

QUIET WAITRESS DEBUTS AT DENNY'S RESTAURANT

Denny's Restaurant Executive Says "Come Back in 20-Years Buck Rogers"

Here's an idea for customers to order their breakfast, lunch, dinner, cocktails, happy hour, etc. from the convenience of their table or booth. In 1988, I designed a program called "The Quiet Waitress" originally called the headless waitress; a completely automated restaurant ordering system, where you would order, hail a waiter or waitress, and pay for meals directly from your table. With built-in menu, the system allowed for the host/hostess to check table availability, add customer party names, print cooks station & beverage instructions. The customers would have a touch-screen displayed flush-mounted in the table with automatic screen orientation staring at them, ready to accept their orders. Their names would show up on the screen, and the server, already knowing their names, would introduce him/herself greeting them with a personal touch; "Hello Mary & Tom, I'll be your server for the evening". During the time between ordering & getting served, the party could watch the news and current events, or play games for the kids. Well, I took my new invention to the local Denny's restaurant in Costa Mesa, California, where I set up the mock system and demonstrated it to three executives. The demo went flawlessly well with receipt paper flying out of strategically positioned printers. After the demo, one of them leaned back in his chair and said "Come Back in 20 Years Buck Rogers". Apparently the world wasn't quite ready for the concept. [Below brochure printed in 1988...](#)



John Calicchio

