

# 1 potato 2 potato



Nearly 30 years ago, Canadian french fry maker McCain Foods forged a corporate alliance with McDonald's. It was expedient. Strictly business.

"It started out as a convenience relationship for both parties," says Bob Cornella, McCain's corporate vice president, McDonald's worldwide business unit. "We were in countries where McDonald's wanted to be and McDonald's was where we wanted to be."

Gradually, however, convenience grew into camaraderie. "Over time, it's turned into a partnership, a true, strategically aligned partnership," Cornella says. "It's one of those situations where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. We are number one. They are number one."

With more than 60 companies on six continents, McCain is the world's largest frozen french fry manufacturer. It produces one-third of the world's french fries and is capable of processing up to one million pounds of potato products every hour. When McDonald's went global, McCain was an obvious choice.

"We're in 62 countries with McDonald's around the world," Cornella says.

Among them are the United Kingdom, where McCain introduced local farmers to the Russet potato, from which Ray Kroc insisted all his fries be made, and the former Soviet Union, where McCain helped McDonald's sow its seeds in the 1990s, after the Cold War.

"McCain is really well-known for its agricultural expertise. When McDonald's was going into Russia, we helped them by giving them our people as consultants," Cornella says.

And in 1994, when McDonald's wanted to move into South America, McCain built a french fry plant in Argentina to supply the business. That's no small task—it takes about \$100 million and four to seven years to develop an adequate raw material supply system and build a plant capable of producing a McDonald's french fry.

"It was the first time McCain built a french fry plant at the request of a customer," Cornella says.

McCain turns about 2.8 billion pounds of raw potatoes every year into 1.4 billion pounds of McDonald's french fries.

"I can say unequivocally that McDonald's has the highest specification for a frozen french fry," Cornella says. "They will not deviate or accept anything less." As potatoes go, he says, McDonald's french fries are made from "the best of the best."

And the quality doesn't stop at the fryer. It extends, he says, to every leg of McDonald's famous "three-legged stool," which symbolizes the relationship between the employees, owner/operators and suppliers.

"We are extremely proud to be part of the three-legged stool," Cornella says. "We believe in people, quality, service—and that's basically what McDonald's believes in. It's really a pleasure to do business with McDonald's."





# a forever brand Leo Burnett wants to work on forever

McDonald's is famous worldwide—because of its menu items and because of its slogans.

Slogans such as “Have you had your break today?” and “That’s my McDonald’s” came from marketing/branding powerhouse Leo Burnett USA, which has handled McDonald’s kids and “tween” business in the United States since 1981. More recently, the agency worked on the Happy Meal family, Kids, Ronald and Balanced Lifestyles Global Initiatives.

Leo Burnett’s client roster boasts household names such as Walt Disney, Nintendo, Hallmark and Kellogg’s; yet its employees have a soft spot for the Golden Arches.

“McDonald’s is the best account in the business to work on,” says Cheryl Berman, chief creative officer at Leo Burnett USA, who penned the aforementioned slogans. “It is a brand of the people, a forever brand that will always be on the forefront of people’s lives wherever there is a McDonald’s. It’s a brand everyone at Leo Burnett always wants to work on.”

With good reason—during Berman’s 13-year term as the account’s creative director, she wrote hundreds of McDonald’s commercials, supervised ads, directed TV spots and even wrote music for some campaigns.

“I am probably most proud of the ‘Nothin’ but Net’ ad,” Berman says. “The idea came from two brilliant creatives at our agency. It was No. 1 in the Super Bowl poll the year it came out and won many awards and produced tremendous talk value and word of mouth for McDonald’s.”

The ad featured Larry Bird and Michael Jordan playing an intense game of H-O-R-S-E for a very valued prize: a Big Mac, which Jordan won, thanks to a far-reaching shot from across town. “That single commercial probably generated more response and got more PR coverage than any commercial in the past 15 years,” Berman says.

Leo Burnett also teamed with McDonald’s to create other projects, such as the “Perfect Season” commercial, featuring a peewee football league. Another spot, “Mike,” featured a true story about a McJobs program participant with Down Syndrome. “Mike” won numerous industry awards and inspired the Disability Channel to create the Mike Sewell Award.

To the Leo Burnett staff, McDonald’s is more than just an account.

“We have a great working relationship with McDonald’s,” Berman says. “We feel we play a big part in making this brand known, successful and relevant in people’s lives. We hope to continue working with McDonald’s forever.”

*Leo Burnett*

