

DSR SMART

Reach Teach Engage Incent

Easiest way to build product loyalty among DSRs is to train them consistently. Plus, you gather valuable research and metrics with each lesson you send to AFDR members.

[Learn more under FAQs](#)

PRICING PER LESSON

Includes all setup, incentives and reports. Based on yearly agreement and client-furnished videos.

1-3	\$7,875/lesson
4-7	\$7,125/lesson
8-11	\$6,375/lesson
12+	\$5,375/lesson

1 QUESTION SURVEY

The foodservice industry's only weekly opinion poll of DSRs, consolidated into quarterly reports. Each issue provides comments about important sales and trend topics directly from DSRs – and analysis from veteran AFDR staff.

[Download free sample copy](#)



\$5,000/year (4 quarterly editions)

** Receive the 1 Question Survey Report for \$3,000/year when participating in any other AFDR program.

DSR FOCUS GROUP

One-hour moderated recorded teleconference with 5-7 Hall of Fame DSRs. Receive firsthand feedback on how to launch a new product, re-introduce an existing product, how you stack up against the competition and other valuable insights. Includes all incentive costs, unedited recording, transcript and summary of comments. [See Project Scope](#)

PRICING PER FOCUS GROUP

Includes all incentive costs, unedited recording, transcript and summary of comments. Based on yearly agreement.

1-3	\$5,000/focus group
4-7	\$4,000/focus group
8-11	\$3,500/focus group
12+	\$3,000/focus group

DSR LIVE!

The foodservice industry's longest-running weekly podcast provides exclusive content to help DSRs improve their sales effectiveness. The podcast is enhanced with a weekly email newsletter that honors AFDR Hall of Fame DSRs, links to product training, searchable product library and more!

[Podcast Archive](#)

OPPORTUNITIES

Sponsorships are based on yearly agreement.

Hall of Fame annual sponsorship	\$30,000
1 Question Survey sponsorship	\$12,000
Monthly DSR Live sponsorship	\$12,000
Monthly content marketing feature	\$25,000

Specifications

ADDITIONAL SPONSOR BENEFITS

- Recognition of AFDR website (priceless!)
- Branded video training section on AFDR website for DSR *Smart* sponsors (\$5,000 value)
- Discount on Quarterly summary of 1 Question Survey results and analysis (\$2,000 value)

CALL US

Other custom programs are available, including onsite DSR Day symposiums, surveys and consulting.



MEDIA SPECIFICATIONS FOR PROMOTIONS

AFDR HALL OF FAME (\$30,000/Year)

Sponsor header branding runs each week right above DSR of the Month honoree in the weekly email blast (example below). Branding is highlighted on website's DSR Hall of Fame section.



DSR of the Month



1 QUESTION SURVEY SPONSORSHIP (\$12,000/Year)

Sponsor header branding runs once per month right above 1 Question Survey feature that is distributed by the weekly email blast.

1 QUESTION SURVEY



DSR LIVE! SPONSORSHIP (\$12,000/Year)

Sponsor header branding runs once per month right above DSR LIVE! podcast feature that is distributed by the weekly email blast.

DSR LIVE! PODCAST



DSR LIVE MONTHLY CONTENT MARKETING PIECE (\$25,000/Year)

Large 600x365 marketing space runs once per month right below DSR LIVE! podcast.

Headline: Up to 8 words → **New Protein-packed snacks that go beyond expected**

Body copy up to 60 words → With 80% of consumers snacking at least once a day—and many replacing meals with snacks—the need for new options that meet and exceed their expectations has never been greater. Now Hillshire Farm® Snacking Small Plates are available in foodservice, enabling operators to offer more than just a quick bite.

Product detail up to 60 words → **SMALL PLATES**

One image up to 250x250 → 

One call-to-action link to downloadable document, web page, etc. → [DOWNLOAD HILLSHIRE FARM SMALL PLATES FULL-LINE BROCHURE](#)

OPTIONS

- 20181 – Genoa Salame w/Natural White Cheddar Cheese & Toasted Rounds, 2.76 oz DOT 635781
- 20182 – Italian Dry Salame w/natural Gouda Cheese & Toasted Rounds, 2.76 oz DOT 635780
- 06479 – Hot Calabrese Salame w/Natural Gouda Cheese & Toasted Rounds, 2.76 oz DOT 635782
- 06480 – Wine-Infused Salame w/Natural White Cheddar Cheese & Toasted Rounds, 2.76 oz DOT 635783





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is AFDR?

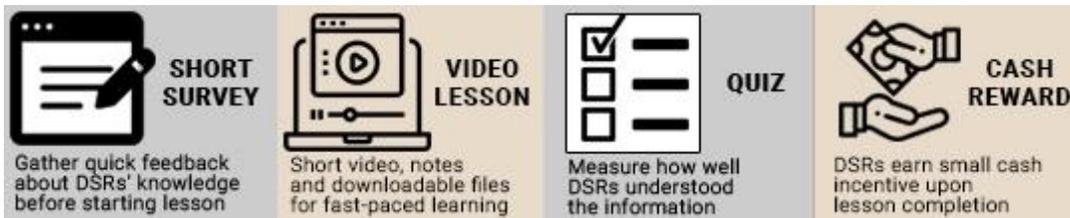
AFDR was founded in 2006 as a non-profit educational association dedicated to helping foodservice distributor sales reps (DSRs) build their professional skills. AFDR has 5,200 members that roughly reflect the demographics of the industry. Membership growth has been primarily through word-of-mouth as DSRs seek insights about their profession.

What are the most popular AFDR programs for manufacturer partners?

- DSR *Smart* online training (see below).
- DSR focus groups: We gather 5-8 “Hall of Fame” DSRs to answer your questions directly through a 60-minute conference call.
- DSR surveys: We distribute an incentivized survey (10 questions or less) to our membership. Goal is to get 200-300 responses.
- DSR *Live!* is a weekly podcast and email blast featuring interviews with top-performing DSRs, product experts and other industry insiders. There are limited opportunities to advertise to expose DSRs to your product message.

How does DSR *Smart* work?

DSR *Smart* is a simple, effective online DSR training system (see the components below). A typical lesson can attract 250-400 DSRs. Each lesson takes about five minutes to complete. We only send one program out at a time (your product is not competing with other training sessions). Beyond DSR training, brands find DSR *Smart*'s short upfront survey insights incredibly valuable. [View demo.](#)



Why do DSRs need an association?

DSRs have a complicated job that ranges from selling products and collecting money to being food product experts and reliable sources of trend and operational knowledge for operators. In many cases, DSRs do not receive a salary and earn 100% of their living through sales commissions. A typical DSR represents 10,000 or more products stocked in their local warehouse. DSRs have little time for training or review peer-to-peer examples on how to improve their skills. As a result, AFDR makes training and content available 24/7 so DSRs can participate at their convenience.

How does AFDR support itself? Does it charge dues?

AFDR membership is voluntary and free to any employed DSR. AFDR relies on partnership programs with foodservice manufacturers that want to forge closer relationships with DSRs.

Why is reaching and connecting with DSRs important to manufacturers?

Industry research by Technomic, NPD and trade publications confirm that DSRs remain the #1 influencer of buying decisions by foodservice operators. The key to building DSRs' awareness about and loyalty for presenting your products is to consistently provide training. The average DSR services 50 customers.

Do you have metrics for your programs, website, etc.?

Our “push” strategy to drive DSR communication centers on our weekly email and podcast. The average open rate is 22%. DSRs rarely have time to surf websites other than their own company's product database. That's why you'll see few opportunities focused on advertising or other marketing devices to draw DSRs to the AFDR website. Our website serves primarily as an archive for past podcasts and other information.

\$17.2 billion

annually

WHO SPEND

249,600

operators

INFLUENCE

5,200

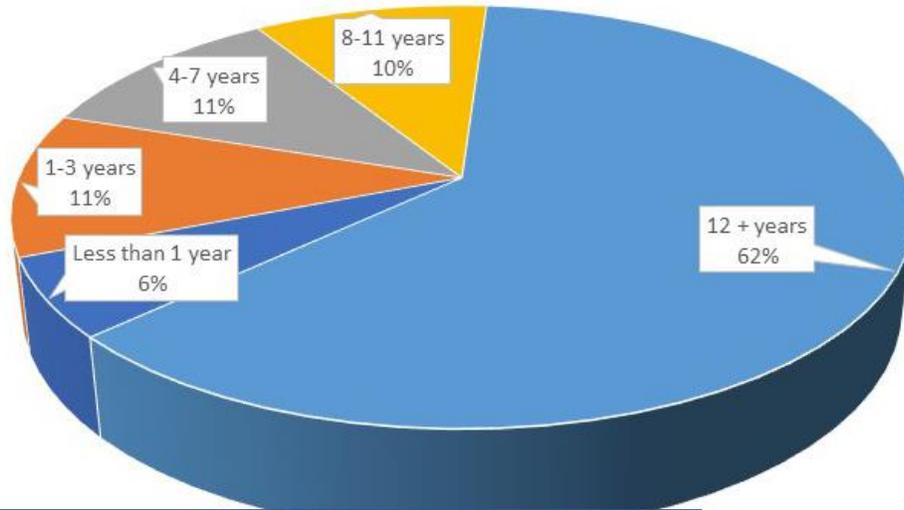
members



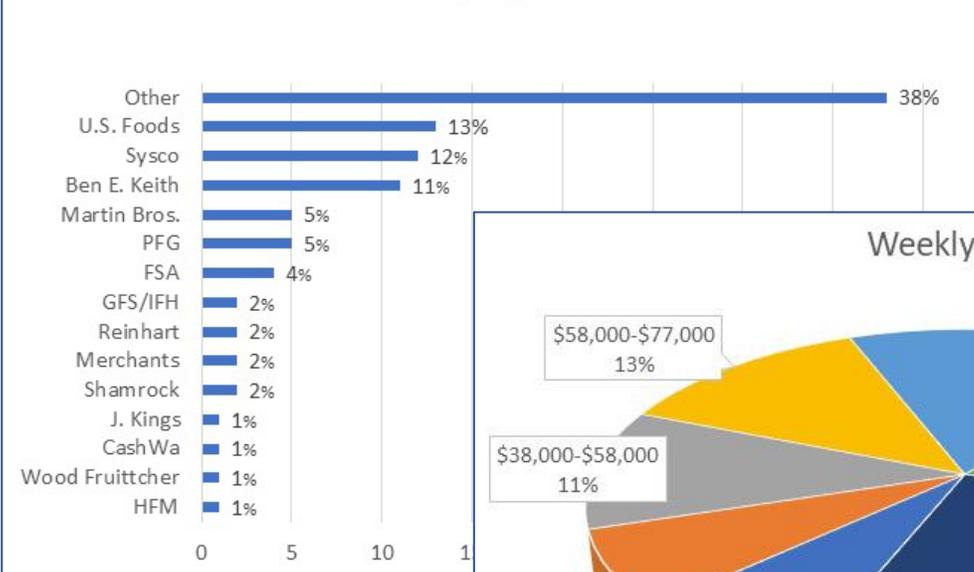
What are the characteristics of the AFDR membership?

The average AFDR member has **48 customers** and generates about **\$3.3 million** in annual sales. AFDR tends to attract more senior DSRs.

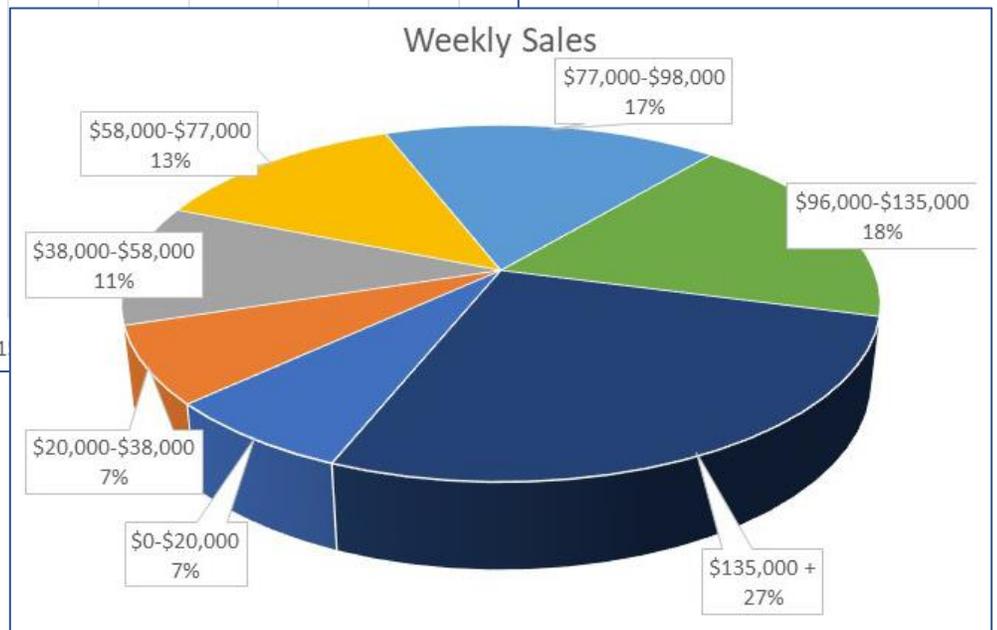
DSR Experience



Membership By Distributor



Weekly Sales





IMPACT DSRs HAVE ON NATIONAL FOODSERVICE BRANDS

The hard truth for national foodservice brands trying to reach independent operators is the simple fact that operators are too busy to consider something new. Especially if things are running smoothly in their restaurant, cafeteria or other foodservice operation.

But the key to breaking through to operators is influencing Distributor Sales Representatives (DSRs) about your product and brand.

As **research from Technomic, NPD and trade pubs** consistently confirm, **operators will most likely learn about your product from their local DSR.** Your chances of success are greatly diminished if DSRs don't champion your products.

National brands also face two other headwinds:

- DSRs are **incited heavily** to sell their distributors' exclusive brands over national brands. So, private labels will continue to gain market share faster than ever.
- Ongoing consolidation among the top five distributors will **supercharge private labels.** Sure, distributors will continue to happily accept program money from national brands. But pushing national brands is not the priority for many distributors. This is not a criticism of distributors, it's simply a business reality in an environment of paper-thin margins.

WHAT TO DO

The good news is brands that focus on building loyalty among DSRs can still win big. In fact, it's easier now to build DSR loyalty because so many national brands have taken their eye off the ball to build DSR relationships. In short, **there's less competition for DSRs' attention.**

Building DSR loyalty is hard work... but it's not complicated. The same things that drive your loyalty with a favorite restaurant, dry cleaner or auto mechanic are key to winning over DSRs:

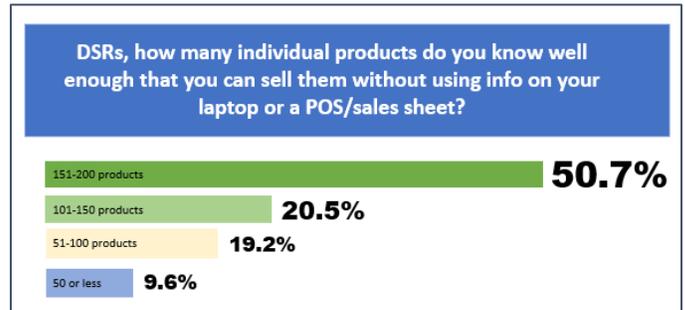
- Your trust in the product or service.
- The brand/person works hard to make you an educated customer.
- Your repeat business is appreciated and not taken for granted.

And while most **DSRs can make more money on private labels,** pleasing their operator customers is job #1. Generally, DSRs are happy to sell a national brand *if the operator believes the product can make a difference.*

HOW TO DO IT

Here's where AFDR's *DSR Smart* online video-based training program comes in (see separate *DSR Smart* 1-pager for details). Each lesson is designed to:

- *Step 1: Build credibility:* DSRs are asked about their experience selling your brand and/or general understanding about the product category in a brief survey before the lesson. DSRs appreciate being asked their opinion.
- *Step 2: Educate:* Short training video quickly walks DSRs through how your product can make a difference in an operator's business.



AFDR 1-Question Survey, 10/24/18

WHAT OTHERS SAY...

As a former DSR, I know firsthand about the constant need to learn about products and solutions to provide great service to my customers. We frequently leverage AFDR for insights and strong DSR connections with programs like DSR Smart to spread the word about our products, promotions and tools to help operators and DSRs win.

Craig Cranfield, Director, National Foodservice Sales

General Mills



AFDR 1-Question Survey, 1/23/2019



IMPACT DSRs HAVE ON NATIONAL FOODSERVICE BRANDS

- *Step 3: Reinforce knowledge:* Each lesson is followed by a short quiz to measure DSRs knowledge retention – and simultaneously reinforce what they just learned.
- *Step 4: Gratitude.* The DSR is sent a small cash incentive as a thank you for investing time to learn about your product. This small gesture goes a long way towards building loyalty for the brand – when the training is consistent, short and meaningful.

REALISTIC RESULTS

The goal is to identify **100-300 truly committed DSRs** who want to become Ambassadors for your brand. Focus on this small group of influencers and you will have a huge impact on your sales (the average DSR services 50 operators).

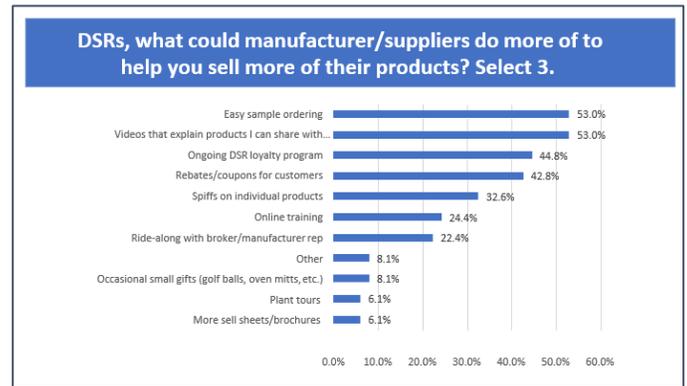
Over time, you can grow the group. But reality is DSRs are no different than any other professions. The “select few” drive the business (about 10-15% of the universe). These are the superstars you want to attract.

Establishing a trusted ongoing relationship with your key Ambassador DSRs will help you gain more measurable insights than anything else. Why? Because DSRs know if they help your brand succeed... they'll succeed. Conducting follow-up surveys or focus groups during and after the training will provide the best data on the impact of your program.

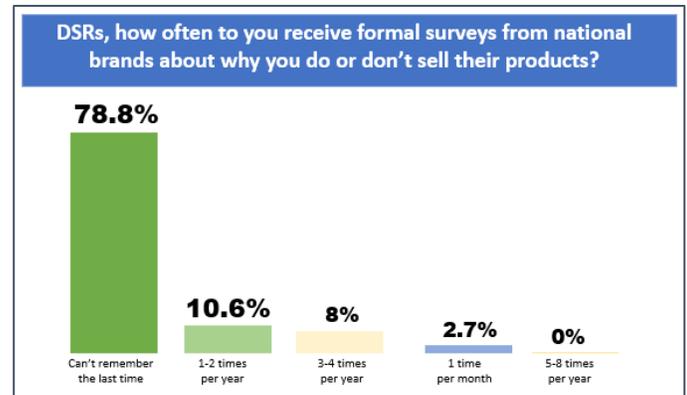
KEYS TO SUCCESS

Here are best practices as you launch a loyalty program:

- *No one-off training.* Like anything in life (marriage, sports, advertising, etc.), you need a long-term commitment to see substantial results. Sponsoring one DSR *Smart* training will do little good. It takes consistent, simple and rewarding programs over the months or years – but will pay large dividends.
- *Show it, don't say it.* Marketing “romance” language is ineffective with DSRs and operators. You must prove your claims to build credibility. Good demonstrations of *why* your product works are essential. Yield examples and competitive comparisons are helpful.
- *Samples.* The bottom line is DSRs sell what they know (don't you?). Operators buy what they know (or based on a trusted advisor). Offering product samples is the fastest way to give prospects and DSRs the experience they need to trust a product.
- *Incentives.* Why should DSRs spend time thinking about your product? Odds are a DSR probably believes there are a dozen of more products of equal value. Provide a genuine token of appreciation (usually a small cash incentive) for spending time learning about your product.
- *Keep it simple.* The most effective training videos are two minutes or less. The formula:
 - Explain what the product is (including the product number prominently displayed!).
 - Provide tangible examples of why it's different.
 - Describe who else uses it successfully.
 - Offer details on how to get sample.



AFDR 1-Question Survey, 6/19/19



AFDR 1-Question Survey, 1/16/19

WHAT OTHERS SAY...

DSRs are the gateway to impact foodservice operators, but it's a real challenge to get their attention. AFDR solves that problem with tools like its podcast and online training so DSRs quickly and effectively learn about products. And the AFDR Hotline and DSR Focus Groups give brands ready access to the industry opinions that matter most: DSRs.

Steve Hamm, Director of Foodservice Marketing
Idahoan Foodservice



PROJECT SCOPE

AFDR facilitates a 60- to 90-minute telephone focus group among 5-7 distributor sales representatives (DSRs). A general question outline is drafted in advance, but the facilitator and/or participants from the sponsoring brand are encouraged to ask follow-up questions based on the DSRs' initial answers. The goal is to make the session interactive to generate genuine, objective feedback (good, bad or indifferent!).

Four weeks before focus group: AFDR and the brand hold teleconference to establish the following.

- Overall brand goals for the discussion.
- Demographics of DSR participants (veterans, greenhorns, specific regional representation, etc.).
- Draft questions to ask DSRs during focus (5-10 general topic area questions).
- Determine if focus group is "blind" (DSRs don't know the brand involved).
- Date and time for focus group call.

Two weeks before focus group: AFDR confirms participation of DSRs.

- DSRs are provided the general discussion topics, but no specific questions. In most cases, we try to capture natural reactions versus prepared thoughts.
- Samples and/or other supporting POS materials required for reaction are shipped to arrive at DSRs' locations a few days before the focus group. Unless noted beforehand, it's assumed the brand will ship materials directly to DSRs. However, AFDR is happy to handle the shipping at cost.

Focus Group Guidelines

- No more than two brand representatives participate in asking questions (along with facilitator).
- Refrain from asking for business or personal contact info unless a DSR volunteers this information.
- Use of a conference phone by brand participants is OK so others can listen in; just be prepared to mute the phone in between questions to avoid background noise as DSRs are answering questions.

Focus Group Follow-Up

- The recording of the focus group will be available within 24 hours.
- Transcripts and a summary of findings will be available within one week.
- A reasonable amount of email follow-up questions can be asked of the DSRs within two weeks after the call.