

10 Hot Concepts Coming for the Chicken Crown

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PDQ

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PDQ had success written into its business plan from day one. Created by MVP Holdings CEO Nick Reader and Bob Basham, one of the co-founders of Outback Steakhouse, PDQ was more than two years in planning before it debuted October 30, 2011 in Tampa, Florida. Inspiration struck when Basham and Reader found a neighborhood chicken joint called Tenders during a North Carolina road trip. They made a deal on the spot with the mom-and-pop and began crafting the concept you see today, which has spread across 11 states. PDQ (or People Dedicated to Quality) opened its latest restaurant March 20 at the Tampa International Airport's Southwest and Frontier Airside C. This marked the debut airport unit for PDQ as well as its first to offer breakfast. There are currently 62 locations with stores slated for Norman, Oklahoma; Skokie, Illinois; Orland Park, Illinois; Winter Park, Florida; Tallahassee, Florida; Orlando, Florida; and Deerfield Beach, Florida. Back in 2016, Reader told QSR 100 units was on PDQ's radar. In that year's Drive-Thru study, PDQ showed why it's been such a hit in markets its opened so far. At 97.4 percent, PDQ topped the 15-brand study for employees who "made eye contact." Coming in at the same clip, PDQ was also No. 1 for "pleasant demeanor," even besting fellow-chicken chain Chick-fil-A, often cited as the benchmark for customer service in this field. It was second behind Chick-fil-A in the "smiled" metric at 84.6 percent, coming in ahead of Panera Bread and Starbucks, and said "thank you" 92.3 percent, which, again, trailed only Chick-fil-A.