

# Modern Eating: Cultural Roots, Daily Behaviors

A Hartman Group National Syndicated Study 2013



Mapping Consumers' New Eating Landscape, Diving Deep Into Immediate Consumption, Alone Eating and Snacking

## Study Objectives

Many companies continue to market to what we imagine when we think of meals and snacks: the bowl of cereal, the lunchtime sandwich, a quick bag of chips and the family to share the meat and potatoes. However, by speaking only to these images, companies are missing out on new opportunities emerging from the dynamic changes taking place in American culture (in general) and our eating culture (specifically).

However, there's more to it than that...consumers' eating isn't as random as it seems. It is shaped by an emerging system of contexts and beliefs. Shifts in the culture and demographics of the U.S. are impacting the what, when, where, who, and why of consumers' eating habits.

In the process, consumers are redefining the parameters of meals, snacks, and the planning process. Consumers are eating more often, in greater isolation, in the moment and on the go.

## A Sampling of What You'll Learn

Eating occasions are an expression of today's modern eating culture and thus provide snapshots of how fragmentation happens in the daily moments of consumers' lives. Three such eating occasions most poignantly reflect the fragmentation of today's modern eating culture:

- **Immediate Consumption.** Represents 15 percent of eating occasions (and they're not just 'on-the-go' snacks). About two-thirds (65 percent) of immediate consumption occasions that are not going to restaurants take place at home.
- **Alone Eating.** Alone eating is not simply a result of more people living alone; it's about how they're living. About half (47 percent) of eating occasions are now alone. Eating alone is no longer about being lonely; it's just a different way to experience food: 43 percent enjoy eating alone as a way to catch up on other activities.
- **Snacking.** Snacks represent 50 percent of eating occasions, 80 percent of which take place at home. Snacks are bound by fewer rules than meals. However, as consumers expect them to do more for them than ever—in terms of the physical, emotional, social and cultural experiences they offer—the lines between meals and snack are blurring.

Our eating is more fluid overall, as consumers eat whenever and however they want. Ninety percent of consumers are engaging in 'modern snacking,' characterized by highly flexible rules and structure.

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### Methodology

Integrated quantitative and qualitative ethnography. Quantitative: Statistical analysis based on two separate consumer online surveys (1) Hartman Compass 2010-2013, an annual eating-occasions tracker survey [n=57,049 adult eatings; n=21,163 adult eatings in 2013] and (2) Eating Occasions online survey of a nationally representative sample of adults (aged 18-79) [n=1,562]. Qualitative: In-person ethnographies in Seattle and virtual engagements in a cross section of geographies, household compositions and backgrounds.

**Report Price:** \$15,000

**Report Deliverable:** General report in PowerPoint format; 118 pages. Set of standard demographic data tables in Excel format included.

