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## Papa John's Selects Desmond Howard for 'Countdown to Kickoff' 25th Anniversary Celebration

Football fans who register at [www.thecountdowntokickoff.com](http://www.thecountdowntokickoff.com) will receive a large, one-topping Papa John's pizza for just 25-cents if the opening kickoff of the Big Game is returned for a touchdown.

LOUISVILLE, Ky.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 19, 2009--How does one of the world's largest pizza companies kick off a year-long celebration of its 25th anniversary? If you're Papa John's, you enlist a famous pro football star (Desmond Howard) during your busiest time of year (football playoffs), thank customers for their loyalty with an added incentive to tune into February's Big Game (25-cent pizzas), and you call it all "The Countdown to Kickoff."

The premise behind "The Countdown to Kickoff" is simple: if the opening kickoff of the Big Game is returned for a touchdown, everyone who registers at [www.thecountdowntokickoff.com](http://www.thecountdowntokickoff.com) before 6pm on Sunday, February 1, will be eligible to receive a large, one-topping Papa John's pizza for just 25-cents. Also at [www.thecountdowntokickoff.com](http://www.thecountdowntokickoff.com), fans can catch exclusive video commentary from Desmond Howard - who holds the record for the longest touchdown return in the history of the Big Game - and earn more special offers from Papa John's by displaying their football expertise. All in celebration of Papa John's 25th anniversary.

"Every receiver craves the thrill of returning a kickoff for a touchdown, especially during the Big Game. Throw in a chance to win a 25-cent Papa John's pizza for everyone in America, and that's more than enough motivation to make it to the end zone," said Howard, whose record 99-yard kickoff return during the third quarter of the Big Game in 1997 helped lead Green Bay to the championship title.

Just in time for its busiest day of the year, Papa John's encourages party planners to consult its catering and "group suggestions" menu at [www.papajohns.com](http://www.papajohns.com). Papa John's offers the following tips for party planners this football season:

- One large pizza feeds 3-4 adults
- The most popular combination of toppings is pepperoni, sausage and mushrooms
- Provide a variety of pizzas with different toppings. For large groups, always include a cheese or pepperoni pizza as well as a few specialty pizzas
- Complement any order with an array of side items - wings, breadsticks, even dessert "sweet treats"
- Don't forget icy, cold beverages from Coca-Cola

"Regardless of how closely you follow football throughout the regular season, nothing brings people together like the Big Game. The same rings true for Papa John's, which is always a crowd-pleaser among family and friends - man or woman, young or old, athlete or couch potato," said Papa John's Founder and CEO John Schnatter, who started what has since become the world's third-largest pizza company in 1984, in the broom closet of his father's tavern in Jeffersonville, Ind.

Papa John's continues to lead the industry in convenient ordering options. The pizza company was the first to introduce national online ordering in 2001, which now accounts for more than 20% of its business. The company's unique advance online ordering option at [www.papajohns.com](http://www.papajohns.com) enables consumers to place orders and specify the time of delivery or pick-up (up to three weeks in advance).

In 2007, Papa John's managed another first - ordering by SMS/text message. Simply indicate your favorite order online and text that "favorite" number to "4PAPA" (47272) and your pizza will be on its way. The company's mobile Web ordering site is a convenient avenue for the person on the go and its [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/papajohns) page is an ideal spot to check out the latest offers and promotions from Papa John's to its Facebook "fans."

Other fun facts about pizza:

- 86% of Americans plan to eat during the Big Game, and more than half of them (52%) said they plan to eat pizza (pizzatoday.com)
- 62% of Americans prefer meat toppings on their pizza, while 38% prefer vegetarian toppings
- The most food is consumed during halftime - six out of seven viewers said they planned to eat pizza during halftime
- Papa John's expects to have three times as many employees working during the Big Game than during a regular day
- Most delivery drivers make \$75 to \$100 more in tips on the Sunday of The Big Game than they would on a regular night
- 93% of Americans eat a slice of pizza at least once a month
- The average American consumes 46 slices or 23 pounds of pizza per year. Americans eat approximately 100 acres of pizza each day, or about 350 slices per second

To visit your nearest Papa John's restaurant or set up an interview with a Papa John's operator or representative, please contact Tish Muldoon at 502.261.4987.

Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, Papa John's International, Inc.

(NASDAQ: PZZA) is the world's third largest pizza company. For nine years running, consumers have rated Papa John's No. 1 in customer satisfaction among all national pizza chains in the highly regarded American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). Papa John's also ranks first among pizza companies in the 2008 Brand Keys Customer Loyalty Engagement Index, was honored by Restaurants & Institutions Magazine (R&I) with the 2008 Silver Award for Consumers' Choice in Chains in the pizza segment, and was named 2007 Pizza Today Chain of the Year. 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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