

KFC — MCKENZIE FOODS

Multi-Generation KFC Franchisee Achieves Efficiency with Oil Management System



Results

- **Safety and cleanliness:** KFC franchisee McKenzie Foods installed the Restaurant Technologies oil management system to make its operation safer and cleaner.
- **Grease Lock:** the new Grease Lock patented disposable filter pad and metal frame filters are more flame-retardant, adding another layer of defense in its drive to be safer.
- **Operational efficiency:** efficiency in back of house has improved by reducing the number of hours required to do manual parts of the oil management process.
- **Quality and consistency:** The Restaurant Technologies system has helped McKenzie Foods make significant changes that have enhanced the company's product.

McKenzie's grandfather started with one restaurant as a second career after retiring from his primary career. He had heard about the Kentucky Fried Chicken concept and thought it sounded interesting, opened a restaurant—even met the Colonel—but sadly passed away at his restaurant kitchen while he was working one day. McKenzie's mother stepped in and used the business as a way to finance her children's college educations. She operated three restaurants in Lafayette, Indiana, until she retired in the mid-2000s.

"The choice came down to selling them or continuing on as great testimony to what my grandpa and my mom started and built up, so I got involved," McKenzie said,



taking the number of restaurants from three to 18. "My mom still calls and checks on how the 'stores' are doing. It has been a good thing for my family. My hope now is that there is someone in the family behind me to takeover!" he added.

After 10 years at the helm of McKenzie Foods, maintaining the mindset established by his grandfather and mother remains the number one goal today for Jim McKenzie. "The biggest thing for us is to always be as efficient as possible. If there are ways to improve the process that make us safer, cleaner, more efficient, or more profitable, that's how to run your business responsibly. We're constantly looking for ways to improve," McKenzie said. "Improve, improve, improve."



KFC franchisee Jim McKenzie has a lot invested in the success of his business as the third generation of his family to be owning and operating KFCs since his grandfather began it all in 1965.

KFC franchisee owner
Jim McKenzie





Safety and Cleanliness

That philosophy is what led McKenzie to install Restaurant Technologies' oil management system. "I had seen it on the road and wondered what it was about, especially when other KFC franchises started using it. We tried it in one restaurant, and it didn't take long to realize that we wanted to do it in all of our restaurants," he said.

Before the Restaurant Technologies systems were installed throughout the family's KFC restaurants, the oil management process was very manual. "But with manual, came some other things we weren't crazy about. We were always worried about the safety of our employees when handling oil, and especially getting used oil out of the restaurant," McKenzie said.

In addition, the time it took to change and manage the oil and the randomness that can occur during that process was not in line with the "efficiency" theme pervasive throughout the company.

McKenzie said, "It was one of those tasks employees sometimes liked to push off until the next shift came in. It was just too random for us. And the whole process of

shuttling oil to and from the dumpster outside was messy, not clean and not safe. It was just asking for spills and mistakes to be made, and accidents to happen. You know that when oil gets on the floor, you can't always see it, but once you put your foot on it, you know it's there."

While employee safety was paramount, cleanliness was also a big issue. "Inevitably the used-oil receptacles are right by the drive-thru, so every drive-thru customer sees them. Eliminating the manual part of the oil management process makes it a cleaner operation for customers both inside and outside," he said.

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In the 10 years since implementing the system, McKenzie said the company has seen a decrease in safety incidents. “There have been fewer back injuries, slip and falls, and the number of workers comp claims is as low as it has ever been. We have done other things to make our area safer for employees, but safety and cleanliness were the two big reasons we chose to install the system,” he said.



Grease Lock: First Line of Defense

One of the other things McKenzie Foods did to enhance safety and cleanliness was to install a new Restaurant Technologies feature: the Grease Lock patented disposable filter pad and metal frame.

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Grease Lock takes the place of traditional baffle filters. It features a unique heat-resistant fiber, designed to deliver exceptional grease filtration. The feature reduces the risk of flames entering the hood and flue, as well as reducing the frequency of hood cleaning, maintenance on the roof, and baffle filter cleaning.

McKenzie said, “When we heard about Grease Lock, we thought it just made sense. We tested it in two very busy locations and decided this was a good concept. The filters are more flame-retardant versus collecting dust and grease that moves up the vents. So basically we’re cleaning the vents all the time now.”

Operational Efficiency

Another benefit of installing the Restaurant Technologies oil management system is how it helps with efficiencies in back of house.

McKenzie said, “The amount of labor and hours required to do the job has been positively affected. We’ve eliminated some time-consuming parts of the cooks’ job, which frees them up to do other things. We can redeploy those hours to get the cooks to be more involved in managing product and being more efficient team members.”

He believes that being able to make the cook’s job a little more attractive through more automation is key to recruiting the right people to apply for that all-important position. “The cooking part of the back of house is so important. Reducing the number of hours required to do the manual parts of the job has helped significantly,” he said.

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Quality and Consistency

From a product standpoint, the oil management system has had a large impact on the quality of the company's product and controlling cost of goods sold, McKenzie said.

In terms of quality and consistency in the oil and chicken product, McKenzie said it's probably as important as just about any other product they use in their process. "Next to chicken, oil is probably the most expensive thing we use," he said. "For that reason, we need to be efficient with the managing of it and making sure it is top quality."

"It didn't take long for us to be convinced that it's a good thing for us to do. The benefits showed themselves quickly. Employees like it for its ease of use, safety and cleanliness, and the ability to automate the less pleasant parts of the job. The benefit for the company overall is that people are polishing and filtering properly now, and the quality and visibility of their check sheets they fill out at end of day prove this point," he said.

McKenzie said the Restaurant Technologies online client portal also helps enhance the quality and consistency of the product.

"We're not perfect by any means so it helps that we get information from the system about the need to reorder or other information. Again, because oil is the second most expensive thing on our ordering slip, the more efficient we can be, the better our bottom line is going to be. It helps us with decision making and tells us where to make changes right away. We get notification right away, so that's a good thing," he said.

McKenzie said he also really appreciates Restaurant Technologies' input and the partnership that has developed between the two companies. "You are an important part of our business. You guys are out there trying to find ways to help us run our business better—efficiency, quality safety and so on. And I appreciate the work you guys do and the huge benefit to us. It feels like it's a real team."

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FOOD QUALITY



EFFICIENCY



SAFETY



SUSTAINABILITY

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