

QUICK SERVE RESTAURANTS :: McDonald's - Three Locations



Background

Today's fast food consumers have busy schedules. Where they stop to grab a bite to eat often depends on which restaurant's sign catches their eye first. You may serve superior food or provide friendlier service than a nearby competitor, but if they're doing a better job of getting passing motorists' attention, they're likely cutting into your market share. For that reason, dynamic, attention-getting signage is crucial to staying competitive in the fast food industry. Here, three McDonald's franchises explain why they've chosen to maximize their results with electronic message centers by Watchfire Signs.

Results

Although these McDonald's franchises have only recently installed their LED signs, their owners have already experienced numerous benefits. They've enhanced their sales, they're able to change the sign conveniently from inside their stores, and each restaurant has a fresh new look that grabs the attention of passing motorists.

Case Study

"The wave of the future."

A small town of little more than 1,000 people, Rustburg, Va., isn't accustomed to businesses installing electronic signage. Yet, when a new McDonald's came to town in the summer of 2009, the community welcomed the new store, which included a full-color Watchfire LED sign.

"It was a new restaurant, and we wanted to have the new technology built into the sign," said David Watson, Director of Operations for the store.

"An LED sign really helps you get your message out, and makes your business look more 21st century."

**--- David Watson, director of operations,
McDonald's, Rustburg, VA**

Watson cites the usual laundry list of reasons for investing in the sign: it's convenient; it allows for multiple messages; it helps boost sales. But perhaps the single most important function of an LED sign was best summed up by Watson in a simple four-word statement: "It just stands out."

Before you can move a consumer to action; before you can arouse their desire or interest, you must first get their attention. And nothing does a better job of doing that than electronic message centers. Steve Cielec believes franchise owners who buy an LED sign now are getting in early on what will eventually become the norm. "An LED sign really helps you get your message out, and makes your business look more 21st century," he said. "They are the wave of the future."



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'There's no comparison.'

Frank Cerrone supervises a McDonald's in Moultrie, Ga., that was recently outfitted with a new LED sign. Cerrone says when he promotes a menu item on the new sign, the results are hard to miss – or argue with. "I would say about 40 or 50 percent of customers start ordering that item shortly afterward."

The McDonald's representatives who participated in this study all agreed that enhanced sales is the biggest reason to invest in an LED sign. But they also cited convenience as a big advantage. Cerrone said it played a major role in his decision to replace an old letterboard sign with an electronic sign when his store was rebuilt.

"There is no comparison. When I promote a menu item on the new sign, about 40 or 50 percent of customers start ordering that item shortly afterward."

-- Frank Cerrone, manager, McDonald's, Moultrie, GA

"There is no comparison," Cerrone said. "It's a constant hassle, worrying about a letterboard sign, changing the letters. The electronic sign is much easier."

'A fresh new look.'

For well over a decade, Steve Cielec has owned two McDonald's in South Point, Oh. As a veteran of the golden arches, Cielec values consistency. But when his oldest store underwent a complete rebuild in 2009, he knew it was time for a change, and replaced his old manual letterboard with a Watchfire LED sign.

In the world of signage, nothing shines brighter than an LED sign. Also known as electronic message centers, LED signs use half the electricity of neon signs, display multiple messages, and can be easily updated from a desktop or laptop computer. They provide value, convenience and a dynamic source of on-site advertising that gets results.

"Now people see the sign's dynamic messages when they drive by, and they know we're open."

-- Steve Cielec, owner, McDonald's, South Point, OH

"LED signs are modern and appealing, and give your store a fresh new look," Cielec said. His sign has come in especially handy late at night. His store is open 24 hours a day, but until recently, he worried that passing motorists didn't realize it. "Now people see the sign's dynamic messages when they drive by, and they know we're open."

Only one of Cielec's stores currently has an electronic message center, but he hopes to upgrade his other store to an LED sign soon. In his view, it's too good an advertising opportunity to pass up. "You can program them to run different messages throughout the day, and really target your advertising efforts," he said.

