

AUGUST 2024

Fast Food Update

The **Fast-Food Bargain Meal War** continues to rage on as America's iconic brands compete to show value at a time when fast food giant prices have spiraled out of control.

Check out these latest developments:

- [Fox Business shares](#) the current best deals:

- Taco Bell Luxe Cravings Box for \$7
- Wendy's \$5 Biggie Bag
- McDonald's \$5 Meal Deal
- Pizza Hut \$7 My Hut Box
- Burger King \$5 Your Way Meal

- [Taste of KFC Deals](#): \$4.99 Meal for One, \$20 Family Meal

- [Subway](#): \$6.99 Footlong Sandwiches (Remember the \$5 Footlong?)



In other Food News...

[FoxBusiness reports](#) that **Del Taco** was recently named the #1 U.S. fast food chain, replacing **Chick-fil-A**, which fell to #3 behind **KFC**. What a SHIFT!

[Taco Bell will expand AI technology](#) at its drive-throughs, which thus far have been tested at 100 locations across 13 states. Let's see how messed up some of those orders will be when confused customers change their mind and want to start over.

[And QSR Magazine reports](#) that Chick-fil-A's new concept building features a kitchen on the second floor plus a conveyor belt system that delivers orders to team members at two meal fulfillment areas on the ground level and there will be no indoor dining.



Disruption: Vari and VariSpace Style

In case you have not kept up with “**The Office of the Future**” or “**Work From Home**” furnishings, please allow me to introduce you to my friend Jason McCann, “Disruptor Extraordinaire.”

He is also the CEO of [Vari](#) (formerly Varidesk)– the originator of **the sit-stand desk** that is available in 18 configurations and as many as 11 different color options, depending on the model.

To say his Varidesk is popular would be an understatement. Today he has 100% market penetration within the Fortune 500, so each of America’s leading companies has bought his product.



How many of us can claim that?

His innovations continue to expand with the creation of [VariSpace](#) – the building he bought in Southlake (with other locations in Coppell and Las Colinas) that feature all the Vari product lines.

Jason shared his entrepreneurial journey at the **Southlake Chamber of Commerce** luncheon held at his VariSpace Southlake campus on Thursday, August 22.

He created the adjustable desk in response to his boss, Dan Flaherty, who was experiencing tremendous back pain. When Dan told his doctor that his back hurt whenever he sat down at his desk, she replied with timeless wisdom: **Then, just stand up more!**

Dan stacked boxes and started working with his own makeshift standing desk. Dan and Jason researched standing desks online and there was no workable solution for less than \$2-3,000.

Over a three-hour period with their industrial designer, Jason and Dan developed the initial concept for what became the Varidesk – a spring-loaded platform that could be ready to work immediately right out of the box and offered a variety of sitting and standing heights.

Truly, necessity WAS the mother of invention!

As the two of them sat together on a flight to China to meet with manufacturers, they shared a copy of the **Wall Street Journal** and read a quote from the **Mayo Clinic** that reaffirmed they were on the right path.

“Sitting is the new smoking.” The message confirmed that the two of them were on a God-given path that they needed to pursue.



They noticed the intense readership of the **SkyMall Magazine** among the flyers and decided to invest \$25,000 in the publication. Within three months, SkyMall reported that the Varidesk ad was being torn out of the magazines and flyers bought the desks for themselves and their offices.

Varidesk became the #1-selling item in SkyMall history.

Jason has disrupted the work and home furniture industries. Here are his three keys to creating disruption:

- **Disrupt Yourself – make yourself uncomfortable**
- **Build a Disruptive Business**
- **Prepare for Disruptions**

Jason and Dan were named the **2017 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year** and Jason was named **D CEO Magazine's 2021 CEO of the Year**.

When Jason spoke to us last Thursday, he had just returned from Mary Kay Cosmetics, where his team was unveiling a “Mary Kay Pink” prototype of the Varidesk.

And one more thing: Jason is a skilled artist who creates unique pieces of art and auctions them off to benefit local nonprofits.

Now THAT is a heart of service!



Olympics Fatigue: Plus, Winners & Losers

There are way too many Olympics stories to share in this limited space so I have curated a few for you to review. Please click on these links to learn more:

- Olympics winners and losers: Simone Biles, Noah Lyles, and the [Pommel Horse Guy who won gold](#)
- [USA Today: Winners & Losers](#)
- [Raygun "Kangaroo Hop" during Break Dancing competition](#)
- [Biggest Loser: LeBron James draws backlash on social media](#) over his stern interaction with a young fan when he refused to give an autograph

Olympics Innovation

This one will shock you. [FastCompany.com reports](#) that as Olympic athletes jumped off diving boards and flipped through their artistic water synchronized swimming sports routines in the Paris games, their pool was **heated by a nearby data center**.

What?

The Aquatics Centre, which was built specifically for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, kept the temperature of its water around 80 degrees thanks to recovered heat from the nearby Equinix data center.

Data centers house servers that generate massive amounts of heat. As a result, the center produces enough heat to accommodate about 1,000 homes. Without a means of capturing and offloading the heat, it would simply be released into the atmosphere.

That same concept is developing here in the U.S. [ITPro.com reports](#) that Google plans to use the waste heat from one of its data centers to warm nearby homes and businesses as part of a \$1 billion investment.

Suddenly, having data centers in our communities could offer positive, unexpected benefits.



Tiebreaker: Diet Mountain Dew Appeals to Both Sides

USA Today calls it the Bipartisan Bubbly.

Both of the Vice Presidential candidates share a mutual affinity: Diet Mountain Dew. Yes, these ice-cold cans of neon-colored, super-citrusy, caffeine-laden blasts appeal to **Republican JD Vance and Democrat Tim Walz**.

Finally, the two sides agree on SOMETHING!

The benefit to each party is that Diet Mountain has its deep roots in rural America –the area that financial analysts call “The Mountain Dew Belt.”



Worthy of a Chuckle

USA Today reports that Gen Z is experiencing “Tattoo Regret.” Social media may be to blame. The article shares that “Hey, wouldn’t it be hilarious to...” may not be the best long-term reason to make an indelible life decision!

Coming next month: Launch of Customer Experiential Audits (CXA)

- How the condition of your restrooms is costing you business and employees
- How companies that replace their receptionist with an automated phone tree lose relationships and customers

WISDOM FROM THE SAVANNAH BANANAS

The Savannah Bananas have five cultural rules. #1 is to **Eliminate Friction**. Ask your customers and your team members how you make your customer experience less than perfect. Listen and you’ll be astounded at what they tell you.



Coming Next Month!

Launch of Customer Experiential Audits(CXA)