

NATION'S Restaurant News

Captain D's rolls out new line of sandwiches

Seafood chain looks to reinvigorate brand with new menu items every two months

June 20, 2011 | By Alan Snel



Captain D's new Southwest chicken sandwich

Captain D's, the quick-service battered-fish chain, debuted new chicken and cod sandwiches Monday that the chain said are designed to be portable, customizable and appealing to younger customers.

The move is one of many to come, according to Monte Jump, executive vice president of marketing for the Nashville, Tenn.-based, 527-unit brand. Captain D's expects to launch new products every two to three months, he said.

TV commercials to promote the new sandwiches will begin on Monday, while Captain D's will be offering free sandwiches through social media efforts.

"This is a huge shift for us operationally. It's about a guest-first mentality," Jump said.

The new sandwiches — North Pacific Cod and crispy-breaded chicken breast — are available in Spicy Bayou, Bacon Ranch or Southwestern styles. A single sandwich is priced at \$4.29; a sandwich and one side is \$5.29 and a sandwich, a side and a drink is \$5.99. The concept's average check is just above \$6.

"This will make us a legitimate player in sandwiches," Jump said. "I don't think you'll find sandwiches like this."

Jump said the new sandwiches were developed over the past three months because the "brand is tired and sleepy. For the company, the sales performance has not been acceptable the last few years. New news is what drives the restaurant business. This will do that for us."

Captain D's is traditionally known for core items such as battered fish, hush puppies, cole slaw and French fries.

With the sandwiches, Captain D's is targeting two major demographic groups — consumers on the go and younger customers, it said.

"Consumers are more rushed for time than they ever have been. They're eating on the go," Jump said. "This allows folks to enjoy sandwiches on the go."

Captain D's restaurants are located in 25 states, mostly in the Southeast.