



## D'Angelo Unveils New Concept

[2005-06-06] D'Angelo Sandwich Shops today officially took the wraps off a new strategic approach to competing in the quick-service dining category. The initiative includes an updated brand positioning heralded by a new name, D'Angelo Grilled Sandwiches; a modern facility design; and a new branding program. Designed in conjunction with Columbus, Ohio-based WD Partners, the new concept is intended to leverage D'Angelo's point of distinction— sandwiches and salads featuring freshly grilled meat and poultry.

“This is a major repositioning for us, a whole new brand experience that is more relevant to today's and tomorrow's consumer” says Michael McManama, vice president of marketing for the chain of more than 200 company and franchisee-operated restaurants. “We've adopted a new descriptor attached to our D'Angelo name that focuses more attention on what our guests love most about us— menu items like our Steak & Cheese and No. 9. And, we're offering guests a more inviting environment...warmer tones, more comfortable furniture, an updated color palette, and other attributes that invite them to dine with us more often.”

The rebranding effort is designed to “enhance the customer experience through personal interaction, sampling programs, and other gestures,” according to a company release. “We want our guests to come in more frequently and we want to get more dine-in business. It helps take our brand experience to another level if people feel equally comfortable dining on-premise as they do ordering food for take-out, and we're hoping we can also expand our dinner business,” McManama explains.

Standard features of the new D'Angelo concept include a graphics package, interior and exterior signage, a bartop and stools offering single seating, a booth package featuring cloth and soft vinyl in warm color tones, exposed brick walls emblazoned with the new logo, an open, exposed ceiling with track lighting, wood floors, and other elements. The upscale positioning is rounded out with a comprehensive branding package that includes packaging, uniforms, menus, menu boards and other visual components.

D'Angelo's new design also adopts a “food is theater” philosophy wherein guests are afforded clearer, closer views of their orders as they are being prepared. The visuals not only draw greater attention to the grill but also showcase the chain's recent move to offering freshly tossed salads.

“WD helped us achieve a number of improved efficiencies,” says McManama. “We cut between 80 and 100 square feet from the back of the house. We reduced walking time. The sandwich-making process is now faster, and we have less wasted space. “We expect this to make a more attractive, economical proposition that will help make our corporate operations more profitable and add topline revenue to attract prospective franchisees.”

D'Angelo began testing the new concept in several locations earlier this year. Most recently, a new D'Angelo Grilled Sandwiches restaurant opened in Westford, Massachusetts, on May 19, following the debut of two locations in late February and early March, respectively, in Westborough and Newburyport, Mass. A remodeled unit also opened in the Boston Medical Center on May 17. Early results from the initial locations have exceeded expectations.

“We've surveyed consumers about their experience, and 98 percent of our guests who were surveyed rated us a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 where 5 was best,” McManama says. “Team members in each location are ecstatic over the new, refreshed look and about the reaction of the guests who are coming in, and our franchisees love what they've seen thus far.”

D'Angelo will open its next new-format site in Enfield, Connecticut this summer and plans to have as many as 20 new-concept locations open by the end of February 2006. In addition to the new design, several of the new restaurants also are being used to test a variety of new products. Among the menu items making their debut are a line of “Toasted Classics” sandwiches, as well as French fries, onion rings and pita chips.

