

# Automatic

## MERCHANDISER

The Vending, Micro Market &  
Coffee Service Industry Resource

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# DRIVING TRENDS

**VEHICLES | SECURITY | ORGANIC GROWTH**

How vending operators are  
investing in key areas to better  
serve customers.



**WHAT'S HOT**  
Products to energize  
your business

page 30



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# DRIVING TRENDS



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Cromer Food Services has prospered for more than three decades by making judicious decisions in all aspects of its business including its investments, hiring and equipment maintenance.



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[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11577302](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11577302)

▶ **VIDEO: State Of The Vending Industry 2014 Report**  
[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11528294](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11528294)

# When price shouldn't matter

Stop offering the lowest price and instead, offer renovation, nourishment and security.

**R**aising prices is still a struggle for many operators in the vending industry. Increasing costs are at war with consumer reluctance to pay higher prices and competitors offering lower prices. It's a tough balancing act in many markets, but there are operators who have broken through the price barrier, earning themselves loyal customers and good profit

margins. And they didn't do it with the lowest prices. They did it with other selling points, and I'm not just talking about micro markets.



**BREAKING the price barrier takes more than low prices.**

for the end user also means alternative types of payment (cashless, mobile, etc.) as well as creating an inviting breakroom employees want to use. If they come, more will buy. If the location warrants it, show them what you can offer in the form of breakroom renovation and entice them — then have the conversation about price and doing away with commissions. This will be a place for employees to recharge, purchase nourishment in order to be more

productive (insert your healthy product options here), stay on location and also feel positive about the company they work for (loyalty and morale are always a winning combination).

Don't forget that these special services also have to be highlighted to the end user, or they will push back at any price increases. Newsletters have been historically used to educate consumers, and the content easily converts to an email. There are also other ways such as social media, video screens, digital signage and clings. Even occasionally having a rep onsite to give out samples or branded giveaways can help spread your message to the end users.

## Professionalism matters

If you haven't sold them on your worth yet, try the all-important buzz word: security. In this issue, we discuss how public media has called electronic payment security into question. Read about the issue and how to reassure your locations on page 14.

Finally, don't forget to talk about image. Locations appreciate working with other professional organizations that put time, money and effort into their appearance. That includes driver training as well as the look and reliability of vehicles. Those topics are in this issue as well.

Outside the industry, vending brings to mind a black box full of snacks. And that's fine, but it will only ever encourage price comparisons. Transform your business into more, and highlight those aspects to customers, so you can ask for the prices you deserve. | ◀

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# Finding and hiring the right employee

It takes more than reading a resume to find just the right addition to your company.

**O**ver the past couple of months, I've had an opportunity to speak with operators and I was surprised to hear a common obstacle: how hard it is to attract and hire the right person. However, out of all the issues that arise with owning a business, this is a problem that can be a good thing to have.

For those of you that are large enough to employ someone dedicated to the human resource function in your company, be thankful. However, for a majority of you, you're not only the owner, but you're also the one doing all and

any of your hiring. If you're like me, you probably didn't graduate college with a degree in HR. The most experience I could draw from was when I was a manager at a business while I was in college. My requirements back then were pretty simple. I was looking for anyone who was interested in working with dogs and could work on the weekends.

## Hiring is an investment

As you probably know by now, hiring a new employee to fill an exist-

ing position or a new position available is an investment. I've seen reports that the cost for a company is anywhere from \$25,000 to \$50,000. Now, most of us wouldn't take the issue of spending \$50,000 lightly, so we must not take the task of hiring a new employee any less seriously. How can you ensure that you are investing wisely in the next employee that you bring into your operation? The best thing you can do is start reading. Out of all the materials that I came across on "Select-

ing and hiring the right employee" here are the main points that I found. Have a clear job description of the position that you are hiring for. What would you like this person to be responsible of? What skills must they have? Ask anyone who might be interacting with this person or those that also handle the position what they find to be key skills needed.

## Read with a critical eye

Review their resume carefully and prescreen your applicants. Anyone can look good on paper, so before you set up a time to bring them in, why not schedule a phone call with this person before deciding if you'd like to speak with them further. This is especially helpful when trying to see if the position that you are hiring for is within their salary expectations. Next is the interview which is the most critical part. Again, while we've all heard horror stories of some interviews, on the norm, everyone is putting their best foot forward the minute they step into your business. However, most people let their guard down a bit when they aren't in your office. So maybe take the applicant out to lunch. Ask some general questions while driving. You can really start to gain reactions when people don't think they are "on the record". Unless you've been expertly trained, it's not easy to gain insight to someone's personality and how they would mesh with your existing environment. Don't take the task of hiring someone all on your shoulders. Invite feedback from everyone to gain an overall perspective.

Lastly, don't forget to follow up on references and don't shy away from calling their former places of employment to gain insight from their former supervisor. It's great to hear operations are growing and creating the need to find good people to work for you- but be sure to protect your investment wisely. | ◀



**FEEDBACK**  
*from other employees can be useful.*

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# What Mess?



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## OAMA Elects First Female President, Kris Ellington

**K**ris Ellington, national account executive for Avanti Markets, has been elected the next president and first female president of the Ohio Automatic Merchandising Association (OAMA).

### Years of experience

Ellington entered the vending industry in 1998 as a vending broker for Statewide Brokerage in Twinsburg, OH. She worked several sales positions before becoming sales manager. In early 2012 Burdette Beckman, Inc., acquired Statewide Brokerage, and Ellington assumed the position of senior account executive. In 2013 Ellington began working as a national account executive for Avanti Markets, where she is now responsible for obtaining multi-site national companies to utilize the micro market concept. "I want to make a positive impact in OAMA and I believe my experience in grocery, vending and micro markets will help provide this in our association," said Ellington.

Ellington has been a member of OAMA since 1998. She joined the OAMA board of directors in 2010 as secretary/treasurer and became the first female to hold an officer position.



Kris Ellington was voted in as the first female president of OAMA on June 21, 2014.

wall, Rubi is now looking to partner with existing vending operators in locations that have the potential to vend 30 cups a day.

### PayRange Reports \$2.6 Million Investment

► PayRange, located in Portland, OR, disclosed in a regulatory filing that it has raised a \$2.6 million investment. The company also revealed that former Google Vice President Osama Bedier will work as a PayRange director.



### Five Star Food Service Opens 300th Micro Market

► Five Star Food Service, Canteen Vending's largest franchise, has opened its 300th micro market becoming one of nation's first independent operators to surpass that threshold. Since installing its first micro market in January 2011, Five Star has expanded the concept throughout Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama. Five Star is expecting to add 150 new markets annually.

### VendScreen™

#### VendScreen Selected As USConnect Strategic Supplier

► VendScreen, Inc. has signed a Strategic Supplier agreement with USConnect, America's only nationwide network of independent food service companies. According to the agreement, USConnect affiliates can get VendScreen touchscreen products and services at group rates through June 30, 2016. USConnect affiliates deploying VendScreen touch-

screen technology will receive special device pricing and USConnect's reduced cashless processing costs, as well as qualify for a set monthly price for monitoring, management and wireless services.

#### Isis Mobile Wallet To Rebrand, Change Name

► Isis mobile wallet has made the decision to rebrand after concerns that the company would be associated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), a militant group linked to sectarian vio-

lence. CEO Michael Abbott released a letter explaining that the company is actively working on a new brand.

#### Rubi Partners With Vending Operators To Place Micro Cafes

► Seattle, WA-based Feniks Inc is partnering with vending operators in several states to place its Rubi Micro Cafés. Previously owned and operated by Outer-



#### Frito-Lay To Launch Four New Chip Flavors

► Lay's potato chips announced it will be launching four new flavors of Lay's chips chosen during the brand's "Do Us a Flavor" contest. The flavors, Lay's Cappuccino, Lay's Cheddar Bacon Mac & Cheese, Lay's Kettle Cooked Wasabi Ginger and Lay's Wavy Mango Salsa flavored potato chips debuted in July 2014.



## NESTLÉ® COFFEE-MATE® To Come In K-Cup® Packs

► Keurig Green Mountain, Inc., and Nestlé USA, a division of Nestlé, announced a multi-year agreement to bring NESTLÉ® COFFEE-MATE® branded coffee with creamer to K-Cup® packs for the Keurig® brewing system. Nestlé® Coffee-mate® is the first brand to offer a 2 in 1 K-Cup® pack for hot coffee — combining roast and ground coffee with branded creamer. The Nestlé Coffee-mate® 2 in 1 K-Cup® packs will be available to grocery, mass and specialty retail channels throughout the U.S., as well as on Keurig.com.



## NAMA Signs Letter To U.S. House In Support Of Bonus Depreciation

► NAMA joined more than 75 business associations and organizations led by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) in signing a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives in support of H.R. 4718, a piece of tax legislation that made permanent an important tax provision that expired at the end of 2013. H.R. 4718 permanently extends bonus depreciation to 50 percent. The U.S. House passed H.R. 4718 on July 11, 2014.

## General Mills Unveils New Product Lineup

► General Mills introduced its new lineup of product innovation launching this summer. Cheerios Protein

cereal, LÄRABAR RENOLA grain free granola, Chex Gluten Free Oatmeal, nacho cheese blasted Old El Paso taco shells, Suddenly Salad made with whole grains, indulgent Pillsbury Melts filled cookies and Häagen-Dazs Triple Sensations ice cream are among the more than 150 new products appearing across the U.S. and around the world.



## Hershey Announces Price Increases

► The Hershey Co. declared an increase in wholesale prices across the majority of its U.S. portfolio. A weighted average price increase of approximately 8 percent across the company's instant consumable, multi-pack, packaged candy and grocery lines has already been put in effect. These changes will help offset part of the significant increases in Hershey's input costs, including raw materials, packaging, fuel, utilities and transportation, which the company expects to incur in the future.

## Beer Vending Machine Comes To Target Field

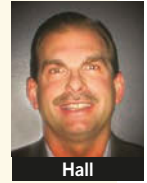
► A beer vending machine for game attendees made its debut at Target Field, home of the Minnesota Twins baseball team. Users can purchase vending cards from a concession cashier and use the cards to dispense beer from the machines, which offer four beer choices. The vending machine allows users to dispense 48 ounces of beer every fifteen minutes.

Continued ►

## People in the News

### Breakroom Provisions Hires Eric Hall As VP Of Sales

Breakroom Provisions announced the hiring of J. Eric Hall as its new national vice president of sales. Hall is a 24 year vending and OCS industry veteran with sales experience at VISTAR, PepsiCo Foodservice & Vending and Hormel/Diamond Crystal Brands.



Hall

### Performance Food Group Names New EVP Of Operations

Performance Food Group, Inc. named Jim Hope to the new role of executive vice president of operations reporting to George Holm, president & CEO. Hope will oversee the company's internal initiative to strengthen operational best practices.



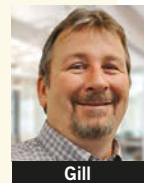
Hope

### ELN Member Testifies Before City Council

ELN member Jennifer Skidmore testified before the Berkeley, CA city council opposing the inclusion of a soda tax measure being placed on the November ballot. The proposal calls for a one-cent-per-ounce tax on sugary beverages, including sodas and sports drinks.

### Brian Gill Joins PayRange

PayRange appointed Brian Gill as director of strategic partnerships and sales. Gill has more than 30 years of experience in the vending industry, most recently as director of purchasing and integration at Next Generation Vending.



Gill

### Flowers Foods Names Bradley Alexander As EVP, COO

Flowers Foods announced that Bradley Alexander will resume the position of executive vice president and chief operating officer of the company. He will be responsible for company operations including the DSD and warehouse segments, supply chain, marketing and product innovation.

### Holiday House Distributing Introduces New VP Of Sales

Holiday House Distributing has named Roger Stewart as vice president of sales. Stewart's past experience includes director of coffee and water service at NAMA and president of AAA Coffee among other positions.



Stewart

# School Nutrition Conference Displays FitPick Machine

**N**AMA's FitPick vending machine, featuring individual packages of sliced apples, baby carrots, celery sticks, grapes, salads and other fresh-cut fruits and vegetables, was on display at the 2014 School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference. The FitPick machine was located in the United Fresh Produce Pavilion and is a collaboration between the United Fresh Produce Association (United Fresh) and NAMA to showcase an effective way to present students with "better for you" snack options. "We appreciate United Fresh for including the FitPick machine in their Fresh Produce Pavilion and, more importantly, we look forward to the related opportunities the partnership represents overall," said Roni Moore, vice president of marketing and communications for NAMA. The FitPick machine on display was developed by Crane.



The FitPick vending machine was on display at the School Nutrition Association Annual Conference.



## Coca-Cola Reports Second Quarter 2014 Results

▶ The Coca-Cola Co. reported that second quarter 2014 net revenues declined 1 percent while year-to-date net revenues declined 3 percent. Second quarter reported earnings per share (EPS) was \$0.58, down 1 percent. Worldwide sparkling beverage volume grew 2 percent for the quarter.

## Nike Places Cashless Vending Machine Around NYC

▶ As part of a marketing move, Nike unexpectedly placed a vending machine in outdoor New York City that vends only Nike gear. The machine accepted only NikeFuel points as payment for the vended items. Items in the machine were priced around 500 fuel points. The company moved the vending machine around the city and tweeted out hints about the location.



## Corporate Essentials Launches New Corporate Identity

▶ Corporate Essentials announced that it has launched its new corporate identity including a new logo, tagline, color palate and more. This rebrand comes as the company now focuses on offering a wider range of products and services than when it was founded in 1996, when it was primarily an office coffee service company.

## GMCW Announces New Sales Representation In Central U.S.

▶ GMCW™ announced that The Yes Group will provide sales representation for the company in portions of the Central U.S. The Yes Group will represent GMCW in Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.



## Pantry To Accept Reservations For Sensor-Based Vending Machine

▶ Pantry announced that it would begin accepting nationwide reservations for its smart sensor-based vending machine that uses RFID-based technology to track each item in the glass-door kiosk.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**OCT. 2-4**  
**2014 Atlantic Coast Expo**  
 Kingston Plantation  
 Myrtle Beach, SC  
 Phone: 919-387-1221  
[www.atlanticcoastexpo.com](http://www.atlanticcoastexpo.com)

**OCT. 19-23**  
**Executive Development Program**  
 Michigan State University  
 East Lansing, MI  
 Phone: 312-346-0370  
[www.vending.org/education/msu-executive-development-program](http://www.vending.org/education/msu-executive-development-program)

**OCT. 28-30**  
**NCA Coffee Summit**  
 Hyatt Regency Boston  
 Boston, MA  
 Phone: 646-924-4033  
[www.ncausa.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=989](http://www.ncausa.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=989)

**NOV. 11-13**  
**CoffeeTea&Water**  
 Hyatt Regency Dallas  
 Dallas, TX  
 Phone: 312-346-0370  
[www.vending.org/education/coffeeevent.php](http://www.vending.org/education/coffeeevent.php)

## June SDP: Record Attendance For New, Improved Session

▶ Returning after a two year hiatus, the 12th NAMA Supervisor Development Program was held in Las Vegas, NV, June 5 to 6, and included new faculty, additional topics and a new two-day format.

# Operator Only Newsletter



## Featured



### Operator Confidence Index Reaches 130.60 For September 2013

U.S. operator confidence is middle of the road with a more positive feeling over last year. Vending, micro market and OCS operators report being...



#### 2014 Employment Law Alert

Was your New Year's resolution to confirm you're up-to-date on new employment laws for 2014? It should have...



#### Sneak Peek: 2013 Route Driver Of The Year Winner

More than one hundred drivers. Only one winner. Announcing the 2013 Route Driver of the Year - Mike Edwards of...

#### 5 Tips for Family Business Succession Planning

These tips will help you develop a plan that helps the senior generation leave with ease and welcomes the...

#### Breakfast trends: Changing with the consumer

In 2014, consumers want convenient, healthy and good tasting morning meals.

## Media Center



#### OneShow Preview 2014

With the 2014 NAMA OneShow only weeks away, Joann DeNardis, director of education/certification at NAMA offers tips...



#### 2014 NAMA OneShow Attendee Reflections

Operators showed positive feedback at this year's NAMA

OneShow. Many were interested in finding new products...



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# 12-Hour Coffee

By Emily Refermat, Editor

**There's an art to brewing coffee, even if you are drinking it cold.**

**F**or years coffee has been reaching new levels of complexity. It has gone from different fractional pack weights, regional beans, Fair Trade and flavored to single cup. Now there is a new trend gaining popularity in coffee chains across the nation for those who consider themselves coffee purists: cold brew.

Cold brew isn't iced coffee. Cold brew refers to how the coffee is produced. Very simply stated, ground coffee is soaked in room-temperature water, or chilled water, for an average of 12 hours, then filtered out, leaving a coffee that is concentrated, less acidic and sweeter tasting (less bitter). The concentrate can be used in everything from cooking to iced coffees.

## Ready-to-drink concentrate

While the process of cold brew has been around for decades, its popularity in the main stream population has grown in only the last few years. There are consumers reporting that many national coffee chains use this method in preparing iced coffee beverages, where less gourmet coffee chains are simply pouring hot coffee over ice. And it is something the iced coffee consumers feel very strongly about.

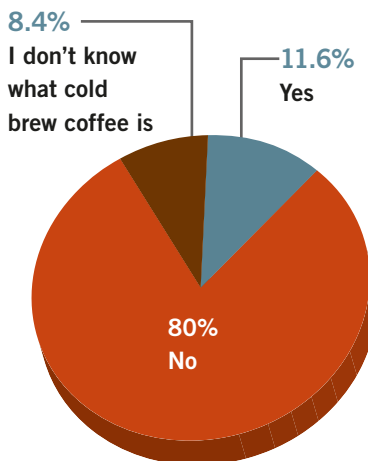
Seattle's Best is one chain that has taken advantage of the cold brew trend. It hosted a video on its Website instructing viewers on the process



Joyride Coffee Distributors

OCS provider Joyride Coffee offers cold brew coffee kegs to offices in NY and CA.

## Do you offer cold brew coffee to customers?



Source: Automatic Merchandiser data

of cold brewing coffee at home with minimal supplies in order to make a Mother's Day iced coffee.

## Cold brew in the breakroom

Cold brew is even appearing in offices. A coffee service provider, Joyride Coffee with offices in New York and California, is offering cold brew coffee in 1-gallon and 5-gallon containers. Described as a smooth, chocolatey cup of coffee that lacks typical acidity,



Joyride Coffee Distributors

the operator suggests consumers mix the concentrate with milk and ice or dilute it with hot water for coffee.

It is also appearing in other places. Stone Creek Coffee in Milwaukee, WI, offers its cold brew blend in bottles; Stumptown Coffee, headquartered in Portland, OR, offers its cold brew in various sizes and many other regional roasters are launching their own cold brew blends.

As the consumer gets more educated about the particulars of coffee, especially iced coffee, it's important for office coffee service operators to understand the complexity of this specialty drink. It's an area that garners a heftier margin than traditional hot brew and is increasing in popularity. | ◀



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# Are electronic payments a security risk?

By Glenn Butler, Contributing Editor and Emily Refermat, Editor

**Massive credit card data breaches, card acceptors with monitoring devices and vending machines used by hackers to gain access to corporate systems — these news stories are spreading concern among locations about electronic payments. However, the reality is much more secure.**

**S**ecurity is a top concern for nearly all companies. This is especially true as more businesses move to the cloud for data storage and use the Internet to connect employees in different locations. The media regularly reports on security failures, from the infamous Target data breach to the credit card sniffers on transit ticket terminals. As electronic payments gain traction in the marketplace, so too must the discussion on what it means for the industry and how we can reassure locations that their data is safe. In this article, we will focus mainly on the different types of electronic pay-

ments, security risks involved — and options for the future.

## **Credit cards and telemetry**

Many operators who are deploying cashless solutions today are looking at two main areas of return on investment. First, using the telemetry data from the machine available with the addition of cashless to know when to fill it and what to bring. The second is using cashless to increase sales. The connection allows the vending machine DEX data to be sent back to the operator's vending management system (VMS) and also allows for standard

credit card processing. The connection can also be leveraged for video, nutritional info and better consumer engagement, though these have not been fully leveraged by our industry yet.

There are some security risks associated with taking cashless payments and using telemetry. The concern associated with credit cards is that someone at a location could get exposure to your payment hardware and install a monitoring device onto the machine that can capture credit card information. This has actually happened in gas pumps and at retail locations, and more recently it has been happening at automated retail machines. However, the limited space on the front of the vending machine makes adding a monitoring device that blends into the legitimate device difficult. Also, most credit card thieves these days are more focused on hacking into systems where credit card numbers are stored and getting multiple numbers at once. These types of hacking breaches have happened more recently to Target.

Operators can ensure consumer credit is protected and avoid liability issues by choosing cashless and telemetry providers who are PCI certified. PCI stands for Payment Card Industry and is a data security standard mandated by the credit card associations. It requires an “end to end” audit to ensure that credit card information is secure.

Stored value cards where consumers load money onto an account have similar security issues as credit cards. Operators should use providers that secure any credit card number used to load the card.

EMV, or Europay, MasterCard and Visa, cards are also forthcoming to the U.S. These cards are credit or debit cards with a chip that provides added security. There is still a great deal of speculation about how and

## **MOST** vending machines and kiosks use a cellular signal or DSL.



Avoid liability with PCI certified devices.

when these cards will be used in this country, but they are coming in the future.

### **Secure your online machine**

Telemetry brings another concern for locations. An online vending machine or micro market kiosk might provide an entry point for hackers into a company's system. An article from *Business Solutions* magazine suggested that third-party systems monitored remotely can be an entry point for hackers and cause a security breach. The theory is that if hackers are able to access one system, then they have the potential to access all other connected systems. This is only an issue if the vending machine or micro market kiosk is on the same network as the company's data files.

## Payment game changers in other industries

When you consider what consumers want for electronic payment in any industry, they seem to want three things: convenience, speed and real benefits versus cash or credit cards. Let's look at some of the best examples of each.

### **CONVENIENCE:**

No company seems to exemplify this more than Uber. Uber is an app that allows users to request a ride from a nearby driver. The app tells the user the cost of going from Point A to Point B and after the user accepts, the payment comes directly out of the user's credit card registered with the Uber mobile app. Usually within 5 minutes a driver appears to pick up the user. No money is exchanged and it is oftentimes cheaper than a cab. The app is fast, convenient and gives the consumer what they want, when they want it.

### **SPEED:**

Quick transactions are convenient, and trying to unfold and straighten out a dollar bill so a bill validator will take it is annoying. Swiping a credit card is much easier. Using a mobile app for payment may work in vending but it has to be quick and convenient.

### **BENEFITS:**

Mobile apps and systems that promote loyalty and points for transactions are much more mainstream now, and consumers increasingly expect them. Yet nearly all vending machines are not capable of offering this type of experience. A good example of a widely used mobile payment app is the Starbucks app. Consumers who frequent Starbucks enjoy the application because it stores their favorite drink and offers points and rewards. Many fast food companies have also either launched mobile apps, or are planning to launch them with benefits for the consumer.

Usually, operators opt for a cellular signal to bring a machine or kiosk online. If an operator is using the Internet, then they should opt for a dedicated digital subscriber line (DSL) which allows Internet access through a local telephone network. The operator can also use a virtual private network (VPN) as most companies do to ensure a secure Internet connection across a public Internet space. All of these options keep the vending machine or micro market kiosk Internet access separate from the company system.

### Mobile payments are here

Today there are also new payment options available to vending operators that can enhance the consumer experience. As an industry, we are behind most other retail outlets, but we are moving forward. Already many payment acceptors on vending machines and micro market kiosks take mobile payments using near field communication (NFC). This allows radio communication between devices and is available on many smartphones.

There are some concerns with NFC. There is a risk that the information could be sniffed and hacked while a consumer pays at a machine. However, while NFC is fairly new, the data is well encrypted and likely much



### BLE vs. NFC

The future of mobile payments isn't clear. Will mobile transactions use near field communication (NFC) or Bluetooth low energy (BLE)? Both technologies are short range wireless data transfer technologies. The range of NFC is measured in centimeters, whereas BLE's range is measured in feet. This may make NFC more secure from spying, but BLE can reach potential users before they come to the machine. NFC is the opposite as the user is the one who must initiate a communication. BLE supports many devices including iPhones with iBeacon. NFC is more limited. Both offer coupons and promotional opportunities. View a BLE vs. NFC infographic at [www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11584825](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11584825) to learn more.

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more secure than current electronic payment technology. However, consumers may still have concerns. The technology providers have security information on their Websites which can be used to reassure the consumer.

Another NFC concern for operators is if it will be the mobile payment of the future. There seems to be ongoing and endless discussions in the payment industry if NFC will be viable long term. Apple never has put it into their phones, but most recent Android phones have it. Google Wallet, which has had many false starts, uses it, and so does Isis. However, there are other options for mobile payments.

### BLE is evolving mobile payments

In the past year a few vending-focused companies have announced or launched systems that use Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) a new standard that started in the iPhone 4S as payment. BLE is wireless technology that consumes only a fraction of the power of classic Bluetooth radios and



also allows two Bluetooth devices (for example a smartphone and a vending machine) to quickly connect and communicate without the burdensome pairing process. Devices powered by BLE can run for much longer on less power and still communicate wirelessly as did the original Bluetooth devices.

BLE allows the vending machine to leverage a consumer's smartphone data connection (rather than a cellular connection in the machine) to settle a purchase transaction. BLE solutions are very inexpensive to put in a vending machine making them a viable option. And Apple is putting its brand behind iBeacon, which allows a mobile device to communicate with another device and is based on BLE technology.

Adding money to a mobile device can be a concern if the device is lost or stolen, whether it uses NFC or BLE technologies. Therefore, it is important to protect the payment option with a PIN known only to the user.

## **MOBILE** payments will likely drive down cashless transaction fees.

### Bringing down fees

One massive benefit to vending operators is that competition between new mobile wallets and the existing associations will drive fees down. At the same time, telemetry fees continue to go down, so it is becoming more feasible to equip most of your machines with cashless/telemetry.

The future is difficult to predict, but here are some theories. EMV is likely to be coming to the U.S. in the next 12 to 18 months. Long term, payments using BLE and smartphones are going to likely become the new standard — but the timeline for this would be hard to anticipate. What operators can do now is be ready. If you are installing cashless readers, include ones with NFC if the incremental cost is low. Also, new devices that include BLE are a good hedge on what the future may hold. And don't forget to tell your locations about these extra payment options you offer and explain that confirming their data is secure is important to you. | ◀



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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# 6 Week New Driver Training

By Dominic Finelli, Contributing Editor

**When service matters, training your route drivers is as important as hiring them.**



**W**hen someone asks how good your company is, what is your reply? We used to say, “We are only as good as our worst route driver.” When we got a puzzled look, we would follow with, “but we hope our worst is as good as our competitor’s best.” That statement drove our commitment to train our drivers to consistently provide the best service.

## Training is important

It seems simple enough, this training thing. An operator hires a new employee; shows him how to fill a machine; gives him a map and sends him out to run the route. What a recipe for disaster! The frustration alone of trying to find a location and then do all the necessary things to fill a machine will make the person quit after the first day, if not after the first stop. Now the operator is back at

ground zero, looking for another body to hire. In the meantime the accounts on that route have to be serviced by either the operator or route driver supervisor. This takes valuable time away from what their jobs really are. I would also caution operators from thinking that if they hire someone with experience, training will be easier. Remember, that person comes with habits picked up from the last job and the operator may spend even longer trying to change those habits and get the new hire to adjust to the company’s system.

Therefore, allow me to share my six week driver training used at my own vending company. After the initial interview, we would do a reference check and driving record inspection to make sure our insurance company would insure them and we cleared the regular duties of the supervisor who would be doing the training. The duties were picked up by other supervisors. Then, the training schedule began.

## Training plan — Week-1

The new route driver, who we will call Nick, arrives on the first day. He is met by the supervisor who shows Nick around the warehouse, introduces him to other drivers, shows him the process of signing in, and signing for keys and change funds. Nick is then taken to the stock room to get that day’s order of fresh pastries and to load them onto the truck in order to start the day. During the first days, Nick is mainly a helper. He watches how to get to each account, helps carry product into the account and watches the supervisor fill the machines. By the third or fourth stop, Nick can be shown how to fill the snack machine, rotate product, take the money and fill the changer. Later in the day, the supervisor should let him try a few by himself to gauge if he has paid attention during the filling process. The supervisor is also

looking to see if Nick jumps in to carry product, load the bins for the next stop or asks questions about the work day. By judging these actions, the supervisor can see if Nick is starting to understand the daily routine.

Back at the warehouse the supervisor should show Nick how to turn in the collections, review the work scheduled for the next day before loading the truck with product and how to do any paperwork required. He should be shown how to turn in his route keys and sign out to end the day. He should also get a copy of the Policy Manual to take home and read so that the next day the supervisor can answer any questions and Nick can sign the document stating that he has read and understands all the company policies. This routine is followed for the first three days, after which Nick should be filling all the snack machines. On that day, the supervisor should let him drive back to the warehouse from the last stop. This will show how he handles the truck and traffic.

### Training plan — Week-2

This week Nick drives to all the accounts with the supervisor in the passenger seat, in order for him to learn the roads. He fills all snack machines and gets product ready for the next account. The supervisor can teach him how to fill other machines, such as soda and food. He should be taught about the special needs an account may have, like an extra row of a particular item or certain healthy snacks, etc. The supervisor should write these down for Nick, so he can check the next time before going into the account. By the end of this week the supervisor should have a good idea about whether he will be able to do the work.

### Training plan — Week-3

At this point the new driver should know how to get everything he needs in order to do the day's work. He

## Pay a fair wage

**It is important to maintain a fair wage scale that starts during the training process. However, you also want to incentivize the new drivers to go on their own as soon as possible. When we hired drivers, they were told what their salary would be for training and after the training period. Let's use a hypothetical number of \$10 per hour while they were being trained. That wage went to \$15 an hour as soon as they went by themselves for a whole week. Use rates that make sense for your company and whatever geographical area in which you compete.**

**We found the difference in the salary after training led drivers to pay closer attention while being trained so they could run the route by themselves as soon as possible.**

should also know how to get to most of the accounts. Now the supervisor becomes the helper. The supervisor is riding along to make sure Nick is not forgetting anything. Nick should be filling every machine by himself so that the supervisor can determine how long it will take him to do an entire day's work. He should be getting faster with each day's repetition.

### Training plan — Week-4

If the supervisor is comfortable with his progression, then it's time to allow Nick to go on his own for three days, preferably Monday-Wednesday-Friday. The supervisor still rides along on Tuesday-Thursday. This week the supervisor can really see how Nick handles himself and how long it takes him to do a day's work.

### Training plan — Week-5

Next, Nick goes by himself on Tuesday-Thursday, while the

supervisor rides along Monday-Wednesday-Friday to check on the accounts Nick did alone the previous week and correct any mistakes he may have made.

### Training plan — Week-6

The supervisor reverses the scenario of the previous week and goes with him on Tuesday-Thursday to check those accounts.

Congratulations. The driver is now fully trained. If the supervisor feels comfortable with his understanding of the operation's system, the way he loads his truck and maintains cleanliness, his handling of the collections, etc., then it's time to let him go on his own. But don't get complacent and forget him. About 4 to 6 weeks later, a supervisor should go with him for a couple of days in order to acquire some peace of mind that the accounts are being filled correctly and to make sure that the customer is happy with the service. This seems like a long process, but if the driver stays and works for the company for a couple of years, then it is well worth it. Of the 40 routes we ran, I can say over 90 percent of the drivers were with us for more than 2 years, and 50 percent of them longer than 5 years. We continually tried to make the work easier by showing them different ways to be more productive while using less time.

At the end of this process you should have a well-trained employee that you can trust to do the work as you would do it. In time, as his performance gets better, he will become the factor on which you judge the quality of your company. | ◀



### About the Author

*Dominic Finelli is a 43-year veteran vending operator in the Washington, D.C. market. He can be reached at [dome@askfinelli.com](mailto:dome@askfinelli.com).*

# Customization: Adjusting Vehicles To Fit Changing Needs

By Adrienne Zimmer, Assistant Editor

In the past, operators could use standard box trucks to adequately make deliveries. Today, micro markets, prekitting and refrigeration needs are causing a vehicle transformation from a rolling warehouse design to a specialized tool of transport.

Vehicles can't be overlooked as an important business decision. In an industry where goods and services are transported via delivery vehicle, trucks and vans are just as important as warehouse space; nowadays, operators are beginning to view the vehicle as a more specialized investment.

In the past, vending operators could use box trucks to deliver product from the warehouse to a location. Now, prekitting and refrigeration needs are causing vending operators to see vehicles as an integral investment in their business and more importantly, as a customized tool of transit.

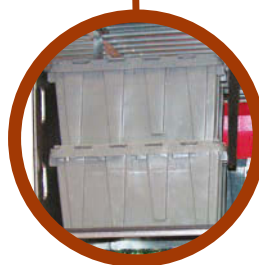
## Vehicles as tools

Vehicles aren't just a means of transportation anymore, says Trak Coveleskie, director of sales and marketing for Equipment Innovators. "Operators have traditionally thought of trucks as a place to put things for transport. Now, I think, they use them as a tool to help do their job better and faster," he said. More operators are catering to increased

prekitting, micro market installation and refrigeration needs by customizing their fleet. And Coveleskie is not alone in his belief.

"Vending trucks are becoming more specialized," said Jeff Maloof, director of fleet development for Isuzu Commercial Truck of America. "In the past, it was acceptable for a full-line vending operator to use a standard box truck or cube van. Today, more operators understand that if you want high weekly route revenue, you have to have a truck specifically designed for the job."

With customized trucks, operators have the option of adding features such as body refrigeration and moveable shelves that will make their routes more efficient. More importantly, however, vehicles can be customized to carry a more diverse offering such as micro market or OCS products should an operator wish to expand certain services.



Prekitting has allowed operators to consolidate routes and lower truck inventories, meaning smaller trucks and lower fuel and maintenance costs.



Consumer preference for fresh food is leading to an increased need for more refrigeration space.

However, tailoring a vehicle's interior isn't cheap, says Richard Ball, director of marketing and business development at VT Hackney. "Any customization to a truck costs money," said Ball. Instead of telling manufacturers how to build the body, Ball recommends that operators approach manufacturers with a business plan of present and future needs. There is a better return on investment if the



Wireless tracking lets drivers deliver their product more efficiently and allows operators to monitor fuel economy, truck idle time and vehicle speed.



High cost of diesel is one reason many operators are switching to gasoline trucks.

truck is designed for long-term business growth, which can save an operator a lot of money in the long run, Ball believes. “There is still that question mark in the industry of how to put it (vehicle design) all together into one package from the front end all the way to the back end that is not only efficient but the least cost of capital up front,” Ball added.

### Technology means efficiency

Largely adopted in the last decade, prekitting has allowed operators to consolidate routes and lower truck inventories, meaning smaller trucks and lower fuel and maintenance costs. “Prekit delivery has proven to significantly increase the amount of revenue a route salesperson handles each week as well,” said Maloof. “The bonus is that prekit trucks will generally need less payload and can be less expensive to operate; however, I would warn operators against buying trucks that

are too small. Operators need to make sure their trucks can legally carry their route driver’s load and have room for growth.” The prekitting trend not only increases route driver revenue, but it also provides an opportunity for operators to view their current fleet and make possible changes. “Whether it’s full-line vending, office coffee service or tire delivery, we are seeing our customers use technology

### The move to gasoline

Although nearly all operators in the past have used diesel, vehicles that run on gasoline are becoming more popular. “Diesel trucks are not as reliable as they used to be and the new pollution controls on diesel engines have been a challenge for all manufacturers,” said Jeff Maloof. “This issue has encouraged some operators to move to gasoline engines.”

to load their delivery trucks more effectively,” added Maloof.

Prekitting, however, is not the only technology trend when it comes to transportation. Maloof reports a growing number of operators combining wireless tracking into their transportation requests. “We are seeing the majority of our delivery customers move to wireless vehicle tracking,” he said. “Vehicle tracking systems are powerful and now they are inexpensive. For example, for about \$40 a month per truck you can monitor fuel economy, truck idle time, vehicle speed and so forth. Additionally, if a route salesperson goes outside of their route path or they exceed the speed limit, it sends their supervisor a text.”

### Increased need for refrigeration

One issue that operators are facing is an increased need for refrigeration, which is brought on largely by micro markets and consumer demand for fresh food. “There is a lot more frozen and fresh food on trucks than in years past,” said Coveleskie. “And food regulations, including food temperatures, are front and center with vending operators.” Not only are operators tasked with providing more fresh food, but they also have to

offer traditional vending snacks such as candy and pastries that can melt in the truck body if it gets too hot. This increased need for refrigeration can cost a driver time and money if they have to access the refrigerator at each stop. Ball added, “Some operators ask us if we can just refrigerate the whole truck instead of offering a traditional cooler. The drawback is the high level of displacement due to the increased number of stops and door openings on a vending route. As refrigeration demand grows, more insulation and larger mechanical units will be needed, so balancing costs and efficiency is important.”

The solution for some operators is to keep the body of the truck at an ambient temperature, between 60 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Some manufacturers are even offering a moveable bulkhead that gives the operator the opportunity to decide how much space he or she wants to refrigerate.

“There are a lot of juices that have to stay cold throughout the entire process,” said Ball. “So vending companies are still trying to figure out how to best get a product from their location into the locations’ hands from the delivery standpoint. But price is the largest issue for operators when making an investment in a vehicle; you can easily increase the cost of a truck by \$10,000 by adding refrigeration.”

There is no doubt that vehicles are becoming a more prominent investment for vending operators. The right type of vehicle should last an operator for both present and future needs, therefore, manufacturers tell operators to think ahead to where their companies will be in five to ten years. Will their vending company increase micro market offerings? Perhaps the company will move strictly to office coffee? There is no predicting the future, but the age of the rolling warehouse is over and customization is quickly taking the lead. | ◀

# Top 5 Vehicle Considerations

- ✔ Cooler options, including temperature zones
- ✔ Adjustable shelving to meet current and future needs
- ✔ Ergonomic design, either drop step or side access
- ✔ Gasoline engines for routes under 25,000 miles per year
- ✔ Small diesel engines with high miles per gallons

## Ye Be Warned

Although the number of ways to save money in the industry is dwindling, operators need to remember that cutting corners when it comes to transportation is never a good idea. “I’ve seen operators attempt to save money on fuel and purchase trucks that are too small for the job,” said Jeff Maloof. “Very seldom does this strategy work. Many times these smaller trucks fail in 3 to 4 years and the maintenance cost for brakes and tires goes through the roof.”

“I’ve even seen some operators use dry ice to meet refrigeration needs,” added Trak Coveleskie. “This is very dangerous.”



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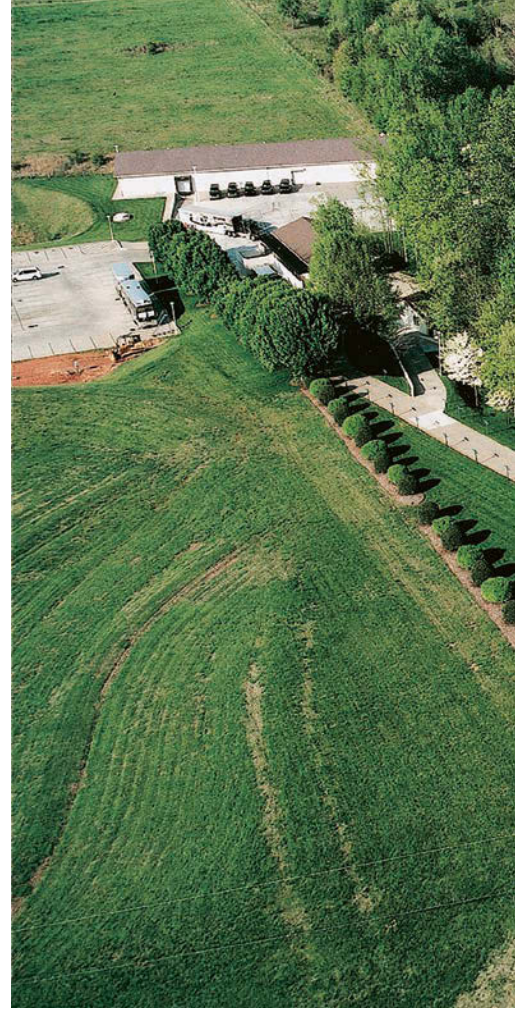
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# Built On LOYALTY, Run On DISCIPLINE

By Adrienne Zimmer, Assistant Editor

**Cromer Food Services has prospered for more than three decades by making judicious decisions in all aspects of its business including its investments, hiring and equipment maintenance.**



Cromer Food Services has grown from 6 to 600 customers, 1 to 90 employees and 1 to 27 vending routes in just a little over three decades.

**C**romer Food Services is not your typical vending company. Located on 40 sprawling acres of South Carolina hills, Cromer Food Services has grown from 6 to 600 customers, 1 to 90 employees and 1 to 27 vending routes in just a little over three decades.

The company earns each contract by building a relationship with the location — it has never bought out another vending company — and by using discipline to drive how it invests in equipment and employees. Cromer Food Services prides itself on being a debt-free company. “We grow with our cash-flow, we don’t borrow any money, that’s one rule that is very important for any vending operator,” said Brent Cromer, president of Cromer Food Services. “This is not the type of business you can serve a debt, so when you get to the point that your startup debt is covered, lean

on your cash flow for growth.” Every penny that Cromer Food Services earns, with the exception of employee salaries and wages, is invested back into the company.

### From one man to forty acres

C.T. Cromer began working in the vending industry in 1954 when he was 14 years old. In 1981 he opened Cromer Food Services that ran out of the back of the family home. “His goal was to have a one man operation and to be able to control the business him-



Cromer Food Services Founder  
C.T. Cromer



Cromer Food Services President  
Brent Cromer

self,” said Brent Cromer, C.T.’s son and now president of the company.

C.T. had an Air Force background and built the company on several disciplines that included constant professionalism and customer loyalty. During the recession in the early 1980s, companies began downsizing, which led their larger vending operators to walk away. C.T. saw the recession as a business opportunity, and started servicing these smaller locations. “He had the opportunity to go into some of those smaller companies that needed vending and it was after the recession that those companies started hiring back the employees they had let go. Instead of going back to their larger vending operators, they remained loyal to Cromer because of the loyalty Cromer showed them during the tough times,” said Brent.

The company became second generation in 2004 when the title





In early 2014, Cromer Food Services hired an executive chef to lead the culinary center. The company is looking to expand its offerings of higher-end foods and uses its culinary center to make food for vending and micro markets. The company also caters company picnics and meetings.

aren't traditional ear piercings or use tobacco products.

Although gaining employees is sometimes challenging because Cromer Food Services has such strict requirements, the company prides itself on the people it does employ; especially the route sales personnel.

"The route salespeople we've got are very good. Once we get them hired into the position, they enjoy the work," said Brent. "But it's finding the right type of person — that's the challenge." The company is continuously looking to hire route salespeople, so it conducts interviews each week, even if there isn't a route open. "We have a team of quality individuals in place, but when we interview someone we think will be a good fit, we will hire them because we don't want to let them slip away," he said. "We hire on personality first. We can teach someone how to run a route, but we can't teach someone to have a good personality." Potential route salespeople go through several interviews to make sure they understand the nature of their work. Then, if they are hired, they are trained for thirty days on a route before going out on their own.



Route drivers are trained to run routes for vending, micro market or OCS. "We've always felt that a specialty employee does better," said Brent Cromer, president.

of company president transferred to Brent, who has maintained the same level of business discipline over the last ten years. Brent had worked for the family business doing odds and ends since he was twelve years old and when he graduated college, he came back to Anderson, SC, to work as a route salesperson, what the company calls route drivers, for the business. Running routes taught Brent what areas needed to be improved upon and how the business could be more efficient. And it also taught him

how hard route sales personnel work and what type of employee it takes to assume that role.

### Investing in the right employee

On the company's Website it states that there are two things that set one vending company apart from another — equipment and employees. Every route salesperson wears a security badge and they have all been screened for criminal records, DMV violations and drug use. Employees can't have any showing tattoos, piercings that

**Self-sustained = more reliable**

Not only does Cromer Food Services invest in its employees, but it also invests in its equipment. The company began prekitting in 2009, which helped it increase profits on every route. Prekitting led Cromer Food Services to re-think how and what types of vehicles it uses. The use of prekitting took the average route from a \$7,000 per week sales average to a \$13,000 per week sales average. Prekitting took the company from using many smaller trucks to using fewer larger trucks.

“Once we started prekitting, we had to re-develop our trucks,” said Brent. Cromer Food Services recently ordered eight new Omnivan trucks from Equipment Innovators with a full body unit refrigeration system. Now the company has a refrigeration compartment for the food and another refrigerated compartment for all other products. “The Omnibody has made us more efficient because it eliminates the center-aisle and the route driver doesn’t have to step into the box truck, which eliminates many safety hazards and extra steps,” said Brent. The new trucks will be cooled at a temperature below seventy degrees Fahrenheit so products like candy and pastries can be placed in the back year-round. The company has also started looking into temperature gauges to monitor internal truck temperature wirelessly throughout the day.

Just like everything else, trucks are a business investment for Cromer Food Services, so the vehicles are handled with care and maintained to strict professional standards. The management staff uses GPS Tracking and Verizon Wireless to monitor a truck’s fuel mileage, oil levels, tire pressures and handling statistics to ensure route drivers are being cautious and safe drivers.

The company even employs two full-time vehicle technicians to work on its fleet of 50 trucks. The employees do all in-house vehicle repairs,



Cromer Food Services finds the most cost benefits using large trucks designed for prekitting.

including engine, tire and some bodywork — everything except for radiator repairs and front-end alignment.

All trucks that have been on the road during the day are required to be sent through the company’s wash bay when they come in for the evening. “People like to eat out of clean environments, not dirty trucks,” said Brent. Additionally, each truck is taken through a safety check for brake lights, fluid levels and tire pressure each evening before drivers head out the next day.

The automotive care comes from C.T. who is, as Brent describes, a very automotive-savvy person. “He knew what the wear and tear did to vehicles when he started the company. That’s why we have strict rules for our vehicles,” said Brent. “A truck is a big investment for any vending company so why wouldn’t you want to take care of your investment?”

Cromer Food Services places such an emphasis on customer service and loyalty that if a truck breaks down in the middle of a route, the company will send its own roll-back truck out to the site with a replacement truck so the driver just simply has to transfer product and continue to the next location. That way, a customer never feels forgotten.

**Micro markets: The future of Cromer**

The company has been able to stay one step ahead by making smart investment decisions along the way. These decisions not only encompass investments in employees and equipment such as trucks, but also in the company’s business enterprises.

**Profile:**  
**Cromer Food Services**

**Headquarters:** Anderson, SC  
**Number of employees:** 90  
**Number of routes:** 27  
**Software provider:** VendSys  
**Micro market provider:** Breakroom Provisions  
**Annual sales:** Not Available



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In 2013, Cromer Food Services opened its first micro market with Breakroom Provisions and now operates ten markets, making up 2 routes. “Micro markets are the future of our business,” said Brent. The company is opening one new market each month and always looking to hire and train employees specifically to run micro market routes.

Although he sees at least a 25 percent increase in food sales over vending, Brent also has seen the other side of micro markets. “Theft is an issue that we have to get a hold of,” he said. “Anybody who says they aren’t experiencing micro market employee theft or is reporting it as low as 1 percent isn’t looking at the numbers close enough.” He says that the key to keeping it under control is catching someone in the beginning when the market first opens and then monitoring video feeds once a month or once a quarter. The company’s most profitable part of its business, however, is its OCS segment.

In the late 1990s, Cromer Food Services added OCS to its business model because as margins got lower in the cold beverage segment, the company needed to look into other areas of revenue. They began to see the profitability of office coffee service in the early 2000s and decided to put as many resources as possible into that part of their business. It has even invested in technology on the OCS side so locations can more easily order product. “We wanted to separate the coffee and vending on all aspects, and that included the software as well,” said Brent.

Cromer Food Services uses a Midwest roaster, White Bear Coffee, that has helped the company change the image of its OCS offerings. “They helped us to develop a better vending coffee, where in the past a cup of coffee from a vending machine wasn’t viewed as a positive,” said Brent. Much like micro markets, he sees OCS as a large driver in the company’s



The company employs two full-time vehicle technicians to work on its fleet of 50 trucks. The employees do all in-house vehicle repairs, including engine, tire and some bodywork — everything except for radiator repairs and front-end alignment.

## Cromer Wins First Runner-Up Verizon Wireless Technology Innovation Award

In 2013, Verizon Wireless was looking for nominations for an award to go to businesses in the Southwest who had used Verizon services to become more efficient, and Brent Cromer knew that Cromer Food Services was a perfect candidate. Cromer Food Services equips its field employees with handheld computers to help manage inventory. Those inventory counts are sent via Verizon Wireless’s 4G LTE network.

Leading up to the award, Cromer Food Services partnered with USA Technologies to install card readers on many existing machines. The company initiated a partnership with Verizon and USA Technologies to place card readers on high-volume machines and has seen higher sales and larger growth.

The company was named the 2013 Verizon Wireless Technology Innovation Awards runner-up and was awarded a \$5,000 prize.

future success. “OCS is expanding everyday. We are putting more and more money behind it and it’s been an area of expansion within the last three to five years,” he said. “OCS isn’t as price sensitive. In OCS you can get the same profit with less investment, unlike vending,” said Brent.

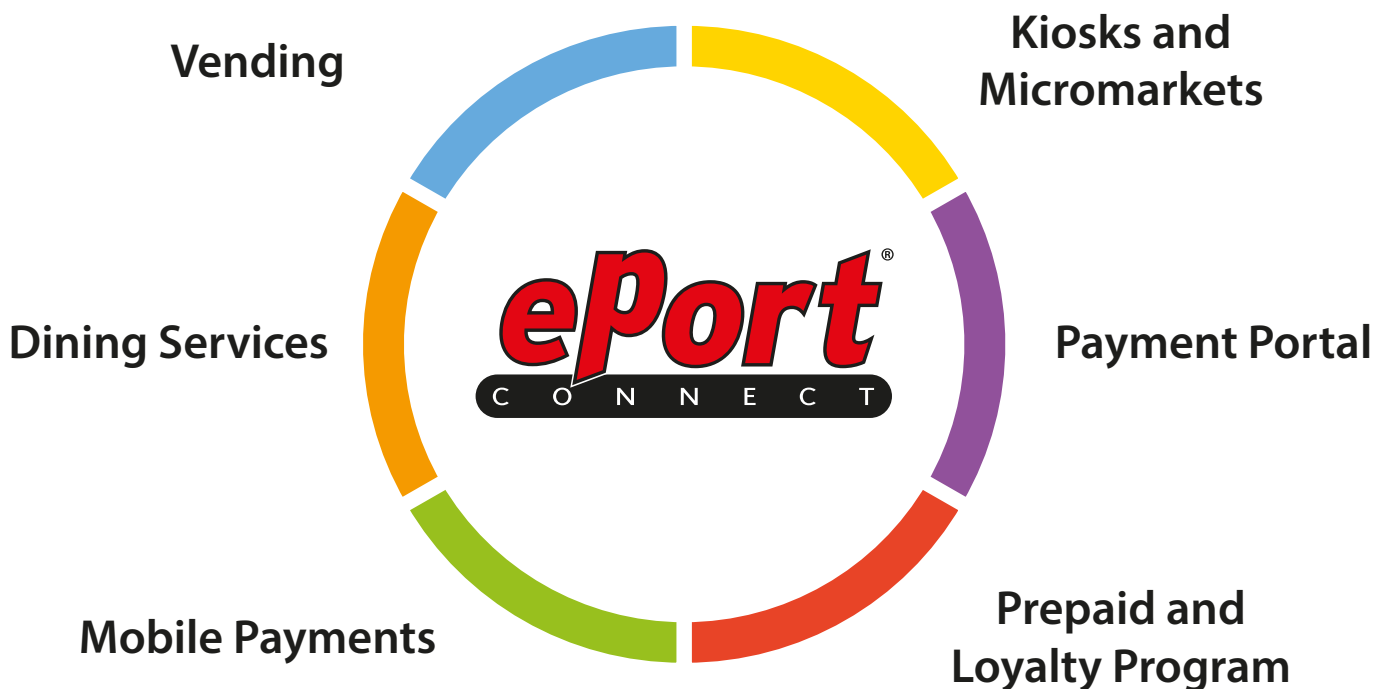
### Challenges come and go

With all the success the company has experienced in the last three decades, it has also experienced some chal-

lenges. In the early 2000s, finding labor was an issue. And these days, Brent says the biggest challenge is controlling food costs. “Food costs are going up and consumers don’t understand why the price on the vending machine is changing. And that’s something we have to end up explaining.” However, even with challenges that come and go, the company is confident that the investments it makes now will ensure its future of success. | ◀

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# PRODUCT NEWS

**Microtronic** is proud to announce the release of its new free standing “mini” micro market kiosk that will allow operators to service smaller population accounts with an acceptable ROI. The unit

can be purchased as a full feature unit including cash validator, credit card MSR, 4-channel surveillance system and custom graphics, or as a bare-bones unit equipped to perform specific functions, such as an additional user station.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11535734](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11535734)



**Minus Forty Technologies Corp.** introduces the **19USGF**. A 19-cubic-foot upright glass door merchandiser, this product is available in medium temp (cooler) or low temp (freezer) configurations. It measures the same height and depth as the popular full size 22USGF model but with the width reduced by 3.5 inches for installations where there are width constraints.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11521487](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11521487)



## Herr's® Cheese Curls with Old Bay® Seasoning

combine the savory Old Bay® with real cheese flavor. Herr's Old Bay® Cheese Curls are gluten free and have 0 grams trans fat. The product is available now in the following sizes: 8.5-ounce size bag with a suggested retail price of \$3.49, 2.37-ounce size bag with a suggested retail price of \$0.99 and 1-ounce size bag with a suggested retail price of \$0.35.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11474869](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11474869)



**Mars** introduces its new, limited edition **M&M'S® Brand Birthday Cake Chocolate Candies** in the micro market channel. M&M'S® Brand Birthday Cake Chocolate Candies are available in two sizes: 1.4-ounce singles and an 8.0-ounce stand-up pouch, giving consumers immediate and future consumption options.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11500003](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11500003)



**AdvancePierre™ Foods** is expanding its Fast Choice sandwich line to include a variety of deli wedge sandwiches including **Chicken Salad**. Each sandwich is packaged in clear film for maximum visibility, and colorful, easy-to-read labels to clearly identify sandwich flavors. The sandwiches have a 25-day refrigerated, nine-month frozen, shelf life.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11574878](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11574878)



For more products, visit the online Product Guide at: [www.vendingmarketwatch.com/directory](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/directory).

**Buzz Strong's LLC** announced that it has added its new soft and chewy 1.5-ounce, whole grain **Mint Chocolate Chip Cookie** to its product choices. Buzz Strong's Mint Chocolate Chip Cookie has a nine month shelf life and sells for a suggested retail price of \$1.00. Buzz Strong's cookies have just 180 calories with only 45 fat calories. The cookies have no trans fat and are low in sugar with 3 grams of protein.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11535752](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11535752)



**General Foods International** introduces its new **English Raspberry Tea**. This new limited time flavor blends the taste of sweet raspberries and tea to deliver a creamy café style beverage that meets specialty tea/tea latte trends.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11521455](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11521455)



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## PRODUCT NEWS



**VE Global Solutions** introduces the newest addition to its coffee machine family, the **Krea**. Krea is the ideal solution for medium to large offices and locations where quality coffee, reliability and contemporary design are paramount. In addition, the perfectly balanced coffee hopper and waste container capacities guarantee the highest level of operational efficiency.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11525746](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11525746)

This fall season, **Kraft Foods Group** is introducing new **Gevalia Pumpkin Spice Espresso** in the office. This *Tassimo Professional T-Disc* flavor lets customers cozy up to fall with the on-trend flavors of pumpkin pie spices. With *Tassimo Professional*, users can pair *Gevalia* Pumpkin Spice Espresso with a latte or cappuccino *T-Disc* to create a café-style treat.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11584904](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11584904)



**Zone 8 Beverages** introduces four flavor varieties of organic, non-GMO ready-to-drink tea and juice blends. Made with real, premium ingredients found in nature, the Zone 8 line can be served hot or cold; Agua de Jamaica Hibiscus Tea, which appeals to the growing Hispanic population, Honey Lemon Tea, Red Rooibos Pomegranate Tea and Black Tea, with plans to expand the portfolio further. Packaged in 16.9-ounce plastic bottles, the teas contain 0 to 88 calories per serving and have a \$1.99 suggested retail price.

[www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11598174](http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/11598174)

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