



Taking the 'Cons' Out of Convenience

The GetGo Café + Market prototype seeks to change shoppers' c-store perceptions

By Danielle Romano

The convenience channel continues to challenge shoppers' long-held view of "gas station food" with new store environments that are on par with markets, as seen with Fullerton, Calif.-based Mission Market and Parker's Urban Market Gourmet in Savannah, Ga.

One more contender jumping into the ring is the GetGo Café + Market.

Accounting for 17 locations across GetGo's 199-store footprint, the Café + Market format is part of the metamorphosis of Pittsburgh-based Giant Eagle's evolving GetGo model.

The concept, which can currently be found in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana, taps into an opportunity at the intersection of fast food/quick-service restaurant, traditional convenience store, and fuel station, GetGo spokesperson Jannah Jablonowski told *Convenience Store News*.

Speaking especially to millennials and time-starved consumers, GetGo Café + Market not only caters to the changing convenience retail landscape, but also harkens back to the company's commitment to meeting customers' shifting needs.

"With every GetGo Café + Market location we build, we're striving to reshape how customers perceive 'convenience' — we're taking the cons out," Jablonowski articulated. "We never want our customers to feel like they have to sacrifice."

A LITTLE FINE-TUNING

The goal behind GetGo Café + Market wasn't total reinvention; instead, it was refinement of GetGo's original vision of "Get In. Get Out. Get Going."

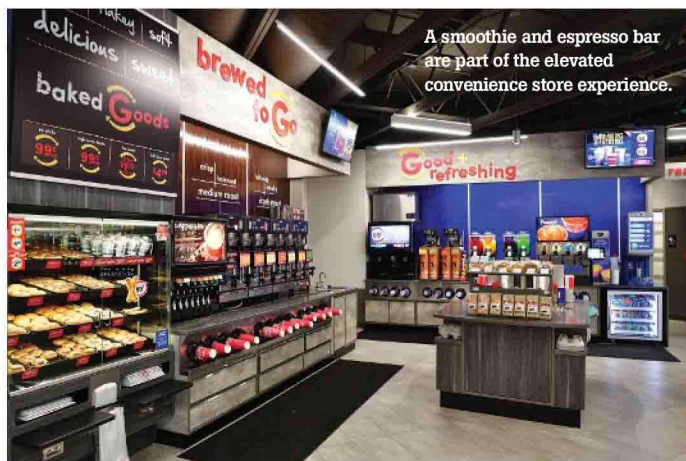
The company sought to communicate to consumers that it had upped its foodservice game and also created a fun and comfortable environment for customers to leisurely enjoy.

To relay this message, GetGo enlisted Chicago-based thinktank Adrienne Weiss Corp. (AWC), which has worked with the retailer over the last 15 years to develop the original GetGo concept, as well as Giant Eagle's Market District grocery stores, Market District Express format, and a pharmacy concept.

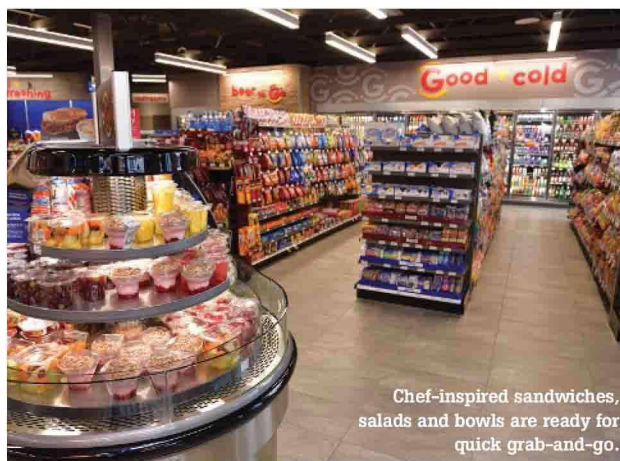
For GetGo Café + Market, AWC and GetGo collaborated to create an environment that brought the brand's promise to life by developing a new store interior and exterior, signage, uniforms, printed collateral, electronic menuboards, and everything else customers may see or touch in the store.

"We take all of these assets and push them through a filter of the GetGo brand story, so the customer experiences one holistic experience," explained Greg Weiss, president of AWC. "... The experience of walking into a GetGo Café + Market, ordering delicious food and eating in a comfortable and fun environment, is truly an elevated convenience store experience."





A smoothie and espresso bar are part of the elevated convenience store experience.



Chef-inspired sandwiches, salads and bowls are ready for quick grab-and-go.

When it comes to foodservice, GetGo Café + Market shies away from traditional with a selection of made-fresh-to-order subs, breakfast sandwiches, burgers and wraps. The stores also feature a smoothie and espresso bar. On the packaged side, there's an assortment of better-for-you snacking options like nut mixes, protein bars, and protein shakes.

To further its message of quality foodservice, select Café + Market locations in the Pittsburgh market will soon add "Great to Go by Market District" items to the foodservice selection. These items will encompass

customers were unfamiliar with; we wanted to refine an experience they already enjoyed. GetGo has built a great brand since 2003 and we wanted to leverage that brand equity, not replace it," Weiss commented.

GOING FORWARD

While many retailers with new prototypes are quick to transition existing locations to their new-to-industry concept, Jablonowski divulged that GetGo will not roll out Café + Market across existing stores. Instead, it will focus future growth of the prototype via new locations.

GetGo Café + Market is now a place where the food is even better, the atmosphere is even more inviting, and the food and convenience offerings are even broader. We did not want to make a brand-new experience that the customers were unfamiliar with; we wanted to refine an experience they already enjoyed. GetGo has built a great brand since 2003 and we wanted to leverage that brand equity, not replace it.

— Greg Weiss, Adrienne Weiss Corp.

grab-and-go prepackaged, chef-inspired sandwiches, salads and bowls.

Still, the prototype has not forgotten to include customary convenience store fare, including fresh coffee, candy, snacks, tobacco products, an extensive variety of beer, and fountain beverages.

Among the other amenities are: indoor/outdoor café seating; surcharge-free ATMs; free air for tires; an expansive selection of retailer gift cards; lottery for purchase; and onsite parking.

"GetGo Café + Market is now a place where the food is even better, the atmosphere is even more inviting, and the food and convenience offerings are even broader. We did not want to make a brand-new experience that the

"All of our current format types share the passion for saving customers time and the commitment to community that is intrinsic to the GetGo brand," she said.

When it comes to what Giant Eagle wants customers to think of when they think of GetGo Café + Market, the retailer hopes the store's uniqueness shines through.

"When a customer thinks of GetGo Café + Market, we hope they think: This is far different than any 'convenience store' I know. Not only can I pick up a fresh, well-made meal for myself or my family on-the-go, but I can also grab a few pantry staples to save myself a stop on the way home. All in the same place where I fill my tank and a helpful Go-Getter is cheering me on as I go through my busy day," concluded Jablonowski. **CSN**