



**OLDER BOOMERS BORN 1946 TO 1955**

Estimated annual spending power **\$1 trillion**

Total number of households **21.9 million**

Average number of people in household **2.7**

Average number of children under 18 in household **0.6**

Annual average household income **\$58,889**

Annual average spending per household **\$46,160**

Source: MetLife Mature Market Institute



**YOUNGER BOOMERS BORN 1956 TO 1964**

Estimated annual spending power **\$1.1 trillion**

Total number of households **23.9 million**

Average number of people in household **3.3**

Average number of children under 18 in household **1.3**

Annual average household income **\$56,500**

Annual average spending per household **\$45,149**

Source: MetLife Mature Market Institute

# never too old to rock 'n' roll

Baby boomers still wield enormous influence on foodservice's future.

By **Scott Hume**, Editor-in-Chief

**B**aby boomers' love of the spotlight is legendary and often is annoying to anyone who was not born between 1946 and 1964. But in a mass-marketing economy, attention inexorably flows to the biggest masses. In demographic terms, that would be boomers. It's math, not hubris.

That's why Kathleen Casey-Kirschling, a retired schoolteacher in Cherry Hill, N.J., made national news in October 2007 just by signing up for Social Security benefits. Born just after the stroke of midnight on Jan. 1, 1946, Casey-Kirschling is credited with being the first boomer, and she will be eligible for her first early-retirement Social Security check next month. Her 80 million fellow boomers are lined up behind her.

If boomers are used to attention, it's because they can't help making news.



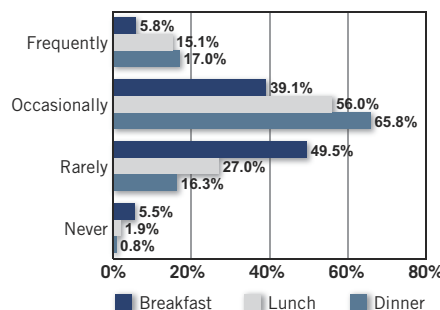
They're the proverbial 800-pound gorilla in the room: difficult to ignore and having a tendency to knock over the socio-economic furniture whenever they move. The rock 'n' roll generation already has changed foodservice. Its numbers and mobility helped quick-service restaurants take hold. And boomers remain loyal QSR users.

The generation's two-income households also bankrolled casual dining's growth. R&I's New American Diner Study finds that 14.9% of boomers say they visit a casual-dining restaurant at least once a week. Only 11.6% of Generation Y (ages 26 or younger) say they patronize casual-dining venues that often.

Now in their prime income-generating years, boomers also are the age group most likely to patronize a fine-dining restaurant in any given week, according to New American Diner data. And when gasoline prices rise and younger and older age groups cut back on restaurant spending or trade down to lower-price options, boomers are more inclined to stay closer to home but still dine out as planned.

## Frequent Diners

Most baby boomers say they frequently or occasionally eat lunch or dinner at a restaurant. Although away-from-home breakfast occasions lag behind those of other dayparts, baby boomers are above average in visiting restaurants for breakfast.



Source: R&I New American Diner Study.

