



Ice cream shop insights

Looking to start your own ice cream parlour?

We will be happy to supply you ice cream and share our vast knowledge to help you get started.

As a taster here are some brief insights into the tricks of the trade we have learnt from our nine years of experience.

Keep the ice cream display looking fresh.

This is especially important in the slower months. If you do not control how your staff scoop the ice cream, when you are $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through your tray of ice cream it will look unappealing, and virtually empty, even though there will be 10 scoops left.



Buy lots of window cleaner.

No matter what you do, once kids see the ice cream display, nothing you can do will stop them from wiping their hands (or worse tongue) across the glass. It seems to be some sort of natural instinct to kids. So be prepared to clean the glass tens of times a day.

The toilet is really important.

When we opened our shop, the toilet was an afterthought. I assumed hardly anyone would use it.

In fact I reckon at least 50% of our customers use the toilet when they visit.

Signage. Blind customers.

Menus have to be unbelievably clear. Don't assume anything.

If you don't say you have cones or tubs, expect to be asked 100 times a day.

Menus also have to be in the direct line of sight. They can be as big and bold as you like, but if they are not where the customer would expect them to be, they are invisible.

The first sunny day of spring

Be ready for it!

10 oc in March will be an amazing day, people looking to enjoy the first sun of spring, but 10 oc in October, and people see this as the sign to start hunkering down for winter.



The first rainy day after a heat wave

On the opposite end of things, the first rainy day after a heat wave will be terrible! As (hopefully) everyone will have had their fill of ice cream.

Speed

At the peak times, we have found customers arrive at a rate of about 1 every 20 seconds. Whilst you want staff to build up a good rapport and create regulars, it is important to serve the customers as fast as possible.



Physically scooping the ice cream isn't the slow part here. The slow part is at the customer end. So make sure

- ★ All your flavours are clearly labelled, and it is obvious what is in each ice cream allergy wise
- ★ Even better let the customer know what flavours you have so they can make their decision in queue, before they arrive at the counter
- ★ Let them know the size options, cone / tub. (you will be surprised how many customers will ask if you do cones, the second they see the person in

front of them order a tub)

There is nothing worse than to see a massive queue of people form in the time it takes for one person to slowly decide what they actually want.

The daily selling window. Between lunch and dinner. Ice cream hour.

Peak ice cream selling time is between lunch and dinner. 2-5

If the weather is good you can sell ice cream in the morning, but few folks will buy ice cream a couple of minutes before eating their "proper" meal.

So you will always get a lull over lunch and dinner time (useful for staff breaks)

But be ready for the afternoon rush.

Know your audience.

We wholesale ice cream so have a wide variety of customers. Some flavours are big hits for one customer. Another can't shift them. For example Rum & Raisin and coffee only tends to sell to customers over 70! If you don't have this type of customer, these flavours will just sit there. If you do have older customers, make sure you stock these, or they will moan like anything.



Events. Visitor numbers are not the most important thing.

If you are attending events the organisers will like to tell you how many people they reckon will be attending. Whilst this is nice, this isn't the most important factor. The type of customer is.....

For example: At a school fete with 500 visitors, we will sell close to 500 ice cream.

Any event with a lot of alcohol (Rugby Pub 7s, Beer festivals) with 5000 visitors we would be lucky to sell 100 ice creams.

Car parking.

Another thing I didn't think too much about when we opened our shop, as there is a public car park 3 minutes walk away. But this seems too far for a lot of people.



Sorbet sales.

Whilst ice cream sales are seasonal, sorbet sales are even more so. In the winter a lovely raspberry sorbet can be a slow mover. But the moment it gets really hot, our sorbet sales start to rival our ice cream sales.

At Dylan's Ice Cream we make all our ice cream from scratch at our factory in Fernhurst and supply a number of ice cream parlours across the south.

We can help you open your own ice cream parlour.

Call us on 01428 645219

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