

Inspired Design

Weigel's drew inspiration from industry "friends" to develop its newest store

By Danielle Romano

A Tennessee staple, Powell-based Weigel's Inc. sees its core purpose as being to "wow" its customers. With its newest state-of-the-art, full-service convenience store in Clinton, Tenn., the retailer delivers on that promise and then some.

While its 63rd store is seemingly like other Weigel's stores, with brightness and cleanliness that showcases the iconic Weigel's brand, the Clinton store is unique with the addition of a dedicated diesel bay, centrally placed Weigel's Kitchens foodservice offer, and multiple entrances in the front and back — one of which is dedicated to professional drivers.

ments to fit our needs and aesthetics," she explained.

KEEPING IT FRESH

Designed with truckers in mind, Weigel's Clinton location offers wide-turn lanes for easy navigation and ingress/egress; diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) at the pump; and the Smart-Q payment system. The store, however, also reaches out to a broad demographic of commuters, locals and tourists with its signature 16-fuel position gas pumps for cars and small trucks.

"The customers at [this store] are a mix of local residents that live in the Clinton, Tenn., area, business owners, recreational commuters, travelers and professional drivers," Havelly said. "Given the diverse nature of [this store's] customers, we have a diverse product and service offering that includes a separate diesel fueling station with wide diesel lanes and DEF at the pump for professional drivers."

The 5,000-square-foot location, which opened this January, also offers Weigel's Kitchens, the brand's new, proprietary made-to-order food and beverage program where customers can order freshly prepared items like paninis, pizzas, burgers and quesadillas.

The Weigel's Kitchens foodservice kiosk area also brews up organic coffee and prepares specialty, barista-style espresso drinks like lattes and cappuccinos. In fact, the cappuccino recipe is Weigel's own recipe made from Weigel's milk from its dairy, real sugar and real coffee, including organic espresso beans, according to Havelly.

Also unique to Weigel's Kitchens is fresh fruit and yogurt smoothies, as well as a proprietary line of iced



Weigel's 63rd store is unique in that it features multiple entrances in the front and back.

To arrive at the new look and feel of this location, Weigel's owner and CEO Bill Weigel and President Ken McMullen visited several "friends" in the industry for inspiration, Charlotte Havelly, the company's director of marketing, told *Convenience Store News*.

"Our store design incorporates both the ideas and learnings from the industry and our own design require-



Weigel's Kitchens is the chain's new made-to-order food and beverage program.

tea, iced coffee, and frozen granitas like mocha latte and piña colada.

In the mornings, Weigel's Kitchens bakes signature, grab-and-go, encased breakfast biscuits stuffed with eggs, cheese and sausage or ham. Other breakfast offerings include breakfast pizza, paninis and the Sweet Glazer, which is similar to a grilled cheese but sandwiched between a Weigel's glazed doughnut as opposed to bread.

In the afternoons, lunch customers can opt for healthier options such as green or chef salads, or indulge a bit with a Polar Blast treat with a candy or cookie mix-in (which resembles a Dairy Queen Blizzard), shakes or soft-serve ice cream.

Weigel's Clinton store offers fresh-baked goods including doughnuts, muffins and cookies, too, delivered daily from Weigel's Knoxville-based bakery. And fresh milk is delivered locally from Weigel's Powell, Tenn., dairy, which was established in 1931.

"We deliver daily milk from our own dairy and doughnuts, muffins and cookies from our own bakery for all our customers," Havelly pointed out. "We also serve best-in-class beverages like brewed organic coffee and frozen drinks, which is easily paired up with a bag of chips or an energy bar. Our goal is to offer something compelling to everyone."

The chain currently has five locations with the Weigel's Kitchens concept and plans to open four

ground-up builds before the end of this year that will feature the foodservice program.

A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

In addition to the grab-and-go and made-to-order food items, fresh bakery goods and specialty drink offerings, Weigel's clean, spacious and uncluttered Clinton store allows customers to comfortably navigate the aisles.

Open 24 hours a day, other store amenities include:

- Three entrances, with one dedicated to professional drivers;
- No-fee ATMs;
- Prepaid Card Center with reloadable debit cards, long distance wireless cards and gift cards from top brands like Amazon and Sony Playstation;
- Lottery tickets;
- An auto body section specific to this location that includes the most common trucker accessories and necessities for professional drivers;
- Window squeegees, large trash bins and air outside in the forecourt; and
- Fuel types like diesel, regular unleaded, 100 percent premium unleaded and DEF.

Once again with professional drivers in mind, this new Weigel's store is the first fully equipped with Comdata Smart-Q, a payment system that enables drivers to fuel up quicker so they can get back out on the road sooner. The solution reads a RFID chip that's been previously installed in the tractor-trailer. A RFID antenna at the canopy of the fueling bay reads the driver's tag and before the driver exits the vehicle, he or she must enter prompted data before fueling.

"Authorization controls ensure that purchases conform to [the professional driver's company] standards and policies [and] automatic pump shutoff upon departure boosts security and reduces the risk of fraud," Havelly noted.

All customers who download the Weigel's mobile app from the Apple Store or Google Play can take advantage of promotions and utilize the store locator, but the "really cool feature" is mobile pay at the pump, Havelly insists.

"If you are part of our fuel discount rewards program, you can use the mobile pay-at-the-pump feature and get your fuel discount. This is yet another offer we give our customers to help them get in and get out as fast as possible — with a positive experience, of course." **CSN**