

CStoreDecisions®

Solutions for Convenience Retailers

Assistant Store Manager Yubisai Ortiz and CEO Andrew Mitchell highlight the team collaboration and shared values fueling Toot'n Totum's success.

TOOT'N TOTUM TURNS 75

With its 100th store under construction and a focus on new builds, foodservice expansion and digital upgrades, the Amarillo-based chain honors its legacy while embracing the future.

PLUS

**Economic Outlook:
The Pathway to
Profits in 2025**
p. 26

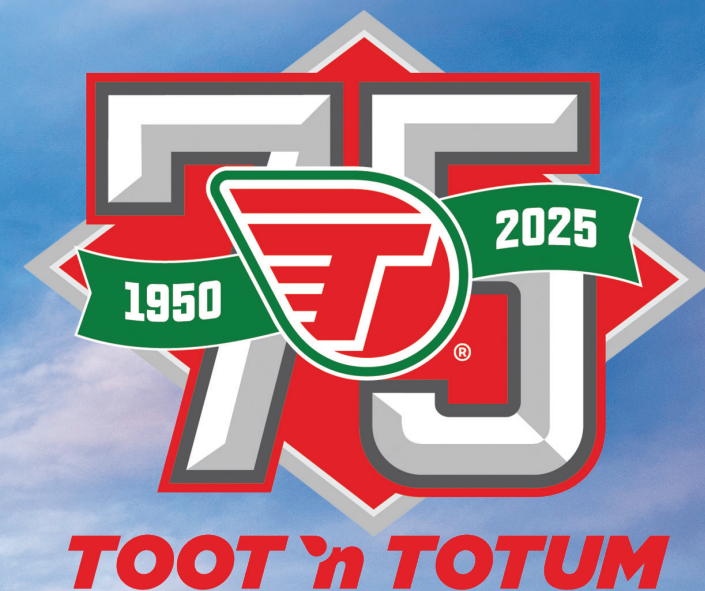
**Choosing Mocktails
and NA Beer**
p. 42

**Fuel: Adapting
to Alternatives**
p. 48

TOOT'N TOTUM TURNS 75

With its 100th store under construction and a focus on new builds, foodservice expansion and digital upgrades, the Amarillo-based chain honors its legacy while embracing the future.

Erin Del Conte • Editor-in-Chief



TOOT'N TOTUM IS CELEBRATING its 75th anniversary with impressive momentum, driving growth through new-to-industry (NTI) builds, particularly in the Lubbock, Texas, area. Headquartered in Amarillo, Texas, the chain continues to strengthen its competitive edge by embracing vertical integration, expanding its foodservice offerings, and unveiling a revamped mobile app alongside an upgraded loyalty program.

It currently operates 99 stores in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and New Mexico,

and its 100th store is currently under construction just down the street from its main headquarters and scheduled to open in August 2025.

Reaching the chain's milestone 75th anniversary and 100th site is "really exciting," said Andrew Mitchell, CEO and president of Toot'n Totum and a third-generation member of the family business that was founded by his grandparents.

"I think what my grandmother would really appreciate the most is the team that we've developed to carry on this

generation of the family business and to continue the pace of our growth strategy," Mitchell said. "Seventy-five years in business is a long time. We're excited about the future as well."

As it builds on three-quarters of a century in business, the company remains deeply committed to the mission and values that have fueled its success throughout its history. Those values include honor and value; being team focused and guest ready; taking ownership; and providing a quick, clean and

convenient experience.

"Our mission is to create experiences worth repeating for each and every guest and vendor partner we encounter on a day-to-day basis," Mitchell said.

BUILDING TOOT'N TOTUM

Toot'n Totum got its start in 1950 when Mitchell's grandparents, Eldon "Lefty" Mitchell and his wife Novie, opened their first c-store on 15th and Washington in Amarillo, Texas. As they grew the chain to six stores over the next five years, they

simultaneously ran the utility company Mitchell Electric and the gift shop business Little Brown House. When Lefty passed away in 1955, Novie took the reins. Her entrepreneurial spirit and unwavering work ethic laid the foundation that shaped Toot'n Totum into the success it is today.

"At that time, she had two children," Mitchell explained. "She had lost her husband and was running all of these businesses. She narrowed her focus down to Toot'n Totum, and that's where she put all of her efforts."

The efforts paid off. By 1988, the chain had grown to 50 c-stores in Amarillo.

In 1996, Novie's son, Greg Mitchell, as president and CEO, and his wife Julie began to steer the chain's expansion across the Texas Panhandle via acquisitions. Through their leadership the company began to prioritize vertical integration, expanded into the lube shop and car wash business, and moved into new operating areas, including Kansas and Oklahoma in 2015 and New Mexico in 2020. Today, Greg serves as chairman.



Novie Mitchell, who founded Toot'n Totum alongside her husband Eldon "Lefty" Mitchell, laid the foundation that shaped Toot'n Totum into the success it is today.

Andrew Mitchell, Greg's son, stepped into the CEO role in 2023. His brother Jeff Mitchell acts as VP of construction.

"Jeff handles the day-to-day operations with our general contractors, and he also runs our family ranch," Mitchell said. "I've also got two incredible sisters that are not in the business on the day-to-day side but are very involved in aspects of the company. There are 14 grandchildren, and we hope someday one or two of them — or who knows, all of them — might want to be involved with the company."

Mitchell shared that leading the company as the third generation in a family business is both an exciting honor and a daunting responsibility, but he also added that the company's success is a true team effort.

"We do everything collectively as a group. The team we've developed ... they're absolutely critical, from our employees, our human resources (department), all the way to our operations, our marketing, our fuel, our category managers — everything about our company is all based around our team," he said.

VERTICALLY INTEGRATED

One key to Toot'n Totum's success has been its focus on vertical integration.

"We've really taken the ability to

vertically integrate as far as we possibly can," Mitchell said.

Around 15 years ago, the convenience store chain began handling its own warehouse distribution. Today, it distributes supplies and retail items to its chain of stores once or twice a week depending on the location.

In the forecourt Toot'n Totum features its own proprietary brand of Toot'n Totum gas, in addition to partnering with Valero and Phillips 66. Six years ago, it began using a transportation affiliate called SUPA Inc., which handles about 90% of the chain's fuel transportation to its sites, including DEF (diesel exhaust fluid) deliveries.

The c-store chain has a centralized kitchen located about three miles from the company headquarters that acts as a commissary where the chain produces its fresh products daily and delivers them warm or cold throughout the day to neighboring locations.

Toot'n Totum also runs 10 Express car washes — 90-120-foot tunnel washes that feature unlimited car wash subscriptions — and nine Car Care Center lube centers, some of which are co-located adjacent to the c-stores.

The company also operates a sign division called Sign Pros, which handles all signage installations on new builds, as

well as maintenance on signs throughout the company; a landscaping business called Lawn Pros, which takes care of all of the grass, tree and landscaping needs at its many locations; and a cleaning business called Cleaning Pros, which keeps the sites squeaky clean with power washes on lots, deep scrubs and parking lot cleanup.

"So basically, everything from curb-to-curb and door-to-door we're trying to do in house with our own teams at our own time, so we can try and not inconvenience the guests as much as possible," Mitchell said. "We have an internal quote ... 'Nobody takes care of Toot'n Totum like Toot'n Totum.'"



(Left) Chairman Greg Mitchell was instrumental in steering Toot'n Totum's expansion across the Texas Panhandle during his time as CEO. His son Andrew Mitchell (right) took the reins as CEO in 2023.

STATE-OF-THE-ART DESIGN

Toot'n Totum has been rapidly expanding in the Lubbock, Texas, area, opening 10 NTI stores there over the past two years, along with an additional NTI location in Lamesa, Texas.

After it opens its 100th store this fall, the chain is set to debut another NTI site in Lubbock.

Its NTI stores feature a Gen-3 look, which includes wooden accents and textures, a red-and-white color scheme, open ceilings with cloud-based lighting and stained concrete floors. The stores offer a clean and inviting atmosphere with colorful graphics and logos above the various sections of the store. The chain is also enhancing lighting in its bathrooms and adding tile to create a more vibrant atmosphere.

"We changed that whole dynamic," Mitchell said.

The store layout shifted as well to provide more space for an expanded grab-and-go food section and a larger checkout area to enhance its drive-through operations.

Drive-through has been a big focus for Toot'n Totum.

"We started off small in the drive-through industry ... and then we really stepped it up in every single store we built," Mitchell said.

At first it just allocated space for a window, but over time it expanded to adding speaker boxes so guests can pre-order before they get to the window as

Toot'n Totum's stores have come a long way since 1950. Below is an image of a vintage Toot'n Totum.



well as seamless payment options.

"We started seeing increased traffic, but we also started to see that convenience wins," Mitchell said.

The drive-through concept ties into Toot'n Totum's values of quick, clean and convenient. Guests can order anything from the drive-through except for refills, lottery, prepaid fuel or money orders.

The stores Toot'n Totum is building today are between 5,200 square feet to 6,700 square feet, which includes space for a drive-through. The chain also operates 16 travel centers that span 7,600 square feet and feature high-speed diesel and trucker amenities.

Three of its newer locations feature electric vehicle charging through an agreement with Tesla. One of the sites

includes 12 superchargers and two others have six per site.

Toot'n Totum is also committed to refreshing its legacy locations. In 2024 it completed four remodels, and it has another six on the docket for 2025. As the chain remodels sites, it's upgrading all lighting to LED while revamping store interiors to put more emphasis on the food offerings. At most legacy sites, the chain displays grab-and-go food in a walk-around center island. As these stores are remodeled, they're receiving a food display cooler that is flush with the wall, ensuring all products are faced in front of the guest so they can better observe the selections at once. It's also moving the grab-and-go section closer to the overall food area and fountain dispensers.

FAST 'N FRESH FOOD

Toot'n Totum makes the majority of its fresh grab-and-go foods at its commissary kitchen and delivers the items to its chain of stores under the fast 'n fresh brand. That includes items like fresh-made sandwiches, salads, burritos and subs, parfaits and breakfast burritos.

"Our menu is diverse. We've got an entire division set up for our food, and the kitchen is where it all starts," Mitchell noted. "We're trying to give guests an opportunity for a sandwich like no other, and it is absolutely the freshest we can possibly bring to our sites," Mitchell noted.

Through the kitchen it also developed three proprietary programs: Mitch's Texas



Toot'n Totum runs 10 Express car washes, which are 90-120-foot tunnel washes that feature unlimited car wash subscriptions.

Toot'n Totum was recognized at the Association of Fundraising Professionals Texas Plains Chapter's annual National Philanthropy Day event as the Outstanding Large Business for Philanthropy in the Texas Panhandle. Pictured right, the award sits atop a box of Red's Pizza – one of the chain's foodservice offerings.



Style BBQ, Red's Pizza and Oasis Tea.

Seven stores feature the Mitch's Texas Style BBQ program, while 64 sites offer its newest concept, Red's Pizza, which launched in 2024 and includes a number of limited-time offers.

Most recently Red's Pizza partnered with Texas Tech football, whose colors are red and black, and created a red-and-black pizza using black olives and pepperoni on a honey crust called "Game Day Pizza." Toot'n Totum is the official c-store partner of Texas Tech Athletics.

During Halloween it debuted an "Inferno" Pizza — a pepperoni pizza with a ghost pepper sauce drizzled on top.

"It was a very, very hot pizza," Mitchell said. As part of the festivities, it also converted one of its car wash tunnels into a haunted house.

At press time, the chain was featuring

a dessert pizza that resembled an apple pie, with fresh apple slices, cinnamon and sugar on a warm crust.

A strong food program includes an ample beverage selection, so Toot'n Totum launched the Oasis Tea program, which is a fresh-brewed tea offering. "We're purifying the water to a high purification (level)," Mitchell said. The program is available at three sites, and the chain plans to begin expanding it to as many locations as possible.

High-quality coffee is also a priority. Select stores with above average coffee sales are implementing bean-to-cup

coffee machines. Mitchell estimated that about 75% of the stores have implemented bean-to-cup.

"We give that opportunity for a guest to have the soft heat or the bean-to-cup throughout the day. We've really enjoyed bean-to-cup. It does help us in making sure that we have a quality product each and every time for our guests," Mitchell said.

Toot'n Totum is also leveraging branded partnerships on the food front. It partnered with Amarillo brand Donut Stop to learn how to make fresh-made doughnuts and now makes them each morning in its kitchen and delivers them daily to about 20 Texas locations, which serve them fresh in-store.

In addition, it operates two Which Wich Superior Sandwiches shops and 10 Wendy's locations, some of which are standalone while others are located inside of the chain's travel center locations.

As it continues to move in a food-forward direction, Toot'n Totum is placing an emphasis on grab-and-go.

"We know our guests are busy, and we know they want something quick and convenient, and so we try and strive for that each and every day with the quality of our product and the investment and time that we're putting into it," Mitchell said.

In 2023, Toot'n Totum introduced an order-ahead and delivery platform called FetchUm, which its marketing department created in partnership with Vroom. Guests can order online and pick up their



Toot'n Totum recently celebrated the opening of its 10th Lubbock, Texas, location.

TOOT'N TOTUM TIMELINE

1950	First Toot'n Totum store
1955	Six Amarillo locations
1988	50 Amarillo locations
1995	Toot'n Totum purchased select Diamond Shamrock stores
1998	Toot'n Totum opened first Car Care Center
2004	Toot'n Totum purchased select Phillips 66 stores, including one location in Borger, Texas
2013	Cleaning Pros established
2014	Purchased Frontier Fuels Convenience Stores in Dalhart, Texas
2015	Expanded to Kansas and Oklahoma
2017	Opened first Which Wich Superior Sandwiches
2018	Opened first Wendy's restaurant
2020	Expanded to New Mexico and partnered with Donut Stop
2021	Opened flagship travel center at I-40 & Lakeside
2022	Expanded to Lubbock and Lamesa
2023	Established FetchUm pickup & delivery platform
2024	Launched Red's Pizza; Opened 10th store in Lubbock
2025	75th anniversary celebration and 100th convenience store grand opening

orders via the drive-through for added convenience or opt for delivery via Vroom and Uber.

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

At press time, Toot'n Totum was in the process of reinvigorating its mobile app, which is set to launch this January, in partnership with Rovertown. The new app will feature the chain's updated Toot'n Totum Rewards loyalty program and will bring all aspects of the business together under one platform. Customers will be able to use the app to schedule an oil change at the Car Care lube center or take advantage of an Express car wash deal. The FetchUm order-ahead and delivery program will also be integrated into the app.

"The biggest thing is the loyalty piece that we're able to provide to our guests to earn points and use those points in the way that they see fit," Mitchell noted.

The updated loyalty program will feature tiers. Customers will qualify for a tier based on their visit frequency. Within each tier, customers can redeem points for items such as free products or fuel discounts. Guests can also use their mobile phone number at the pump or inside the store to access their loyalty deals.

The refreshed rewards program, timed with the chain's 75th anniversary, represents a major leap forward for the chain.

"Our first loyalty program was just a step, and it was just basically cents off on fuel," Mitchell said. "Now we're taking this to a whole different level."

While the loyalty program will be exclusive to the convenience stores at first, Mitchell has his sights set on growing the program to where guests can eventually redeem points at the car washes and lube centers as well.

Toot'n Totum is also closely monitoring technological advancements and testing innovative solutions that align with its objectives. Currently, it's piloting self-checkout at two locations but is finding that its customer base prefers encounters with team members behind the register. It's also evaluating opportunities with artificial intelligence (AI).

"AI is one area where we're investing some time and effort," Mitchell said.

Recently, the chain has been piloting

Toot'n Totum's mascots celebrate its most recent grand opening.

an advanced camera system powered by AI at one of its locations. Additionally, it is partnering with a company specializing in location analytics and foot traffic data to enable data-driven insights into customer behavior, site selection and market trends. The chain is also prioritizing in-store data analysis, equipping store managers with detailed, actionable metrics to enhance daily operations and decision making.

FUTURE VISION

Looking ahead, Toot'n Totum plans to continue its expansion into the Lubbock market. An additional six NTI stores are slated for development there in 2025 and 2026. The chain is now investigating other territories within its current operating footprint to earmark for expansion. But as Toot'n Totum prioritizes NTI growth, it hasn't ruled out other modes of expansion.

"We always are looking for a possible acquisition," Mitchell said.



Toot'n Totum is also focused on internal growth through team development. Its human resources department has introduced a leadership academy called LEAD, which stands for lead, engage, act and develop. Every manager and select assistant managers go through the program, which includes a handful of full-day sessions over three months.

"We're always trying to develop our leaders into becoming the best they can possibly be," Mitchell said.

He added that strong store managers

can play a big role in reducing turnover and driving the overall sales of a store.

"We really want to make sure that our managers and general managers of our sites have as much leadership training as they can in their portfolio to use in their stores, to grow the business and to foster a positive honor-and-value approach to each one of our team members," Mitchell said. "Our team members are really the ones that make Toot'n Totum move."

The chain also continues to grow its involvement and philanthropic efforts within the communities it serves.

In November 2024, Toot'n Totum was recognized at the Association of Fundraising Professionals Texas Plains Chapter's annual National Philanthropy Day event as the Outstanding Large Business for Philanthropy in the Texas Panhandle. While the company has received numerous accolades over the years, this one held particular significance for Mitchell.

"I am honored on behalf of our team that we're able to do this — to give either the funds, the time or the effort to raise money for these philanthropies. This has been an incredibly special award, and we're very honored," he said.

As he looks to the long-term future of Toot'n Totum, Mitchell embraces a straightforward philosophy to help guide the company forward in alignment with its values: "We're here to grow our team members and to grow our communities. We'll continue to work each and every day to do that." **CSD**



Toot'n Totum is investing in team development and helping its leaders become the best they can be. Its team members "are the ones that make Toot'n Totum move," CEO Andrew Mitchell said.