



*Kaffee ist heute ein starker  
Umsatzbringer in der Bäckerei.  
Kaffeekompetenz zeigt sich unter  
anderem in der Auswahl passender  
Produkte im Angebot.*

## What really works in the coffee business?

**The recent innovations by coffee professionals seem almost limitless. What works and, more importantly, what does the baker need to know?**

There is currently a lot of movement on the coffee market: a relaunch of the Melitta filters, different brewing methods such as Chemex, Siphon, Iced and Cold Brew and many more. The filter coffee remains in first place but the cappuccino is making up considerable ground. This assessment is only true for bakeries, cafes and service stations, however. The cappuccino is already in first place in coffee bars and has been for a long time. So how should we view these trends? You can find answers, tips and ideas in the following article.

**The cappuccino is catching up.** What is hip, cool or out of fashion is shaped primarily by the innovations in coffee bars and, since recently, of small, local coffee roasting houses. Bakers could theoretically sit back and relax but they should certainly not underestimate the innovative strength of the coffee bars and roasting houses. The creations and developments in the coffee business are spread almost in real-time over the internet. The more often a consumer hears of such innovations, the more likely they are to ask about them in your bakery and this is where the consumer can be merciless. If a vendor no longer seems competent, the consumer will simply find a new one elsewhere. My tip: stay up to date by reading about trends on the internet or signing-up for newsletters or trade journals. But remember – not every supposed trend will come to fruition. For example, how successful has the reintroduction of the porcelain coffee filters with its paper filters been?

**Porcelain filters are making little headway.** Determined attempts have been made over the last two years to push this classic brewing method back onto the market. After numerous visits to establishments offering this brewing technique, the same finding was made repeatedly. Customers in coffee bars were still opting for specialty coffees like cappuccinos. The historical porcelain filter could not establish itself in cafes and the time conscious to-go customers rather preferred the already prepared filter coffee. During this phase there was, however, slight growth in the interest for the French press but after a while this paled into insignificance when compared to the sales of the classic brewing methods. According to GA-Trendagentur, one reason for this is customers have become accustomed to quality over the last decade due to the rapid development of espresso machines and



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fully automatic coffee machines. Just pulling an historic porcelain filter out of the drawer was not enough to convince consumers they were going to experience a particular quality or taste sensation. As is the same in fashion, some adjustments are needed. Phylz from the USA uses large coffee filters, like the well-known ones from Brewmatic, and

the employees pour water into the filters from a great height, ensuring entertainment value for the observers. This method creates a whirlpool effect, the filter coffee swells up and the aromas can develop better. A similar Asian method exists where the whirlpool is used to mix coffee grounds and hot water, which is then poured through a cotton cloth strainer (sock).

**Cold Brew is on the rise.** Independent from the heavily publicised filter coffee systems like Chemex (using paper filters), Syphon (comparable with the Italian method of espresso makers but out of glass), the Cold Brew variety is likely to set a trend. For Cold Brew, the coffee is prepared for longer than 10 hours with cold rather than hot water and is a trendy alternative in the summer months to the traditional iced coffee with vanilla ice cream. For now, bakers can sit back and relax in this respect but they should still keep their employees up to date with the various methods of preparation emerging from the coffee bars. By doing so, they can prevent awkward moments with the coffee-enthusiast customers, who are increasingly frequenting bakeries.

**Maintain Standards.** In the current period of coffee innovations, it is becoming ever more important to keep up with the expected standards. Filter coffee is best prepared using a bulk brewer. Careful: coffee machines with hotplates risk bitter coffee. My tip: with an electronic timer, you can set yourself reminders to change the filter coffee. Nowadays, a bitter coffee will directly convince a customer to go elsewhere as it is seen as old coffee. Cappuccinos should most definitely be offered alongside filter coffee.

**Don't forget the chocolate powder on top.** Many customers expect chocolate powder on their cappuccinos. Some vendors think it's a good idea to first ask customers if they would like chocolate as it's one way to save on costs. In some cases where customers decline the offer, it could be that they would like it but assume it costs extra. If individual customers would not like chocolate on their cappuccino, experience has shown they will say so directly. My tip: place free chocolate, cinnamon and vanilla shakers on a condiment station as most coffee bars already do.

**Lattes are recommended.** The target age group up to 49 years old knows the latte from the global coffee bar brand Starbucks and this product should also not be missing from the drinks board in any bakery. Traditionally, the latte is served in a glass or large mug. If you already offer a latte with two shots of espresso, it is advisable to advertise it as "latte strong" on the board. The milder variety that most younger target groups know from Starbucks can then be advertised simply as "latte". In comparison,



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the familiar "Milchkaffee" (White Coffee), still popular outside cities, is mostly made with filter coffee and hot milk.

**The frothy milk makes the difference.** The flat white made with especially creamy milk is currently on the rise. It starts with two shots of espresso - the same as a cappuccino - and the milk is prepared with the steamer in a circular motion in the semi-automatic or espresso machine. The milk jug is tapped against the counter top to settle and thicken the milk, which is then poured into the cup with the espresso. This is also the best way to present latte art - the artistic decorating of frothy milk is a must for every coffee professional. If you have a fully automatic coffee machine, you can use the creamy milk setting for the flat white and it can also be adjusted for the cappuccino. Your customers will appreciate it. The cortado could also be coming to the German market in the next few years. The global coffee bar chain Costa is currently promoting the drink as the new variety for a special taste experience. The espresso labelled cortado is exposed to hot water for a shorter time, resulting in the release of fewer bitter compounds. Through this process, the coffee should be lighter on the stomach and more flavourful. The cortado is also served with creamy milk in a small glass. Up to now, consumers have not expected to find this drink in bakeries. This addition should help build up customer loyalty, however. It is a sign of a store's competence when coffee lovers can find a mocha on the menu - this is hot chocolate and espresso with optional whipped cream.



**Apropos whipped cream.** Whipped cream is an integral ingredient in coffee bars. This will eventually become a standard part of bakeries as it already is in coffee bars. Cream is experiencing a comeback particularly with the young, female target groups. As with all trend developments, cream is appearing slightly different than previously. Now it comes into the hot drinks directly from the disposable spray cans and sweet. This is often enjoyed with a little sauce as well. While syrups and flavours don't do especially well in bakeries, the combination of cream and chocolate sauce, for example, is a hit on the mocha. Cream and chocolatey sauces should also be offered for the hot chocolate - and preferably served in a glass.

**Semi or fully automatic coffee machine?** The opinions differ on whether semi or fully automatic coffee machine are better suited for use in bakeries. Consumer minds are made up, however. GA-Trendagentur has discovered that consumers perceive bakeries using espresso machines as the most competent. Users who have chosen fully automatic machines give time saving as the primary reason for their decision. It is not the preparation that is meant here as trained employees can prepare specialty coffee faster than most fully automatic machines. It is rather the time that can be used to

serve or pack up other products for the customer. The manual preparation of creamy milk and latte art discussed above should not be ignored in the long term, however. One solution is to have a semi or fully automatic machine to only prepare coffee, alongside the espresso machine. The employee can then concentrate on frothing the milk. My tip: whichever machine you go for, be it the espresso or fully automatic machine, don't forget a filter coffee machine should always have a place in bakeries.

**Full fat or fat free?** For the purposes of a full-bodied taste, milk should have at least 3.5% fat. Nevertheless, bakeries should also have reduced fat and lactose free milk options available. Currently, around 20% of customers in coffee bars explicitly ask for the low-fat option – and the trend is rising. When customers have the choice between various milk types for their black coffee at the condiment station, every sixth will go for the low-fat option. My tip: provide three types of milk in different jugs – full-fat, low-fat and lactose free.

**Condiment stations provide orientation.** Condiment stations are not a new trend, from the consumer perspective they are already standard and emphasise a store's competence in coffee. It is best to place these stations away from the till so that the customer can take some time to organise themselves and make final preparations to their drinks. The stations should at least contain: take-away lids, stirrers, different types of milk, white and brown sugar as well as sweetener and chocolate powder. Own-roasted coffee and espresso beans, also those freshly ground, do not sell very well. Despite showing a vendor's competence in coffee, they are by no means a top seller. You should significantly lower your sales expectations for these products.

**Training for employees.** GA-Trendagentur considers it essential for employees to have a sound knowledge of coffee. Nowadays, many consumers are more well-informed and expect a bakery with a competence in coffee to have employees who know the fundamentals surrounding it and similar products. For this reason, you should send your employees to coffee training courses or use the knowledge from your coffee supplier. It is enough for your employees to know the origin of your coffee, the beans and the roast (Robusta, Arabic, etc.). Fair-trade and organic coffee work to your advantage as an instrument to build customer loyalty. Even though a consumer is not prepared to pay more for fair-trade coffee, it still improves the image of your store. If a customer has the choice between two vendors, they are more likely to go with their conscience and choose the fair-trade offering.

**Clearly structured boards.** Too much information on boards only serves to confuse customers who can become quickly overwhelmed. The design of the drinks board is one of the most difficult decisions for a bakery to make. Which products should be included and what is the easiest way for the board to be structured for customers? Here is a tip for the bakers of the future with coffee competence: choose the heading "Classics" and list cappuccino, latte macchiato, white coffee and coffee. For bakeries with an espresso machine, the espresso should also come under "classics". Under the heading "Espresso Specials", include latte, flat white and mochas.

**Coffee mugs are becoming more rustic.** When you observe trends in coffee bars, you can tell the days of fine china are long gone. The colouring of the cups seems friendlier and they appear to have been made individually. The hand-made cups and mugs portray the image of originality and bridge the distance between the chosen coffee and the familiar coffee plantation overseas. In this way, you can stand out visually from the industrial look and all too perfect standard.

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