

# Wendy's sues franchisees, unveils prototype

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*Continued from page 1*

## Building for the future

Wendy's also will start rolling out a new store design as it looks to increase domestic growth over the next few years. The first two of four different prototype designs opened Tuesday in Columbus, Ohio.

Lynch said 10 total prototype units would be built in five cities this fall, although no schedule has been determined for new-unit growth with one of the four designs.

"We still have to get customer feedback and measure our results," Lynch said from the opening event for the newest restaurant in Columbus. "These restaurants are living laboratories, so there's no timetable that says when we'll open more."

"The core of it was the restaurant needed to do a great job of demonstrating that Wendy's does go above and beyond typical fast food to provide fresher food," said Tre Musco, chief creative officer and chief executive of San Francisco-based Tesser, the design firm that created the prototype. "They did a lot to bring the food more forward, so customers can see a more open kitchen than before and more fresh produce in coolers."



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The specialty beverage program now is more prominent in guests' line of sight, Musco added, as is an oven and a reach-in baked-goods case. The order line is broken up more with digital menu boards hanging on one side of the restaurant where the queue forms and where cashiers take customers' money. Guests then move to the other side of the line where their food is delivered by separate kitchen staff.

The updated décor of the new prototypes was meant to reinforce the freshness of the food that's been Wendy's positioning for years, Musco said.

"A new look goes a long way to tell people there are fresh things happening with the food," he said. "A lot of times with contemporary design, we lose warmth and wholesomeness to get more modern looks. We had to find a balance with a modern look and Wendy's traditional values of wholesome quality. The idea of transparency — people make a direct translation between big open windows and having nothing to hide in the kitchen."

Wendy's also announced that it would move 50 positions back to its Dublin, Ohio, headquarters from the offices of Wendy's/Arby's Group in Atlanta. The company's building at 1 Dave Thomas Boulevard will get an \$11 million renovation as part of the move. The Wendy's Co. received \$8 million from the city of Dublin and \$4 million from the state of Ohio in job creation incentives, according to reports in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and the Columbus Dispatch.

The Wendy's Co. had been part of Atlanta-based Wendy's/Arby's Group until last month when it sold Arby's to private equity firm Roark Capital.

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