

SEARCH [Advanced Search](#) [Archives](#)

Home > [Marketing Daily](#) > [Friday, Dec 1, 2006](#)Welcome [Sign-in](#) | [Register](#). Fri, Dec 1, 2006
[EMAIL THIS ARTICLE](#) [PRINT](#) [REPLY](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#) [TODAY'S EDITION](#)

## Wendy's, McDonald's Beef Up Gift Cards

by Lisa Bertagnoli, Friday, Dec 1, 2006 5:00 AM ET

COUNT WENDY'S, MCDONALD'S, DENNY'S AND IHOP among the restaurant chains that have either added gift cards to their product lineup, or replaced paper gift certificates with electronic, reloadable cards.

The cards sell.

McDonald's added "Arch Cards" to its paper gift certificate program last year, and sold 4.5 million cards in December, a spokeswoman said. The chain is on track to handily beat that figure this December, in part because of "Writable Ronald" cards, introduced Nov. 30, that enable gift-card buyers to write a personal message on the cards.

Denny's cards, rolled out Sept. 5, "are doing great," said Alice Crowder, director of new products marketing for Spartanburg, S.C.-based Denny's.

Non-expiring gift cards, most of which are reloadable (Denny's is not), also act as portable marketing devices. The wallet-size pieces of plastic are emblazoned with the chain's name and frequently a menu item. IHOP has emblazoned its cards, rolled out for 2005's holiday season, with its Rooty Tooty Fresh n Fruity pancake offering, while Wendy's gift cards, rolled nationally Nov. 23, also feature menu items.

The cards also offer an operational benefit to chains. "Gift cards will give us better metrics...we can track everything from total sales to redemption," said Bob Bertini, a spokesman for Dublin, Ohio-based Wendy's. Bertini said Wendy's will accept paper gift certificates through 2007.

Wendy's launched the cards by giving away 80,000 \$1-value cards at airports across the country to passengers who showed a middle-seat boarding pass. The kickoff played off the current "Stuck in the Middle" ad campaign for Wendy's Double Melt Burgers. Through mid-December, customers will receive a \$1 gift card with the purchase of a Double Melt sandwich. Bertini said the chain expects to give out 8 million cards.

To promote the cards, chains are using everything from television commercials to in-store marketing materials. Denny's servers wear buttons listing reasons to buy the cards ("because Grandpa loves our pancakes," "because she's so hard to shop for").

At McDonald's, servers' name tags are shaped like Arch Cards; an acrylic display case, register toppers and tray liners also tout the cards. Glendale,

### Today's Most Read

1. [Yahoo Pilots Social Sites For Brands](#)
2. [Former MTV Digital Czar Joins Slingbox](#)
3. [Wendy's, McDonald's Beef Up Gift Cards](#)
4. [Microsoft, Disney Dominate Corporate Media Coverage, Wal-Mart Drops To Fifth](#)
5. [Merrill Lynch: Yahoo Branded Revenue To Grow 21% In 2007](#)

Calif.-based IHOP promotes the cards with a 3- to 5-second tag at the end of commercials as well as with ceiling danglers in the stores.

Since gift cards are portable, cross-marketing opportunities abound.

McDonald's gift cards are sold at Safeway-owned supermarkets, and Denny's is exploring the option of selling its cards at drugstores and convenience stores. That way, "we'll be reintroducing ourselves to people who don't regularly visit us," Crowder said.

***Lisa Bertagnoli can be reached at [lisa@mediapost.com](mailto:lisa@mediapost.com)***

## Recent Marketing Daily Articles

[Coca-Cola, Caribou Plan Iced Coffee Launch](#) Dec 1, 5:00 AM

[Beverages] Coca-Cola North America and Caribou Coffee plan to launch a line of premium ready-to-drink iced...

[Wendy's, McDonald's Beef Up Gift Cards](#) Dec 1, 5:00 AM

[Restaurants] Wendy's and McDonald's are among the restaurant chains beefing up the marketing of gift cards...

[Discounters Stumble, Macy's Shines In November](#) Dec 1, 5:00 AM

[Retail] With the exception of Target, consumers don't want to shop at discount stores the way...

['80s-Themed Promo No Trivial Pursuit For Heinz, Hasbro](#) Dec 1, 5:00 AM

[Packaged Goods] Heinz and Hasbro are partnering on a holiday promotion that puts questions from the...

[Passikoff's Priorities: Engagement Top Trend For 2007](#) Dec 1, 5:00 AM

[Trends] In his annual roundup of trends for the New Year, Brand Keys President Robert Passikoff...

[Hewlett-Packard's Reputation Takes A Hit; Microsoft Tops List](#) Dec 1, 5:00 AM

[Research] Hewlett-Packard dropped from 10th place to last in the latest Delahaye Index, which analyzes the...

[Target Muscles In On Macy's Herald Square](#) Nov 30, 5:00 AM

[Media] New York's Herald Square, the home of Macy's, has a new attraction -- an interactive...

[Specialty Food Interest Peaks With Seasonal Nostalgia](#) Nov 30, 5:00 AM

[Food] It's the time of year when consumers seek out the tastes of their past, and...

[Automakers Roll Out Their Green Lines In L.A.](#) Nov 30, 5:00 AM

[Automotive] The Greater Los Angeles Auto Show kicks off today, and the big news comes from...

[Smarting From Softer Sales, Chico's Rethinks Its Marketing](#) Nov 30, 5:00 AM

[Retail] Chico's, one of the first retailers to successfully target affluent older women, is shifting its...

[>> Marketing Daily Archives](#)

[ABOUT MEDIAPOST](#) • [MEDIA KIT](#) • [PRIVACY](#) • [TERMS & CONDITIONS](#)



©2006 MediaPost Communications. All rights reserved.  
1140 Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10001  
tel. 212-204-2000, fax 212-204-2038, [feedback@mediapost.com](mailto:feedback@mediapost.com)

Ads Powered by  
**ACCIPITER**