

USAToday.com Feature Delivers Big for Online Grocer, Peapod

Peapod.com and 360PR

Category 5 (Earned Media): Digital & Print Media

Peapod®

Industry Originator Challenged by Start-Ups

Peapod.com, the country's leading online grocer, enjoyed a relatively uncompetitive marketplace for its first 25 years; however, the past 18 months have been game-changing.

- With new players like Instacart jumping in, and online giant Amazon flexing muscle with its AmazonFresh service, the online grocery space suddenly went from sleepy to sexy.
- All these services weren't just vying for a piece of the consumer's grocery dollar, these new media darlings were eating our coverage lunch with news of huge investor rounds or simply by extending service to a new market.
- It became more important than ever for Peapod to convey the value and breadth of its service and encourage new members to visit the site.



Refocusing to Win

We recommended a focus on a Peapod service newer players weren't able to tout - Delivery to Business – to change the news-making game.


- Like competitors, Peapod delivers to homes, but a growing percentage of Peapod's business comes from business delivery. Not only are these deliveries higher value (business deliveries tend to be twice as large in dollar/basket size), they are also much more frequent (usually weekly).
- One additional challenge to the PR team was securing business coverage for the brand without sales figures or hard data to offer.
- We looked to third party research to create the headlines we wanted.



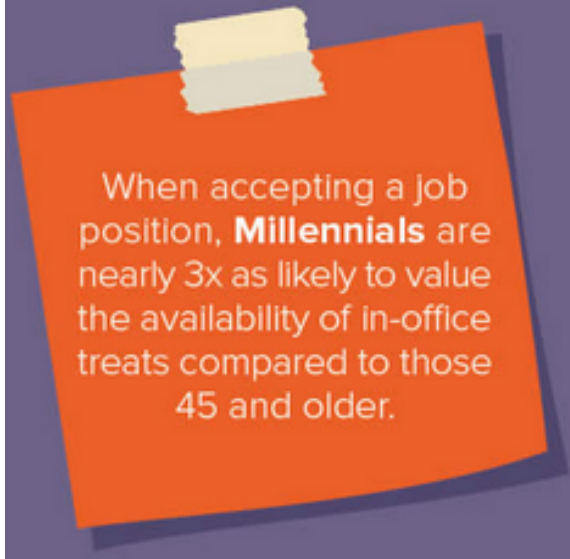
And The Survey Says...

We conducted research to add weight to our story. The hypothesis: does the presence of free snacks in the office make workers happier?

- With plenty of news made about Silicon Valley soft perks like on-site hairdressers, dog-walkers and basketball courts, could something as simple as free food be the key to workplace satisfaction?
- If so, it would be a eureka moment for Peapod and an opportunity to tell how Peapod is a great resource for bringing snacks into the office.
- We polled 1,000 office workers nationally to find out. We also made sure to dive deep into millennial opinions knowing that media has a tireless fascination with them, the largest generation in the US labor force.
- The results of our poll clearly showed the power of snacks, especially among a millennial audience. Our headline was born: “Free office snacks are the key to workplace happiness.”



66% of those who say their office is always nicely stocked with free food or beverages report being extremely or very happy with their current job.



When accepting a job position, **Millennials** are nearly 3x as likely to value the availability of in-office treats compared to those 45 and older.

Mapping Story to Target

USA Today emerged as the ideal target, owing to its “light” business stories, a focus on Millennials and the potential for syndication through owner Gannett.

- In our research, we determined that USA Today had covered the topic of millennials at least 500 times since 2013, showing no fatigue around the topic. We noted that many articles had been devoted to their work ethic and attitudes around business conduct.
- We set our sights on business reporter Hadley Malcolm as our research showed that she followed finance issues key to millennials (e.g. her piece “5 financial musts for every college grad”), and kept an eye on the grocery industry covering Whole Foods extensively.
- We offered her the exclusive first look at the data to seal the deal.

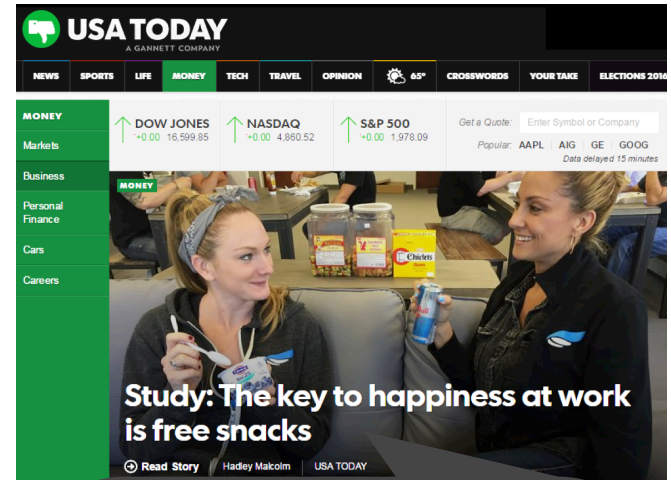


Owning the Story

On September 16, our exclusive – “Study: The Key to Happiness at Work is Free Snacks” – ran on the home page of USAToday.com’s Money section (UVM: 16.7 million).

- Crafted around the results of our survey, the story led with Peapod and sourced the brand as an expert resource for companies looking to make their employees happier with the simple gesture of free office snacks.
- Malcolm honed in on millennials, calling out the stat we pitched to get her initial attention: “Snacks may even lure employees to new companies: 48% of respondents said that if they were looking for a new job, they would weigh company perks, including availability of snacks, in their decision.”
- Peapod was also able to share its breadth of offerings, touting that “the top 10 items Peapod sells to businesses are all fresh fruit: bananas, strawberries and apples.”

Click [here](#) for the full story



"What we have going in our favor is Millennials, because they are so interested, I think, in food in general and also in good food, healthy food," says Peg Merzbacher, Peapod's vice president of regional marketing. Peapod's corporate business has been growing faster than its residential business for the past several years, Merzbacher says, adding that the "sweet spot" for the service is companies with 10 to 100 employees.

Going Wide

The first exclusive strategy to work with USA Today, a Gannet publication, paid dividends. The story was picked up by more 92 publications; another 19 outlets took inspiration from the article and wrote their own commentaries.



Here's Why You Should (Maybe) Give Your Employees Free Snacks

A well-fed employee is a happy employee.

Here's a no-brainer statistic that's still sort of fun: full-time employees are more than 10% more likely to dig their jobs when their workplaces provide access to free food.

That's according to a new survey of more than 1,000 full-time office workers conducted by grocery-delivery service Peapod (which, of course, would probably like your company to order some groceries.) **USA Today reports:** While only 56% of employees in workplaces without access to free food



Stephen Branson/Getty Images
A cart full of snacks sits near a mikeshinken in a Google Nixland building October 28, 2009 in Nixland, Washington.



Study: The key to happiness at work is free snacks

"It helps employees be more excited about coming to work," says Monaghan, whose company, in addition to the retailer machine, also gets weekly deliveries of organic fruit and has soda, chips, cookies and a popcorn machine on hand. "For lots of Millennials coming into the workplace today, it's the norm, so you kind of have to meet those expectations."

In recent years, some offices have turned into edible playgrounds, with a never-ending supply of pressed juics, granola, Greek yogurt, chips, cereal, cookies and even beer. And with a growing number of young start-ups and high-energy tech companies that have reimagined the workplace as communitarian with a shared purpose, rather than offices where a group of people all happen to be from 9-5, free food has become an integral part of the workday.



© iStockphoto.com/John Goffey

NEXTSHARK

Companies Who Give This Free Perk Have the Happiest Employees



THE HAPPIEST U.S. OFFICE WORKERS GET FREE SNACKS

- 86% of those who get free office snacks are happy with their work.
- 4 in 10 employees are in agreement that free snacks at work makes them more productive.
- Top 4 favorite office snacks: Cereal (89%), Coffee (88%), Chips (87%), and Soda (87%).
- 83% of employees who get free snacks at work are happy with their work.
- 56% of employees who get free snacks at work are happy with their work.
- 42% agree: Our office has a better atmosphere when we have free snacks.
- 32% of employees who get free snacks at work are happy with their work.
- 58% of employees who get free snacks at work are happy with their work.

Peapod.com



Key To Happier People: Free Snacks

Happiness at work is free food and drinks, which also turns out to be good business. According to a new survey by grocery-delivery service Peapod, companies that provide free food have happier employees compared with those who don't. While the majority, 56%, of full-time employees are "extremely" or "very" happy with their current job, that number jumps to 67% among those who have access to free food. Only 16% of employees said they get free snacks and treats at work.




The key to happiness in the workplace: FREE snacks

By Joe Kelley

You're surely shaking your head up and down even as you read this - a new study finds that providing free snacks and drinks in the workplace makes employees considerably happier than those who must feed themselves.

According to a new survey by grocery-delivery service Peapod, companies that provide free food have happier employees compared with those who don't get to chow down on their



The sad selection of 20-year-old candy in News 9.5 breakroom

Related

More Love from USA Today

- The article was so popular that USA Today also included it in its daily Short List, a compilation of briefs around the outlet's most important and top-performing articles. This was also syndicated to Gannett outlets (90+ additional pickups) and emailed to newsletter subscribers.
- We were also able to leverage the story and our research for not just one, but two, additional pieces of coverage in USA Today via its Snapshots feature. Featured in print and online, combined these tallied for more than 16MM online impressions.

USA SNAPSHOTS®

The office trough



48% of those working in offices with free snacks or beverages indulge in such treats


1-4 times a week

Source Peapod.com survey Aug. 11-17 of 1,009 full-time office workers

TERRY BYRNE AND PAUL TRAP, USA TODAY

USA SNAPSHOTS®

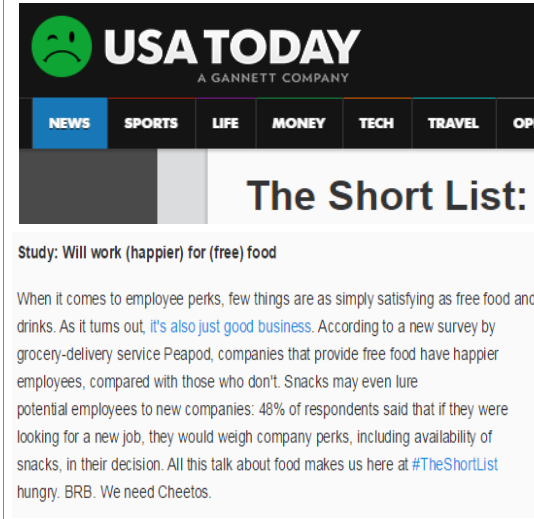
The office trough



32% of workers agree that they have to hide food in the office fridge so co-workers don't steal it.

Source Peapod.com survey Aug. 11-17 of 1,009 full-time office workers

TERRY BYRNE AND PAUL TRAP, USA TODAY



USA TODAY
A GANNETT COMPANY

NEWS SPORTS LIFE MONEY TECH TRAVEL OP

The Short List:

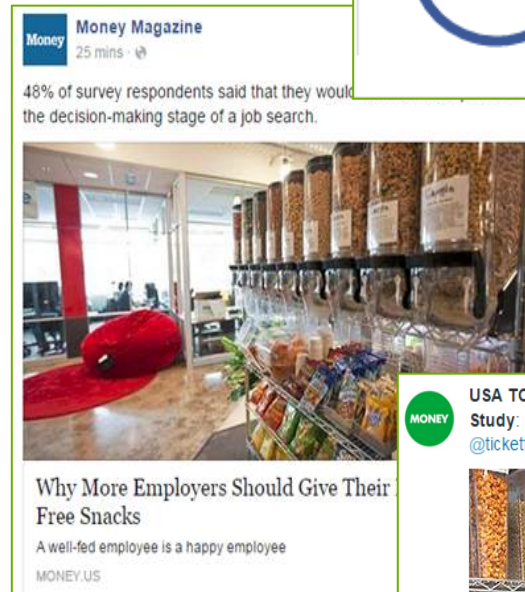
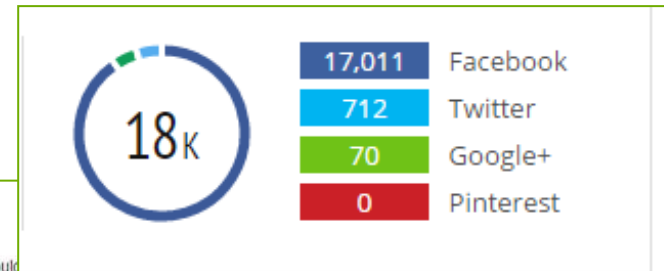
Study: Will work (happier) for (free) food

When it comes to employee perks, few things are as simply satisfying as free food and drinks. As it turns out, *it's also just good business*. According to a new survey by grocery-delivery service Peapod, companies that provide free food have happier employees, compared with those who don't. Snacks may even lure potential employees to new companies: 48% of respondents said that if they were looking for a new job, they would weigh company perks, including availability of snacks, in their decision. All this talk about food makes us here at [#TheShortList](#) hungry. BRB. We need Cheetos.

Leveraging Social Media

The original USA Today article was shared on social media more than 18,000 times. For example:

- USA Today Money & Tech shared the article on Facebook to 3K fans.
- Business Reporter Hadley Malcolm (@Hadleypdx) Tweeted the article to her 3.7K followers.
- @USATodayMoney retweeted to 409K followers.
- Money.com tweeted to 273K Twitter followers and shared with 484K Facebook fans.



Broadcast Buzz

We turned right around and shared the USA Today article and top stats with the NBC Newspath, a syndicate service for the entire family of NBC local stations. This, plus even more organic interest in the USA Today piece, yielded more than 192 TV and radio segments, including key Peapod markets like New York, Boston, and Chicago.



By the Numbers

The USA Today story drove tangible results, most significantly Peapod's best three weeks of Delivery to Business sales in 12 months.

"We'd been trying to figure out how to market our delivery to business service and consistently coming up empty. This strategy hit the nail on the head. Not only did the USA Today piece increase new sign-ups and our best few weeks of orders for the year, but we're also able to leverage it for additional marketing."

– Peg Merzbacher, VP of Regional Marketing, Peapod

1 USA Today article



265,104,626
media impressions

18,000
social shares

Peapod's online Share of Voice increased by 5 percentage points or 250% compared to the rest of the year*.



More Sales: With no other marketing efforts in place, Peapod's delivery to business soared in the weeks following the USA Today piece. Peapod reported best B2B sales of the year in all markets. For example, in the Stamford CT market, sales rose by 1000%.

