



'IT HAS TO BE HEINZ' AT RESURRECTED NORTH WEST CHIPPY!

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In the grand scheme of things, how important really are the condiments you use in your fish and chip shop? John Wild, who bought Tarnbrook Chippy in Heysham, near Lancaster, just over a year ago, would not dream of offering his customers anything but the best, believing attention to detail is as imperative to business success as the piping hot fish and chips he serves up. Here, he explains why, when it comes to rich, incomparably comforting condiments, 'It Has To Be Heinz'...

Estate eats its heart out

At the back end of 2009, fish and chip aficionados on the Kingsway council housing estate in Heysham, Morecombe, stopped to do a double take.

Tarnbrook Chippy had re-opened after being closed since 2004 when the previous owners did a disappearing act in the middle of the night. However, nothing prepared them for the transformation of the 1960s chippy, rescued, resurrected and revamped by local couple John and Hilary Wild, who bought the shop within a block of council flats in 2007.

Prompting a few jaws to drop on the estate, the new look shop sports a razor sharp exterior of glass, stainless steel and cool grey, super contemporary interior with gleaming white walls with stainless steel equipment and fittings to match.

There are three large TV screens behind the counter displaying the menu, advertising, U-Tube video clips and entertaining slideshows, as well as Wi-Fi so customers can communicate on the go. The shop also has snazzy glass sliding doors, which John believes is a first for the region.

The piece de resistance is an enormous, vibrant painting covering one full wall which depicts Heysham and its famous shoreline and promenade, painted by local artist Chas Jacobs.

As homage to renowned sculptor Eric Gill, who created exquisite stone carvings and reliefs for Morecombe's recently-restored Art Deco Midlands Hotel, John is also using the famous Gill Sans typeface, used on the London Underground Map, on his advertising, branding and logo.

"It's definitely a far cry from the usual chip shop in a terraced street, which we have a surplus of in the North West," said John. "When we bought Tarnbrook Chippy, or Tarnbrook Fisheries as it was then known, everything was worn out and unfit for purpose due to lack of investment. We ripped everything out and revamped out; even the toilet roll holder was chucked in the skip.

"The TV screens and sliding doors are a bit of a talking point as there isn't really anything like it up these parts. We also have a wheelchair access ramp, which is so long I am thinking of trying to get it into the Guinness Book of Records as the country's longest."



“For the industry to stay fresh, this is what fish and chip shops of the 21st century should be about; not back street chippies of the past. Staff wear branded matching uniforms and headgear, and are instructed to greet and thank customers with Sir or Madam, not mate or love, which is how customer service should be. We’re not about competing against other fish and chip shops; we are taking on the fast food giants that are sometimes not about local communities.”

The physical transformation comes as Tarnbrook Chippy celebrates its first month of trading with the Wilds at the helm, and with month one exceeding all expectations, 2010 is set to be a cracker. Offering a feast of sustainably sourced fish such as cod and haddock from the cool waters of Iceland and Norway, the chippy has quickly won itself fans with unusual offerings such as calamari and even salmon, both surprising hits on the council estate.

In the coming months, John and Hilary plan to introduce a breakfast menu, selling tea, coffee and pastries, bacon buns and sausages. Demonstrating just how serious they are about building trade, they will soon be changing the shop name to Tarnbrook Chippy and Breakfast Bar.

Advocates of ‘wacky’ ideas, the pair have attracted a wealth of local and regional newspaper and TV press interest in their time through the likes of John’s annual Battered Christmas Pudding and during Wimbledon season, Strawberries in Champagne Batter. John now also writes a weekly cookery column for local newspaper, The Visitor.

Each bit of success is a great sense of achievement for ex-driving instructor of 18 years John and former secretary Hilary, who bought their first chippy, the Packet Bridge in the picturesque village of Bolton-le-Sands, six miles outside Lancaster, in July 1999.

“When we took on the chippy, I had never fried a fish before in my life,” said John. “It was a complete change of direction and I have to say, we didn’t know what we were doing to start with. After just a few months, though, we had built up a reputation for quality fish and chips.

“Three months from opening, we had achieved the benchmarking Fish Friers Award and the rest is history. Before we knew it, we were being featured in the local press and in Tony Mudd of Rough Guide fame’s Tip-Top Fish and Chip Shops. In 1999, we had a 10 year business plan and after working our backsides off, we delivered it. Now, we’re looking forward to the next era.”

It Has To Be Heinz

Despite the recession, Tarnbrook Chippy refuses to compromise on quality to sell ‘on the cheap’, investing only in the best. For example, it swears by Whitby scampi, the Rolls Royce of scampi, according to John, which sells at £4.10 for a 10-piece portion excluding chips, a price locals are happy to pay. “A secret of our success is that we buy the best and sell the best,” said John.

“We do not cut corners and always use decent produce and products, it’s as simple as that. Branding is also very important to us and we won’t sell cheap alternatives. When it comes to condiments, everyone loves Heinz and, therefore, that’s what we offer.



"Our main seller is Heinz SqueezMe! Tomato Ketchup, which is priced at 25p per pod and virtually flies out the window. We also get through a huge amount of Heinz SqueezMe! Garlic Mayonnaise, which has a really fantastic taste. I like to go to Spain a lot and out there, I swear by Aloli garlic mayonnaise. Heinz Garlic Mayo is easily as good as this, which is a mean feat, I can tell you. We are also looking to invest in the new Heinz SqueezMe! Variety Pack this year, so we can have smaller quantities of the sauces that we don't sell as much of.

"It's not just about grab 'n' go condiments such as SqueezMe!. We also sell the 342g bottles of Heinz Tomato Ketchup by the shed load, which is impressive as it's not the cheapest brand in the fast food industry. We also have bottles of HP Brown Sauce under the counter for those that like it, which will become even more important when we launch our breakfast bar.

"The point is, if I sell rubbish, I do not see customers again. If I sell quality, I'm set up for repeat business. Only the best condiment brands will do the job. We are in the process of printing new menus and the Heinz logo will be on there. We don't have to go into detail; the logo says everything customers need to know. It's subliminal. That we are selling quality."

Biggest campaign in five years

This key message is currently being explored in the biggest combined retail and foodservice campaign from Heinz in five years. 'It Has To Be Heinz' focuses on the deep connections the Heinz brand holds and the fact some things 'have to be', identifying key platforms to understand consumers' motivations when deciding what to eat.

The platform 'Perfect Partners', for example, brings to life the emotional connection naturally made between Heinz Tomato Ketchup and a piping hot plate of chips.

According to a new survey of UK caterers conducted by market research company Cambridge Direction, Heinz loyal caterers would not switch to another brand or own label because of the risks involved, namely customer rejection and complaint, poorer taste and appearance. They know the power of the brand¹ and will not compromise, whatever the incentive.

Already live in retail with TV and radio adverts and consumer promotions, 'It Has To Be Heinz' will continue through 2010, and, in foodservice, will concentrate on seven iconic products; Heinz Tomato Ketchup, Heinz Mayonnaise, HP Sauce, Heinz Salad Cream, HP BBQ Sauce, Heinz Classic Soup and Heinz Beans, all in a variety of great catering formats.

'It Has To Be Heinz' will be very specifically foodservice-focussed using the latest statistics and research, alongside caterer promotions and ways to make Heinz work even harder on menus.

SqueezMe! heroes unite for business

Heinz SqueezMe!, the innovative sauce pod with profit prowess, is offering operators a recession-busting way to give customers more choice in their favourite sandwich condiments.

Following demand, Heinz Foodservice has launched the new Heinz SqueezMe! Variety Pack, comprising a famous five of sauces from the most-loved brand in the award-winning format.



The pack contains 80 pods, made up of **20 Heinz Mayonnaise, 20 Heinz Garlic Mayo, 20 Heinz Tartare, 10 HP Brown** and **10 HP BBQ**, for the ultimate 'grab n go' all rounder.

Brand manager for Heinz Foodservice Tal Drori said the five flavours were carefully chosen in direct response to industry feedback. "We understand some smaller operators and outlets are keen to offer customers a greater choice of SqueezeMe! flavours, but do not necessarily need them in the same quantity.

"For example, they might easily get through a case of Heinz Tomato Ketchup a week, but might not be able to justify buying a case of Heinz Mayonnaise or HP BBQ Sauce. The Heinz SqueezeMe! Variety Pack gives caterers the opportunity to offer customers more choice in their favourite sandwich condiments during a tough economic climate."

Heinz SqueezeMe! not only holds at least twice the sauce of an average sachet, with ergonomic packaging for maximum sauce control, it is a proven profit generator and a perfect example of a product that consumers are willing to pay for at the point of purchase.

Operators pay between 10p and 12p per 26ml pod and can charge a minimum of 20p to the consumer, highlighting an instant profit. According to research, customers do not mind paying this to enhance their experience², reassuring operators who know serving Heinz raises the perception of their outlet, but believe sauces of this type are a cost to their business.

For further information on Heinz Foodservice, visit www.heinzsight.co.uk or call 0800 57 57 55. For more on Tarnbrook Chippy, located just off junction 34 on the M6, call 01524 852211.

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Sources

1. Heinz is voted the most-loved food brand in the UK and second best food brand in the world (FreshMinds survey 2009 and Interbrand Best Global Brands 2009)
2. IPSOS Survey 2009

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