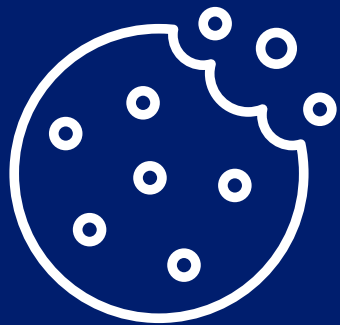
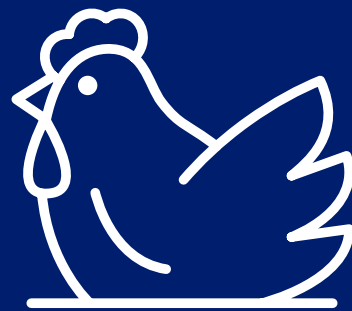


# Huhtamaki

## 2023 Q1 Trends Report



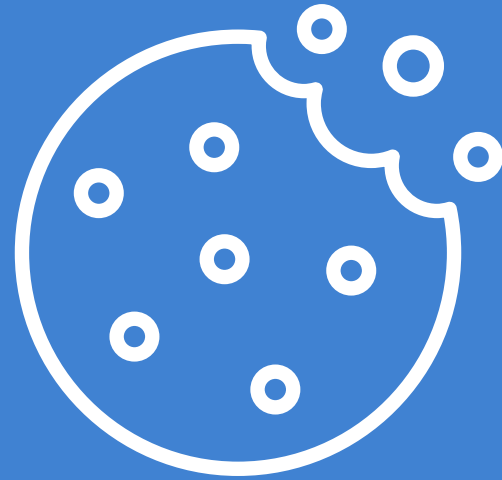
Cookie Takeover



Spicy Chicken



Promotional  
Activation



# I. Cookie Takeover

**Cookies are making a comeback:** The cookie segment saw a significant increase in interest in 2022. In its fifth year of business, the beloved **Crumbl Cookies** surpassed 500 locations. The New York-based chain, **Chip City Cookies**, received a sizable investment of \$10 million from Danny Meyer's growth fund, **Enlightened Hospitality Investments**. The interest in specialty cookies is only going up, and 2023 is sure to reveal a multitude of creative avenues for brands to get into the cookie business.

# Subway



Who doesn't want a **footlong cookie**? **Subway** saw a trend and turned it into their own for **National Cookie Day**. **Cookieway** was **Subway's** pop-up bakery that exclusively sold footlong cookies for the December 4th holiday.

“Bringing together two of **Subway's** most iconic menu items – footlong subs and **Subway** cookies – was the only way we could top our celebration of **National Cookie Day** last year when we opened the first **Cookieway**,” said **Paul Fabre**, senior vice president, culinary and innovation at **Subway**.

# Subway



“We wanted to give **Subway** fans even more cookie to love, with flavors and ingredients that are just as craveable as the sandwiches they’re inspired by.”

All cookies are made with love, and **Cookieway** took this saying to heart. Each footlong cookie was available in exchange for a donation to the 501(c)(3) **Subway Cares Foundation**.

# Papa Johns

**Papa Johns** and **OREO** came together to fulfill savory and sweet needs. The **OREO Cookie Papa Bites** were born, and the ultimate sharable side paired perfectly with pizza. For a small price, customers receive the ideal comfort food with an extra burst of flavor.



**OREO Cookie Papa Bites** are made with **Papa Johns'** fresh, never frozen, six-ingredient dough stuffed with chocolatey **OREO** cookie crumbles and baked fresh with a side of sweet icing for dipping or drizzling.

# Krispy Kreme



**Krispy Kreme** merged the best of two worlds to create three **Biscoff** doughnuts! The **Biscoff Doughnut Collection** is sending cookie lovers on a roundtrip of sweetness and introducing them to the unique and delicious flavors of both brands for the first time in the United States.

Biscoff is known for its unique and delicious caramelized cookie taste. This limited-time sweet treat combined **Krispy Kreme's** Original Glazed with **Lotus Biscoff's** Cookies and Cookie Butter.

# 16 Handles

Who doesn't love safe-for-consumption unbaked cookie dough? **Kristen Tomlan**, a designer and brand consultant, founded **DŌ, Cookie Dough Confections**, in 2014.



The inspiration was her love for the formerly forbidden treat and her desire to make it available to eat just how people crave it – straight out of the mixing bowl! **DŌ** has been such a delight that entrepreneur **Neil Hershman**, the owner and CEO of **16 Handles**, has acquired the innovative, edible and bakeable cookie dough brand.

# Cookie Plug

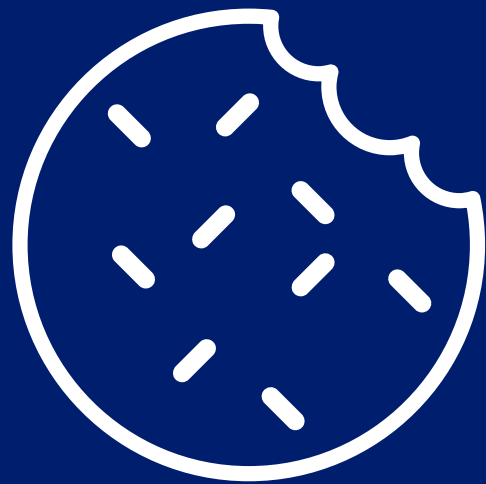


Cookies are becoming more well-rounded with an infusion of hip-hop culture. **Erik Martinez** and **Chris Wyland**, owner of **Roll-Em-Up Taquitos**, teamed up to develop **Cookie Plug**, a West Coast cookie brand that combines urban culture with a variety of cookie flavors.

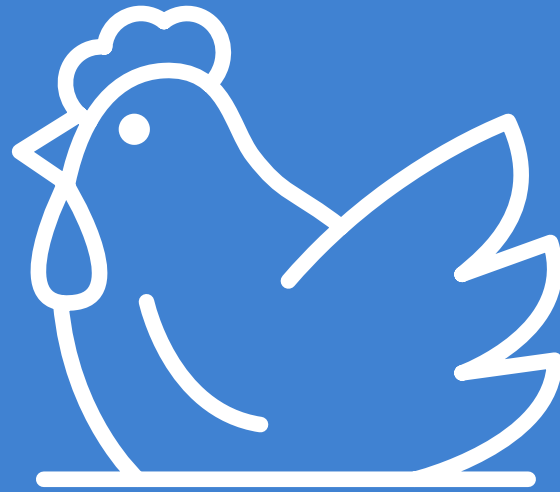
**Cookie Plug**, which has 23 corporate stores and two franchises, is hoping to grow with **300 additional locations** planned by the end of **2026** and 1,000 units under development. Some **150 stores** are currently in the pipeline.



# Cookie Plug



Would you like to try a **Snooperdoodle** or perhaps a **Mac Daddy** or **Nutty O.G.**? Patrons can enjoy dozens of cookies while admiring the graffiti-covered walls and unedited hip-hop music in the background.



## II. Spicy Chicken

**QSRs can't get enough of spicy chicken!** From Mexican flavors to Nashville hot, this zesty phenomenon has made its way into restaurant menus through a convergence of two big trends. It was driven in part by the “**chicken sandwich wars**,” in which a number of **quick-service restaurants** experimented with their own versions of the Southern classic that is both portable and craveable. Meanwhile, consumers' tolerance of and appetite for spice has grown: According to market research firm **Datassential** and its FLAVOR database, **61% of consumers say they like or love spicy foods**. Brands are jumping on this trend by getting spicy with menu items like pizza, salads, wings and more.

# Newk's Eatery

Honey is here to spice things up! **Newk's Eatery** is expanding its menu with four hot new entrées for a limited time.

The neighborhood-centric restaurant is bringing the heat with a **Hot Honey Chicken Sandwich**, **Hot Honey Italian Pizza**, **Spicy Jalapeño Ranch Salad** and **Spicy BBQ Chicken Ranch Salad**.

“We’re excited to finally bring the hot honey flavor profile to **Newk's** and create an even more craveable chicken sandwich and pepperoni pizza,” says Senior VP of Guest Experience **Denise Pedini**.



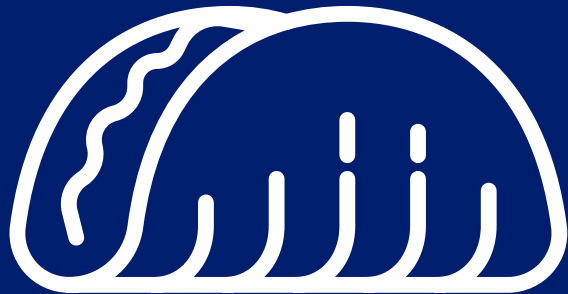
# Newk's Eatery

“Plus, we’re bringing back a fan favorite, the **Spicy Jalapeño Ranch Salad**, which has been highly requested systemwide across our social media platforms.



“Finally, we’re giving our guests a new, unique menu item with the **Spicy BBQ Chicken Ranch Salad**, which entails our **Newk's** chicken infused with spicy BBQ sauce topped warm on a fresh green ranch salad. These hot and spicy recipes are irresistible and will bring our guests coming back for more.”

# Taco Bell



**Taco Bell's** wings are back! The kickin' queso-covered entrée practically flew off the menu the last time they were introduced.

The limited-time offer also included a combo meal called the **Ultimate GameDay Box**, which came with eight wings, four crunchy tacos and one traditional Mexican pizza.

Thinking outside the bun paid off for **Taco Bell**; the wings were a huge hit for the second year in a row.

# Clutch City Cluckers

The Nashville hot chicken craze has taken over Houston. **Clutch City Cluckers** is opening its eighth location in **Friendswood, TX**. The food truck will keep fans excited with a full menu of favorites: **Hot Chicken Sandwiches, Cheese Topped Hot Chicken Sandwiches, Chicken Tenders, Loaded Fries** and even **Cauliflower Tenders** for their vegetarian guests.



The new food truck will also offer their new line of Milkshakes & Wings, with these flavors available: **Buffalo, BBQ, Sweet & Spicy, Garlic Parmesan** and **Lemon Pepper**.

# Dave's Hot Chicken



The **Carolina Reaper Pepper** is the hottest in the world. But you don't have to travel the globe to step up to this taste trend.

**Dave's Hot Chicken**, flavored with the intense Reaper pepper, is available at over **100** locations. If you fear the **Reaper pepper**, don't worry,

**Dave's Hot Boxes** have seven levels of spice per box: **No Spice**, **Lite Mild**, **Mild**, **Medium**, **Hot**, **Extra Hot** and **Reaper**.

# Dave's Hot Chicken



There's even a **Reaper Roulette** challenge to debut the new **Hot Boxes**. The limited-edition **Reaper Roulette Hot Box** comes with four mild-spice-level tenders, five medium-spice-level tenders and one **Reaper!**

Hot chicken lovers are encouraged to record their reactions and post them on social, tagging **Dave's Hot Chicken** and using hashtag **#davesreaperroulette**.



# Tijuana Flats

Chipotle chicken is a new variation of the hot chicken craze, and **Tijuana Flats** is one of the first to bring it to the table. The “**Tex-Mex for All**” brand is offering a flautas promotion featuring new **Kickin’ Chicken Flautas** with its one-of-a-kind spicy chipotle chicken.



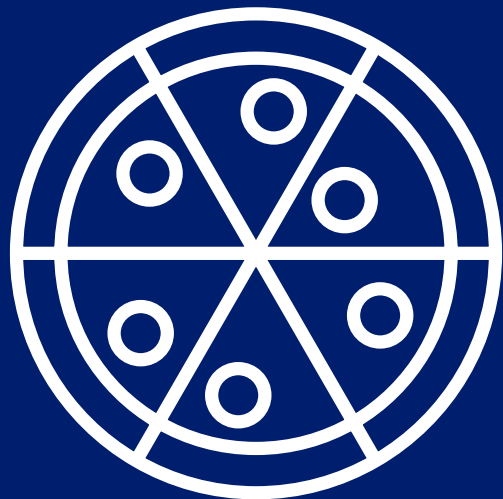
Each flour tortilla is packed with fresh **Tex-Mex** flavors and lightly fried to cheesy perfection.



# III. Promotional Activation

**2022** has produced head-turning restaurant happenings. To name a few, the year saw the introduction of a **cocktail infused with processed cheese**, a fine dining establishment for **feline lovers**, and the **occasional oversized snack food**. More and more restaurants and food manufacturers are trying to shock and astonish to **gain awareness**. That said, brands are jumping onboard with **marketing trends**, and this train is rolling strong in 2023.

# Pizza Hut

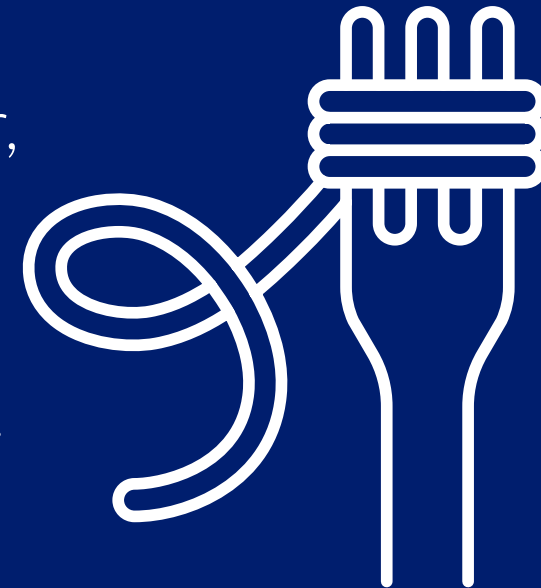


Making the world's largest pizza is no easy task. However, **Eric "Airrack" Decker**, a popular influencer, and **Pizza Hut** now hold the **Guinness World Records'** title for the "**World's Largest Pizza.**"

The partnership celebrated two milestones: the return of Pizza Hut's iconic fan-favorite pizza, "The Big New Yorker," for the first time in 24 years, as well as Airrack hitting 10 million subscribers. After the record-breaking pizza was created, the pizza was donated to several charities in Los Angeles.

# Olive Garden

How did **Olive Garden** post strong sales during the height of COVID-19? Last quarter, the brand offered customers unlimited servings of pasta combinations, homemade soup or salad, and freshly baked bread sticks. The **unlimited deal** originally began in **1995** and was brought back in a time of need.



The results of the **Never-Ending Pasta Bowl** exceeded expectations and kept segment averages higher than ever in the quarter.

# McDonald's



The **McGold Card** is real, but customers had to place one order in the **McDonald's** app for a chance to win it.

“Our fans have been fascinated by the lore of the **McDonald's Card** and if it really exists. And now, we'll make this **McDonald's** legend a reality for our fans by giving them the ultimate holiday gift – a chance to win a card and then share access to it with three of their family or friends,” **Tariq Hassan**, McDonald's USA chief marketing and customer experience officer, said in a statement. The promotion got a significant amount of press including **Forbes** calling the idea “**Really Smart.**”

# Jimmy John's

**Rewards programs** are getting an upgrade, and **Jimmy John's** is introducing elements of **gamification and personalization** to help introduce customers to menu items they might never have tried and keep them coming back for new incentives.



The sandwich chain's first challenge is **The Gauntlet**. For customers to win a **Jimmy Chips** beanbag chair, they must purchase all **25 Jimmy John's sandwiches** within a specific time frame. This is just the start of many more fun activations to come.

# Starbucks



**Starbucks' Metaverse** experience is offering in-store rewards. Customers will find three tiers of benefits in the **Odyssey** virtual universe. Customers can earn, purchase and trade “**Journey Stamps**” for in-store exclusive experiences.

“Leveraging Web3 technology will allow our members to access experiences and ownership that was not possible before,” **Brady Brewer, Starbucks** executive vice president and chief marketing officer, said in a statement.

# Starbucks



“**Starbucks Odyssey** will transcend the foundational benefits that our **Starbucks Rewards** members have come to love and unlock the digital, physical and experiential benefits that are uniquely **Starbucks**....”

Our vision is to create a place where our digital community can come together over coffee, engage in immersive experiences, and celebrate the heritage and future of **Starbucks**.”



# IV. Sign-Off

As a foodservice provider, it's important to stay on top of the trends that are important to your customers. It helps build brand loyalty and introduces customers to new menu items through relevant, innovative executions.

**Huhtamaki North America** stays at the forefront of these trends to build your business and navigate the ever-changing foodservice landscape.

# Q1 2023 Trends Report Sources by Slide

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- Slide 3-4:** <https://www.foodbusinessnews.net/articles/22754-subway-introduces-footlong-cookie-lto>
- Slide 5:** <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/news/papa-johns-introduces-oreo-cookie-papa-bites>
- Slide 6:** <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/news/krispy-kreme-introduces-biscoff-doughnut-collection>
- Slide 7:** <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/news/16-handles-acquires-do-cookie-dough-confections>
- Slide 8-9:** <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/fast-casual/cookie-plug-looks-disrupt-dessert-category>
- Slide 10:** <https://www.nrn.com/consumer-trends/nashville-hot-converges-two-big-food-trends>
- Slide 11-12:** <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/news/newks-eatery-brings-four-spicy-items-menu-limited-time>
- Slide 13:** <https://www.nrn.com/first-bite/why-taco-bell-bringing-back-wings>
- Slide 14:** <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/news/clutch-city-cluckers-opens-eighth-location-friendswood-texas>

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**Slide 17:** <https://www.qsrmagazine.com/news/tijuana-flats-launches-kickin-chicken-flautas>

**Slide 18:** <https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/23/business/food-stunts-2022/index.html>

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**Slide 22:** <https://www.nrn.com/top-500-restaurants/6-new-and-revamped-loyalty-and-rewards-programs-are-shaking-restaurant-industry/gallery?slide=3>

**Slide 23–24:** <https://www.nrn.com/top-500-restaurants/6-new-and-revamped-loyalty-and-rewards-programs-are-shaking-restaurant-industry/gallery?slide=5>