



“We lead you through the profitability maze”.

CONDEVCO LLC / CONVENIENCE DEVELOPMENT CORP

THE “METER” NEWSLETTER

“THE METER”

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Vote “Yes” for good customer service.

In the Convenience Store field, our first name is “Convenience”. Convenience means being in a convenient location, having a selection of merchandise that allows people to fill their needs without additional trips somewhere else (making it convenient to stop there), and having multiple options to allow them to pay. What seems to be missing from many convenience settings is making it convenient to deal with your first-line associates. In other words, how many times has a friend or client with a store or stores had a half-hour discussion with you about how to arrange the cold vault, but shrugs their shoulders and dismisses staffing with “It’s hard to find good people”?

All the care and science that goes into everything from merchandise selection and mix, to how a store is designed and looks, to what fuel brand, if any to select, can be of little effect if the customer/associate interaction isn’t a positive experience. The level of service in the US, in general, has gotten to the point that good friendly service is the exception rather than the norm. One of the big C-Store publications actually has a column where they talk about the good service they received when THEY are on the road.

That doesn’t mean we shouldn’t strive for a better level of customer assistance.

We don’t believe anecdotal evidence proves a norm or spots a trend, but we all know that, even with the rapid drop in fuel prices, our customers are hurting financially. Inside store merchandise and foodservice (if you have it) sales are the lifeblood of the business. The easiest way to increase inside sales is to concentrate on staffing and training. Raise your expectations of performance for your customer service associates, and reward them when they perform.

Your customers want to be served, promptly and with a smile. My blog is named “The Service Station” for a reason. Think of the category you’re in as “The Service Store” instead of “The Convenience Store” category, and both you and your customers will be much better off. Sales will go up, your associates will be happier and busier, and you’ll be providing a positive “service” to your bottom line in the end.

Condevco offers comprehensive customer service and operations consulting and manuals for your store/chain. The operations we have operated and consulted on have a long history of “famous” customer service. Let us help you.

The Dining Plate— Casual Dining and QSR Sector Comments

Buffalo Wild Wings and dineEquity are both being built for the long run, but with different Operating Models.

- 1) dineEquity is 6 times larger in location count than Buffalo Wild Wings
- 2) The two companies aspire to grow earnings in different ways.
- 3) dineEquity can market across the whole daypart with the brands they own.

dineEquity ([DIN](#)) and Buffalo Wild Wings ([BWLWD](#)) both released third quarter results on October 27th. dineEquity posted a .47/share profit verses a .09/ share expected loss, and Buffalo Wild Wings posted .25/share profit, missing the projected earnings by .06/share. We used the two firms Quarterly reports as the basis for our comments

The two companies are not similar in size or makeup, and while they are competitors where Applebee’s and Buffalo Wild Wings restaurants compete in the same market for casual dining dollars. they really market to two separate



To Vote for Good
Customer Service

ABOUT CONDEVCO LLC AND RON & DARCEE SANTICOLA

RON SANTICOLA HAS BEEN IN THE CONVENIENCE STORE BUSINESS FOR 14+ YEARS HERE IN FLORIDA AND INTERNATIONALLY, AS A “C” LEVEL EXECUTIVE AND CONSULTANT. AWARD-WINNING AND RESPECTED INDUSTRY LEADER. DARCEE SANTICOLA IS AN AWARD-WINNING STORE DESIGNER AND SPACE PLANNER. WE MERCHANDISE LOCATIONS AND LAY OUT SELECTION, MIX AND PROMOTIONAL CALENDARS.

RON IS ALSO A FL LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKER, SPECIALIZING IN PETROLEUM RETAILING PROPERTIES AND PETROLEUM DISTRIBUTION.

WE SPECIALIZE IN:

- ◆ SITE AND CHAIN ACQUISITION
- ◆ BRANDING AND FUEL SUPPLY
- ◆ STORE DESIGN—NEW & REFURBISHMENT / REBRANDING
- ◆ MERCHANDISING & PROMOTIONS
- ◆ FINANCIAL MODELING—ACQUISITION AND OPERATING
- ◆ CUSTOMER SERVICE TRAINING
- ◆ MYSTERY SHOPPING



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Adjusting Menu Selection a Good Short Term Fix

This was done for Gerson Lehrman News and Published Oct 27

- 1) Customers are resisting higher prices
- 2) Food prices will come down, but not rapidly
- 3) Market the selections as new variety

The restaurant industry has a real dilemma on it's hands. Customers, given the current economic climate, are resisting price increases with fewer trips to dine out and lower per-ticket purchases.

At the same time, the core ingredient "proteins" have experienced a much greater than CPI increase in cost. Given the recent steep decline in energy costs, we can expect there to be a stop in the cost inflation, but any decrease in supply prices will come due to weak global demand, ([See More](#))

To be removed from the mailing write to rsanticola@condevco.com.

Questions or comments? E-mail us at rsanticola@condevco.com or call Ron at 561-274-4261

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