

“Are the snacks still fresh?”

“I’d like the chicken ciabatta in the middle please..”
“This one?” replies the barista and points to the snack, the customer nods. Seven customers later a similar situation – the student asks “can I have the tostado from underneath?” The barista is easy going and reacts with a friendly “sure” and a relaxed look. He knows why the customers are pointing to specific snacks, as he himself filled the display counter. The store manager had told him to “place the snacks from yesterday on top and sell them first”. During his cigarette break the barista remarks that “you can easily see if the snacks are from the previous day”. The barista was not able to answer the question as to whether or not the shop had sold fewer snacks recently. One hour later in the queue between two friends. “Are you also having a muffin?” asks one friend, to which the other replies “no, they were too dry for me last time”. “OK, then I’ll only have a latte as well” is the final answer.



Unsold or written-off products are undoubtedly a cost factor. Findings have shown, however,

that very few customers are prepared to make compromises when it comes to freshness (quality), especially with snacks. It is rather quite the opposite reaction, customers tend to “generalise” and forgo the purchase of a snack altogether, regardless of whether they are sweet or savoury. Once the process of disappointment has started for a customer, other parameters are also perceived to be irritating.. suddenly the place is not clean enough, too loud or the employees are less friendly than usual. On top of that comes the problem of product availability in the display counter. “One or two muffins” often appear like leftovers to

of a “weak competence” in that field. To get out of this dangerous spiral, a step forward needs to be taken:

Tip 1: Only sell “savoury” snacks the same day. **Tip 2:** Check which items are the “Bestsellers” by deducting the “filled/delivered” snacks from the unsold/leftover snacks at the end of the day. If you have snacks where you are selling 5 or fewer a day, then replace these with “creative” new snacks. **Tip 3:** Attract customers with “exciting” flavours, such as “fig mustard” with strong cheese or your home-made “Cream-cheese with herbs and a little pesto”. Offer “vegetarian” snacks to show your health awareness. Look for regional suppliers for your ingredients. The “dairy farmer” who also delivers “cheese”, the organic “vegetable farmer” or the butcher with the good reputation. “Advertise” the new innovations with an “appetising” photo and place the pavement sign in front of the shop. It is important when making the photos that the “exciting” ingredients are in the foreground and create the desire to “tuck right in”. **Tip 4:** Promote the idea of freshness with “vegetables” in the display counter. Tomatoes, whole cucumbers, bell peppers and rocket are often conveyers of freshness from the point of view of customers. Moreover, you can use these vegetables as toppings for your snacks. **Tip 5:** Sweet snacks such as “muffins” and “brownies”, which often have a longer shelf-life, should not be on sale for longer than two days. In order to direct the customers’ attention, you should have the “strongest” product in abundance. This could mean, for example, a wide display of 15 chocolate muffins packed full. To the left and the right somewhat smaller displays of the next types such as blueberry and apple or cinnamon. The result will be that the items presented in the middle will sell the best. **Tip 6:** As a general rule, you should have at least 10 items of a particular type in the display counter. It is only from these quantities that customers will recognise a “competence” in a particular product group. Do without offering “many types”. The “basic stock” of sweet snacks should be 8 types and the same for savoury snacks. The effort and the danger that you will have somewhat higher unsold stock in the beginning will help you, however, to

make up for lost ground. In addition, you will be winning “new” customers. Overall, you will notice that you are able to sell “significantly” more snacks. So that the situation does not go as far as the example above, you should regularly train your employees in “freshness” in the visual appearance and in taste as well as how products should be stored in general. Whether it is in closed or open containers, where and how the snacks should be kept in the fridge and how they can stay their freshest for longer. Employees should also be sensitised to notice what is left “on the plate” by customers after their visit. Do not offer “tasters” of snacks from the previous day, in the misguided assumption that you are doing the customers a favour. Only offer “fresh” samples of snacks for customers to try and place these next to the cup when serving. The rate of impulse purchases of the “whole” product was significantly higher with fresh products. Good luck!