

KING-CASEY *Insights & Trends in Restaurant Merchandising & Design*

# REPORT



**noodles**  
& COMPANY

Menu **Reengineering** &  
**Improves Sales & Profits**  
**for** Noodles & Company

## KING-CASEY REPORT

These Reports are intended to provide valuable insights regarding best-practices and innovative solutions that have been successfully implemented by restaurant and foodservice brands.

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## OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

Noodles & Company began in 1995 with a simple concept—serve fresh food fast. Today, there are 460 Noodles fast-casual restaurants in the United States serving a wide variety of international and American noodle dishes, pasta offerings, as well as soups and salads.

Noodles approached King-Casey with the goal of optimizing menu and communications strategies in order to improve sales, margin and the customer experience. Specific business objectives to achieve the previously mentioned included:

- Increasing average check through focus on attachment, upsell and high margin items.
- Making ordering faster and easier through less customization.
- Simplifying menu communications.





Menuboard "Before"

# THE PROCESS

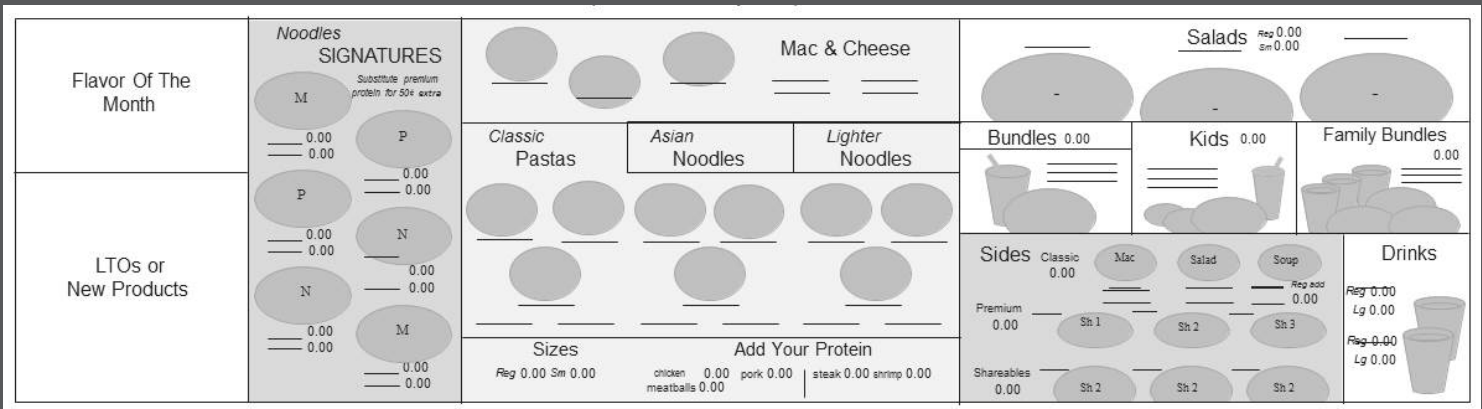
## THE PROCESS STARTED WITH A BRAND USAGE ASSESSMENT

Quantitative Research helped develop effective alternatives to the current strategy by understanding consumer usage and attitude perceptions toward the menu

Research was conducted among 600+ customers to help the project team understand consumers attitudes and behavior regarding the current menu and ordering process. Research confirmed that the current menu required customers to customize 90% of their meal, e.g., pick a noodle category, select a size, add a protein, plus optional substitutions and add-ons. The process was deemed confusing and cumbersome, and often resulted in unhappy customers when they saw costs add up at checkout.

## NEXT CAME STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The project team conducted a menu segmentation process which included identifying new opportunities for categorizing the brand's key food platforms.



### *New Optimized Menu Strategy and Schematic*

**Guided by the insights and enhanced segmentation opportunities, King-Casey developed the optimized organization, space allocation and placement of menu items on the menuboard**

King-Casey worked hand-in-hand with Noodles to review their previous menu strategy, and develop a new menu strategy that identified how each menu category and menu item will contribute to achieving Noodles' desired business objectives.

From this, several new black & white menu schematics were created to illustrate the organization, layout, product placement, space allocation and key menu communications. Each of these schematic alternatives provided "templates" for how Noodles' optimized Menu Communications should be organized.

Selected schematics were then developed into color renderings illustrating what the new menuboard would look like. There's just enough detail in these color renderings (visuals, graphics, copy, branding, colors) to conduct quantitative consumer research that quickly and objectively assesses the validity of the new menu communications strategies, and identify which strategy has the greatest business potential.

**OPTIMIZED MENU STRATEGIES AND ARCHITECTURE WERE DEVELOPED TO ILLUSTRATE ALTERNATIVE MENUBOARD DESIGNS**

### Light and Lovable

**Zucchini Garlic & Wine Sauce with Balsamic Chicken**  
Zucchini = Zoodles + Spaghetti  
Reg \$11.00 670 Cal

**Zucchini & Asparagus with Lemon Sauce**  
Reg \$8.25 Sm \$7.00  
500 - 250 Cal




### Signature Flavors

**Penne Rosa with Parmesan-Crusted Chicken**  
Reg \$9.00 910 Cal

**The Med Salad with Chicken**  
Reg \$9.25 390 Cal

**Pesto Cavatappi with Grilled Chicken**  
Reg \$9.25 880 Cal

**Buffalo Chicken Mac**  
Reg \$9.25 1100 Cal

**Japanese Pan Noodles with Marinated Steak**  
Reg \$9.50 760 Cal







### Classic Noodles

**Penne Rosa**  
Reg \$6.25 Sm \$5.00  
720 - 360 Cal

**Buttered Noodles**  
Reg \$6.25 Sm \$5.00  
760 - 380 Cal

**Steak Stroganoff**  
Reg \$9.75 Sm \$8.50  
1150 - 640 Cal

**Spaghetti & Meatballs**  
Reg \$9.00 Sm \$7.75  
980 - 670 Cal

**Alfredo MontAmoré® with Parmesan-Crusted Chicken**  
Reg \$9.25 Sm \$8.00  
1410 - 800 Cal

**Pesto Cavatappi**  
Reg \$6.50 Sm \$5.25  
730 - 370 Cal




### World

**Wisconsin Mac & Cheese**  
Reg \$6.50 Sm \$5.00  
980 - 490 Cal

**Gluten-Friendly Pipette Mac**  
Reg \$6.50 Sm \$5.00  
850 - 420 Cal

**Zucchini Truffle**  
Reg \$8.25 Sm \$7.00  
510 - 260 Cal

### Zoodles and Other Noodles

**Zucchini & Asparagus with Lemon Sauce**  
Reg \$8.25 Sm \$7.00  
500 - 250 Cal

**Zucchini Garlic & Wine Sauce with Balsamic Chicken**  
Zucchini = Zoodles + Spaghetti  
Reg \$11.00 670 Cal

**Zucchini Pesto with Grilled Chicken**  
Reg \$10.25 Sm \$9.00  
480 - 310 Cal

**Whole Wheat Fresca**  
Reg \$6.75 Sm \$5.50  
770 - 380 Cal

**Gluten-Friendly Pipette Rosa with Grilled Chicken**  
Reg \$10.00 Sm \$8.75  
830 - 550 Cal

**Add or substitute Zoodles to any dish +\$1.00**




### Asian

**Japanese Pan Noodles**  
Reg \$6.25 Sm \$5.00  
630 - 320 Cal

**Spicy Peanut Sauce**  
Reg \$6.75 Sm \$5.50  
830 - 420 Cal

**Pad Thai**  
Reg \$6.50 Sm \$5.00  
1040 - 520 Cal

### Explore Bold Flavor

**Gluten-Friendly Pipette Mac**  
Reg \$7.50 Sm \$6.00  
850 - 420 Cal



### Add or Substitute

Noodles	Meat or Tofu +\$2.75
Any Noodle 230-590 Cal	Grilled Chicken 150 Cal
Zucchini Noodles +\$1.00 30 - 60 Cal	Parmesan-Crusted Chicken 190 Cal
Gluten-Friendly	Oven-Roasted Meatballs 360 Cal
	Seasoned Tofu 210 Cal
	Naturally Raised Pork

### Premium +\$

Marinated Steak  
120 Cal

Sautéed Shrimp  
70 Cal

## VALIDATING THE STRATEGIES

**CONSUMER VALIDATION OF THE STRATEGIES WAS FOLLOWED BY IN-STORE TESTING TO IDENTIFY THE MOST EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC APPROACH**

The alternative menu communications strategies were consumer-validated using quantitative, online research among 400+ consumers. From this research, final refinements were made and three recommended strategies plus the current board were then put into different test store groups.

All three test groups experienced a lift in per-person average check and profits. One of the three strategies was recommended to be rolled out system-wide.

## Famous Macs

**Buffalo Chicken Mac**   
 Reg \$9.25 Sm \$7.75  
 1100 · 650 Cal




**BBQ Pork Mac**   
 Reg \$9.50 Sm \$8.00  
 1210 · 690 Cal



## Noodles

**Spicy Korean Beef Noodles**   
 Reg \$9.50 Sm \$8.25  
 1000 · 560 Cal



 Spicy  
 Gluten-Friendly  
*Made without gluten-containing ingredients but potential for cross-contact exists.*  
 Vegetarian  
*Excludes meat & fish.*

**Vegetarian? Allergies?**  
 Ask us for our Nutrition and Allergen Guide.  
 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice, but calorie needs vary. Additional nutrition information available upon request.

## Salads

**The Med Salad with Chicken**   
 Reg \$9.25 Sm \$8.00  
 390 · 250 Cal

**Chicken Veracruz Salad**   
 Reg \$9.25 Sm \$8.00  
 650 · 380 Cal

**Grilled Chicken Caesar**  
 Reg \$9.00 Sm \$7.75  
 420 · 270 Cal



## Make It a Meal

**Add a Side & Reg Drink**  
 \$3.25  
 30-570 Cal



## Drinks

**Fountain Drink**  
 Reg \$2.25 0-300 Cal  
 Lg \$2.50 0-450 Cal

**Fresh-Brewed Iced Tea**  
 Reg \$2.25 0-120 Cal  
 Lg \$2.50 0-180 Cal



## Sides +\$1.75

**Wisconsin Mac & Cheese** 270 Cal  
**Tossed Green Salad** 30-110 Cal  
**Caesar Salad** 80 Cal  
**Tomato Basil Bisque** 140 Cal  
**Thai Chicken Soup** 120 Cal  
**Chicken Noodle Soup** 120 Cal



## Soups

**Reg \$6.00 Sm \$5.00**

**Thai Chicken**   
 370 · 250 Cal

**Tomato Basil Bisque**   
 430 · 290 Cal

**Chicken Noodle**  
 360 · 190 Cal



## Shareables

**Reg \$5.00**  
**Just For You Sm \$3.00**

**Potstickers**  
 [6] 380 [3] 220 Cal

**Cheesy Garlic Bread**   
 [6] 700 [3] 350 Cal

**Meatballs**   
 [6] 700 [3] 350 Cal



Menuboard "After"

# THE RESULTS

- New menu (with individually priced items) and menu communications provides customers more clarity around the ordering process and their guest check.
- New menu additions, Signature Flavors and Make It a Meal offering, have high customer appeal which positively impact average check and margin.
- Combining consumer attitudes and usage insights with data-science purchase behavior resulted in a "win-win" for Noodles and its customers.

# KING-CASEY IS THE FIRM THAT THE WORLD'S LEADING RESTAURANT AND FOODSERVICE BRANDS COME TO WHEN THEY WANT RESULTS

King-Casey, founded in 1953, provides practical, data-driven insights and research-validated solutions for restaurant and foodservice brands. We are renowned as the leader in providing comprehensive, turn-key Menu Optimization Services that increase Sales and Profitability.

Our team of industry professionals provides a suite of totally integrated menu optimization services. Collectively, our services provide advanced solutions that enable our clients to unlock the full potential of their menu communications, and achieve significant, measurable business results.

No other firm provides such comprehensive menu optimization solutions. Our Suite of Services Include:

- Consumer insights
- Transactional analysis
- Demand-based pricing
- TURF analysis
- Menu reengineering
- Menu strategy
- Menu communications
- Path-to-purchase zone communications
- Total Store Communications

The Benefits Are Immediate and Meaningful

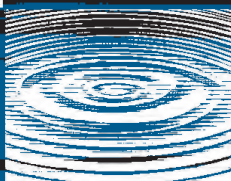
- Increased sales and profitability
- Totally integrated solutions
- No loss or dilution of insights and data due to their transfer from one consulting resource to the next
- Cost and timing savings resulting from combining the full suite of services under one umbrella

## Want to Know More?

Please call Tom Cook, Principal, King-Casey at (203) 571-1776 or email Tom at: [tcook@king-casey.com](mailto:tcook@king-casey.com). Take the first step in optimizing your menu and increasing your business performance.



KING·CASEY



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