



12/21/2020

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## **Church's Chicken® Conversation Tour Spotlights 2020 Wins, Sets Tone for Growth in 2021** *Brand Ends Year with Record Breaking Back-To-Back Positive Sales*

**ATLANTA, GA** – At this year's annual Conversation Tour which wrapped up just late last week, [Church's Chicken®](#) shared encouraging news with its franchisee network. Despite challenges facing restaurants around the world, Church's steered clear of corporate furloughs and pivoted quickly with the support and trust of franchisees to adapt to rapidly changing markets and maintain market share and profitability. Thanks to a Q1 shift towards off-premise dining, family meals, and meal delivery services, coupled with the company's biggest new product launch in years, Church's Chicken announced to its franchise community industry-leading sales results for 2020, at the same time other restaurants and brands were closing their doors.

Even though company-owned and many franchise-owned dining rooms closed for months, the system produced sales results that were only slightly lower than the previous year. [Joe Christina](#), CEO for the brand, attributed the solid showing to the collective ability to adopt an off-premise model and fast track the development of new technologies aimed at improving operations, even at a time when in-person restaurant inspections were impossible. Furthermore, since the launch of its new chicken sandwich in October, the system has experienced consistent positive same store sales with many weeks beating the brand's best-ever sales in a decade.

Other highlights and wins for the brand this year include:

The **"People First, Safety Always"** initiative which moved corporate employees to a virtual environment and the plans implemented that became the industry standard for ensuring a safe return process. The principles of the plan were also adopted in restaurant as the brand was one of the first in the quick-serve category to ship protective barriers, personal protection equipment, and digital thermometers to its restaurants, and require dining room closures as the most effective way to protect employees and guests.

"There has never been a moment's pause as to the importance of each and every one of our team members, franchisees, and even our vendors," said [Pete Servold](#), Executive Vice President, Franchise & Company Operations. "By acting in their best interests, we know we can count on our entire system to act in the best interests of guests and their families. That's a mindset that has to be solid in today's marketplace."

"Doing The Right Thing has been one of our core values for a long time. People know that about Church's now, and its from that place of trust that we've been able to move forward and continue serving guests during these unprecedented times," said [Karen Viera](#), Sr. Vice President and Chief People Officer.

**Cajun Operating Company d/b/a Church's Chicken**  
**[www.churchs.com](http://www.churchs.com)**

**Restaurant Support Center: 980 Hammond Drive, Suite 1100, Atlanta, GA 30328 (770) 350-3800**

On the operations front, *Church's* rolled out its **new Ops360 digital platform** which marks a dramatic step forward in day-to-day operational procedures and utilization of technology to improve speed, quality, and responsiveness. The new system uses interactive tablet computers instead of paper binders for checklists, best-practice recommendations, quick reference to the latest Operations Manual, instant distribution of procedures related to new menu items or promotions, extra training support, and integrated access to performance metrics such as guest satisfaction scores.

"Ops360 is next-generation technology designed to streamline operations, reduce complexity and drive insights at every level – from restaurant management to above restaurant leaders, all the way up to corporate," said [Brendan Berg](#), Senior Vice President of Global Operations Services for the brand. "Not only has this platform allowed us to address performance gaps during our weakest dayparts, but we're also finding that the entire restaurant team is eager to use the new system because it is intuitive, super convenient and loaded with digital resources – the days of paper are over. We are excited about the future of *Church's*, especially the significant growth of our Texas *Chicken* international markets. The OPS 360 System will be a tremendous asset to our franchisees' business, ensuring day-to-day operations and leadership development keeps pace with their rapid expansion plans."

Additionally, ***Church's* unveiled a sweeping new marketing approach** that placed the brand back on national television for the first time in years, along with a greater and deeper focus on one-to-one digital marketing. Sales results and growth in the brand's digital platform served as proof positive that the strategic shift worked.

"We've been hyper-focused on consumer needs," said Chief Marketing Officer for *Church's*, [Brian Gies](#) about the brand's evolved plan. "For food, that means addressing a handheld menu gap solved with the recent launch of our new chicken sandwich. For our restaurant, order ahead, drive thru, and delivery, that means simple and easy convenience. And, for the communities we serve, it means *Church's* meals are a common-sense value that everyone can appreciate. That message is really hitting home right now. People don't need marketing gimmicks, they need and want no-nonsense, simply good, crave-worthy food that travels well, with smart, sensible pricing. *Church's* still does that better than anyone in the business."

"A lot has happened in 2020," said *Church's* Chief Executive Officer, [Joe Christina](#). "It was important for us to make sure we connected with our franchisees in an open forum to make sure we're all united in our purpose going forward. We've pulled together in amazing ways through the challenges of this year, and we're stronger for it. Now, it's time to focus those energies on the road ahead."

"*Church's* has come to be the brand that people rely on – for quality food, genuine hospitality, and as a profitable business to own. That reputation means more than ever in today's restaurant landscape," added Christina. "Strengthening and growing our solid franchisee-franchisor relationships has allowed us to emerge from 2020 better than expected. It also gives us permission to tackle more aggressive targets in 2021."

### **About Church's Chicken®**

Founded in San Antonio, TX, in 1952 by George W. Church, *Church's Chicken*, along with its sister brands *Texas Chicken*® and *Church's Texas Chicken*® outside of the U.S., is one of the largest quick-service chicken restaurant chains in the world. The brands specialize in Original and Spicy Chicken freshly prepared throughout the day in small batches that are hand-battered and double-breaded, Tender Strips®, sandwiches, Honey-Butter Biscuits™ made from scratch and freshly baked, and classic, home-style sides all for a great value. *Church's Chicken*, *Texas Chicken* and *Church's Texas Chicken* have more than 1,500 locations in 25 countries and global markets and system-wide sales of more than \$1 billion. For more information about Church's Chicken®, Texas Chicken® or Church's Texas Chicken ® franchising opportunities, visit <http://www.churchs.com/franchiseget-started.php>.

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