

## Breakfast Business, Profits are on the Rise

From breakfast sandwiches, omelets and wraps, to pizzas and even breakfast hot dogs, more and more customers are choosing to eat their morning meal outside of the home - and the quickservice (QSR) and casual restaurant markets are reaping the profits. The National Restaurant Association's 2006 Forecast reported that 56 percent of all quick-service operations serve breakfast.



Breakfast accounts for 38 percent of sales at Bojangles' Restaurants. Commitment to quality, speed of service and traditional menu items such as the Cajun fillet biscuit are all factors in the operation's success.

Among those, roughly half expect this portion of their business to increase.

Breakfast has always been important to the success of Bojangles' Restaurants. The Charlotte, North Carolina-based operation was founded in 1977 and is popular for its all-day breakfast menu.

Bojangles' founder Jack Falk is credited with originating the concept of the breakfast sandwich. Today, the menu includes nine types of breakfast sand-

wiches, including the top-selling Cajun fillet; Southern fillet; bacon, egg and cheese; country ham; and sausage. Today, breakfast generates 38 percent of sales across the company's 335 locations.

Chris Bailey, director of franchise development for Bojangles', believes that several factors contribute to the company's success in the breakfast arena. Knowledge of the customer is key, he said, as is the "fresh made-from scratch biscuit," a crit-

ical part of the breakfast menu's popularity and brand heritage.

"Operationally, our success at breakfast comes not only from a consistent and unwavering commitment to quality, but also from our focus on speed of service," said Bailey. "The result is

great food, great value served fast, all the time."

Another important factor said Bailey, is advertising. Bojangles' supports its breakfast program with a consistent level of advertising spending. "It's critical to put your money where (See BREAKFAST on page 16)

## BREAKFAST: Business, Profits on the Rise

(Continued from page 1) your priorities are," he said, "and we've been very pleased with the returns."

The company is constantly refining its menu and values feedback from its customers. New menu items are introduced as "limited time offers" three to four times a year, while best-sellers like the Cajun fillet biscuit will never change.

"We've been making breakfast for our customers for over 29 years and listening to their feedback, so we've got a clear picture of what they want," said Bailey.

Also taking advantage of the rise in breakfast busi-

ness is Tallahassee, Florida-based Po' Boys Creole Café. The seven-unit restaurant chain's brunch menu, introduced eight years ago, quickly became one of the highest-grossing day parts.

"Brunch is a very lucrative meal period which most restaurants don't even bother with," said Po' Boys co-founder Charlie Youngs.

Youngs credits the brunch program's success with unique menu items, low prices and a laid-back atmo-

sphere. Inventive menu items include the Crabmeat Omelet a la Creole, with blue crabmeat, garlic, shallots and onions smothered in a

béarnaise sauce; and the Jackson Square Sunrise, a spinach, egg and shallot medley served on a flour tortilla with red beans, provolone cheese and fresh vegetables. Traditional favorites

- eggs benedict, omelets, cheese grits and more - round out the menu.

Slightly less traditional are the breakfast offerings from Franktitudes, a gourmet hot dog establishment slated to open in downtown Miami,

Florida, this summer. The operation, which will offer menu items such as the Fiery Dog, with hot cheese sauce, jalapeno peppers, wasabi mayo and chopped onions, will also profit from

the lucrative breakfast day part by offering scrambled eggs served in a hot dog bun. Customers may choose to top their breakfast sandwich with a selection of 25 toppings, including mushrooms, cheese sauce, hummus, potato strings and sun-dried tomatoes.

Whether launching a new breakfast menu or building on an existing one, operators often create unique dishes designed to capture customers' attention. In typical southern tradition, however, often it's the classic breakfast items - eggs, bacon, sausage, biscuits - that become tried-and-true favorites.

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*~ Chris Bailey, Bojangles'*