

QSR

QUALITY AND SPEED FOR RESTAURANT SUCCESS

The next four years will be an exciting time to be a brand CIO. Decisions on which technologies to employ and how much to spend will be as important as any other business decisions.

Looking Forward

BY PAUL GEREFFI

2006 Applied Technology Stars

If you're not seriously looking at cashless payment at the drive-thru, online ordering, self-service kiosks, or tech-based training, you're going to fall behind. That's a promise.

Today your customers can order a carnitas burrito plus a side of guacamole and bottle of Nantucket Nectar online at www.chipotle.com or a Spinach Alfredo Chicken and Tomato pizza with a side of Chipotle BBQ wings and a Dr. Pepper at www.papajohns.com. Your teenaged crew is downloading music videos to their cell phones and using a web language called Leet to socialize with people thousands of miles away. Your customers and crews are increasingly embracing the 21st century's technological revolution. To keep up with both groups, you will have to do the same.

It was with that thought in mind that QSR decided to bring back the Applied Technology Awards. By acknowledging those who are using technology to make life easier for their crews and customers, we hope to encourage others to do the same. Congratulations to the innovators highlighted here.



Automation

User: Wendy's

Technology: Store Automation

Provider: TimeManagement Corporation

In creating its Store Automation program, Wendy's International worked with five technology companies and its distributor partners to create a web-based application suite that automates many of the manual back office functions in all 1,500 Wendy's company stores. The new system is fully incorporated into existing systems systemwide and integrated with distributor systems—a complex undertaking that makes Store Automation unique.

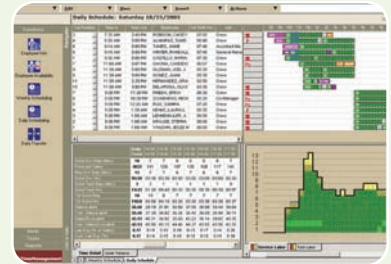
Now a Wendy's manager starts his/her day by reviewing labor and food forecasts and making needed changes. Those modifications are then entered into the Store Automation's food management, labor scheduling, bin chart, and manager work applications, where updated order, bin, and prep forecasts are generated. Forecasts are also integrated into labor guides and prep efforts to determine the optimal crew size for a store based on sales throughout the day. As a result, Wendy's company stores are now operating under broader operations consistency, with improved supply chain efficiencies, greater visibility for multi-unit managers, and a platform for future updates.

The program's forecasting system, FCST, is the central point for all data. Information is uploaded on a weekly basis from store POS systems. That data is then sent to a Demantra forecasting application, where a 90-

day sales and product mix forecast is created. Via the web, those forecasts are then inputted into Store Automation's scheduling, food management, and bin chart applications.

During Store Automation's pilot testing phase, Wendy's selected a general manager from each of its regions to take on a regional expert (RE) role. The RE's responsibilities included benchmarking stores pre- and post-implementation. Training for Store Automation was approached through a blending of computer-based and paper-based sessions. Training workstations were also installed in each store.

Savings have already been seen in food and labor. Store Automation's product mix forecast is 95-percent accurate, thereby saving Wendy's managers, on average, 1.5 hours a week. Stores are also carrying a smaller inventory thanks to the system. Waste was reduced, as were product transfers between company stores—tasks that used to take six hours now take half as long, Wendy's says. And managers are better able to create effective schedules. The scheduling tool is tied to the time clock, preventing early clock-ins, thus saving even more.



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TimeManagement Corporation
1.800.542.8463
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