a protein bar in the afternoon.”

Why are Americans grazing the day away?

- No time—With the demands of work, household duties, family and friends, cooking is often put on the back burner.

- More sit-down time—Sitting for hours in front of computers,



Desktop dining has become a way of life for many time-strapped workers.

cable TV and high-tech video games creates an ideal environment for snacking.

- Mobile society—Americans love their cars, so much so that the dashboard has replaced the dinner table as a dining spot.

- Choices and convenience—Never before have there been so many grab-and-go food choices on the market—everything from smoothies to microwavable sandwiches.

Some restaurants cater to grazers by offering extended hours and a full menu, including breakfast items, at all times of day. At Jack in the Box, for example, customers can order breakfast sandwiches at 6 p.m. or burgers and shakes at 6 a.m.

“Over the years, we’ve learned that our customers are looking for a lot of choices, not only in menu items, but also in dining times,” Bailey said.