QSR CASE STUDY

APP-ETIZING WEARABLES: MEASURING SMART TECHNOLOGY'S IMPACT ON THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

AT-A-GLANCE

- **Simulated wearable and smart technology to gauge interest and usefulness.**

- **Launched a pilot of the tech at one location to continue testing in a real life environment.**

- **Tested the pilot at three other locations with different value props to understand the tech's effectiveness in different types of restaurants.**

CHALLENGE

One quick-serve restaurant wanted to be the host with the most, spicing up their employee and customer experience with new wearable technology. For this QSR, delivering genuine hospitality is a main priority, and they wanted to explore the potential to support team members with smart watches powered by on-site cameras and artificial intelligence. The company tapped into The ExperienceBuilt Group's experience design consulting service to assist with research and development that would help them understand how early stage tech would impact their business.

How can wearables and smart technology help team members deliver a better guest experience, make their job feel easier, or reduce their cognitive load?

01 Test Technology in Conducted Simulations

We orchestrated a 20-minute snap-shot of the dining room, complete with customers arriving, ordering, "eating," and having interactions with QSR staff at their tables. With strategically-placed cameras, we used a trained AI to alert smart technology. The simulations lasted for about 20 minutes, and team members determined they were interested in the tech and thought it was worth exploring further.
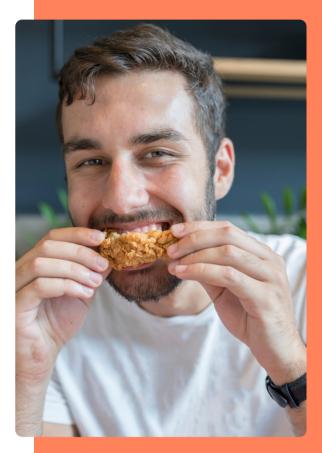
02 Launch the Tech at One Location

After conducting a second round of simulations, we decided to test the wearable tech in a real restaurant. We launched it at one location for the QSR, expanding from the dining room only into the drive-thru. We monitored the progress of the pilot in-store, spoke with customers and staff about how the test impacted their experiences, and launched a functional online dashboard. Using this information and a final debrief with team members, we determined that the technology had the potential to reduce cognitive load for employees, increase care for guests, and improve business operations by connecting all areas of the restaurant through data-driven leadership.

03 Expand the Pilot to Different Locations

The technology wasn't quite ready to be streamlined until we tested it in a few different locations. We expanded the pilot to three locations with three very different value propositions. Customer intercept surveys and check-ins with various team members helped us come to a conclusion: the wearable technology provides value in some areas but is hindered by technical limitations, and communication using the watch was overall inefficient.

IMPACT

The result? We gave the QSR confidence in how to continue exploring this technology in the context of their business goals. We helped them validate or debunk hypotheses and identified adjacent users that weren't part of the original charter. Furthermore, we consulted in the co-creation process for developing a pilot package for future restaurant pilots to use for new technology rollouts.

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