

Cool It

Published by



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NRA Restaurant Indexes Show Optimism

In a positive sign for the restaurant industry, the National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Performance Index—a monthly composite index that tracks the health of and outlook for the U.S. restaurant industry—showed continued positive same-store sales and the strongest operator optimism in the history of the Index. Despite the Index slipping a modest 0.3 percent in September, marking the first decline in three months, the restaurant industry remains in a solid position for continued growth during the next several months.

The Expectations Index, which measures restaurant operators' six-month outlook for four industry indicators, increased 0.2 percent in September. The September gain matched the increase posted in August, and

marked the third consecutive monthly increase in the Expectations Index.

Restaurant operators continue to become more optimistic about short-term sales growth in their establishments. Fifty-three percent of restaurant operators expect to have higher sales in six months (compared to the same period in the previous year) – up from 51 percent who reported similarly last month. Meanwhile, only 15 percent of restaurant operators expect their sales volume in six months to be lower than it was during the same period in the previous year.

Restaurant operators also remain confident in the direction of the overall economy. Fifty-two percent of restaurant operators expect economic conditions in six months to be better than they are now – the strongest level on record. Only 10 percent of restaurant operators expect economic conditions to worsen in six months.

Along with their positive expectations for sales growth in the near future, restaurant operators are continuing to plan for capital expenditures. Sixty percent of restaurant operators plan to make a capital expenditure for equipment, expansion or remodeling in the next six months – marking the third consecutive month with a level of 60 percent or greater.

This article was adapted from information published on www.restaurant.org. Reprinted by permission of the National Restaurant Association.

Even though the National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Index (below) dropped slightly in September, industry optimism is still running high.



Accomplishments Recognized At Sales Meeting

Master-Bilt recognized several team members for their excellent work in helping the company achieve its 2003 sales goals at the annual sales planning meeting held July 9-12, in Tunica, Mississippi.

The winners of the 2003 achievement awards were:



A few of the award winners at the recent Master-Bilt national sales planning meeting. (Left to right) Dave Cahoy, Master-Bilt business development manager; Lynn Burge, Master-Bilt advertising coordinator; John Molhoek, Greater Michigan Distributors; Steve Pacentine, Jay Mark Group; Mike Crossen, Master-Bilt business development manager; Bill Huffman, Master-Bilt vice president of sales and marketing.

- **Business Development Manager (BDM) of the Year** – Mike Crossen
- **Most Improved Territory of the Year (BDM)** – Dave Cahoy
- **Most Improved Territory of the Year (Sales Representative)** – Jay Mark Group
- **Runner-up, Most Improved Territory of the Year (Sales Representative)** – Greater Michigan Distributors
- **Sales Representative Group of the Year** – Eagle/Frizzell & Associates
- **Extra Miler Award** – Lynn Burge, Advertising Coordinator
- **New Business Development (BDM)** – Mike Krueger
- **New Business Development (Sales Representative)** – John Molhoek, Greater Michigan Distributors
- **Key Customer Productivity (BDM)** – Don Rooker
- **Key Customer Productivity (Sales Representative)** – Jay Mark Group

“Master-Bilt’s success stems on the dedication and hard work of our employees and partnerships,” said Bill Huffman, vice president of sales and marketing. “The extra miler award is given each year to the individual who personifies these qualities as well as leadership, service and teamwork with both customers and co-workers.”



Product Scene

Expanded Choice In Walk-in Door Sizes

Quick ship and PRS series walk-ins are now available with a choice of three entry door widths: 26", 30" or 36". There's no extra charge for any of these widths. Just specify the desired width and door swing when ordering. Door height remains at 78" for all three widths.

New Michigan Warehouse

Master-Bilt is pleased to announce a new warehouse in Roseville, Michigan. This facility will stock a broad range of cabinets to serve Michigan and the surrounding areas.

For more information, contact our sales department at 800-647-1284 or email us at sales@master-bilt.com.



Master-Bilt's newest warehouse in Roseville, Michigan.



Sales Toolbox

Customer Training Seminar Set For March

The next Master-Bilt Customer Training Seminar is scheduled for March 2-3, 2004 in Tupelo, Mississippi. For more information, contact your local Master-Bilt business development manager or sales representative. You may also contact Donna Teague at 800-647-1284, ext. 308. For a tentative agenda, go to www.master-bilt.com/trade/trade.htm#training.

New AutoQuotes Version Updates Automatically

AutoQuotes users take note! There's big changes in the industry standard foodservice quotation program.

The new Internet Version eliminates the need to click

an update button for the latest upgrade. The program automatically updates itself in the background while you work.

CD users remember: After the October disc is mailed, there will be no more automatic mailings of CD/DVD updates. For new installations or if you have a slow or no internet connection, you will need to go to <http://info.aql.us/> and choose the CD Request option.

There's a lot more going on in the Internet Version including an entirely new browser. For all the details on updated features or technical assistance, go to <http://info.aql.us/>. If you prefer to call, the phone number is 904-384-2279.

Fascinating Facts About The Restaurant Industry

- There are over 870,000 restaurant locations in the United States, with sales projected to reach \$426.1 billion in 2003.
- The restaurant industry is the nation's largest private-sector employer, providing jobs for 11.7 million individuals.
- One-third of all adults in the United States have worked in the restaurant industry at some time during their lives.
- The average annual household expenditure for food away from home in 1998 was \$2030, or \$812 per person.
- The restaurant-industry share of the food dollar today is 46.1 percent, compared with only 25 percent in 1955.
- More than four out of 10 adults were restaurant patrons on a typical day in 1999.
- Off-premises (takeout and delivery) traffic accounted for roughly 51% of total restaurant traffic in 1999.
- Almost 54 billion meals are eaten in restaurants and school and work cafeterias each year.
- The distribution of restaurant traffic by daypart: Dinner accounted for 52% of commercial establishment traffic in 1999, followed by lunch (37 percent) and breakfast (11 percent)
- Between 1970 and 2001, restaurant-industry sales posted a compound annual growth rate of 7.5 percent.
- August is the most popular month to eat out and Saturday is the most popular day of the week for dining out.
- More than 50 percent of all consumers visit a restaurant on their birthdays, making this the most popular occasion to eat out, followed by Mother's Day and Valentine's Day.

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The three stages of a man's life: He believes in Santa Claus; He doesn't believe in Santa Claus; He is Santa Claus.

—Unknown



JUST FOR GRINS

A Christmas Memo

To: All employees

Subject: Office conduct during the holiday season

Effective immediately, employees should keep in mind the following guidelines in compliance with FROLIC (the Federal Revelry Office and Leisure Industry Council).

- Running aluminum foil through paper shredder to make tinsel is discouraged.
- Playing Jingle Bells on the push-button phones is not allowed. It runs up a heck of a long-distance bill.
- Work requests are not to be filed under "Bah Humbug."
- Company cars are not allowed to go over the river and through the woods to Grandma's house.
- All fruitcake is to be eaten BEFORE July 25.
- Eggnog will not be dispensed from the vending machines.



— adapted from *Jokesand Humor.com*

Christmas Jokes...Ho, Ho, Ho

Q: What do you have in December that you don't have in any other month?

A: The letter "d."

Q: What did Adam tell his girlfriend on Dec. 24?

A: It's Christmas, Eve!

Q: What do you call a polar bear wearing earmuffs?

A: Anything you want. He can't hear you!

Q: What do you call a chicken at the North Pole?

A: Lost

Q: What kind of pine has the sharpest needles?

A: A porcupine

—adapted from *TheHolidaySpot.com*

Signs Of The Season

Seen on a sanitation truck in Lexington, Kentucky: "Happy Hauladays."

Posted on the door of a festively decorated gift shop in a Chicago suburb: "Please Open Before Christmas!"

Sign advertising a health club: "Merry Fitness and Happy New Rear!"

—from *Reader's Digest*

New Key Customers

Thanks to the following companies for joining the Key Customer network:

Atlas Restaurant Supply, Inc.
South Bend, IN

Coast Restaurant Equipment
Bradenton, FL

Gustave A. Larson Co.
Pewaukee, WI

Kessenich's, Ltd.
Madison, WI

Qual Serv/Smith St. John
Roswell, GA

S.S. Kemp & Co.
Cleveland, OH

York Distributing
Denver, CO



Upcoming

Events

- Master-Bilt Customer Training Seminar
March 2-3, 2004 • Tupelo, Mississippi
- International Pizza Expo
March 16-18, 2004 • Las Vegas
- Northwest Foodservice Show
April 18-20, 2004 • Tacoma, Washington
- National Restaurant Association
Restaurant Hotel-Motel Show
May 22-25, 2004 • Chicago
- Southwest Foodservice Expo
June 27-29, 2004 • Houston, Texas
- Western Foodservice Expo
August 28-30, 2004 • Los Angeles
- International Foodservice Expo
September 10-12, 2004 • Orlando



The Search Continues

We're still looking for the oldest, still-working piece of Master-Bilt equipment. The hunt is on now and will end at the National Restaurant Association Show in May, 2004.

Once found, Master-Bilt will take the old piece of equipment and replace it completely free of cost to the contest winner. The owner of the oldest unit will receive a brand new model as similar as possible to the original.

To enter the contest, submit your name, company name, the serial number on the equipment, phone number and email address to Mary Lowstuter of Master-Bilt. Note the contest is limited to a self-contained cabinet or merchandiser, no walk-ins or remote refrigeration units, please. The contestant can either call 800-647-1284, ext. 203 or email Mary at mlofstuter@master-bilt.com.



Partners in Success

Scardina Refrigeration Baton Rouge, Louisiana

For nearly 40 years, Master-Bilt and Scardina Refrigeration, sellers of restaurant equipment and supplies, have been teaming up to supply refrigeration solutions for a vast array of projects. The relationship that was forged years ago remains strong today as the two refrigeration suppliers embark upon their largest joint project to date.

During the summer of 2002, Louisiana's Department of Agriculture realized a need for a Baton Rouge refrigerated warehouse to serve as a distribution center for commodities. From this warehouse, goods would be delivered to local government agencies like public schools, correctional facilities, wildlife and fishery and several other arenas. The Department's previous distribution system had involved smaller walk-ins scattered across the state, a system that proved ineffective. The cost to have shipments delivered to numerous different facilities each day was too high, and the quantity of lost product was significant. Although smaller walk-ins provided good local outlets for food products, a large space for refrigerated food storage would provide the Department buying power and the ability to stock up on products for emergency situations.

Once the need for such a warehouse was realized, Louisiana's Department of Agriculture began to create a set of specifications for those interested in bidding the project. Scardina was confident enough from its previous relationship with Master-Bilt, to rely on its architectural specifications binder, which provided intricate details necessary for a refrigeration project of this magnitude. The new warehouse was to measure 255 ft. x 231 ft. x 20 ft. tall, with five different compartments within. Although they

had collaborated with Master-Bilt on walk-in coolers for nearly 40 years, even completing smaller projects for the Department of Agriculture, Scardina Refrigeration had never seen a project of this magnitude.

Scardina and Master-Bilt both knew this was a unique opportunity to engineer a first-of-its-size project. With help from Bryon Hum, architect at STBP Architects, the team worked together for over a year to provide a real-life solution to the Department's specifications. The focus of the design began on the inside of the structure in order to fulfill the Department's needs for a custom interior. A floor plan was created with different size panels varying in width and length for the separate compartments within the structure. The roof panels had to lock into place with the side panels in order to maintain structural integrity. To further increase reliability, steel panel straps ran the width of each panel with cam-lock connectors on both ends providing a tight seal. In addition, due to the size of the warehouse, the steel pallet racks used to store products inside the structure also supported the paneling.

The bid was submitted for consideration, and the team hoped that their vision and specs would work with those of the Department of Agriculture. Thankfully, the Department knew firsthand that the partnership between Master-Bilt and Scardina was a dependable one and hired them for the project.

The scope and magnitude of this project proves the dedication and teamwork between two established partners. Work began on this central refrigeration warehouse in Baton Rouge this past summer. Master-Bilt will closely follow the progression and bring you more details in a later issue of *Cool It!*

We need your help!

To make **Cool It!** a better publication for all, we need your questions, comments and story suggestions. Send in your ideas to Lynn Burge at lburge@master-bilt.com or fax them to 800-232-3966.



Published quarterly by the
Master-Bilt Sales & Marketing Department
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