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## **Cinderella Story: Lower Seeded Bracket Busters Impact America's Appetite During 'The Big Dance'**

Papa John's sold record number of pizzas - the most popular tourney food - during last year's college men's basketball semifinals that featured no. 11 seeded team

LOUISVILLE, Ky.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--March 14, 2007--There are two people commonly found in the home of basketball fans during March's "Big Dance" - Cinderella and the pizza delivery man.

The one with the food is often invited back, while the party crashing one wearing the glass slipper may not be as welcomed.

Even if uninvited, "Cinderella" plays a huge role in what Americans can stomach during the popular men's collegiate basketball tournament in March. The two and one half weeks of the tournament falls in the heart of the busiest sales period in the pizza industry. Papa John's (NASDAQ:PZZA) will sell roughly 10 million pizzas from tipoff Thursday, March 15 through the final horn on Monday, April 2.

And the success of Cinderellas will directly effect the total consumption of pizza. For example, last year Papa John's experienced record sales as a No. 11 seed sailed all the way into the semifinals. In fact, the Saturday of the semifinals was the busiest Saturday of the year for Papa John's. The three previous years featured no team lower than a fifth seed in reaching the semis, and pizza sales weren't quite as high.

Coincidence?

"We're not scientists, and we're not psychiatrists, but we do know how to make a quality pizza for fans whether they are pulling for the underdog or cheering for the favorite," said Bill Van Epps, Papa John's president, USA. "It's an exciting time of the year and we're happy to be a part of that for millions of basketball fans across the country."

Zeroing in closer on pizza sales in March, Papa John's sees a double digit spike in orders on Championship Monday versus the average Monday, while sales up tick by 15% on the Saturday night of the semifinals versus when there are eight teams remaining in the tournament the week before.

Overall, Papa John's expects a similar slam dunk this year for pizza, even if the glass slipper falls off early. It is estimated that Americans will eat more than 100 acres of pizza a day during the 2007 collegiate basketball tournament. Since there are 463 basketball courts in an acre, that means fans will consume enough pizzas during the tourney to fill 926,000 basketball courts.

During that time, Americans will consume more than 13 million slices of pepperoni, which is America's favorite pizza topping. An average of 350 slices of pizza are eaten every second in the U.S., and everyone eats roughly 23 pounds of pizza year.

This time of year also represents one of the biggest spikes in online orders through [www.papajohns.com](http://www.papajohns.com). More than half a million basketball and pizza lovers placed their order online last year. And of those online orders, more than 12,000 people took advantage of Papa John's advance online ordering, which enables users to schedule their preferred delivery time or pick-up up to 21 days in advance.

Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, Papa John's International, Inc. (NASDAQ:PZZA) is the world's third-largest pizza company. For seven years running, consumers have rated Papa John's no. 1 in customer satisfaction among all national QSR chains in the highly regarded American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). For more information about the company or to order pizza online, visit Papa John's at [www.papajohns.com](http://www.papajohns.com).

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