here are times when a cup of joe, or a jug of milk just doesn’t fit the bill. Customers looking for similar items to these, but in a quick consumable format, are turning to grab and go dairy, and cold coffee beverages. Single serve dairy can be touted as a healthy alternative to pop and juice, while cold coffee RTDs are a sophisticated on-the-go option.

For many years flavoured milk was classified as a kid’s product. But, the introduction of single-serve packaging and sophisticated flavours, such as mocha or coffee, coupled with the fact that adults are looking for ways to increase their calcium intake, has altered that perception.

Saputo’s Milk 2 Go, in 500 ml and 350 ml bottles, stand out amongst the protein shakes and RTD coffee beverages with their bold packaging. Visual appeal aside, the products also offer a tantalizing alternative to regular white milk. With a variety of flavours, such as chocolate, banana, strawberry, vanilla, coffee and the newest, orange, customers can pick not only delicious option, but a healthy one as well.

Dairy and coffee based beverages become popular as customers look for healthy, and trendy, alternatives to pop.

Neillson Dairy’s MooJo™, 325 ml plastic bottles of the company’s enriched chocolate milk, is targeted both at kids, and their parents, who are looking for healthy options on the run or to pop into a lunch kit. Neillson MooJo™ is available in both single serve bottles and in a convenient four pack that does not require refrigeration until opened.

Yet, if consumers are wanting to combine luxury with health, Neillson Dairy’s Indulgence On The Go milkshakes are a quick treat. Featuring the great taste of Cadbury’s best selling chocolate bars, Caramilk® and Crispy Crunch®, as well as Neillson Dairy’s own French Vanilla, all shakes are available in a 325 ml portable plastic bottle with convenient re-sealable screw cup.

Nestle Canada is also capitalizing on their popular chocolate bar brands, Rolo and Coffee Crisp, as an indulgent milkshake.
Keeping the product at eye level for quick identification is a good merchandising strategy within the cooler, but Whissell suggests a secondary placement with a c-store’s lunch offerings.

“A lot more c-stores are adding items such as fresh sandwiches, and healthy products for lunches, so along with water bottles placing on the go milk products in this secondary display will increase a c-store’s lunch time ring through,” she says.

What’s the Buzz?

Customers looking for an easy jolt after lunch may opt to grab a cup of Joe, but the trendy thing to do is pop the lid of cold, RTD coffee beverages. According to the Coca-Cola Company, who earlier this year paired up with Illycafe to launch three premium ready-to-drink coffee products in several European countries, the highly profitable RTD coffee category globally is valued at just under $16 billion and has experienced several years of growth that is expected to continue. Globally (excluding Japan), the ready-to-drink coffee category has grown at an average rate of 10.1 per cent over the past five years.

A key player in North American c-stores is Starbucks, who through a joint venture with Pepsi-Cola Co., offers glass-bottled Frappuccino® beverages in Mocha, Vanilla, Caramel and Dark Chocolate Mocha flavours. The company has also released a short, slender 6.5 oz can of Starbucks DoubleShot®, a convenient, bold, authentic Starbucks coffee experience with a touch of cream.

“Opportunities for Starbucks to introduce innovative and exciting ready-to-drink products to our customers allow us to extend the Starbucks Experience to them any place and anytime they choose,” says Gerry Lopez, president, Starbucks Global Consumer Products, in a recent press release. “Expanding Starbucks ready-to-drink offerings internationally helps to strengthen the Starbucks brand and reinforces our reputation and commitment to innovation, as well as coffee quality and expertise.”

According to the North American Coffee Partnership, ready-to-drink coffees are being marketed to people age 18 to the mid-40s. Industry executives say the sweet drinks have fans among teenagers, while the tart, bold espresso beverages are a hit with a more mature crowd.

Opting to merchandise coffee RTDs by functionality helps customers quickly select a product that matches their needs and taste. For example, Starbucks’ Frappuccino® beverages with more of a dairy base, and sweet flavour, are being placed with the RTD dairy beverages, while Starbucks DoubleShot® is being placed with other energy drinks because of its vigor.

Capitalizing on the natural buzz of coffee, energy drink brands, such as Coca-Cola’s Rockstar and Pepsi-Cola’s Monster, are adding coffee flavoured and coffee based skus to their line-up. Rockstar Roasted is a mix of the finest espresso coffee, fresh milk and cream enhanced with the potent herbal blend of guarana, ginkgo, ginseng and milk thistle, and comes in Latte, Mocha and Light Vanilla flavours. Monster, on the other hand, offers up bolder blends with the Java Monster line-up, including nonalcoholic versions of Irish and Russian coffee, and a low-cal, low-carb option.