



## MARKET UPDATE

**Tomatoes:** Growing conditions continue to be optimal in Florida, bringing an abundance of round, grape and cherry tomatoes to market. There are also ample supplies of romas, although numbers are generally lighter on this variety throughout the Winter season. Quality is very nice on all types of tomatoes.

With Sinaloa now harvesting in earnest, round and roma availability has improved in the West. Sizing is heavier to the larger end of the spectrum as most growers are in crown picks. Grape tomatoes continue to cross in adequate numbers through Texas, while Western Mainland growers are starting to see increases in production. Quality and condition are good from all areas. Baja is not completely out of the picture, as they continue to have fruit available, but volumes are lightening up.

**Bell Peppers:** Florida perseveres with strong supply of bell peppers with good quality. Plant City is still in the mix, but the majority of fruit is coming from the coastal areas of South Florida. Peppers are running large, as weather has sized up crops and farms are passing by 2<sup>nd</sup> and later picks which generally yield smaller fruit. XL peppers are more snug than other sizes. Western markets are saturated with pepper, as multiple areas in Mexico are in strong production. Quality is excellent with nice color and thick walls on the fruit.

**Cucumbers:** Culiacan has ramped up production, providing the West with a steady stream of very nice quality cucumbers. Baja is also crossing fruit, but numbers are declining as less growers are in the mix. Eastern markets are pulling from both Florida and Honduras,

with plenty of product available. Look for Florida crops to wind down in another 2-3 weeks, when the East will begin to rely on imports. Honduras initially brought in more product than the market needed, and quality suffered as product backed up. They've cleaned up, resulting in improved quality.

**Summer Squash:** With multiple areas in season, Florida continues to have strong supplies of yellow and zucchini squashes. Quality has improved as growers have worked through older fields. Mexico also has multiple areas in production with lots of fruit available. Overall quality is good, although there is scarring on some lots of yellow squash.

**Green Beans:** Green beans supply presses on in strong numbers in both Florida and Mexico. Quality has been good from all growing areas.

**Eggplant:** Eggplant remains a very promotable item throughout the country, as both Eastern and Western sources have good supply and quality available.

**Chili Peppers:** With both Sonora and Sinaloa harvesting, core chili pepper items will remain in good supply for at least the next few weeks. Quality is mixed out of Sonora as crops begin to show their age. However, Sinaloa's new crop fruit has been stellar. As perfect growing weather continues in Florida, farms have good supply and quality on chilies, particularly jalapenos.

**Hard Squash:** Honduran hard squash are beginning to show up in good volumes in the East, as Florida crops wind down. In the West, there is more than adequate supply of all items coming out of Sonora. There are some quality concerns where inventories are backed up with reports of sugar spots & stem mold.

## TRANSPORTATION FACTS

\* The National Diesel Average increased \$.01 this week moving from \$2.53 to \$2.54 per gallon.

\* The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is almost \$.31 higher than the same time last year.

\* All areas reported price increases this week, with the most significant hike coming from New England (up \$.024 per gallon).

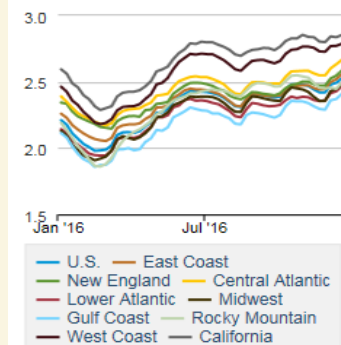
\* California remains the high-price leader for diesel fuel at \$2.87 while the Gulf Coast region still offers the best bargain at \$2.42 per gallon.

\* The WTI Crude Oil price rose 3.5% this week, moving from \$52.23 to \$54.06 per barrel.

\* Slight transportation shortages continue in Central/South Florida, at Mexico/Texas crossing points, and in potato and onion production areas.

### On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices

(dollars per gallon)



Source: Energy Information Administration

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

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## RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

### 5 Ways to Connect with Your Customers in 2017

By: Anna Bogdanova, [www.fastcasual.com](http://www.fastcasual.com), December 21, 2016

Considering that consumers of all ages are growing weary of the marketing campaigns and messages constantly bombarding them, 2017 could be a tough year for fast casuals to engage new and old customers.

What still works really well, however, is engaging them on their own terms, and mobile channels are great for that. Seventy percent of mobile phone users said they actually want to have loyalty cards on their devices, and recent studies found that overall activity on mobile devices now accounts for two-thirds of digital media time.

Taking those stats into consideration, below are five things to consider when defining your 2017 customer relationship strategy:

#### 1. Incentivize your customers to share personal data

The success of your marketing efforts heavily relies on what you know about your customers, and your customer database needs to be a year-round priority. Keep in mind that nobody will fill out guest experience cards these days. Customers want to release their personal information on their own terms and in the easiest and most rewarding way.

If you have a mobile app, the data gets richer as customers use it and engage with it, so make sure you continually give reasons for new customers to install it and existing users — to log in. If customers know upfront what they are signing up for and are incentivized, they'll be less likely to delete your loyalty app or unsubscribe from communications later on.

##### Ideas:

- Make it a quick and easy experience for your customers to install your restaurant app and register their personal info using your wi-fi access. Offer an incentive like a menu item for the download.

- Consider an ongoing lottery with a regular prize like a meal for two: restaurant guests are usually much more inclined to share personal data if there is a drawing involved.

#### 2. Get laser focused with targeting

Use the year end and Q1 to exhaustively analyze which tools your specific audience engages with most and reflect on which

campaigns have worked effectively for your restaurant. Then consolidate your marketing to fuel these efforts. Carefully segment your audience for different campaigns and analyze results afterward — you need to know exactly how effective your tactics are and who you are addressing. Make sure you target specific groups with highly tailored messages.

##### Ideas:

- Segment your existing and potential customers based on demographics, favorite menu items, important dates, etc. A married couple doesn't need an email about a "singles special" on Valentine's — target your younger demographic instead. Nor should you send giant burger promos to your vegetarian customers.

- Track birthdays: we see a high 35 percent conversion rate on average for birthday incentives in the fast casual segment, so invite your customers to stop by a week before or after their birthdays.

#### 3. Focus on mobile apps

In Q2, prioritize hands-on marketing campaigns and mobile channels for communications. We know for a fact that mobile-based gamification works great as people really enjoy collecting points for visits or gaining a certain status at the restaurant. Using mobile apps for these campaigns means you can encourage active sharing of pictures and engagement of your community (especially if there's an additional incentive to invite friends or share the message on social channels). Millennials represent the most "mobile-engaged" customer group, so you also maximize the use of tools like proximity notifications and actions on the go when targeting younger customers.

##### Ideas:

- Consider investing in a digital ordering system, so your regular customers can rapidly pre-order their meals and pick them up at lunchtime.

- Offer the newest mobile and digital forms of payments that attract mobile-savvy customers. Customers now expect brands to offer these convenient options, and this trend will only continue to intensify.

#### 4. Find creative ways to upsell

Your focus for Q3 could be on upselling and increasing the average check amount. It's an obvious way to grow the restaurant revenue, but the key here is to position the offerings as useful recommendations and bonuses that will make your customers' visits even more enjoyable and fun.

##### Ideas:

- Offer additional points for a larger check or discounts for groups since summer is all about vacation and spending time with friends and family.

- Use bounce-back coupons to give your customers incentives to come back within the first 7 days of their visit. Chances are, if customers visit twice in 1-2 weeks, they'll be coming back again — we've seen consistent success with this tactic.

#### 5. Measure incremental sales

As you are reflecting on your results and reviewing your efforts in Q4, the emphasis should be on the incremental value of your marketing efforts. For example, based on the average number of weekly visitors, how many more people visited the restaurant since you've launched a particular campaign? Incremental value is probably the most important stat that you can gather by comparing historical data and your average numbers in a given week.

##### Ideas:

- If you are operating a fast casual chain, run a promotion in two locations out of four that perform at the same level. Then compare the revenue and other numbers with the locations that didn't run a promotion.

- Analyze historical data for the same location comparing the week of running a promotion with the previous week. Pay attention to specific issues you are trying to solve: for example, if you want to fill up the restaurant at off-peak hours, run a weekly comparison of the off-peak purchases.

What are the key takeaways for restaurant owners and marketers? Ditch simple offers in 2017, relying on the fact that a 10 percent discount or another free slice of pizza just don't cut it anymore. Instead, start building committed customer relationships through highly targeted and personalized mobile campaigns that deliver incremental value to your business.





## LIPMAN IN PICTURES

Here are just a few photos of Team Lipman celebrating the holidays!



North Carolina had a dinner, a prize lottery and a piñata!



Workers at Farm 7 (in Naples, FL) received chicken, rice & beans from Lipman and the Marco YMCA



Farm 15 in Wimauma, FL had a big holiday dinner.



Rafael Diaz of our Virginia farm volunteers his time and efforts to work with Operation Christmas Child



TPE/Lipman in Livermore enjoyed a luncheon and Tacky Christmas Sweater Contest

## PRODUCE BAROMETER

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Good	Steady
Cucumber	Good	Steady
Eggplant	Good	Steady
Green Beans	Good	Steady
Jalapenos	Good	Lower
Onions	Good	Steady
Squash	Good	Steady
Tomatoes	Good	Steady



## JANUARY CALENDAR

**All Month**  
National Slow Cooking Month  
**January 1<sup>st</sup>**  
New Year's Day  
National Bloody Mary Day  
**January 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
National Buffet Day  
**January 4<sup>th</sup>**  
National Spaghetti Day

### Estero, FL Weather

Fri Dec 30	Sat Dec 31	Sun Jan 1	Mon Jan 2	Tue Jan 3
66°F	73°F	81°F	81°F	81°F
45°F	59°F	66°F	66°F	70°F
N 16 MPH	NE 9 MPH	ESE 10 MPH	ESE 10 MPH	SE 7 MPH
			Precip 30%	Precip 20%

## KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

### Generation Z Leads the Omnichannel Parade

By: HBSDealer Staff, [www.chainstoreage.com](http://www.chainstoreage.com), December 27, 2016

When it comes to combining in-store visits and online product research or purchase, Generation Z (ages 18 to 26) leads all other shopper age groups in the U.S., lending some spark an otherwise flat “omnishopping” environment.

Just-released findings from GfK’s annual FutureBuy study show that nearly half (46%) of all Gen Z shoppers in the US have researched an item on a mobile device and then bought it in a store – a strategy known as “webrooming.” That level is up 5 percentage points from 2015 and beats other generations by 12 to 27 points.

One-third (32%) of Gen Z US shoppers report they researched a product in a bricks-and-mortar store and then bought it online via a mobile device (“showrooming”). This compares to 24% just a year ago, and bests other generations by 11 to 20 percentage points.

Frequency of showrooming is also higher among the younger generations, with Gens Y (ages 27 to 36) and Z much more likely to say they showroom at least once a week. Generation X (ages 37 to 51), on the other hand, tends to fall into the “once every few weeks to once a month” category.

Overall, webrooming – reported by one-third (34%) of all US shoppers – is much more common than showrooming (21% of US shoppers).

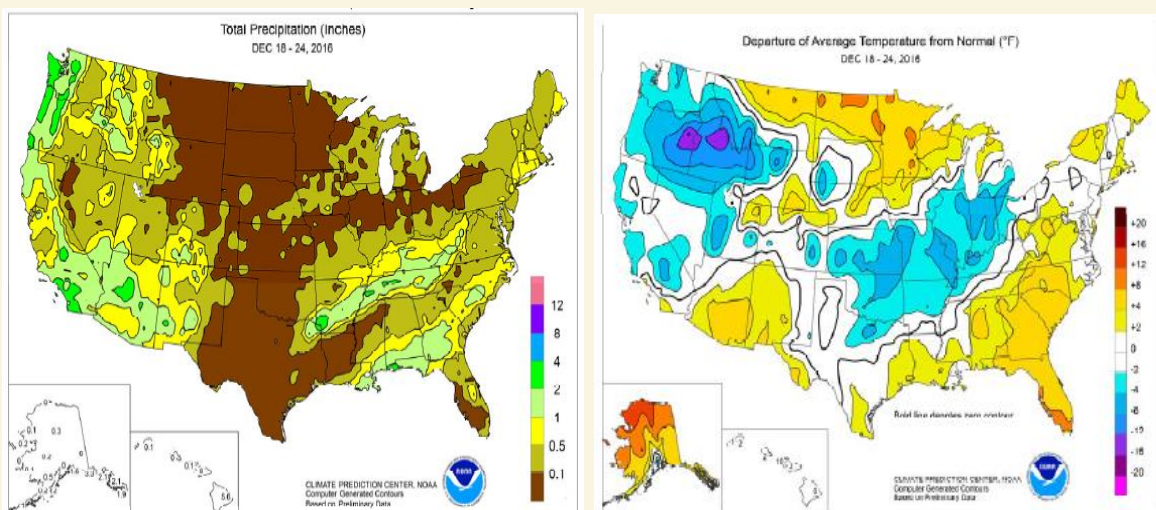
Somewhat surprisingly, Gen Z was also most likely to cite concerns about credit card and personal information security as a reason to avoid shopping online. One-third of all Gen Z shoppers in the US mentioned this worry, up from 26% last year. But the top reason for avoiding online shopping remains the cost of delivery, cited by 50% of all shoppers and 51% of Gen Z.

“These findings really illustrate that generation is a major factor in determining how someone prefers to shop,” said Joe Beier, EVP on GfK’s Shopper and Retail Strategy team. “They also offer a stark reminder of the importance of tightly defining the target audiences for any activation initiatives. The days of ‘one size fits all’ are clearly over.”

GfK’s annual FutureBuy study measures the shifting interactions of digital and in-person activities in the shopper experience, tracking essential trends such as “showrooming” and “webrooming.”

## NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

### Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



## AN APPLE A DAY

### Why I'm Ditching New Year's Resolutions

By: Pazit Perez, [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com), December 25, 2016

New Year's resolution don't work, it's obvious. Fact: Only 8% succeed at it. So, why do we keep doing the same thing year after year, expecting different results? Last New Year's, I tried a new approach, one that worked. I created a compelling vision, in the form of a photograph that reflected who I wanted to become, not who I was. That photograph became my destination, my focus, and my target. I now had a tangible image in hands and took daily steps in the direction of my vision to become and be the person I created in the photographs. I actually used photography not to create memories, but to create my future. There is no such thing as an overnight success, sorry guys, but I will share with you my winning recipe of how to become the creator of your life.

#### CREATE A VISION AND STICK WITH IT

Every journey begins with a vision of where you're going. Walking by sight is much easier than walking by faith. So first thing first: create a **VISION** of who you want to be, do, or have. This is the most fundamental step in your journey. If you don't have an idea established in you as a reality of who or what you want to become, you will most likely never achieve it. Create a vision with your Kodak's. Ask yourself; Who do I want to become? What do I want to achieve?

#### FOCUS

Whatever you focus on expands. **Focus** on your potential, not your problems. Potential is infinite, and problems will pass. Remember to place your vision, that tangible image you created in sight, somewhere you will see it every day and often, make it your social media profile photo, otherwise out of sight out of mind applies. When the going gets tough remind yourself why you want to achieve your dreams, keep your eyes on the prize and focus on the big picture Vision for your life.

#### WORK

Do the **WORK**. The more often you will do the work, the faster you will get there. The vision will inspire ideas that will get you from where you are to where you want to be. Act on ideas that are aligned with your vision. Every small action, taken daily in the direction of your vision will create momentum and get you closer to your BIG picture vision. There's no free ride to the top...otherwise we would all be there now.

#### PERSISTENCE

Not accepting no as an answer. It's that simple if one person says no to you, find another that will say yes. If one door closes, find one that opens. Keep pushing forward. Every no is an opportunity for you to find a different way that will work. It can sometimes feel frustrating when things don't go your way or as planned, but one thing you need to understand is that sometimes your way is not the best way. You have to believe that there are greater plans and greater ways for you to get there. The no's are just a way to redirect you to the yesses from the right places. Got it? It will take **PERSISTENCE**.

#### CREATE JOYFULLY

I committed to **CREATING JOYFULLY**, not stressfully. I believe that this is a very important ingredient, to remember to have fun while you're creating and breathing life into your big dreams. Since you're creating you get to decide if you want to create a joyful or stressful experience. After all everything will pass in time, hang on and enjoy the ride, the ups, the downs are all valuable experiences and directing your steps towards your destination.

Resolutions are so passé, and have a 92% failure rate. Visions are the new New Year Resolutions. In the last year, I've become the person I've envisioned myself to be. I keep creating new visions for my life and others through Phototherapy®, a groundbreaking approach to photography and get to witness the success it brings forth. Once you can see who you can become, you will emotionally connect to your dreams, you will ignite your potential that is still within you and realize that it's still possible for you to achieve it. That vision will pull you out of your story of where you are now and push you to become who you were created to be. Ready to begin?

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS!

**February 23-24, 2017**

USDA's 93<sup>rd</sup> Annual Agricultural Outlook Forum  
Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel  
Arlington, VA  
[www.usda.gov/oce/forum](http://www.usda.gov/oce/forum)

**March 5-6, 2017**

Ocean City Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Trade Expo  
Roland E. Powell Convention Center  
Ocean City, MD  
[www.oceancitytradeexpo.com](http://www.oceancitytradeexpo.com)

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