

Brewsletter – Vol. 42

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Buckeyes: A Simple Holiday Treat

By Sarah Bailey

I am making these in the showroom today, the reason is twofold: I'm still a buckeye at heart (born and raised in Ohio) and they are DC's favorite! So, I thought I'd share the recipe with all of you. It's simple enough to produce with nothing more than a mixer and a microwave.

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Ready In: 50 Minutes

Cook Time: 5 Minutes

Servings: 30

This recipe is so good that I double it whenever I make it. Since it is peanut butter balls dipped in chocolate it is almost like candy. Real buckeyes are nuts that grow on trees and are related to the horse chestnut.



Ingredients:

-1 1/2 cups Reese's peanut butter sauce	-6 cups confectioners' sugar
-1 cup butter, softened	-4 cups Ghirardelli semisweet chocolate chips
-1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract	

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, mix together the peanut butter, butter, vanilla and confectioners' sugar. The dough will look dry. Roll into 1 inch balls and place on a waxed paper-lined cookie sheet.



2. Press a toothpick into the top of each ball (to be used later as the handle for dipping) and chill in freezer until firm, about 30 minutes.
3. Melt chocolate chips in a double boiler or in a bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water. Stir frequently until smooth. (If you do not have a double-boiler handy, a microwave with suffice, just keep a close eye and stir frequently so the chocolate does not burn)

4. Dip frozen peanut butter balls in chocolate holding onto the toothpick. Leave a small portion of peanut butter showing at the top to make them look like Buckeyes. Put back on the cookie sheet and refrigerate until serving.

*This recipe will yield roughly five dozen buckeyes with your cost being under \$1 a dozen!



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A Word from the Warehouse

By Eric Schwarz

A little off the normal rants, but I bet you didn't know that your friendly, 'It's a wonderful day at Upper Midwest Gourmet' guy is also in a band. It's a 3-piece Americana band called Woodshop, covering all your favorite tunes from the late

1800s to the early 1990s. We feature a guitar player, a drummer and yours truly on vocals, washboard, harmonica, kazoo and any other noise makers in the house. We have over 100 tunes on our play list and can play in nearly any

environment, coffee shops, weddings, house parties, bar and grill, etc. We are weekend warriors and are reasonably priced. Feel free to check us out at www.woodshoprock.com or you can contact us on the Woodshop hotline at 763-533-3454. Have a great day and don't forget to boogie.

2 Are Bad Habits Causing Bad Sales?

By Kevin Selig

Operating your café with bad habits can be devastating to your bottom line. Getting an edge (and keeping it) over your competition is essential to your survival. The inability to gain new and repeat sales can be a major part of this survival. Having staff that buy into your system and take ownership can dramatically affect your overall sales.

Selling with bad habits in today's competitive market just will not do. Selling today is harder than it has ever been. There are a lot more options for the consumer to choose from in today's market so it's more important now than ever before for your sales staff to gain a competitive edge. Part of the competitive edge may include better trained staff. Staff that understands the industry and the products they are selling will convince your customers that you are the expert in your market. Knowledge sells!

Listed below are a few BAD habits of unsuccessful sales people:

1. Poor Service: It has been researched that over 50% of every selling situation involves customer service. This means that your service must be exceptional! Give the customers something to remember, something to tell others about. Your staff is the face of your business. Giving poor service will leave a negative impression on your customers for a long time. It can take a long period of time to overcome being known for bad service.

2. Bad Communication Skills: The art of communication and relationship-building are two of the most important things in good selling. Many businesses are simply focused on making the sale rather than making them feel like you are thankful for their business. Good conversation controls relationships, therefore creating good sales. The art of communication is the pinnacle to building long-term repeat customers. Focus on the following 3

skills to improve your sales; 1) terrific listening skills, 2) agitating questions or conversation, and 3) good vocabulary.

3. Failure to Build Relationships:

As simple as this may sound, a key to good relationship building is to stop focusing on selling. Customers want relationships with those they patronize to create a sense of trust and show that we care about them. Refrain from focusing on the number of sales made and focus on how many great relationships that you can build. You will begin to notice that selling may become less laborious and more enjoyable. You may even see business increase based on customer referrals.

4. Inability to Take Action: This simply means that we need to be proactive in our actions and words. Engage with your customer, asking them what they are looking for today instead of simply waiting for them to tell you. Change up your counter and retail spaces often and have your staff promote these new items. Engage with customers in your café rather than avoid them. Create reasons for them to visit your café often. Advertise upcoming events and specials well in advance to generate a buzz. There are millions of ideas available out there that you can take advantage of. We need to keep things moving in order to keep customers visiting.

5. Lack of Interest or Skills: If your sales staff lacks an interest in what they are doing or selling, customers will not want to be served by them or return to your café. Keep your staff interested by continuous training. Encourage them to create new items to sell. Keep them accountable for their actions and find ways to keep their customer service skills updated and relevant. The bottom line; find a way to get your sales staff to take ownership in your café so they will want to sell on your behalf. This will benefit them in the long run. Happy employees make happy customers which makes happy owners!

6. Poor Preparation: This bad habit generally involves not knowing what to sell to your market. A lack of knowledge about the customers in your market can cause you to offer goods and services they do not want or need. Your staff needs to know and understand the products you are offering. There is nothing worse than engaging with a sales person who appears to have no knowledge of what they are trying to sell you. You must know the competition in your market so you can adjust your business plan and offerings accordingly. It is vital to know what to say or what to sell your customers before they step foot into your business. Researching your market and the competition is vital to your success.

Improving in any one of the above listed bad habits can mean the difference between keeping your doors open and having to shut down your business. Simply having the best products and services may mean nothing without having the proper sales staff to present them in a way that can generate customers who want to patronize your business.

We at Upper Midwest Gourmet; pride ourselves on knowing our products, services and the industry we serve. We are always looking for ways to stay on top of these areas. It is our goal to equip and prepare our customers for long-term success. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any reason.

We always thank you for your continued support and business. You make us who we are!



Retail Offerings, A Must.

By Michael Applen

As many café owners know, you can't survive on selling cups of coffee alone. Especially in these tough economic times, people are trying to save money. One way they can save money is by brewing their coffee at home. Right away I'm sure you all cringe at the idea of that, but you shouldn't because that retail coffee market is yours for the taking. If this customer is trying to save money and not buy their cup of coffee from the counter everyday, it opens up their buying segment to all of your retail offerings for home preparation and consumption. This means you have to offer retail coffee to them or you may lose their business all-together!

Some cafés have an attractive retail area with one-pound coffee bags, tea boxes, mugs, press pots, single-serve cocoas

and chai teas, etc... that do very well to add that extra sale to every order. Using the holidays to promote your retail items can really be profitable as well. Try bringing in some "holiday labeled and flavored" retail coffees from us on your next coffee order and watch them fly off the shelves. A nice bonus is that our flavors are now completely organic just like our coffees!



You could also sell your retail coffee right out of your bulk supply. This would mean weighing out the coffee and bagging it right in front of the customer, which can be good for a few reasons. First, it keeps your coffee fresher overall, and secondly, allows the customer to buy the exact same coffee in whole bean or ground form that they are sipping on and loving at your café, thirdly you pay a lower, bulk price on your coffee, and fourthly we provide FREE custom, color labels. You can also sell in any increment this way too, so if a customer only wants to buy \$7 worth of coffee then weigh out and sell them a half of a pound.

Please feel free to give your sales person or the roastery a call if you have retail questions or would like some recommendations to improve your retail offerings.

Brrrrr, It's Cold Outside.

By David Chall

Welcome to winter and the end of 2010. We hope your heat works and Santa has a few pairs of nice wool socks packed in the sleigh for you. 2010 has been an exciting year here at Upper Midwest Gourmet. We've added a lot of new products, new equipment, and new customers and had some great new experiences.

Our trip to the Dominican Republic helped us find the best **Organic** Dominican Coffee we've ever tasted. 10,565 pounds of those delicious organic beans cleared customs for the first time last week and are now in production in the roastery.

A 2nd coffee roaster was added to our arsenal. Rather than buy a new machine, we stayed true to our environmental mission and chose to refurbish a 14 year old Primo roaster. Our 'newish' Primo is installed and being tested for perfect roast profiles. To end the year we think we've found another winning product for you:



Umpqua Oats. There are seven great gourmet flavors of all natural oatmeal in a 'ready to serve' portion cup. Just add water from your coffee brewer or your espresso machine and the customer is ready for a great all natural oatmeal breakfast, lunch or snack. All seven oatmeals contain all natural whole rolled oats.

- Monkey Bars: Chocolate, peanut butter and organic coconut
- Kick Start: Almonds, walnuts, flax, sunflower seeds, blueberries, raisins and cranberries
- Mostly Sunny: (Nut Free) Cranberries, craisins, golden raisins and apples
- R U Nuts?: Toasted almonds, walnuts, sunflowers seeds and flax
- Take A Hike: Hazelnuts, pumpkin seeds, and apricots... trail mixers dream
- Old School: Dried apples, cinnamon, cranberries, and pumpkin seeds
- Lei'd Back: Cashews, macadamia nuts, coconut, cranberries, and papaya. Vacation in a Cup!

There's an Umpqua flavor for everyone.

New Product Promotion in December and January: Receive a 6 + 1 when you try a case each of all 7 flavors!

Thanks to each and every one of you that put your trust in us weekly to be your product supplier. Without you we wouldn't be here and we'd have to get real jobs, ha. We hope your 2010 was better than 2009 and that 2011 is the best year you've ever had. Have a remarkable Holiday Season, stay safe and warm and always remember you get free training and support with Upper Midwest Gourmet and we're here to help you succeed. Call us if we can be of any assistance at all.



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“Upper Midwest Gourmet is a one-stop, wholesale distributor of specialty food service ingredients, Flamenco Fair Trade Organic coffee, Italian gelato ingredients and equipment, hundreds of other gourmet beverages and foods, café equipment and machines, and environmentally-conscious supplies like cups, napkins, and eco-sleeves.”

Upgrades and Accolades!

Flamenco Organic Coffee Co.



Since last April, we have worked meticulously on refurbishing our recently purchased roasting machine. Our current Primo PRI-20 machine has worked well for the last 5 years but has now reached capacity. The new machine, a Primo PRI-50, is an older model with a larger drum to roast more than double the coffee of the PRI-20. Received used from another local roasting company, the machine was in pretty bad shape.

When not roasting, we diligently scraped, chiseled, burned and punched the cemented coffee sludge off of the hardware, replaced out-of-date and broken parts, added our own design twists, threw in some functional flourishes, and shined it up like the day it was forged.

After 8 months, we, as giddy roasters, put our first batch though last week. We plan on easing into its daily operation as we begin pairing individual coffees with the most suitable machine's personality.



Thank you to everybody who came out and supported Flamenco at Calhoun Square Coffee Fest! When the votes were tallied, we were proud to have had the strongest showing of the entire competition, winning either 1st or “Runner-up” in every single category. Again, thanks to the thousands of voters who ventured out to evaluate coffees and support a good cause!

NEW OFFERINGS: Organic Dominican Jamamucito Estate, Organic Kenya AA Kia Ora Farms, FTO Guatemala Maya Ixil de Avelina, Organic Colombia San Pedro Micro-lot, and our award winning FTO Decaf Ethiopian Natural Sidamo! Supplies are limited on several of these, so ask a sales rep or your favorite roaster for samples today!

~Roasters, Jesse Grote & Alan Erbach
