



Concession Equipment

by Ingrid Chen

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What would a childhood be without the festival treats to go with our memories? From cotton candy to corn dogs, concession fare harbors nostalgia of old school ideals and simpler days for many individuals. An American baseball game isn't complete without the standard hot dogs and peanuts. Some crave the salty, buttery appeal of movie theater popcorn or soft pretzels. Others indulge themselves with sweets, quelling that ever-craving sweet tooth with warm cotton candy or gooey candy apples.

Whatever your preference, the concession stand industry has ballooned into a multi-billion dollar industry. Every unassuming concession venue adds up in profits, especially during seasonal business. With an excellent cost-to-profit ratio, the profitability of the concession industry is not to be underestimated. Owning and operating a concession stand is a great stepping stone for an enterprising business owner, or a means of supplemental income for seasonally-employed individuals.

-The Financial Benefits of a Owning a Concession Stand

Most concession items are inexpensive to supply and cheap to produce. One can turn out considerable profits by offering something as simple as a carnival treat. For example, cotton candy is a staple in outdoor venues and sports arenas. It's quickly made to order, and can be pre-made and pre-packaged for on-the-go customers. Cotton candy is colorful and fun to eat, and parents often give into their children's sweet tooth pleas, as well as their own.

Consider this--the two ingredients in cotton candy are sugar and food coloring, both of which are available almost anywhere, and are exceptionally inexpensive to purchase. The biggest purchase is the equipment itself, but that cost is easily recovered with good foot traffic and profitable production. Each serving costs mere pennies to produce, but is sold at price of dozens of times the cost. Simply put, the costs are low and therefore the profits are high.

- What Equipment Do I Need ?

The choices in concession equipment vary tremendously. Depending on the kind of food or drink you intend on marketing, you may need a large machine such as a deep fryer or commercial grill. You might also only require a small device, such as a waffle maker or candy apple stove. Whatever you choose, be sure to cover several important bases.

First and foremost, where do you plan on selling your product? If you want a more permanent location, you may do best by investing in large equipment to store and process your fare. Stadium concession stands, for example, are often built into the stadium structure itself, and may accommodate large grills, commercial refrigerators and multiple display cases. The operator of a larger stand has the luxury of offering many different items and allowing more people to serve in the concession space.

If you plan on having a mobile unit such as a trailer or a simple cart, you should keep in consideration the size of your equipment relative to the capacity of your location. Equipment also depends on the volume of business that results from the item you offer. For example, a large-capacity hot dog steamer is appropriate for a hot dog cart with significant volume of foot traffic and, therefore, business. For smaller audiences, a roller grill, which holds fewer hot dogs but cooks with a great, self-basted flavor, may be more suitable. Keep in mind, though, that most variations in equipment can adapt to whatever your needs may be.

- Concession Fare and Its Place in Food History

Collectively, concession fare has a very rich history. For example, pretzels date back thousands of years, and are thought to be created by European monks as rewards for children who memorized their Bible verses and prayers. The Latin term is "pretiola", from which the common name "pretzel" was derived.

Many foods, however, were the innovations of inventors in the late 19th to mid 20th century time period. The invention of every machine and every unique treat changed the face of concession fare and impacted the food industry forever. Resourceful machines allowed for mass production, and certain foods became associated with certain events. Even the corn dog holds a significant place in food history; the family of Ed Waldmire Jr, the inventor of the corn dog on a stick, still runs his original Cozy Dog restaurant to this day, which attracts locals and Route 66 passersby alike.