

Convenience Store News

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[Home](#) > BONUS CONTENT: The Pros & Cons of On-Site Baking vs. Commissary

[Home](#) [1]

BONUS CONTENT: The Pros & Cons of On-Site Baking vs. Commissary

Bakery programs give retailers much to consider.

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NATIONAL REPORT — For some convenience store operations, it makes sense to bake products fresh in-store. For others, the commissary route is more efficient. In order to decide which is right for you, there are some important considerations a convenience store operator must make.

Maurice P. Minno, principal of [consulting firm MPM Group](#) [2] and board director for convenience store chain Maverik Inc., shared with *Convenience Store News* the following pros and cons regarding on-site baking vs. commissary delivery for c-store fresh bakery programs:

THE PROS OF IN-STORE BAKING

Fresher Products: Just baked in store are the freshest products possible vs. commissary-delivered bakery product assortments.

Powerful, Memorable, Craveable & Sensory Products: In-store, fresh-baked products enhance their “craveability” as a result of stimulating all five sensory cues. These sensory cues are: sight and sound (seeing and hearing the baking in process); smell (the sweet scent of fresh-made cinnamon rolls and the

smells of other just-baked products activate the salivary glands); taste (of high-quality, fresh-baked products sampled just after baking); and touch (via sampling a fresh-baked muffin or cookie).

Theater Destination Driver: Showcasing an in-store bakery prominently in the store, for customer viewing, provides a unique theatre for format distinction vs. traditional c-stores.

In-Stock Product Selection Assortments: As products sell through, product assortments can be baked and replenished as required.

Assortment Selection Customization: Product assortments can easily be changed at a specific store on a specific day or daypart as a result of customer demographics that day.

Made-to-Order Customization Options: In-store bakeries could offer a line of flash-baked products made-to-order (e.g., fresh-baked cinnamon rolls or cookies topped to order with a variety of icings) customizable to a customer's request.

THE PROS OF COMMISSARY DELIVERED

Not All Locations Are Feasible for an In-store Bakery: Store location, size, configuration, customer traffic, customer demographics, along with other feasibility factors, may not justify an in-store bakery.

Product Consistency Higher: The consistency of commissary-made bakery products can be much higher than in-store baked products in terms of product shape, size and the ingredients used.

THE CONS OF COMMISSARY DELIVERED

Not as Fresh: If the bakery products are fully baked, commissary-supplied bakery products are typically "hours old" vs. a product that's just been baked in-store.

No In-Store Theatre: Customers will wonder where the products came from if the store does not have an in-store bakery.

No Product Replenishment at Sell-Through: If the assortment sells through, there is no product replenishment until the next commissary delivery.

No Change to Delivered Product Assortment: The daily product assortment delivery sets the assortment of the products that are displayed.

No Capability to Offer Made-To-Order, Customized Products: Assuming fully baked and finished products are delivered from the commissary, these products could not be made-to-order.

Editor's note: Look in the [May issue of *Convenience Store News*](#) ^[3] for more tips on successfully executing a fresh bakery program, including advice on branding, product mix and merchandising.

By Bob Phillips, Convenience Store News



- *About Bob Phillips Bob Phillips is a contributing writer to Convenience Store News.*

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