

ACNielsen Consumer Pre*View Study Finds Consumers Too Tired To Cook Or Clean

Half of All Heads of Household "Too Worn Out" for Evening Meal Prep

SCHAUMBURG, IL -- 6 January 2003 -- ACNielsen U.S., an operating unit of ACNielsen, a VNU company, today reported that half of all heads of household are too tired to put much time or effort into evening meal preparation, and nearly two-thirds are constantly looking for faster ways to do household chores. Such time-pressured sentiments are making convenience-oriented food and cleaning items some of the fastest-growing consumer packaged goods (CPG) products on the market, according to the most recent ACNielsen Consumer Pre*View survey of consumer attitudes and behaviors.

The research showed that 50 percent of respondents (heads of household age 18+) agreed that: "I am so busy and in such a hurry all day that by dinner I'm too worn out to fix a meal that requires much in the way of time or effort." As the chart below shows, those most likely to agree with the statement were younger and had somewhat higher incomes.

	Age of Head of Household				Annual Household Income			
	18-34	35-44	45-54	55+	<\$25K	\$25-34,999K	\$35-49,999K	\$50K+
Agree Somewhat/Strongly	62%	59%	56%	33%	41%	47%	52%	56%

In addition, 63 percent agreed that: "I'm constantly looking for new ways to get the household chores (like shopping, cooking, cleaning) done faster." Younger households were most likely to agree with the statement.

	Age of Head of Household			
	18-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Agree Somewhat/Strongly	74%	70%	66%	53%

The fast pace of life is translating into success for products that promise to save people time. The chart below highlights six fast-growing convenience-oriented product categories.

Category	\$ Volume 52 Weeks Ending November 2, 2002	% Growth vs. Year Ago
Shelf-Stable Entrées	\$207,620,394	+66%
Frozen Biscuits/Rolls/Muffins	\$205,258,598	+56%
Pre-Moistened Cleaning Towels	\$147,400,347	+54%
Breakfast Bars	\$403,528,731	+26%
Refrigerated Entrées	\$1,022,827,039	+20%
Polishing/Cleaning Cloths	\$251,199,784	+16%

Source: ACNielsen Strategic Planner, grocery/drug/mass merchandise (excluding Wal-Mart) channels combined

Shelf-stable and refrigerated entrees are fully-cooked meals that just need to be heated; boosting sales in the frozen biscuits/rolls/muffins category are products that allow people to select the quantity that they want to heat; pre-moistened cleaning towels have cleaning or polishing ingredients already in them; numerous new product introductions, such as "cereal-with-milk bars," are boosting sales of breakfast bars; and refills for popular electrostatic floor and furniture cleaning products are driving growth in the polishing/cleaning cloths category.

Phil Lempert, a food industry expert and spokesperson for the ACNielsen Consumer Pre*View service, said, "Several CPG manufacturers are successfully serving today's time-starved consumer. However, many retailers are still trying to figure out how to do so. The challenge of providing a freshly prepared great-tasting meal at a reasonable price and with a maximum of convenience has yet to be solved. For those who come up with a good solution, there's tremendous upside potential. I don't see consumers slowing down anytime soon, and meal preparation is a key area where consumers are looking to save time."

The ACNielsen Consumer Pre*View service conducts surveys once a quarter among members of the ACNielsen Homescan consumer panel. The most recent study was conducted in September and October 2002, and included responses from more than 21,500 demographically balanced U.S. households.

ACNielsen, a VNU business, is the world's leading marketing information company. Offering services in more than 100 countries, the company provides measurement and analysis of marketplace dynamics and consumer attitudes and behavior. Clients rely on ACNielsen's market research, proprietary products, analytical tools and professional service to understand competitive performance, to uncover new opportunities and to raise the profitability of their marketing and sales campaigns.