



RISE

ADDING MORE TO YOUR BENCH AND YOUR BUSINESS.

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Welcome to RISE, the newsletter from the Pillsbury Bakery Institute™ (PBI) that's dedicated to helping retail bakers like you strengthen your bench and your business.

For over 140 years, General Mills has been in the bakery business. Several of our Territory Managers started as bakers, therefore we understand many of the challenges you face. We would like to share with you what we've learned over the years including profit-generating ideas, technical assistance, and helpful product information. Every issue will feature marketing ideas from the Pillsbury Bakery Institute and topics for your bakery to stay competitive. Contributing Editors Bill Weekley, CMB and Tim Huff, both of General Mills, will draw on their decades of experience to answer technical baking questions and update you on innovations for your operation. Subsequent newsletters will include Operator Profiles to spotlight bakery success stories or Territory Manager Profiles so you can get to know us better. We'd also like to hear from you—what topics interest you? How can we make this resource more valuable?

We hope you enjoy RISE, and we look forward to hearing your suggestions.

Please contact us at RISE@genmills.com with your ideas.



**BAKERY
INSTITUTE**

General Mills Bakeries & Foodservice

For more information, visit us online at pillsburybakery.com or call your General Mills Territory Manager.

A snapshot of the Pillsbury Bakery Institute seminar that took place in Chicago.

Count on the Pillsbury Bakery Institute™ to help your business grow.



As an independent retail bakery, your shop is one-of-a-kind. Though you've worked hard to make it successful, wouldn't it be great to exchange ideas (or concerns) with seasoned industry professionals? Now you can. Introducing the **Pillsbury Bakery Institute (PBI)**, a comprehensive resource for bakery professionals.

As you know, bakery operators face significant business challenges like competition from coffee shops, supermarkets and convenience stores. Look to us for marketing tips that capitalize on the latest trends. Need help with product merchandising? We have ideas to keep your cash register ringing.

If you have technical production challenges, our experts can visit your operation to assist with formulation and production issues. Or you can attend a regional workshop to get marketing ideas that will help you take your business to the next level. Our knowledgeable sales representatives have a wealth of experience and are eager to help you succeed. Visit our website at www.pillsburybakery.com for more information. You'll also find troubleshooting tips, tricks and research-based new product ideas.

Take advantage of PBI's support for your bakery business. Count on us to add value and help build your bottom line.



Marketing Your Bakery

What's the best way to compete against concept bakeries, coffeehouses and convenience stores? Focus on what makes your bakery unique. At the Pillsbury Bakery Institute (PBI), we often emphasize that being successful is not only about what you choose to do, but also about what you choose not to do. We recommend that you work your strengths instead of trying to be all things to all people.

For example, if cakes are your signature item, develop a marketing campaign around them. What makes them special? Is it your ability to customize? Your signature butter cream? Your heritage and history? Your decorator's skill? In your marketing, emphasize what makes your bakery special. Be *the* destination for what you do best.

If you're not sure what you want your bakery's focus to be, consider the 5 Cs of Marketing taught by business schools:

- 1 COMPANY** – What does your bakery do well? Can you focus on that and make it better?
- 2 CUSTOMERS** – What needs do your customers have and how can you better meet them? Are you focusing on serving your most valuable customers?
- 3 COMPETITORS** – What can you learn from your competitors' strengths and weaknesses? Where can you be competitive? What product or service is most likely to win you additional business?
- 4 COLLABORATORS** – Can you partner with schools, local businesses, organizations, or other retailers to increase the visibility of your bakery and add value for customers?
- 5 CONTEXT** – What trends can you capitalize on? Look beyond the food industry for ideas. What do gift shops and florists (i.e. other special occasion retailers) do to attract and keep customers? Can you adapt their ideas for your business?

Cake Deep Dive: *Solving Inconsistent Cake Production*

by Bill Weekley CMB and Tim Huff, Pillsbury Bakery Institute™ Advisors

Are your cakes turning out as well as you'd like? There are many complex variables that affect production, but often something simple accounts for less than optimum results. Review these basics to see if mixing time or batter temperature could be the culprit.

MIXING TIME

If a cake is flat or tall and airy but collapses, improper mixing may be the reason. The goal of mixing is to hydrate the ingredients and aerate the batter. Initially, batter will be a stiff paste, but eventually it acquires a velvety, free-flowing consistency. Over-mixing over-aerates, which weakens the structure and leads to collapse. Under-mixing results in too little aeration, and consequently, the cake has lower volume and tighter crumb.

BATTER TEMPERATURE

Changes in batter temperature will significantly affect the batter's aeration potential and leavening action. Warm batters activate the leavening too early in the production process. Consequently, the cakes will have insufficient volume and a coarse grain. These cakes also tend to be fragile and crumble easily. Conversely, cool batters delay leavening action and the cake will have peaked and broken tops with a tough crumb. To avoid these problems, follow the batter temperature guidelines included with the bag directions and make allowances for your bakery's conditions.

SPECIFIC GRAVITY

The specific gravity of a batter is the ratio of the weight of a cake batter in a standard volume container compared to the weight of water in the same container.

In other words, the specific gravity ratio is used to measure the amount of air incorporated into the batter during mixing. Correct batter temperatures and mixing times will ensure the batter's specific gravity falls within the range outlined in the cake mix bag instructions. Low specific gravity signifies an over-aerated batter that's likely to collapse in the oven. High specific gravity indicates an under-aerated batter, which will result in a dense cake with poor volume.

SPECIFIC GRAVITY

$$\frac{\text{Weight of volume of cake batter}}{\text{Weight of an equal volume of water}}$$



Cash in on cupcakes!

Small Cakes = Big Profit

Cupcakes are irresistible – small, self-indulgent and perfect for a personal on-the-go treat or as individual servings for a large gathering. Perhaps that's why cupcakes, which were once a kids-only treat, have become one of the trendiest bakery items today. Like gourmet coffee, customers are willing to spend \$2.50 - \$5.00 apiece for eloquently decorated, gourmet cupcakes.

Consider your bakery's target market and then decide what to offer. Traditional customers appreciate favorite flavors like Devil's Food, Yellow and White. More upscale customers can be lured with decadent items like dark chocolate orange cupcakes, margarita cupcakes with key lime icing, or crème-filled mini lemon tortes (upside down cupcakes) garnished with raspberries. Even wedding cakes can be done as cupcakes, beautifully displayed on a tiered rack, and then packaged as a take-home treat for guests.

To maximize your cupcakes' impact on sales, consider these marketing ideas:

- Create an eye-catching display near the front of the store.
- Develop creative packaging to further enhance the impression that your cupcakes are special.
- Consider offering samples of your signature flavors.
- Create a coffee and cupcake special to draw on the power of two high-profit items.
- Distribute flyers to local businesses to get them thinking about buying cupcakes for office meetings or celebrations.

The possibilities *and profit-potential* are endless!



PILLSBURY BAKERY INSTITUTE™ ADVISORS



Bill Weekley, CMB and Corporate Baker at General Mills, is a 40-year veteran of the baking industry. As a Corporate Baker, Bill is instrumental in new product innovation and provides guidance on product handling and performance.



Tim Huff, National Technical Services Manager and 22-year veteran of General Mills, helps define the performance characteristics for wheat and flour. He also designs and implements training programs for operators, distributors and field sales personnel. He is a frequent contributor to publications such as *Baking Buyer* and *Breadlines*.

For more information, visit us online at pillsburybakery.com or call your General Mills Territory Manager.


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