

FOODSERVICE

The Value of Extended Product Information

SURVEY RESULTS

R1.0 — MAY 06 2015



THE GLOBAL LANGUAGE
OF BUSINESS

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1 INTRODUCTION

The foodservice industry has changed dramatically. Consumer demand for health foods, locally-sourced items, clean ingredients, and eco-friendly products, as well as allergen-free, vegan and/or vegetarian menu options, continues to grow. In response, foodservice operators have had to evolve to meet these trends by updating their menus with new dishes, different ingredients, and more information. In fact, more than 50% of operators have added gluten-free, vegan or all-natural items to their menus over the past three years.¹ And more and more new operators are opening with menus designed exclusively for these consumer demands.

The common ingredient operators need to offer any of these menu options is product information. Attributes like ingredients, nutritional and allergen data, and whether or not the product is eco-friendly or organic are needed to ensure that the right products are being purchased. Beyond these trends, operators are under tremendous pressure to be strategic in their purchasing decisions to support their value proposition to customers, whether it be on price or quality. Images and relevant marketing descriptions are especially important to their decision-making.² This need for information impacts not only operators, but the distributors who supply them as well.

As a result, product information sheets with only transaction information are no longer enough. Operators and distributors can rarely make purchasing decisions without extended product data, and if it is not provided -- they will request a sales call and/or a sample to get it. Although sales calls and samples can be valuable sales tools for nurturing relationships with prospective buyers and converting qualified leads into sales, they can be a drain on sales productivity and profitability if not well managed. Nonetheless, distributors and operators seeking extended product data are having mixed results. Suppliers who have already started the journey toward complete product information comply easily. Those that have not usually ignore or challenge the request, causing frustration and less-than-desired participation.

To break this cycle, the Foodservice GS1 US Standards Initiative initiated a survey to examine the impact of providing extended product data. The goal was to drive greater adoption of extended product data by foodservice suppliers. Although reducing cost is a valuable benefit of any initiative, promoting and increasing sales is a more persuasive value proposition for foodservice suppliers. Therefore, the survey sought to gain insight about the impact that providing extended product data can have on foodservice sales by examining requests for calls and samples by operators and distributors. The results of the survey indicate that providing extended product information can improve foodservice sales.

Highlights of some of the key findings:

- With incomplete information, over 70% of operators are “very likely” to request manufacturer support.
- There is very limited chance of an unassisted operator sale for value-added products with incomplete information.
- With complete information, the number of operators who are “very likely” to request a sales call is reduced by over 40%.
- With complete information, the number of distributors who are “very likely” to request a sales call is reduced by over 46% for value-added products and over 38% for commodity products.

¹ *Behind the Scenes - Survey reveals foodservice operator sentiments on trends, growth.* Manny Picciola. August 15, 2014.
<http://smartblogs.com/food-and-beverage/2014/08/15/survey-reveals-foodservice-operator-sentiments-on-trends-growth/>

² *On the Plate -- E-Commerce and product information in the foodservice industry.* Jason Gunn. February 19, 2014.
<http://smartblogs.com/food-and-beverage/2014/02/19/e-commerce-and-product-information-in-the-foodservice-industry/>

2 SURVEY DETAILS

2.1 COMPLEXITY

Several layers of complexity were built into the survey:

- **Two Supply Chain Roles: distributors and operators**

The survey polled foodservice distributors as well as foodservice operators in order to gain insight about whether the impact of having extended data varied based on the recipient's supply chain role.

- **Two Types of Product: value-added product and commodity product**

Respondents were asked the same questions for two different types of products in order to gain insight about whether the impact of extended data varied based on the type of product. The commodity product in the survey was tomato sauce. The value-added product was breaded stuffed shrimp.

- **Two Types of Sales Support: request for call and request for sample**

Respondents were asked about the need to request a call and the need to request a sample in order to gain insight about the impact of extended data on the need for each type of sales support.

2.2 DESIGN & PROCESS

The survey was designed to collect data about sales support needs when incomplete product information is provided versus when complete product information is provided:

- For each product, respondents were first given a ***product data sheet with only transactional data*** and asked how often they would need to request a sales call and how often they would need to request a sample. This data set is referred to as "incomplete information" in this white paper.
- Respondents were then given a ***product data sheet with extended data*** (including nutritional information, allergens, product images, etc.) and asked how often they would need to request a sales call and how often they would need to request a sample. This data set is referred to as "complete information" in this white paper.

The data sets used in the survey are provided in [Appendix A](#).

2.3 RESPONDENTS

The data was collected from a large cross-section of distributors and operators from January 10, 2014 through October 31, 2014. Participating distributors included broadliners and specialists, as well as local single branch distributors, multi-branch distributors and national distributors. Participating operators represented the full spectrum of foodservice operations, including lodging, healthcare, quick service restaurant, full service restaurant, education, college/university, business and industry, and recreation. There were more distributor respondents than operator respondents. However, the operator respondents had a significantly larger scope (nearly 65% were national chains) and personal sales volume (over 55% had \$10 million plus) than distributor respondents. See [Appendix B](#) for demographic information about the survey respondents.

3 SURVEY RESULTS FROM FOODSERVICE OPERATORS

Although all of the survey findings were quite telling, the responses from operators provided the most dramatic findings in terms of the impact of providing incomplete product information, and how much providing complete information can improve that.

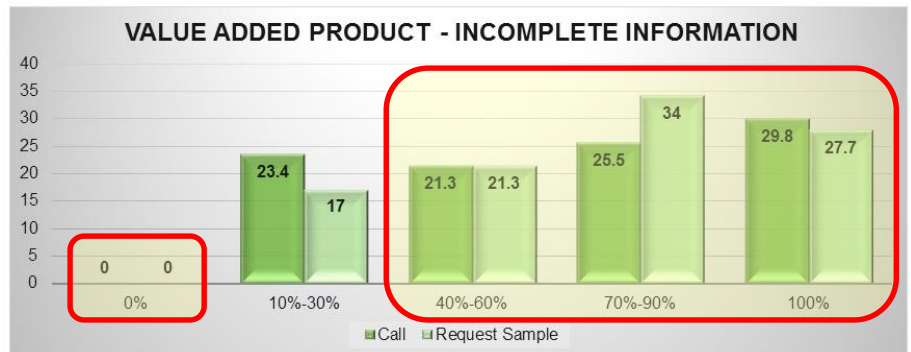
3.1 INCOMPLETE INFORMATION

The survey found that when incomplete information is provided, **over 70% of operators are very likely to request some form of assistance for both types of product.**

3.1.1 VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

When operators are given incomplete information about **value-added products**:

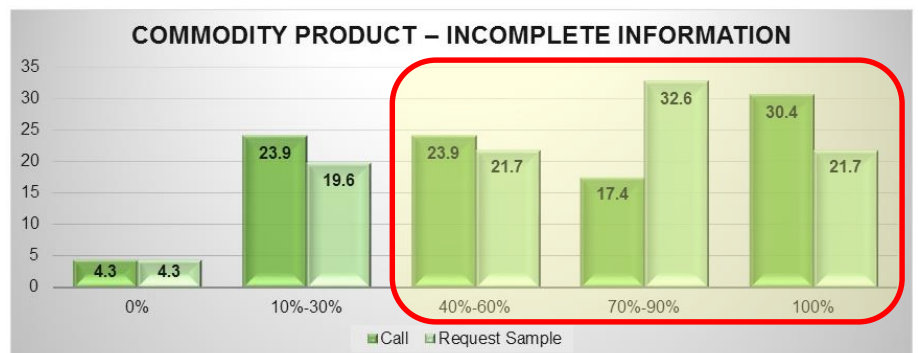
- There is very limited **chance of an unassisted sale.** (With our survey respondents, there was no chance of an unassisted sale.)
- **Over 76%** of operators are very likely to request a sales call.
- **Over 83%** of operators are very likely to request a sample.



3.1.2 COMMODITY PRODUCTS

When operators are given incomplete information about **commodity products**:

- **Over 71%** of operators are very likely to request a sales call.
- **Over 76%** of operators are very likely to request a sample.



Fortunately, the survey found that this can be significantly improved by providing complete information.

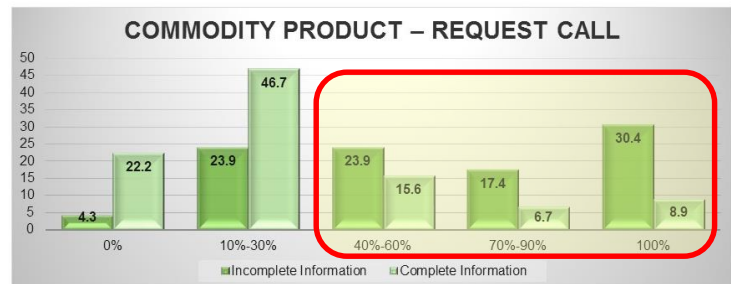
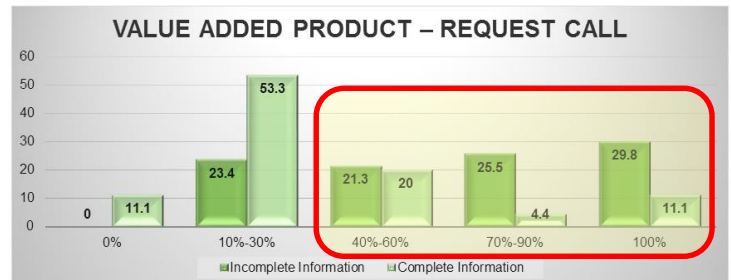
3.2 THE IMPACT OF PROVIDING COMPLETE INFORMATION

The survey found that *requests for calls and requests for samples by operators can be significantly reduced* by providing complete information. This was true for *both commodity products and value-added products*.

3.2.1 REQUESTS FOR SALES CALLS

Operators who were very likely to request *sales calls reduced by over 40%* for both types of product.

PRODUCT TYPE	INCOMP INFO	COMPLETE INFO	IMPROVEMENT
VALUE-ADDED	76.6%	35.5%	41.1% reduction
COMMODITY	71.7%	31.2%	40.5% reduction



3.2.2 REQUESTS FOR SAMPLES

Operators who were very likely to request *samples reduced by over 20%* for both types of product.

PRODUCT TYPE	INCOMP INFO	COMPLETE INFO	IMPROVEMENT
VALUE-ADDED	83%	62.2%	20.8% reduction
COMMODITY	76%	53.3%	22.7% reduction



4 SURVEY RESULTS FROM FOODSERVICE DISTRIBUTORS

Survey responses from distributors followed the same trends as operator respondents in terms of the need for sales support when incomplete information is provided, and how complete information can reduce those needs for both types of products.

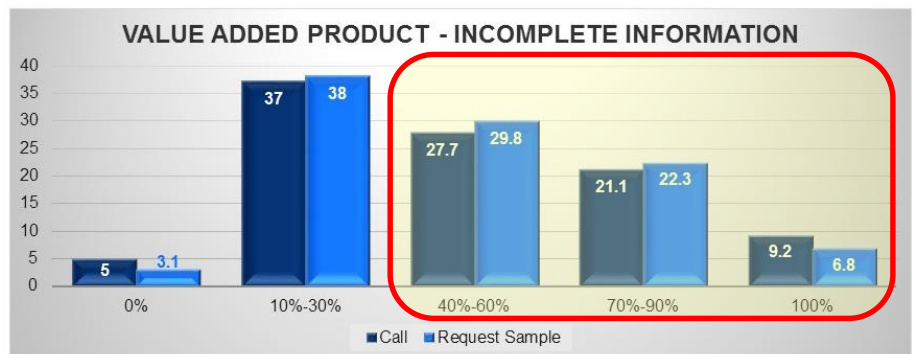
4.1 INCOMPLETE INFORMATION

The survey found that incomplete information causes **over 50% of distributors to be very likely to request some form of assistance for both types of product.**

4.1.1 VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

When distributors are given incomplete information about **value-added products**:

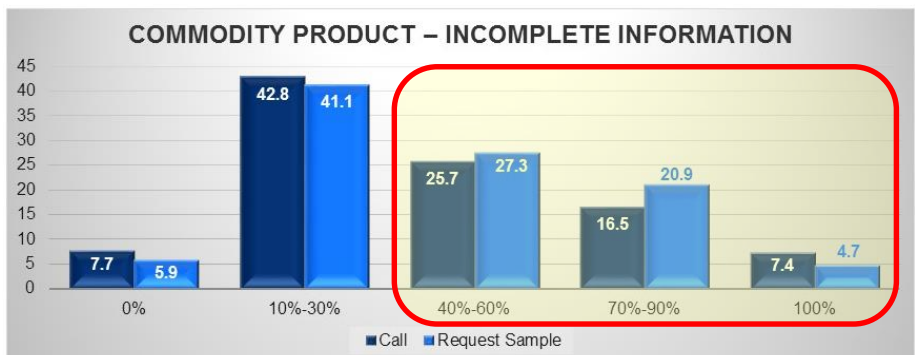
- **58%** of distributors are very likely to contact the manufacturer to request a sales call for value-added products.
- **Over 58%** of distributors are very likely to request a sample for value-added products.



4.1.2 COMMODITY PRODUCTS

When distributors are given incomplete information about **commodity products**:

- **Over 49%** of distributors are very likely to contact the manufacturer to request a sales call for commodity products.
- **Over 52%** of distributors are very likely to request a sample for commodity products.



As with operators, this can be significantly improved by providing complete information.

4.2 THE IMPACT OF PROVIDING COMPLETE INFORMATION

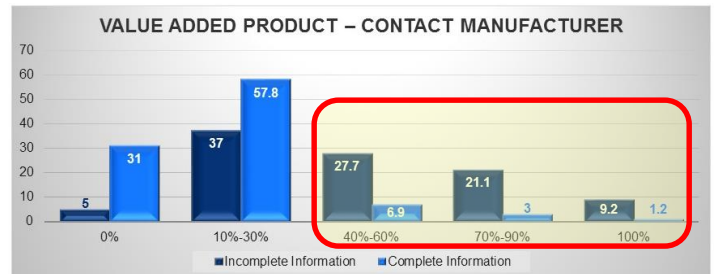
The survey found that *distributor requests for calls and requests for samples can be reduced* by providing complete information. This was true for *both commodity products and value-added products*.

4.2.1 REQUESTS FOR SALES CALLS

Distributors who were very likely to *contact the manufacturer to request a sales call*:

- *reduced by over 46%* for value-added products
- *reduced by over 38%* for commodity products

PRODUCT TYPE	INCOMP INFO	COMPLETE INFO	IMPROVEMENT
VALUE-ADDED	58%	11.1%	46.9% reduction
COMMODITY	49.6%	11.1%	38.5% reduction

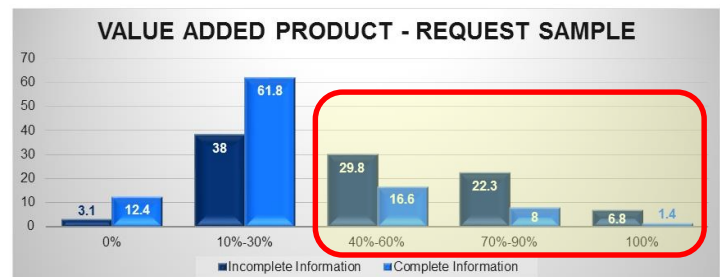


4.2.2 REQUESTS FOR SAMPLES

Distributors who were very likely to *request samples*:

- reduced by over 32% for value added products
- reduced by over 28% for commodity products

PRODUCT TYPE	INCOMP INFO	COMPLETE INFO	IMPROVEMENT
VALUE-ADDED	58.9%	26%	32.9% reduction
COMMODITY	52.9%	24.3	28.6% reduction



5 THE COMBINED IMPACT ON THE MANUFACTURER

As the individual results for operators and distributors suggest, providing incomplete product information creates a high maintenance sales environment for manufacturers that can drain the productivity and profitability of sales operations. When the results of operators and distributors are combined, a full picture of the manufacturer's sales operations (and opportunities) emerge.

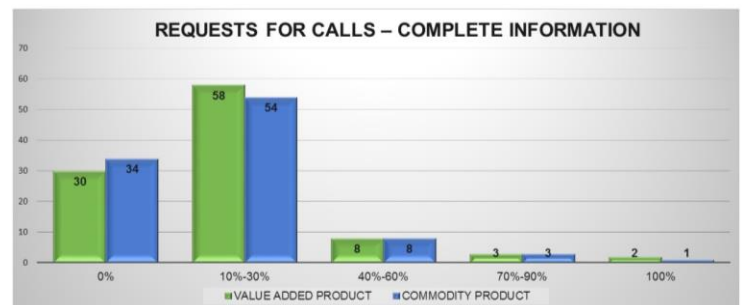
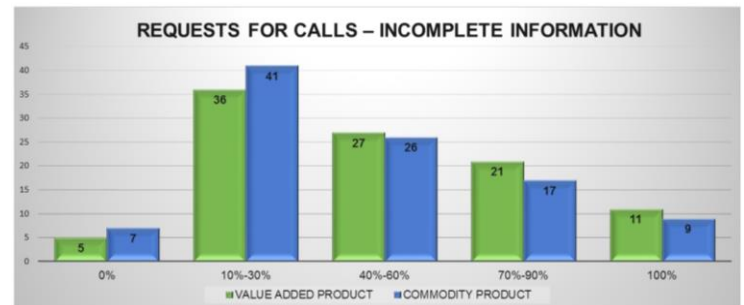
5.1 REQUESTS FOR SALES CALLS

When manufacturers provide *incomplete* product information, **over 50%** of trading partners **are very likely to requests sales calls for both types of products**.

With *complete information*, requests for sales calls are:

- **reduced by over 46%** for value-added products
- **reduced by over 40%** for commodity products

PRODUCT TYPE	INCOMP INFO	COMPLETE INFO	IMPROVEMENT
VALUE-ADDED	59%	13%	46% reduction
COMMODITY	52%	12%	40% reduction



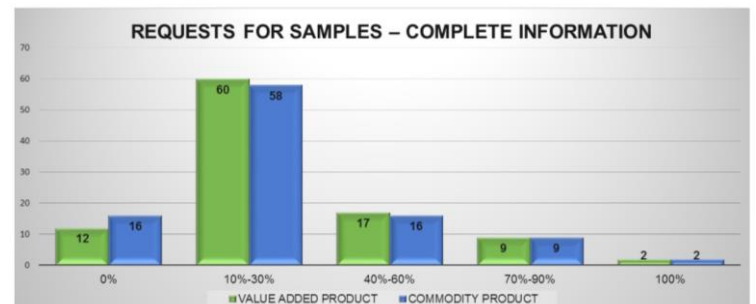
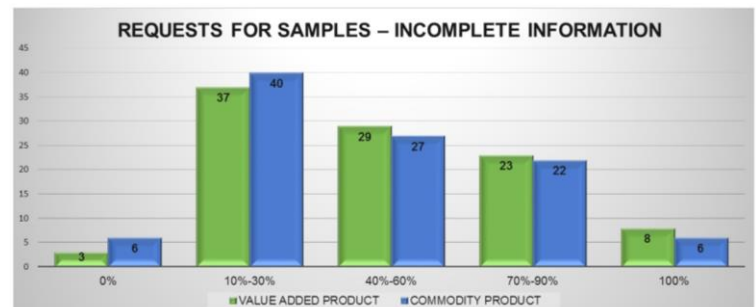
5.2 REQUESTS FOR SAMPLES

When manufacturers provide *incomplete* product information:

- **60%** of trading partners are very likely to **requests samples for value-added products**
- **55%** of trading partners are very likely to **requests samples for commodity products**

With *complete* information, the number of trading partners who are very likely to requests **sales calls are reduced by 30%** (average).

PRODUCT TYPE	INCOMP INFO	COMPLETE INFO	IMPROVEMENT
VALUE-ADDED	60%	28%	32% reduction
COMMODITY	55%	27%	28% reduction



6 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

6.1 REGARDING OPERATORS

- The benefits of complete information are approximately the ***same for value-added products and commodity products.***
- Complete information has a ***much more significant impact on request for calls*** than request for samples (***reduces requests for calls twice as much*** as it reduces requests for samples).

6.2 REGARDING DISTRIBUTORS

- Complete information ***benefits value-added products more*** than commodity products.
- Complete information has a ***more significant impact on contacting a manufacturer to request a sales call*** than request for samples.

6.3 OVERALL

- Greater impact on operators than distributors
- Greater impact on sales calls than samples
- More impact on value-added products than commodity products

7 INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

Successful sales operations minimize administrative and non-revenue producing activities in order to maximize the amount of time the sales team has to identify and develop sales opportunities. They promote:

- Unassisted Sales: a distribution sales representative (DSR) sells or an operator purchases an item without any supplier interaction (i.e., sales realized without any additional effort or support by the supplier), and
- Quality Leads: customers that already know about the product and think that the item will meet their needs (i.e., quality sales leads result in a more productive sales force)


The results of the survey showed how complete product information can have a dramatic impact on sales operations. In order to fully understand the opportunity, consider what might have happened with the trading partners in the survey who indicated they no longer needed sales support once they received complete information:

1. They are ready to purchase the product. In other words, ***they become unassisted sales.***
2. They think your product is a good fit, but they still need a sales call or a sample. In other words, ***they become qualified leads.***
3. They realize that they have requirements that do not align with your products. In other words, ***non-leads are weeded out without further intervention.***

All three of these options increase the productivity and profitability of your sales operations and produce bottom line results.

8 APPENDIX A: SURVEY PRODUCT INFORMATION SHEETS

8.1 VALUE-ADDED PRODUCT - INCOMPLETE DATA SET



Breaded Stuffed Shrimp,
"Shrimp Shooters," 4-2 lb

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS					
Man Prod Code	Dist Prod Code	GTIN	Units / Case	Units / Measure	Servings / Case
088120	12701514	10025753208814	4	2 LB	25
Brand	Brand Owner	GPC Description			
Shrimp Shack	Shrimp Shack Foods	Shellfish			
Gross Weight	Net Weight	Country of Origin	Kosher	Child Nutrition	
9.2 LB	8 LB	USA	No		

SHIPPING INFORMATION						
Length	Width	Height	Cube	TlxHl	Shelf Life	Storage Temp From / To
11.875 IN	10.75 IN	6.25 IN	0.462	12x7	730 Days	0° / 0°

INGREDIENTS

ALLERGENS (C = 'Contains' MC = 'May Contain' N= 'None');	HANDLING SUGGESTIONS	SERVING SUGGESTIONS

BENEFITS	PREP & COOKING SUGGESTIONS	MORE INFORMATION

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size:
Servings Per Container:

Amount Per Serving

Calories: Calories from Fat:

% Daily Value*

Total Fat

Saturated Fat

Trans Fat

Cholesterol

Sodium

Total Carbohydrate

Dietary Fiber

Sugars

Protein

Vitamin A	Per Srv	Vitamin C	Per Srv
0%	0%	0%	0%
Calcium	0%	Iron	0%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat. Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram

Fat	9	Carbohydrate	4	Protein	4
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8.2 VALUE-ADDED PRODUCT - COMPLETE DATA SET



Breaded Stuffed Shrimp, "Shrimp Shooters," 4-2 lb

Tail-on BTRFLY shrimp filled with Monterey Jack cheese and coated with a seasoned breading that cooks up golden and crunchy. Ct/lb 16 - 18 pieces per pound.



PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

Man Prod Code	Dist Prod Code	GTIN	Units / Case	Units / Measure	Servings / Case
088120	12701514	10025753208814	4	2 LB	25

Brand	Brand Owner	GPC Description
Shrimp Shack	Shrimp Shack Foods	Shellfish

Gross Weight	Net Weight	Country of Origin	Kosher	Child Nutrition
9.2 LB	8 LB	USA	No	No

SHIPPING INFORMATION

Length	Width	Height	Cube	TixHI	Shelf Life	Storage Temp From / To
11.875 IN	10.75 IN	6.25 IN	0.462	12x7	730 Days	0° / 0°

INGREDIENTS

SHRIMP, BLEACHED WHEAT FLOUR, MONTEREY JACK CHEESE (MILK, SALT, CHEESE CULTURES, ENZYMES), CREAM, SODIUM PHOSPHATE, SALT, XANTHAN GUM, LOCUST BEAN, GUAR GUM, SORBIC ACID [ADDED AS A PRESERVATIVE], WATER, WHEAT FLOUR, MONTEREY JACK CHEESE SAUCE (WATER, MONTEREY JACK CHEESE [CULTURED MILK, SALT, ENZYMES], PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED SOYBEAN OIL, MODIFIED CORN STARCH, NONFAT DRY MILK, CONTAINS 2% OR LESS OF SALT, BUTTER [CREAM, SALT], SODIUM PHOSPHATE, CHEDDAR CHEESE [CULTURED MILK, SALT, ENZYMES], SODIUM CITRATE, YEAST EXTRACT, ACETIC ACID, MONOGLYCERIDES, NATURAL FLAVORS, BUTTER OIL, LACTIC ACID, MALTODEXTRIN, XANTHAN GUM, ANNATTO COLOR), CONTAINS 2% OR LESS OF: SALT, YELLOW CORN FLOUR, MODIFIED CORN STARCH, SUGAR, YEAST, GELATINIZED WHEAT STARCH, GARLIC POWDER, LEAVENING (SODIUM BICARBONATE, SODIUM ALUMINUM PHOSPHATE), SUNFLOWER OIL, ONION POWDER, CARRAGEENAN, YEAST EXTRACT, SODIUM TRIPOLYPHOSPHATE (TO RETAIN MOISTURE), SODIUM BISULFITE (AS A PRESERVATIVE) CONTAINS: SHRIMP, WHEAT, MILK.

ALLERGENS (C = 'Contains' MC = 'May Contain' N= 'None'):

Eggs-N	Milk- C	Peanuts-N
Soy-MC	Wheat- C	Tree Nuts-N
Fish-C	Crustacean-C	Nuts-N

BENEFITS

Quick and easy to prepare. Layer packed and clean tail. Cooks in three minutes. An excellent appetizer.

HANDLING SUGGESTIONS

Keep frozen until ready to use. Do not refreeze.

PREP & COOKING SUGGESTIONS

Deep fry at 350° F for 3 minutes. Allow to stand for 2 minutes prior to serving.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 140 GR
Servings Per Container: 25

Amount Per Serving

Calories: 290 Calories from Fat: 80

		% Daily Value*
Total Fat	9 g	14%
Saturated Fat	5 g	25%
Trans Fat	0 g	
Cholesterol	85 mg	28%
Sodium	1190	50%
Total Carbohydrate	39 g	13%
Dietary Fiber	1 g	4%
Sugars	2 g	
Protein	13 g	

Vitamin A	Per Srv 6%	Vitamin C	Per Srv 0%
Calcium	20%	Iron	6%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	85g	80g
Sat. Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram		
Fat	9	Carbohydrate 4 Protein 4


SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Serve 4-6 pcs. (3.5-5.5 oz) as an appetizer with salsa, guacamole or sour cream. Combine with breaded cheese sticks or stuffed jalapeños for a profitable combo appetizer. An excellent addition to a seafood platter.

MORE INFORMATION

www.shrimpshack.com
800.555.1212

8.3 COMMODITY PRODUCT - INCOMPLETE DATA SET



Canned Tomato Sauce,
6 lb 7 oz

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size:
Servings Per Container:

Amount Per Serving

Calories: Calories from Fat:

% Daily Value*

Total Fat

Saturated Fat

Trans Fat

Cholesterol

Sodium

Total Carbohydrate

Dietary Fiber

Sugars

Protein

	Per Srv		Per Srv
Vitamin A	0%	Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	0%	Iron	0%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	85g	80g
Sat. Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram

Fat	9	Carbohydrate	4	Protein	4
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PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS					
Man Prod Code	Dist Prod Code	GTIN	Units / Case	Units / Measure	Servings / Case
065702	98765234	10025753846257	6	6 / #10 Can	306
Brand	Brand Owner	GPC Description			
Red City Tomato Sauce	Red City	Sauces-Cooking (Shelf Stable)			
Gross Weight	Net Weight	Country of Origin	Kosher	Child Nutrition	
43.5 LB	42 LB	USA	Yes		

SHIPPING INFORMATION						
Length	Width	Height	Cube	TlxHl	Shelf Life	Storage Temp From / To
19.25 IN	12.25 IN	7.5 IN	1.00	7x7	720 DAYS	50° / 85°

INGREDIENTS

ALLERGENS (C = 'Contains' MC = 'May Contain' N= 'None'):

HANDLING SUGGESTIONS

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

BENEFITS

PREP & COOKING SUGGESTIONS

MORE INFORMATION

8.4 COMMODITY PRODUCT - COMPLETE DATA SET



**Canned Tomato Sauce,
6 lb 7 oz**

A thick, rich, full-flavored tomato sauce. It has a naturally sweet, fresh, tomato flavor. It is never artificially acidified.



PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

Man Prod Code	Dist Prod Code	GTIN	Units / Case	Units / Measure	Servings / Case
065702	98765234	10025753846257	6	6 / #10 Can	306

Brand	Brand Owner	GPC Description
Red City Tomato Sauce	Red City	Sauces-Cooking (Shelf Stable)

Gross Weight	Net Weight	Country of Origin	Kosher	Child Nutrition
43.5 LB	42 LB	USA	Yes	No

SHIPPING INFORMATION

Length	Width	Height	Cube	TlxHl	Shelf Life	Storage Temp From / To
19.25 IN	12.25 IN	7.5 IN	1.00	7x7	720 Days	50° / 85°

INGREDIENTS

TOMATO CONCENTRATE MADE FROM RED RIPE TOMATOES, SALT, CITRIC ACID, RED BELL PEPPER POWDER, DEXTROSE, NATURAL FLAVORING, SPICE.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1/4 cup (60 g)
Servings Per Container: About 49

Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value*	
Calories:	15	Calories from Fat:	0
Total Fat	0 g		0%
Saturated Fat	0 g		0%
Trans Fat	0 g		
Cholesterol	0 g		0%
Sodium	350 mg		15%
Total Carbohydrate	3 g		1%
Dietary Fiber	1 g		4%
Sugars	3 g		
Protein	1 g		

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Per Srv 10%	Per Srv 8%	
Vitamin A	0%	Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	0%	Iron	0%

Calories per gram
Fat 9 Carbohydrate 4 Protein 4

ALLERGENS (C = 'Contains' MC = 'May Contain' N= 'None'):

Eggs- N	Milk- C	Peanuts- N
Soy- N	Wheat- C	Tree Nuts- N

HANDLING SUGGESTIONS

Ready to use. Refrigerate after opening.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Heat and serve with Red City Diced Tomatoes over your favorite pasta dish. Visit www.redcity.com for additional recipes.

BENEFITS

Quick and easy to prepare. Serves as an excellent topping to your favorite foods.

PREP & COOKING SUGGESTIONS

Heat 1-2 cups over stove top or microwave for 1-2 minutes. Allow to stand for 2 minutes prior to serving.

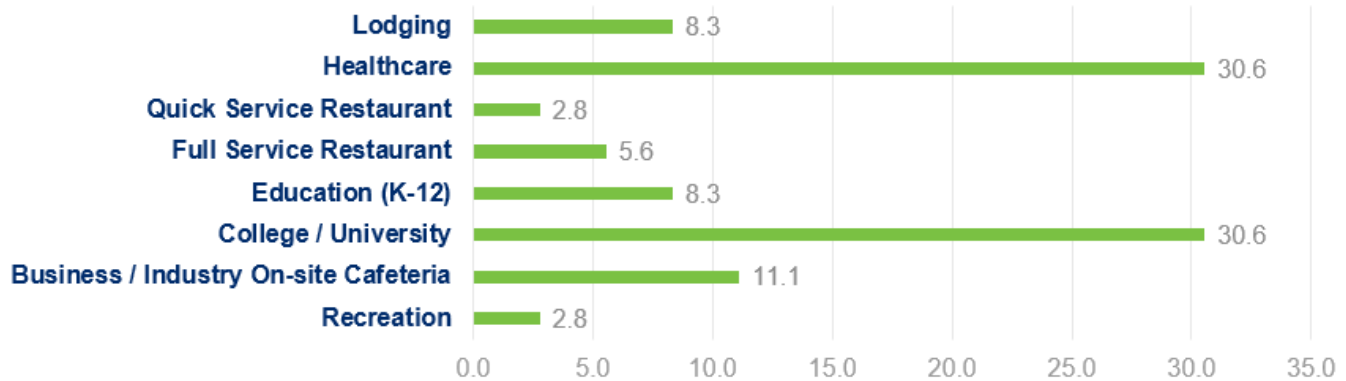
MORE INFORMATION

www.redcity.com
888.555.1212

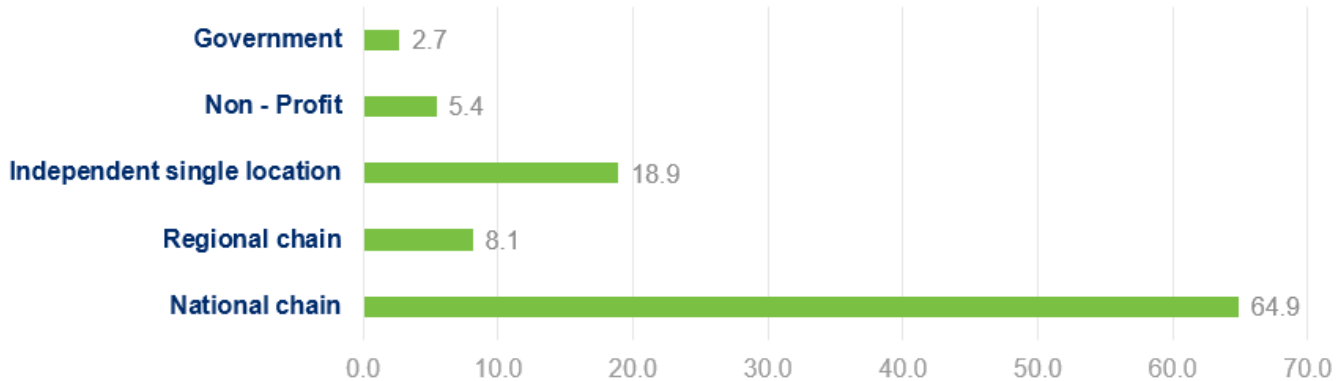
9 APPENDIX B: RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

9.1 OPERATORS

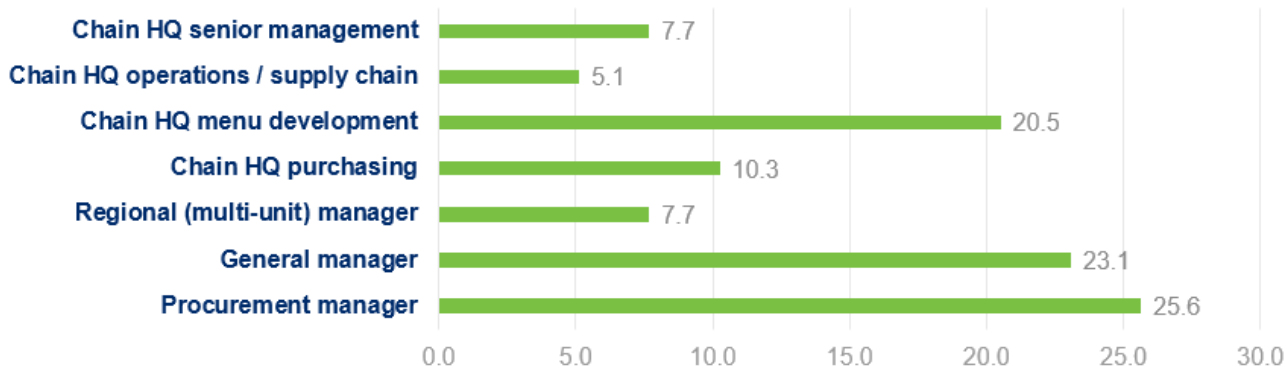
9.1.1 TYPE



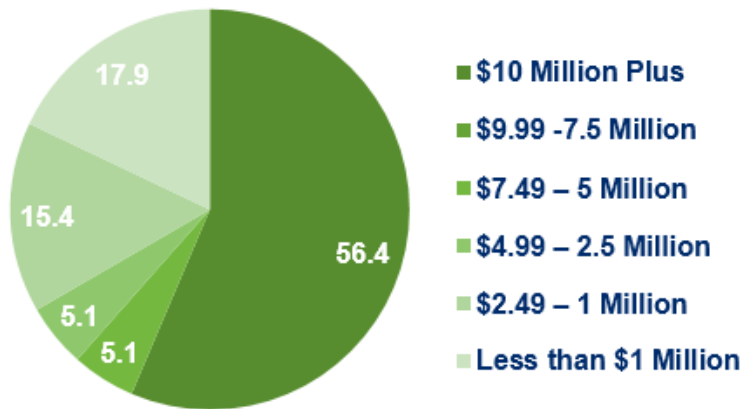
9.1.2 SCOPE



9.1.3 RESPONDENT ROLE

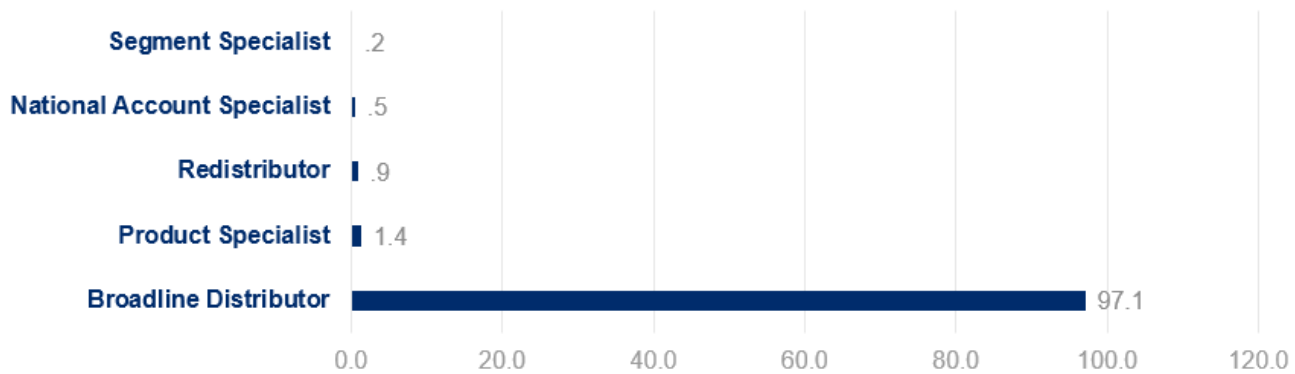


9.1.4 RESPONDENT ANNUAL SALES VOLUME

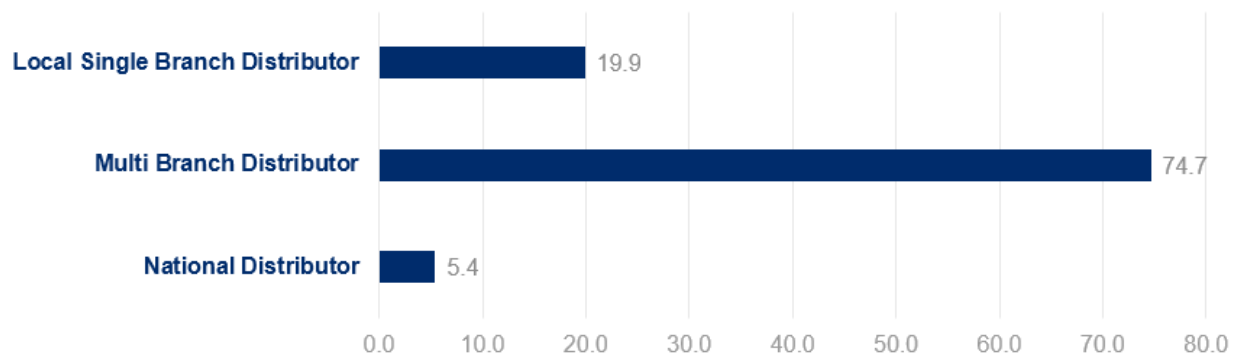


9.2 DISTRIBUTORS

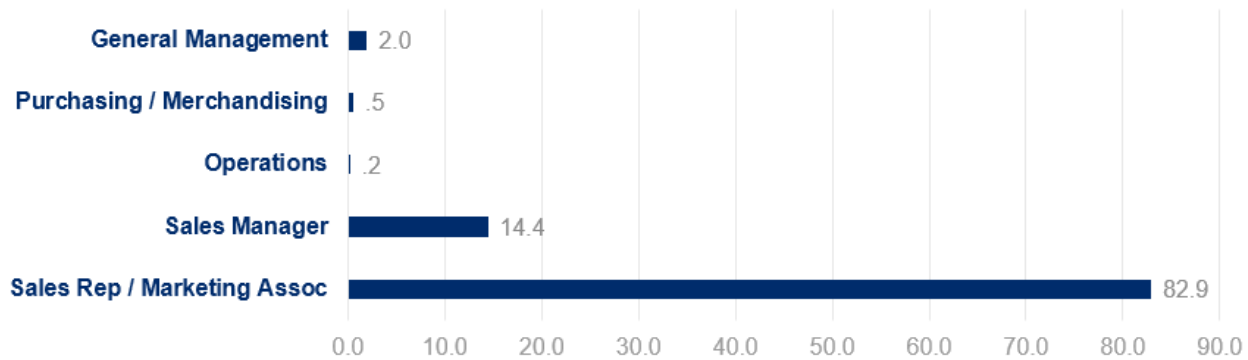
9.2.1 TYPE



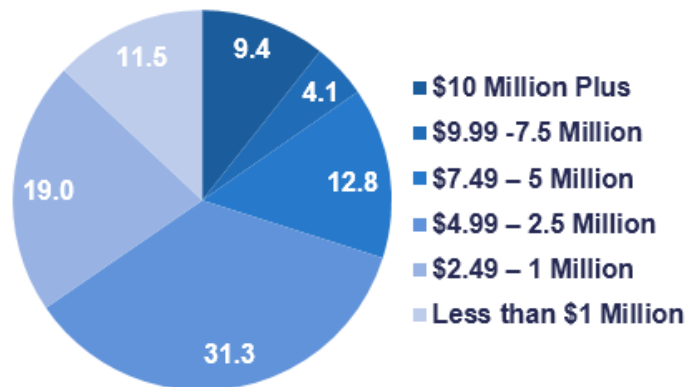
9.2.2 SCOPE



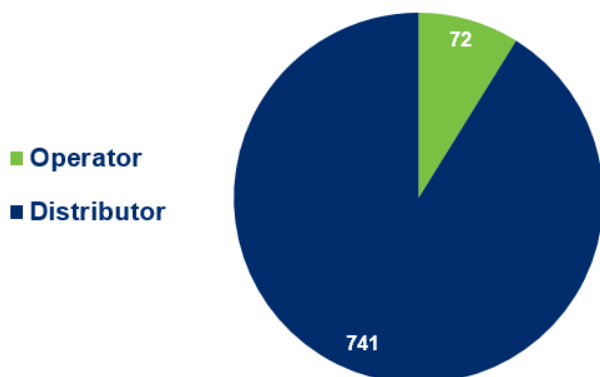
9.2.3 RESPONDENT ROLE



9.2.4 RESPONDENT ANNUAL SALES VOLUME



9.3 TOTAL PARTICIPANTS



• (n=813)

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