

# Around The Clock



## Up All Night—Businesses Burn The Midnight Oil To Meet Customer Demand

(NAPSA)—The sun has set on the traditional 9-to-5 work day. Today, an increasing number of Americans work and play on a never-ending, jam-packed, 24-hour clock.

Catering to this crowd, a growing number of businesses also operate all day, every day. From grocery stores to health clubs, restaurants to Laundromats, companies are finding that pulling an all-nighter can be a profitable move.

One restaurant operator recognizing the importance of 24-hour dining is Jack in the Box, which was one of the first hamburger chains to offer 24-hour drive-thru service. Seventy-five percent of the chain's 1,850 drive-thrus are now open 24 hours, a convenience the chain said customers demand.

"Our customers are busy people with a variety of schedules," said Paul Schultz, senior vice president of operations and franchising for Jack in the Box Inc. "Convenience and accessibility is very important to them, so we try to offer 'round-the-clock service whenever possible."

Schultz added that 24-hour service helps differentiate the chain from its competitors, many of which close at midnight or earlier: "Staying open while the competition sleeps is a strength for us. Customers have cited in research that our non-stop operations is one of the things that makes them loyal."

One downside, though, is finding staff to work the wee hours of



**An increasing number of businesses are extending their hours to serve customers with night jobs or nocturnal lifestyles.**

the night. In today's economy, however, where second jobs aren't uncommon, late-night shift work has grown more appealing.

"Some of our crewmembers prefer working nights," said Schultz. "Especially those who go to school during the day or those who just like a slower pace."

So, other than fast-food chains, what kinds of businesses are catering to the graveyard shift and insomniacs while the rest of America sleeps? Consider the following, which offer 'round-the-clock service:

- Bowling—Boston Bowl Family Fun Center, Dorchester, Mass.
- Computer repair—The Geek Squad, Minneapolis, Minn.
- Hair styling—Valenti's Hair Studio, Milwaukee, Wisc.
- Car wash—Broadway Car Wash, New York, NY
- Golf practice range—D'Lance Golf, Littleton, Colo.