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# Smart Start

Kitchen design, planning makes or breaks restaurant

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**T**he kitchen is the biggest profit center of your operation. With a little tweaking, you can ensure it — and your staff — are performing at peak, and that you're keeping customers and staff by living up to your brand promise.

Smart kitchen design is important, yet restaurateurs often want to skimp on this area of their operation. "Why cut money from what makes you money?" asks Tom Galvin, President of Galvin Design Group, a food facilities consultancy based in Orlando whose client list includes Pizza Hut, Olive Garden and Christini's Ristorante Italian. "Why hack where you can potentially produce millions of dollars?"

While kitchen equipment isn't cheap, a proactive

approach to discerning your operation's unique needs will ensure it's going to serve you well.

Locations, footprints, concepts and menu are always different, so no two kitchens are ever identical. But Galvin and Chet Gabris, general manager of Kessenich's Ltd., a full-service food service distributor in Madison, Wisconsin (both former commercial cooks themselves), know what it takes to take any restaurant kitchen from 'Edsel' to 'Maserati' without necessarily spending a lot of money.

## Length of guest stay

The first step to designing a profitable kitchen, says Galvin, is to know for certain what type of restaurant you are inviting your guests and employees to, and therefore the expectations you're setting up for them.

## Kitchen Savers

Give your kitchen a quick tune-up with these money savers:

- ▼ Combination ovens both steam and bake.
- ▼ Undercounter refrigerators reduce steps.
- ▼ A wall grid system keeps tools at arm's reach and are built to move when needed.
- ▼ Put the dishwasher in site of the head chef, who can call for platters and plates if there is a run on a particular dish.
- ▼ Garbage compactors reduce dumpster trips and save money by reducing the frequency of waste removal.
- ▼ Water-saving spray heads cut down on water utility bills.
- ▼ Reach-in refrigerators can be more energy efficient than walk-ins.
- ▼ Look for more energy star products, increasingly available in the foodservice sector.