

## 3. Why Cold, Iced, and Frozen Drinks Deserve More Space

Many convenience store beverage bars are still built around legacy fountain expectations. But today's shoppers increasingly look for cold beverages that are customizable, flavorful, visually engaging, and fun to build. That shift makes cold, iced, and frozen beverages a stronger priority for operators evaluating **commercial beverage dispensers, frozen beverage machines, and cold beverage dispenser systems**.

Cold dispensed beverages remain one of the most important categories in c-store foodservice. NACS Magazine reported that cold dispensed beverages made up **7.5% of foodservice sales** in 2023 and delivered a **51.76% gross margin**. NACS also reported that frozen dispensed beverages averaged a **64.60% margin** in 2024, making them one of the strongest high-margin beverage categories.

[\[nacs magazine.com\]](https://nacs magazine.com) [\[nacs magazine.com\]](https://nacs magazine.com)

Consumer demand is also evolving. C-Store Dive reported that shoppers are treating customizable sodas, indulgent lattes, refreshers, cold brew, and other premium beverages as "affordable luxuries." Beverage trends such as dirty sodas, fruit-forward refreshers, cold foam, frozen drinks, and drink mashups all point to a more experience-driven beverage station. [\[cstoredive.com\]](https://cstoredive.com)

For operators, this means the beverage bar should function as an **experience zone**, not just a fountain area. The right **beverage station layout** should support cold dispensed drinks, frozen uncarbonated beverages, flavor add-ins, and premium iced beverages without creating operational clutter.

Ask whether your current beverage station reflects how younger shoppers actually buy drinks today, and whether your equipment platform gives you room to grow.