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MAGAZINE



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WENDY'S LAUNCHES NEW CAREER APPAREL 14



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Wendy's® New Career Apparel a Perfect Fit for a Class of One image

There's nothing uniform about Wendy's new line of career apparel. The new line was developed at the request of restaurant teams and refined through surveys, reviews, and in-store tests with both employees and customers. The result? A complete wardrobe of bright colors, comfortable fits, and stain-repelling fabrics, making it Wendy's most upscale line of career apparel ever.

"Wendy's uniforms have had a similar color palette for 18 years," says Tom Mueller, president and chief operating officer of Wendy's North America. "It was time for a change. The way our restaurant teams look and feel is key to them delivering exceptional service. This new career apparel is something customers notice and respond to immediately."

"The new line is really a major aspect of the total customer experience," says Ellen Rose, director of design for Wearguard Crest. Rose and her staff worked with a team of Wendy's representatives for 18 months to develop the new clothing line. "It's a very exciting change for Wendy's and we believe it will have a major impact on customers, managers and crew."

Attractive, well-fitting clothes make a difference in how employees feel about themselves. A clean, modern look also goes a long way in differentiating Wendy's from the competition. From head to toe, the new line gives a more contemporary impression, and is designed to remain current for several years. And, the new clothing should be cost neutral, meaning it won't cost stores any more than the previously approved uniform line.

Fashion Meets Function

Bright new colors provide the most noticeable change. Eye-catching tones of sapphire, coral red, lime and yellow saturate crew tops, complementing each other and offering choice to the Wendy's system. The colors work well with different skin tones, restaurant decors and even geographic locations.

"A key intent behind the redesign was to offer more choice," said Joni Dingledine, manager of supply chain management. "All the different colors give the look freshness and energy."

Beyond the vivid tones, a host of improvements increase wearability, durability and style. "A major trend in retailing right now is for clothes

to be less oversized and more fitted to the body," says Rose. "We incorporated that into the new line by eliminating many of the pieces of clothing that were intended to fit both men and women. Now the clothes are cut to better fit men's and women's shapes."

In addition to offering a better fit, hardworking new fabrics were chosen to meet the demands of the restaurant environment. Premium soil-release technology was incorporated into crew shirt fabrics to keep them looking fresh and clean through an entire shift. Water spills bead on the surface of manager shirts and can be easily brushed away. Easy care poly-cotton blends were selected to minimize maintenance. "If you pull the pieces out of the dryer promptly, a slight touch-up with an iron will do," says Rose.

Details Make the Difference

According to Charles Nance, Wendy's manager of special projects in operations administration, research indicated that customers wanted to more easily differentiate between managers and crew. The new fashion line accomplishes this by offering managers a selection of professional pieces that complement

Fresh, eye-catching tones of sapphire, coral red, lime and yellow.

Premium soil-resistant technology keeps fabric cleaner.

Fitted shirts tucked into pants, and neat, well-groomed hair deliver professional appearance.

Permanent eyelets hold name badges and etched, dyed-to-match buttons complete detailed look.



The designer's illustrations demonstrate the synergy of colors.



the crew items, but in more muted colors for a dressier, more professional look.

No detail was overlooked in developing the attractive, high-performing career apparel line. All shirts have permanent eyelets to hold name badges. Buttons are dyed to match and etched with the Wendy's name. Jackets have a locker loop so that they can easily hang from a hook. There even are fingerless gloves for use at the Pick-Up Window to make handling money easier.

New, clean uniforms boost crew morale and are a crucial component of the Seven Employment Promises. To give customers even more confidence in the quality and safety of the food served at Wendy's, appearance and apparel guidelines have also been revised to outline standards of personal grooming, presentation and hygiene. For example, shirts must be tucked into slacks, belts must be worn and hair must be neat, groomed and clean. (See *Doing it Dave's Way*™ on Page 21 for a complete review of these guidelines.)

Launching a Look

In April, company area offices and franchisees will receive packets of information including a DVD, color catalogue and order form, and revised crew/manager appearance and apparel guidelines.

Career Apparel Guidelines

Crew apparel ensemble includes:

- Woven or knit top
- Woven web belt
- Cap or visor
- Nametag
- Black flat-front pants

Manager apparel ensemble includes:

- Woven top
- Tie or scarf (optional)
- Black leather belt
- Nametag
- Black or taupe pleated dress pants

Implementation of the new career apparel line will begin in May, with every restaurant in the system scheduled to convert to the new apparel line by the fourth quarter of 2006. This will give ample time for both franchise and company operators to manage their current uniform inventories and complete the move to the new line.

"Response to the new line has been very positive from both employees and customers," says Dingledine, who led the redesign project. "It was truly designed to help employees look and feel their best."

The clothing was tested in four Columbus restaurants, and customer and crew response has been enthusiastic. "I've had this shirt for a few months now and it looks like it did when I first got it," says Rodney Jacobs, training store manager in Dublin, Ohio. He's noticed a change in the restaurant atmosphere too. "As you have brighter colors it seems you have a brighter environment and everybody is more cheerful and enjoys their work a little bit more."

That sentiment is echoed by crew member Cynthia Chen, who adds, "They're really colorful. It makes me happy." **W**

- Barbara Wayman



New career apparel will be available May 1.

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