

Delivery offers convenience to night owls

By Jane Campbell

It's 10:30 p.m. Tuesday when you finally set down the calculus book. You shake your head to clear the fog, and try to think logically again. You've been staring at that book for almost four hours.

Suddenly, your stomach kicks over and lets out a growl. You sure could use something to fill up that empty pit in there. In fact, if you don't fill it fast, you just might pass out.

No problem. You just reach across the desk for the phone, dial a familiar number and presto! Within 30 minutes, you are chowing down on pepperoni and cheese on wheat bread, potato chips and a Big Chipper cookie, compliments of Little King's delivery.

Several restaurants deliver to campus. Depending on the time of day, hungry students can order almost anything from a steak sandwich to barbecued chicken in a bucket to a super-

deluxe pizza with extra cheese.

The future of restaurants is in the delivery business, several local restaurant owners said.

"A trend in delivery has been going on, and the delivery business is going to boom," said Glenn Rolofson, Lincoln-area supervisor to Domino's.

Competition helps

Domino's had an open market for deliveries during its first years in Lincoln, Rolofson said. Now, more pizza places deliver, he said, and that is good. Competition creates more awareness, he said.

"Competition is healthy," Rolofson said. "It keeps us from getting sloppy."

Valentino's gives Domino's the most competition, Rolofson said, because "everyone in Lincoln has grown up on Valentino's." He said it will take Domino's time to overcome this.

Other types of restaurants now offering delivery haven't noticeably effected

Domino's, he said.

Rolofson said that the competition did cause Domino's to improve the quality of its pizza and get it to customers faster than any other restaurant. Domino's advertises 30-minute delivery and no delivery charge.

Domino's could not exist without the delivery service, Rolofson said, since 85 percent of its business is from delivery. He also said the franchise "would be lost" without business from the UNL campus, which is why they spend a lot of money on advertising to campus.

Valentino's began delivering in the fall of 1982. Its main goal was to provide a service to the campus, especially those without transportation, said co-owner Ron Messineo.

Messineo said he is optimistic about the future of general delivery. He said he sees delivery becoming more important in 10 years.

"One problem we have at Valentino's is that we are not set up exclusively for deliveries," he said. "We also have a restaurant, so it's hard to get a pizza out in half an hour and still have the quality."

But, people are usually willing to wait a little longer for Valentino's pizza, he said.

Business increased somewhat with the delivery, Messineo said, but Valentino's could live without it.

Valentino's delivers pizza, lasagne and any of its take-out pastas. There is no delivery charge.

Delivery started slow

Little King's also began delivery in the fall of 1982. Management had hoped to increase night business, especially from campus, said Steve Mikkelson, assistant manager at the 27th and Y location.

Mikkelson said the delivery service started slow, and many people still aren't aware Little King's delivers, he said. But business is picking up, and the delivery service has developed a regular clientele, he said.

Mikkelson said Little King's has had promotions to make more people aware that it delivers.

He said Little King's delivers everything on its menu, which includes 20 different sandwiches, soup, chips and dinner salads. Little King's charges \$1 for any size delivery order.

Gregg Wiergart, assistant manager of Chartreuse Caboose, said the steak sandwich shop added the delivery service to bring more business in and to compete with other places.

"Actually, delivery isn't that big of a deal here," Wiergart said. "We added it because we felt we had to."

Chartreuse is doing good enough business without it, he said, but sometimes it helps a lot.

Wiergart said Chartreuse prefers to bring customers into the store because management feels they can serve them better there. But, he added, many college students don't have transportation.

Delivery is free from Chartreuse Caboose, but orders must include at least

four sandwiches.

Customers unaware

Not too many people are aware that Pete's Chicken 'N' a Skillet delivers yet, Pete Peterson, the owner, said. Pete's, which specializes in chicken, cheese frenches and ribs, has been open less than a year. Peterson decided to offer delivery as an extra service last November.

"Delivery is just a service now," Peterson said. "We're not depending on it for profit."

But, he said, he hopes in time to become more competitive with the other delivery services to campus.

Pete's frequently delivers to the state office building downtown, he said, but a majority of the deliveries go to campus.

"We like to be able to offer customers something more than just pizza," he said.

Pete's delivers everything on its menu, for a varying delivery charge less than \$2.

Weekends busy

Sunday night is the busiest night for deliveries to campus because the residence halls don't serve food that night. Friday and Saturday nights are also a busy night to order in, the store owners said.

Both Domino's and Valentino's said they deliver steadily during the week, with business picking up around 10 p.m.

Peterson said more deliveries go to Abel-Sandoz and Cather-Pound dormitories than anywhere else on campus.

Delivering to campus can prove to be interesting sometimes, several delivery persons agreed.

Drunk people late at night are the only real problems, though, said Steve Kauf, an assistant manager of Domino's at 611 North 27th Street.

Domino's has had a couple of its delivery persons robbed, but the robbers, who were intoxicated, were caught and prosecuted, Kauf said. No one was physically harmed.

"Sometimes it's difficult to find the person who ordered the pizza, at a party with 20 people really cracked," Harry Moore, a driver for Domino's said.

But people at parties are usually nice, Jerry Vossen, a driver for Valentino's said.

"They know I'm about the same age as they are, so they try to get me to come in for a beer," he said. Vossen is a sophomore in criminal justice at UNL.

Interesting tips are a big part of weekend deliveries, another driver said. A Valentino's driver was offered a piece of Domino's pizza one night, and another one once received a handful of cookies.

A delivery person from Little King stepped into the elevator in Pound one night, and two women bombarded him with confetti.

"Students like to give us a hard time," a Domino's driver said. "But it's mostly in fun and they don't mean much by it."



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