

Gas Buddy Packaged Beverage Study

Thirsty? Study Finds Majority of Americans Prefer Quenching Their Thirst at Gas Station Convenience Stores, Making a Beverage Purchase at Least Once a Week

Younger consumers, age 18-29, prefer c-stores over drug-and-grocery stores, are the least brand loyal, and most easily influenced by coupons/discounts, according to GasBuddy's new 2019 C-Store Beverage Study.

BOSTON — Americans love their liquids, and they want them sooner than later. Packaged beverages are the third largest in-store category at convenience stores with 15.3% share of sales.* And according to GasBuddy's 2019 C-Store Beverage Study issued today, 51% surveyed said they purchase a beverage at a gas station c-store at least once a week, 20% of which doing so daily.

Convenience stores are the destination of choice for 165 million U.S. customers each day, resulting to \$242 billion of in-store sales in 2018.* The GasBuddy study confirmed that packaged beverages — which includes carbonated soft drinks, energy drinks, water, sports drinks, juices and teas — are impulse buys: 65% said their beverage purchases are typically unplanned before getting to the store.

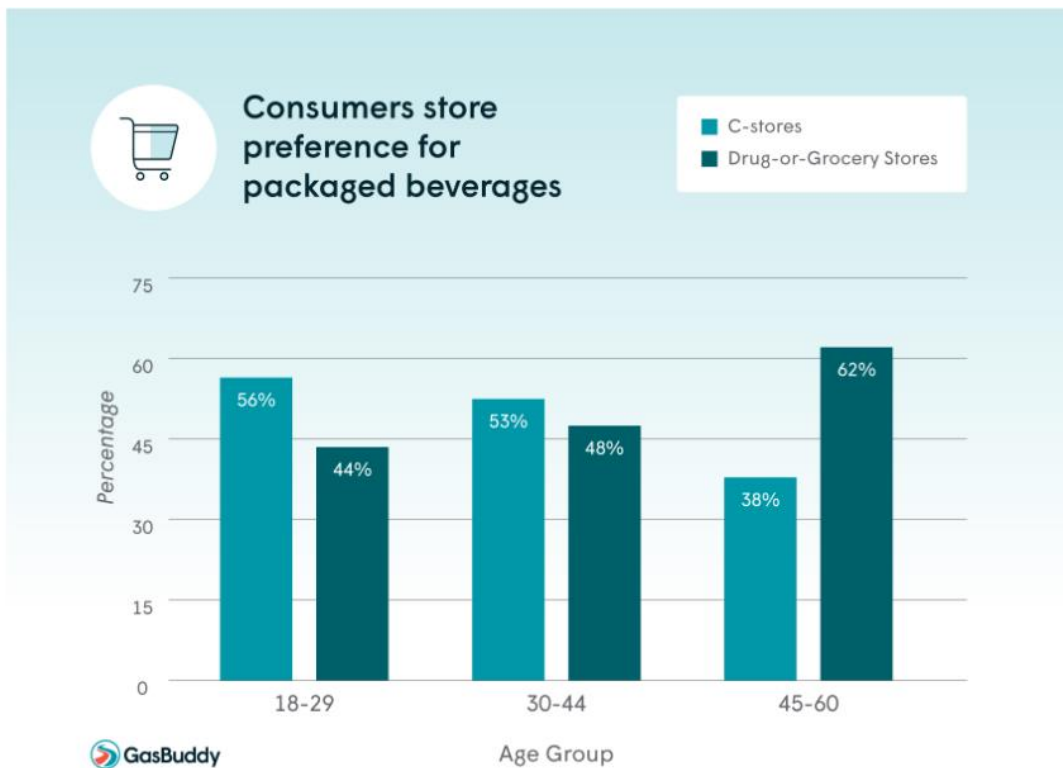
Additionally, brand loyalty is at an all-time low with 67% of consumers saying they try new items based on discounts or interesting packaging.

"Today's consumers—especially millennials—are buying more food on-the-go, including snacks, drinks, and prepared meals," said Frank Beard, convenience retail analyst at GasBuddy. "Efficiency is paramount in today's society, and convenience stores are providing the desired ease and choice of options for an evolving customer. C-stores are also responding to a growing desire for healthier options."

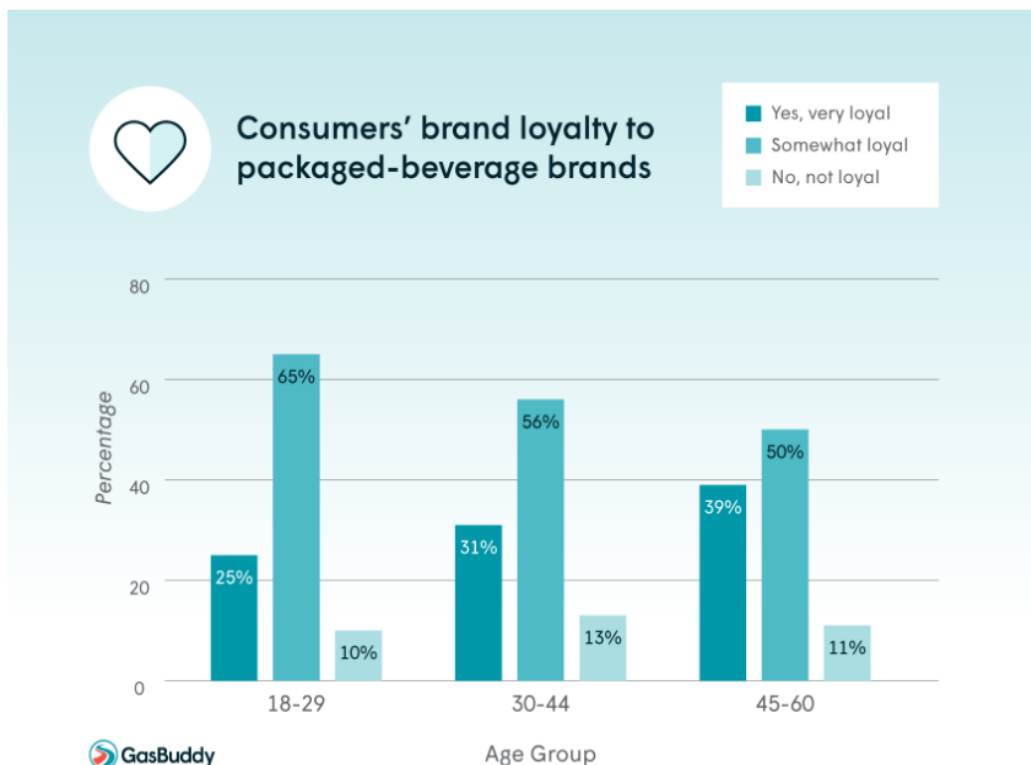
The survey also revealed how greatly product preferences vary between generations. Water is the #1 beverage product purchased at a gas station c-store by 18-29 year-olds, while carbonated soft drinks topped the list for the 30-44 and 45-60 age group.

Other highlights from the study:

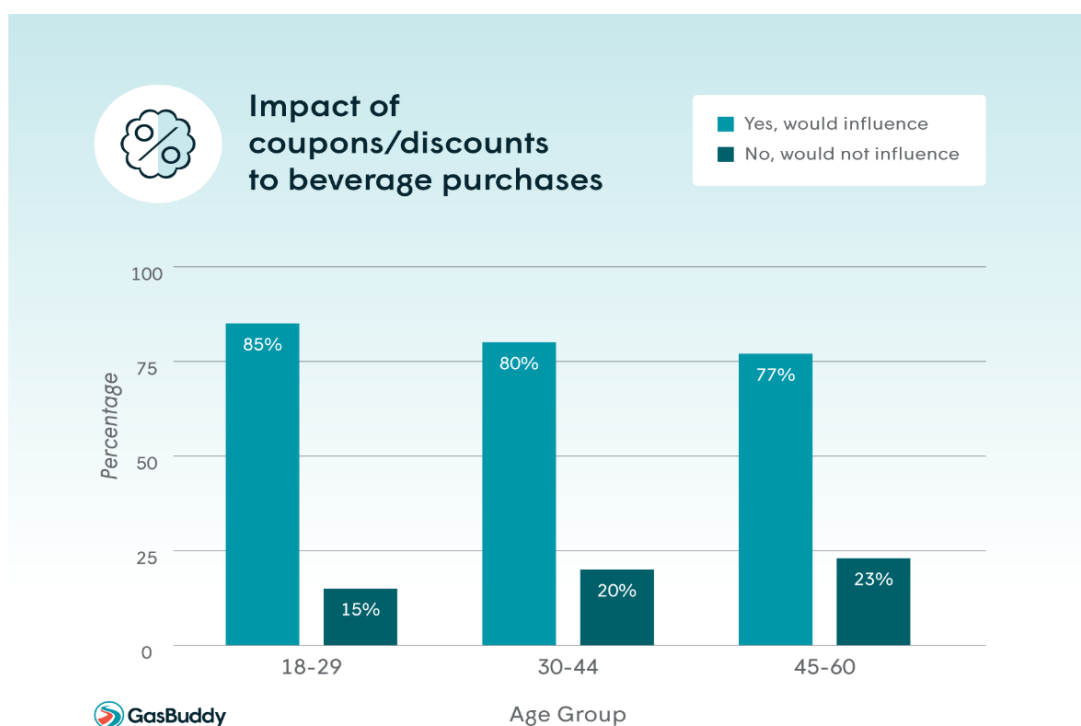
Convenience wins over drug-and-grocery stores. An astounding 56% in the 18-29 year-olds age group said they are more inclined to get their beverages at a convenience store versus a drug-or-grocery store, followed by the 30-44 age group at 53%.



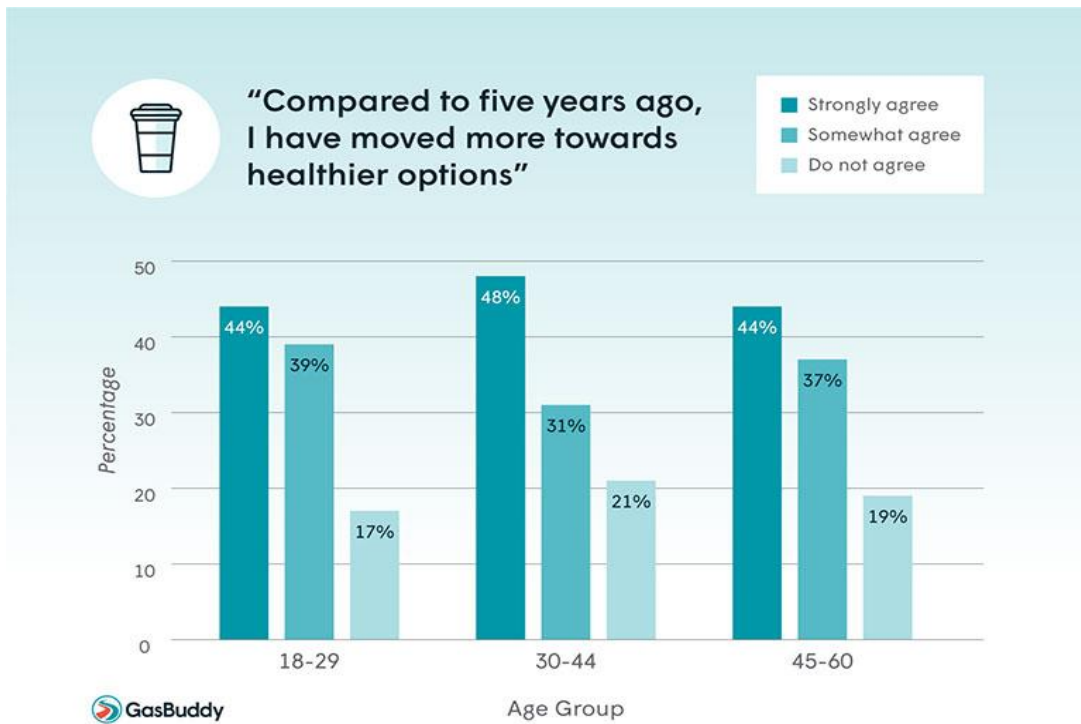
Consumer disloyalty on the rise, especially with younger consumers. In the 45-60 age group, 39% said they are brand loyal when it comes to package beverages. At the 30-44 age range, that number drops 8%, and another 6% at the 18-29 group.



Lovers of deals. 78% said a coupon or discount would influence their decision to purchase. The 18-29 age group is most easily influenced (85%).



Trending healthy. 44% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that they have moved more towards healthier options like sparkling water, drinks with vitamins and electrolytes, over traditional soft drinks compared to five years ago.



Top 5 types of packaged beverages purchased at a gas station c-store are 1) Carbonated soft drinks 2) Water 3) Coffee 4) Energy drinks and 5) Sports drinks.

Methodology

Results based on 1,046 responses from a GasBuddy survey issued on July 10, 2019.

*NACS April 2019