



Limited-Service, Unlimited Possibilities

QSR's Most Read Stories in 2013

Our top 10 stories from a year busy of change and innovation.

The year 2013 was a busy one for quick-service restaurant operators. Innovative new brands ranging from ethnic concepts to pizza fast casuals gobbled up more market share as traditional companies like McDonald's struggled to find consistency. Legal issues such as health care and wage debates busied operators who were already weighed down by rising food costs and a slow-to-recover economy. And customer trends shifted seemingly at the drop of a dime, keeping brands on their toes and in careful search of the "next big thing."

QSR kept abreast of it all, giving you an inside look at how these changes affected the quick-serve industry for the long term. These stories in particular were our top 10 most-read pieces from 2013.

1. The QSR 500
Our signature domestic sales chain, Jimmy west Grill clim

2. 10 Trends for 2013
In January, we respect, we th operators to t January.

3. 2013 Best Franchisees
Franchise Dec thing a little d focuses on sm national pene

4. Pizza's Arms Race

The pizza fast-casual category is exploding, with no less than a dozen brands racing to become the category leader. Get an inside look at who has the fast track on becoming the "Chipotle of pizza."

5. The Drive-Thru Performance Study

Quick-serve companies have continually improved their speed and accuracy in the drive thru ever since we launched our Drive-Thru Study 15 years ago. But this year's Drive-Thru Performance Study showed that the industry's move toward more premium options is starting to have an effect on speed and accuracy in the outdoor lane.

10 Trends for 2013

More fruits and veggies

Quick-service restaurants have never been short on vegetable and fruit offerings—potatoes for french fries; tomatoes, lettuce, and onions on burgers; and various items in salads—but customers will expect more fruit and vegetable variety on menus, the experts say.

"We're seeing all kind of vegetables," Olson says. For example, lettuce will no longer be confined to iceberg; romaine, field greens, and spinach are increasingly being used. Kale, a so-called superfood, is also becoming more popular as a healthful option at some fast-casual restaurants and on college campuses.

The trend is also helping make kids' meals healthier, Olson says. "School foodservice operators are turning vegetables into super heroes with kid-appealing names like Power Punch Broccoli and X-Ray Vision Carrots," she says.

d on
hicken
uth-

ret-
shed
ast

"Best
ome-
nich