

McDonald's fast-food restaurants

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PaperPrompt

McDonald's corporation is undoubtedly the largest fast food chain in the world with its primary sales being in French fries, cheeseburgers, and breakfasts and soft drinks. In the recent times, McDonalds has introduced fruits, carrots sticks and salads to its menu. The company is currently in operations in 120 countries worldwide serving 54 million clients and employing over 400, 000 worldwide, a sharp contrast to 1940 when Mac & Dic McDonald started it.

With such expansions, McDonald's is often associated with the globalization symbol and a spreader of the American ways. The company also has several restaurants such as Boston market, Piles cafes and has stakes in Pret a manger and has had stakes in Chipotle Mexican Grill and Donatos Pizza. The chain usually offers counter and drive through services, McDrive popular on highways and low-density cities. Some play facilities such as the McDonalds Play place and McDonald's play land with special attention to the different children age groups.

The ' Forever Young' concept was introduced in 2006 in an attempt to redesign the restaurants. This included a change of its colors to warmer shades red and yellow and an addition of sage green and olive. The plan also included the use of more wood and brick, in place of plastic. The new look would also include several zones such as the flexible, grab and go linger all with specific music. (Wikipedia 2007). MacDonald's has been suggested to be the largest private establishment in the US with one of eight Americans having been a McDonald's employee at some point of their life. It has also been said to be the single largest buyer of potatoes, pork, beef and apples. (Schlosser 2001). In Australia, over 66, 000 people are employed in the 441 outlets (Goliath Business News 2005)

The international expansion process of McDonald began in the late 1960, in Canada then later to Japan, Germany, Australia, France and England in that order. These six countries rack in over 80% of the international sales income, warranting the title of "The Big Six". In most cases, the expansion into international market was met with enthusiasm and made global headlines. In 1990, McDonald's entered Russia and was met by more than 30,000 people who braved a cold winter day. To date, the Russian crew serves over 50,000 people daily. In 1992, a 40,000-person crowd and a similar situation also transpired in Poland welcomed McDonald's to China.

The international expansion led to the improvement of service delivery standards of those markets. For example, the 1975 entry of McDonald into East Asia led to the demand for high restroom hygiene standards in other food establishments as McDonald had demonstrated to them. However, Klein's book "No Logo" has been in the forefront of the antiglobalization campaign, citing that globalization has led to the crowding out of the smaller local players.

Klein further says that the globalization process has been perfected by the kinds of McDonald's through franchising and the operation of gas station mini-outlets. This led to the creation of a synonymous air of McDonald's and hamburgers. McDonald like other Brand Bullies, phase out the local enterprises by offering the lowest prices, which they can afford due to the bulk purchase of raw materials and the voluminous sales (Klein 1999).

The McLibel case of the early 1990's in which two Britons, Helen Steel and David Morris were directly involved in a protest titled 'what's wrong with McDonald's?' led to the emergence of a seven-year-old battle. When steel

and Morris began the protest, McDonald's protested and used them for illegal defamation. The two-year-old trial that ensued put McDonald's in the spotlight, as the High Court of Justice in London scrutinized the company's advertising strategies. As expected, the press had a field day covering the classic Goliath versus David battle. However, after an appeal to the high court by the Steel and Morris team, McDonald was awarded £40 000 instead of £60 000.

The amount was lowered due to the fact that the court proved some of the allegations of Morris and Steel to be true. One of the established claims was that McDonald's was exploiting children during its advertising. This was through the creation of lucrative cartoon characters and use of mascots, which lead to the association of these characters with McDonald's by the children.

Children would nag and disturb their parents so as to go to McDonald's. McDonalds was also accused of being anti-union and was not keen on doing so because of the fact that it had several franchised units which were after treated as owned by individuals. McDonald's was also accused of being cruel to animals.

Due to the several links made to McDonald's menu and obesity McDonald's has cut off supersized meals from its menus and included healthier options such as salads and fruits. Two overweight girls' case was brought up, with the girls claiming that their overweight states was as a result of eating regularly at McDonalds. The "Supersize me" documentary film of 2004 by Morgan Spurlock demonstrated how foods that was exclusively McDonald's contributed to the obesity problem.

This film also demonstrated the psychological and physical well being status as being compromised. Spurlock consumed a total of 5000 calorie's each for the one-month experiment period. After this period, Spurlock gained a total of 11. 1kg, a total 13% body mass increase. Other than that, he became moody and lost interest in sex. This film was aired at the Sundance Film festival, leading to the removal of the supersized meals from its menu. The company also started putting nutritional information in small print.

In 2002, McDonald's declared the reduction of trans fat cooking fat content by early 2003. However, when the fat was not changed McDonald's was used for not making the information about its failure to change the oil public. This led to a court order that demand McDonald's to spend \$1. 5million in the publishing of its notices on the trans fat initiative status. It also led to the donation of \$7million to the Public Education on trans fat by the American Heart Association (Wikipedia 2007). In 2002, McDonald's was sued by vegetarian groups for misrepresenting of its French fries. This was because the French fries were fried in beef tallow despite the fact that McDonalds had discontinued this practice in 1996. However, to date the French fries in circulation in the US contain beef flavoring.

McDonald's has been in the forefront in making sure that it retains its market share despite the tirades of criticism. The most fundamental policy is that McDonald has ensured that quality standards of its food and beverages are not compromised. This has been coupled with an involvement with only the most reputable supplies with the same objective. To ensure this is adhered to regular monitoring and testing of the ingredients is conducted while using only the most stringent of standards. It has been

noted that several agencies of the government has many a time used the McDonald's standards as models of their regulatory procedures.

McDonald has also deliberately supported food safety procedures and systems that are entirely science based. The food safety measures include microbiological control, high sanitation standards and effective pest control. The worldwide recognized Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan as an effective preventive measure against food borne diseases. McDonald's is also in the forefront in ensuring that its suppliers adhere to the highest food safety standards such as temperature levels and a demonstration that all likely hazards have been addressed through point of control critical management (McDonald's Corporation, 2006). McDonald has made liaisons with independent experts of the international scientific Advisory Council so as to be in the know about latest development in the beef and chicken industries.

At the grassroots level, the restaurant, productive measures have been taken. Staff are oriented and trained on the expected standards of work from the first day of employment. There is also deliberate preparation of staff for promotions making them motivated and committed to their work. Before a shift manager is entrusted with the management of an entire shift, they are ensure enrolled in an entire course on food safety and safety standards which included training from the stage of supply, delivery through to handling during preparation. These food safety processes are closely monitored by consultants specialized in operations of staff. The need for expert intervention of the training programs is identified through regular onsite evaluations.

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