

The Restaurant of
the **FUTURE** is not a

Restaurant

wd

You would think it would be impossible for the definition of “restaurant” to change. It’s a fairly straightforward concept.

restaurant (noun)
a place where people pay to sit and eat meals that are cooked and served on the premises

Well, all apologies to Merriam-Webster, but it’s not that simple anymore.

60%

of US consumers order
delivery or takeout
once a week

– NRN



76%

of people under 25 said they
like to hang out with their
friends at a restaurant

– C-Store Magazine

Now it’s fairly easy to see why the original restaurant definition is dated, at best.

What is a Restaurant Now?

ONLINE ORDER PICKUP



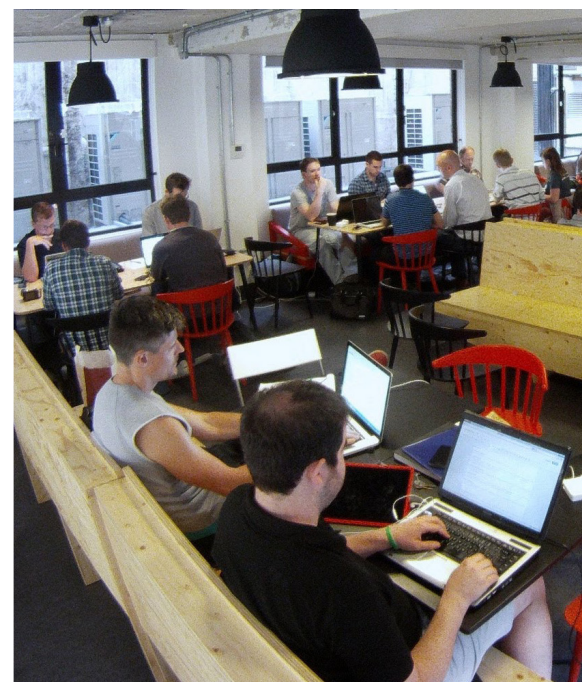
DELIVERY HUB



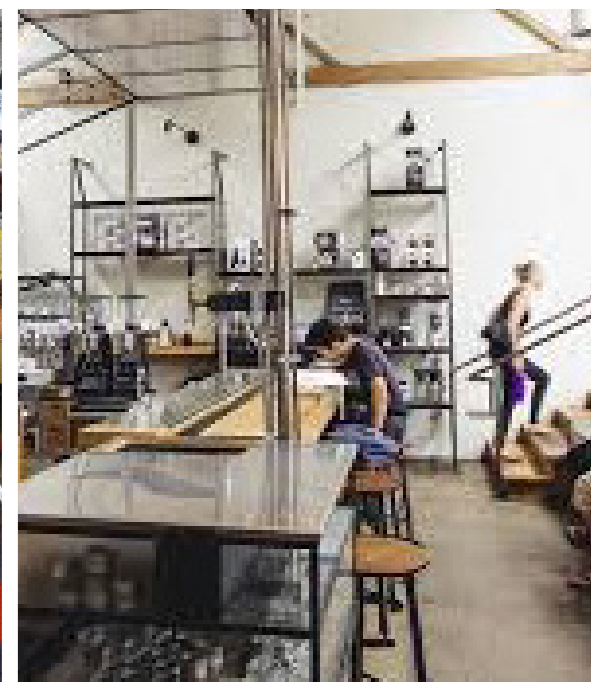
MANUFACTURING FACILITY



WI-FI HANGOUT



EXPERIENCE PLATFORM



The Troublesome Quick-fix

The quick fix is often makeshift delivery stations/fulfillment kitchens shoved into the corner of the restaurant, complete with a few Pickup Parking Only signs in the parking lot. Then there's the sacrificing of revenue to third-party services, but that's an entirely separate article.

Now there's nothing inherently wrong with a quick fix, because at least those restaurants are trying to do something, instead of dying a slow death. But when you take an existing restaurant and modify it to be a pickup center/delivery hub/manufacturing facility, it's almost guaranteed that the new restaurant is not designed for a better customer experience or for employee efficiency.

The resulting quick fix version of the traditionally-defined restaurant offers pickup and delivery, but pickup and delivery customers have to navigate to a certain corner of the restaurant and guests dining in the restaurant have a diminished experience because every five minutes someone walks past their table with to-go boxes and bags.

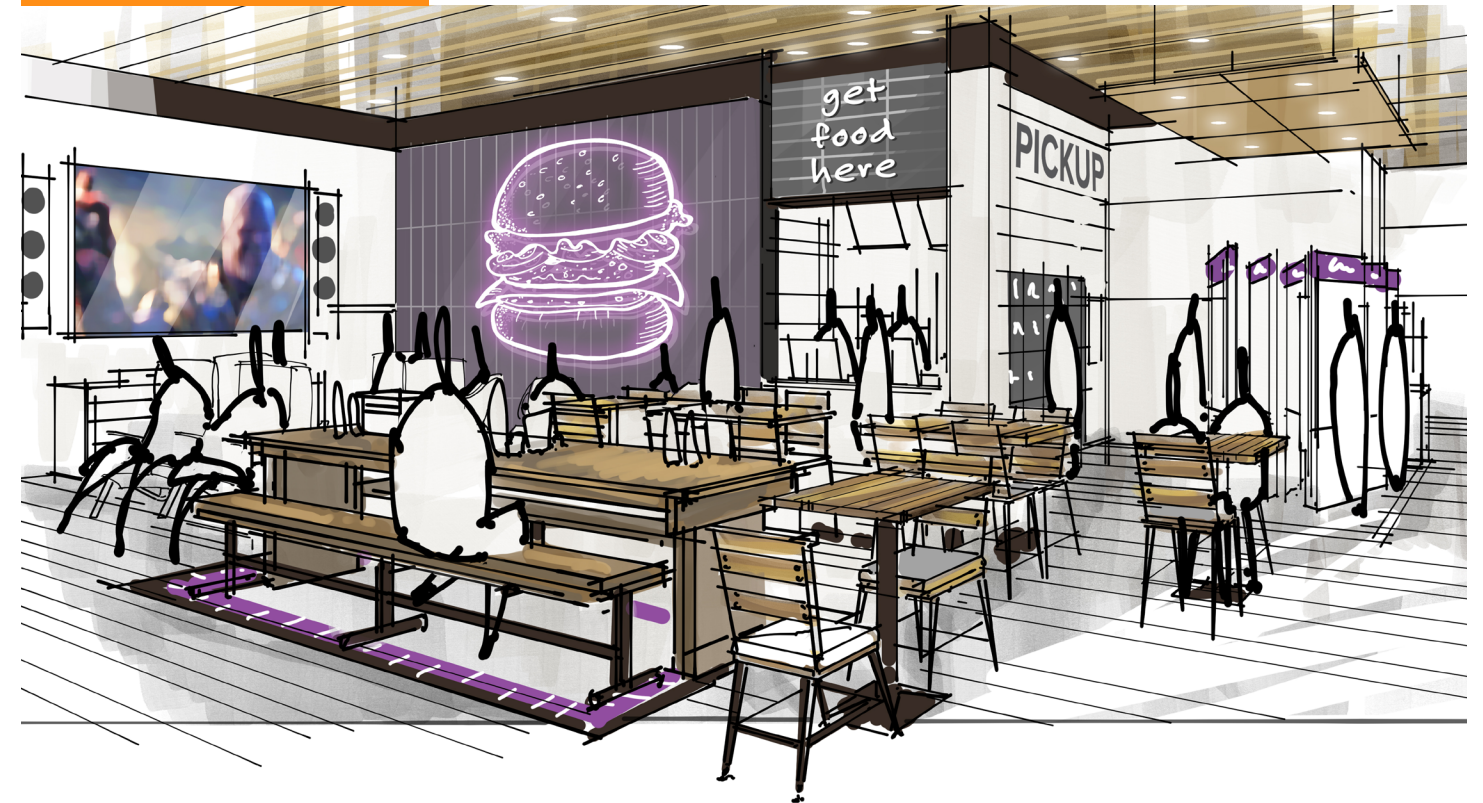
The Non-Restaurant Restaurants

The better option, though, a 21st century foodservice operation, allows for sustainable growth. This operation features two key restaurants as part of its portfolio: **the experience platform (rendering 1)** and **the food dispensary (rendering 2)**. Our experience platform and food dispensary strategy take into account the new definitions of the restaurant and the new expectations of the restaurant customer.

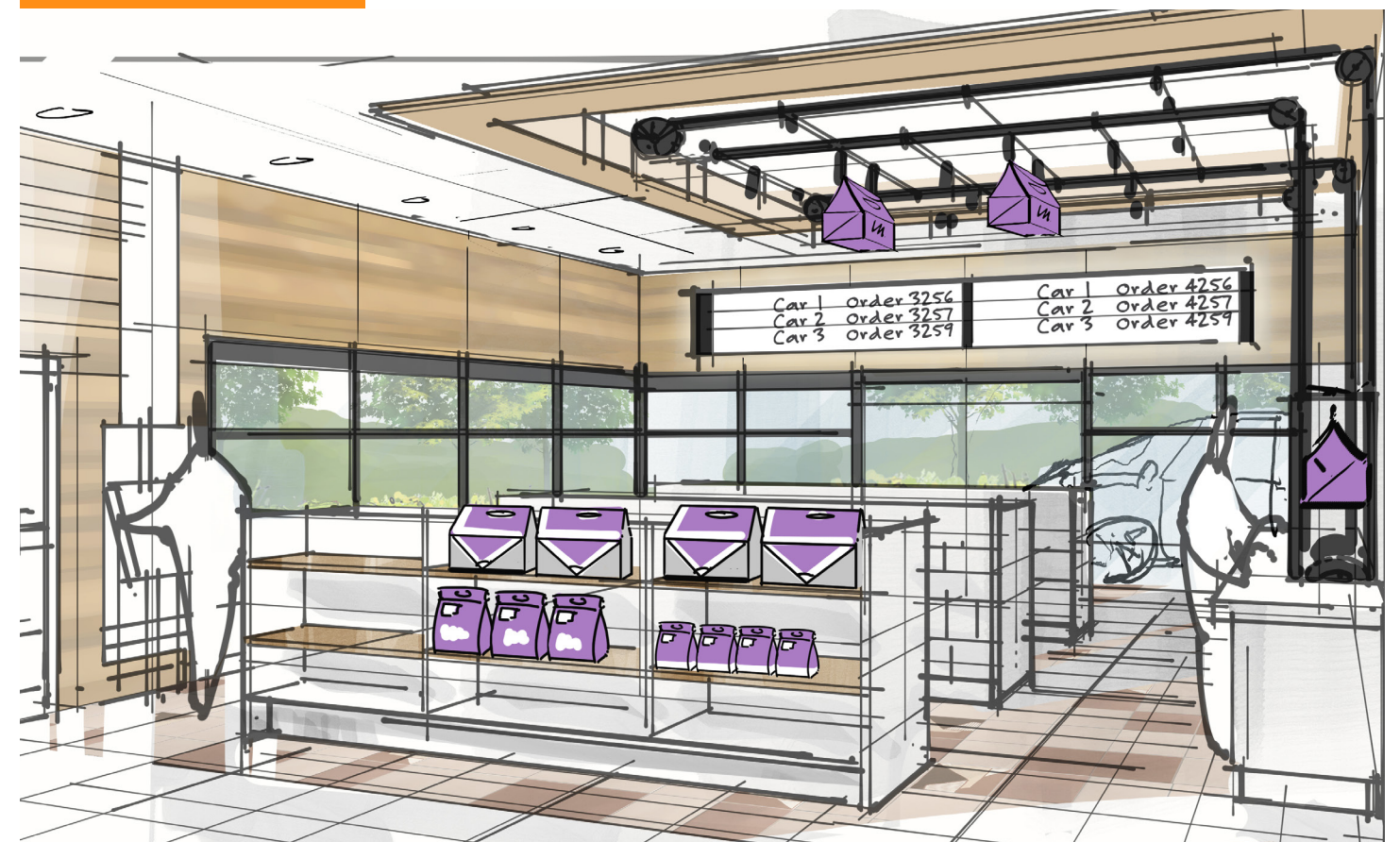
As the name implies, an experience platform is designed around a unique dining experience that consumers are seeking when they are in the mood for dining away from home. This rendering depicts a potential experience platform.

The food dispensary is a brand-owned fulfillment hub designed to produce takeout/delivery meals for the surrounding area. It's not shared with 73 other brands, it's not part of a dark warehouse with no windows. It's a kitchen that's operated efficiently and exclusively for food that is consumed off-premise. Our rendering shows what a brand-controlled food dispensary looks like.

EXPERIENCE PLATFORM



FOOD DISPENSARY



In order to complete the 21st century foodservice operation, the experience platform and the food dispensary must work in harmony via strategically selected locations throughout a region.

The illustration (right) shows an example of the way this lines up with a city like Columbus, OH. Using sales data, a restaurant brand would determine location types where experiential locations are the right fit and dispensary locations provide fulfillment coverage and minimum wait times for the most customers.

While it may seem costly to revamp your fleet of restaurants, we’d argue it’s more expensive not to. The benefits of a well-oiled, strategically planned 21st century foodservice operation are extensive:

Less cost to operate

Less labor costs

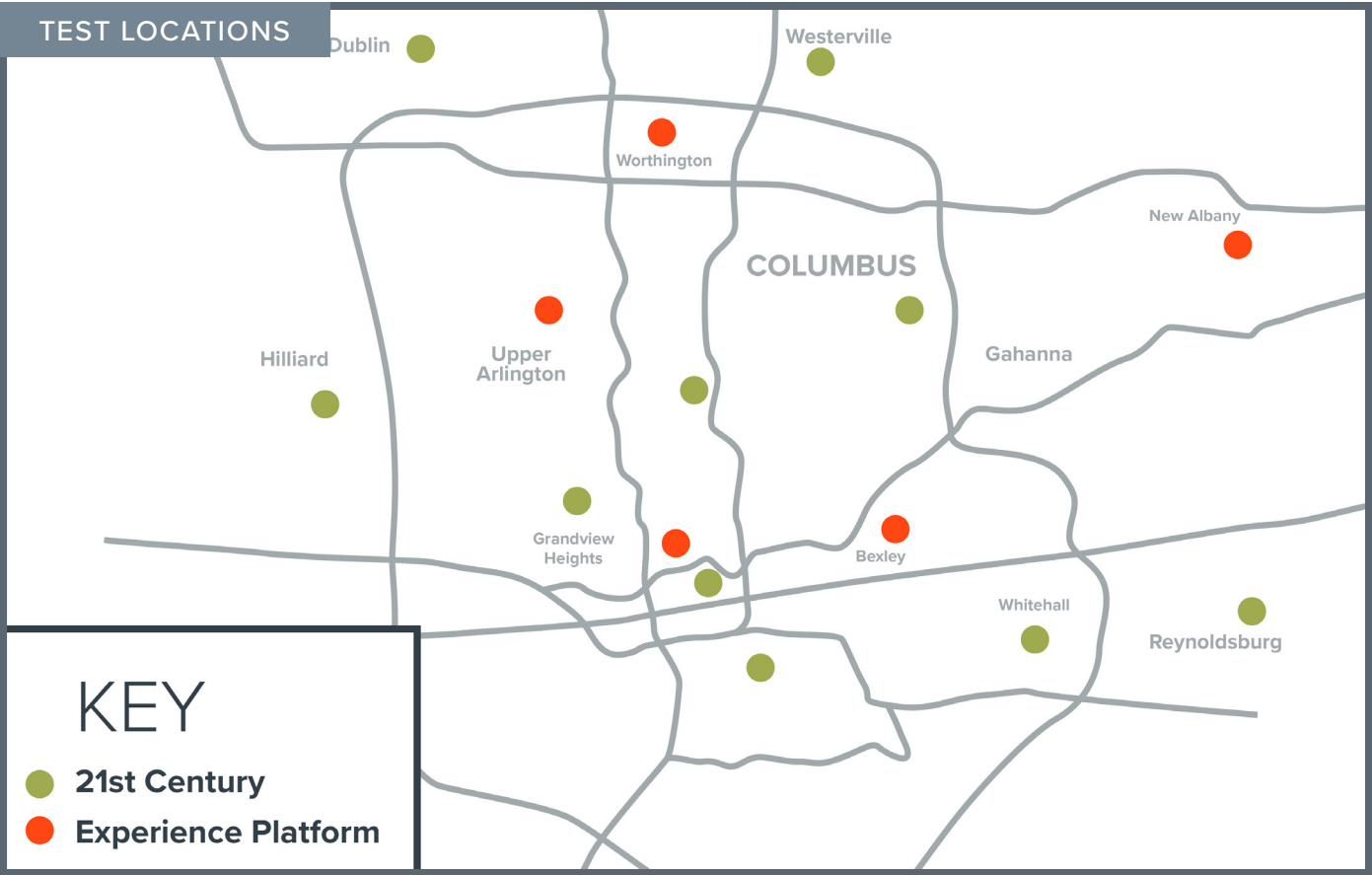
No third-party platforms stealing revenue

Less buildout

Less maintenance

Restaurants are definitively much more than just restaurants today. Whether they’re consuming their meals while watching the head chef, in between duckpin bowling or during a Netflix binge session, smart operators will adapt beyond the quick fix and reap the benefits of satisfied customers and happier employees.

**At WD, we have the restaurant design and operations strategy expertise to bring your 21st century operation to scale. Are you ready to evolve?
Contact us at TalkToUs@wdpartners.com.**



**Restaurant’s remodel
program average budget
\$700k-\$1m**

VS.

**21st Century Kitchen /
pick up / delivery “box”
remodel cost \$400k-\$500k**

**Restaurant maintenance
cost 2% of sales = \$30K**

VS.

**21st Century Kitchen
cost \$12K**