

## VENDING FEATURE

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*Please attribute any quotes to Chris O'Neill, National Account Manager, RH Hall's Food Solutions Division*

- **How has the university vending industry changed in the past 5-10 years?**

Technology has moved forward and the requirement is not just for the ordinary drinks and snack machines, but more 'funkier' concepts – including machines with touch screen menu's that can feature nutritional values and product information. Also video streaming, with screens running adverts – vending with 'theatre' as it were where consumers are interacting with the vending experience. There are also more areas allocated within campuses now for vending.

- **What are the main requirements from a vending machine for today's students?**

The main requirements will always be for snacks, coffee and confectionery.

- **Should universities be stocking more than hot drinks, sandwiches and snacks in their vending machines?**

Hot Food and hot snacks are definitely starting to be top of the agenda to help extend the vending offering and with good profits being realised from hot food too.

- **Is it important for vending machines to take cash/card?**

Yes, most definitely. There are all sorts of ways now to order and pay for vended products, making it easier for consumers – they no longer need to rely on having cash handy. Vending offers Giro Vend, a type of credit card facility that you top up with money for cashless purchases and you can even order products from your mobile phone.

- **Is the positioning of a vending machine important?**

Yes, location is always a key consideration as this can affect its popularity and profitability. An example of this is where a machine is sited outside say strategically outside a bar area for late night snacks/hot food vending, maximising the potential for sales at a key time during the day. I've seen this where a machine vends food items which are then taken by students back to their halls to be cooked/heated, proving to be very popular.

- **Should university caterers have a proper maintenance procedure in place for their vending?**

If a site wants to purchase a machine and keep the profits themselves then they will need to have a separate maintenance agreement in place whereas if a site hires or rents a machine then the maintenance contract is usually part of the agreement.





- **Comments for further information**

Vending machines are evolving and have become increasingly sophisticated with reporting facilities being able to tell operators the best sellers, when they were sold, stock levels etc. This telemetry is a complete management system for operators to be able to remotely monitor vital machine information, keeping them up to date from anywhere – either on or off campus at any time. These systems enable operators to maximise sales, improve service and reduce operating costs.

- **Innovations:**

RH Hall's expertise goes beyond product supply alone...

Through our innovative solutions we can meet and even anticipate clients' needs perfectly, whether this calls for 'off the shelf' products or bespoke solutions for any operational need, foodservice brand, concept or menu. We frequently adapt standard foodservice equipment, tailoring it technically and cosmetically to suit a client's needs through our own Fabrications business and our 15,000 sq ft manufacturing facility. We also work with key business partners to bring together 'total solutions' that marry together innovative food/menu items, with unique equipment at maximum operating efficiencies, such as with the iWave®.

- **Partnering innovation**

A new vending product developed through working with our vending clients is the **iWave Feedstation**. Produced by our UK factory, this new solution has been incredibly well received by clients. Combining the ultimate accelerated regeneration system, the iWave® with in-built refrigeration and interactive live digital marketing and touch screen displays into a merchandising unit that can host real time promotions, hot food can be provided 24 hours a day 365 days a year.

Customers simply make their choice from the digital display, the menu item is dispensed and then they scan the barcode on the packaging and place the item inside the iWave® to begin the cooking process. It's totally fool-proof and eliminates any need for staff supervision. The system can be built up and programmed as required then added to at any time to cater for all foodservice demands.

For more detailed information or to arrange a demonstration, contact the RH Hall Sales Office on 01296 663 400 or visit [www.rhhall.com](http://www.rhhall.com).

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