

faced with certain difficulties when dining out at non-vegetarian places (Shani & DiPietro, 2007) as follows:

Many servers lack knowledge regarding menu items suitable for vegetarians. In many cases, servers also assume that vegetarians are a homogeneous group, unaware of the different types of vegetarians and/or the various motivations behind becoming a vegetarian.

Often, there is no indication in menus as to which items are vegetarian and/or which items can be made vegetarian; for example, by using meat substitutes or excluding animal ingredients.

Many restaurants (and other foodservice operations) only offer a few vegetarian options, which often causes vegetarians to get bored with the restaurant.

In some cases, vegetarians find bits of meat in what is supposed to be a vegetarian dish. In addition to customer dissatisfaction, such incidents might lead to negative publicity for and even lawsuits against the foodservice operation.

There is little dispute that the appeal of vegetarianism and its various types and motivations offers important opportunities, but also challenges, to the foodservice sector. Better awareness of vegetarians' wants and needs, as well as an understanding of the diversity within vegetarianism, would likely result in more vegetarian customers patronizing restaurants. It should be noted that sources of vegetarian information, such as magazines, Websites, and seminars, tend to recommend vegetarian-friendly restaurants that offer suitable options for vegetarian customers, in addition to strictly vegetarian restaurants. In many cases, non-vegetarian people are accompanied by vegetarians, who often have a say in deciding where to go out to eat. Thus, greater attentiveness to vegetarians will likely have a positive effect on non-vegetarian restaurants as well.

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Vending

According to the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA), vending is defined as 'providing service at an unattended point of sale through the use of monetarily-driven equipment' (NAMA, 2008). Vending machines can be found in many areas ranging from schools to businesses to medical facilities to hospitality properties; it is estimated there are over 6 million such machines in use.

While vending operations are very impersonal, they are very convenient for customers who have needs outside of traditional business hours or where desired services and products are not otherwise available. A major advantage from an operator's perspective is the ability to provide food/drink/snack service while incurring little or no labor costs. The four most common items distributed through vending machines are candy, cigarettes, soda, and coffee. Through technology and innovation the industry has evolved to include products such as hot and cold entrees, frozen foods, and dairy products, which may be purchased using coins, bills, or credit cards.

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