

On the go? Order dinner online • Party

Daily Journal staff report

If you're not in the mood to cook at home but don't want to sit in a restaurant, try going online.

Restaurants are following a trend that previously involved retail shopping and hit record sales numbers during the most recent holiday season.

Customers who buy their books and DVDs at Amazon.com can now click a few mouse buttons to place a food order online, side-stepping lines or telephones to browse menus and place an order.

A Castleton-area company, Take Out Food International, has launched the Web site www.menu.plicity.com as a way to connect busy people to their favorite foods and restaurants, such as

Houlihan's steakhouse, Buca di Beppo, Uno Chicago Grill and Quizno's.

No southside-area restaurants are using the service, but the company expects to have area businesses online in coming weeks.

More than 60 restaurants have signed up to participate, most being in Indianapolis and on its northside.

The southside and Johnson County should be next.

People can search by restaurant name, ZIP code, city or even food type to find menu items online.

Once an order is placed, the electronic message is sent to the business and customers can designate when they want to pick up the food, Gallo said.

Three percent of the person's

order is donated to a local or national charity of the customer's choice, Gallo said. About 39 charities are available.

The 3 percent donation comes out of restaurant fees, so customers are not paying anything extra, the company said.

In Greenwood, the Baja Fresh at U.S. 31 and Fry Road participated for about two months before discontinuing the service, manager Charissa Bihl said.

"I'm guessing it's just because people didn't know about it," she said.

Denver-based Chipotle Mexican Grill is starting a similar service online at www.chipotle.com. The restaurant has locations in Indianapolis, Carmel and Avon.

In other business news

INDIANAPOLIS

Officials: Fate of County Line Road store unknown

Not even corporate officials are sure if the Office Max on County Line Road in Indianapolis will be closing its doors.

Officials at Office Max announced Tuesday they will close 110 stores nationwide to help cut costs. An announcement on the company's Web site said officials will not know which stores they will close for at least another week.

A manager at the store on County Line Road said no stores or managers can comment about the future closings or how their stores will be affected.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

Memories offered to help people preserve memories and make money in the process.

They sold part of Wade's die cast John Deere tractor collection to get money for the starter kit so Amy could start her business.

Now, the Morgantown mother of two hosts a few shows per month after she finishes working her shift at the bank, saving most of her weekends for family.

"I am so totally in love with scrapbooking, it didn't make any sense not to be a consultant," Meador said. "I had finally found my hobby, my little niche in life."

Jennifer Clark thought she'd give selling candles a try but didn't intend to stay with the company very long.

Now, almost a decade later, the Partylite consultant said she loves the part-time job where she can be her own boss and earn her own money.

The southside resident said she didn't know of many other jobs where she could set her own hours and have time to visit her 95-year-old grandmother or eat lunch at her 6-year-old daughter Shaylee's school.

Meaningful work

Area consultants said the jobs help them feel like the work they are doing matters and builds confidence in their self-worth and talents.

Meador said showing other people how to use, preserve and arrange photos brought her an unexpected bonus: self-esteem.

She said that she was never much of a public speaker before, but she found it easy to talk to other people about the craft she enjoys.

"I've become a lot more confident in myself by teaching classes," Meador said.

Dawn Stubbs is looking forward to sharing her love of cooking in her new job.

The Franklin resident recently became an independent kitchen consultant for Pampered Chef and conducted her first show this week.

Stubbs said that making meals for friends at church helped to build up her confidence in her cooking abilities.

Now, she's wants to share tips she's learned and good food at Pampered Chef parties, which seemed like a good fit for her interests.

"Cooking is something that I feel like I can stand up there and feel comfortable talking about it," Stubbs said. "I'm really doing this for the fun."

Sales support

Many independent consultants work within a network of consultants for the company, which women said helped them to feel supported and motivated.

Bargersville resident Tiffany Webster said working as a Mary Kay consultant has given her a lot of self-esteem and has been a good way to meet new people.

She meets with other consultants on a regular basis for training, and Webster said the meetings are always encouraging.

"There's a lot of positive reinforcement in it," Webster said.

The companies serve as cheerleaders, offering free products and trips to exotic locations to encourage their consultants to sell their products.

"Working for typical corporate America, you can do a good job and get no recognition," Clark said.

Area consultants said they like the unlimited potential for moving up the company ladder, noting that they don't have to wait for people to retire to reach a better paying position.

And there are real fiscal benefits. For dedicated consultants, there's serious money to be made.

Quick cash

Most jobs provide consultants a commission on products they sell at classes or shows.

They get discounts to add more products to their inventory and bonuses for reaching certain sales marks.

SUCCESSFUL SALES

Independent consulting is a popular field for self-starters, but not everyone can make a go of it.

Area women offered some tips for people looking to be successful in home sales:

- **Make sure everyone knows what you sell.** To make the business work, people have to know what business you're in. Whether you're at the grocery store or gym, talk to everyone you know about what you do.

- **Don't give up.** Some months' sales will drop, but keep working at it, and you'll be surprised by unexpected sales.

- **Choose something that you like to sell.** If you don't believe in the product, no one else will either.
- **It takes family support to make the business work.** Work together to set goals for what you want to do with the job.

- **Go outside your comfort zone.** Don't just sell your product to your family and friends. Always look for ways to get referrals outside this circle.

The combination adds up to some quick money for a part-time job.

Meador said she averages \$300 per month through her scrapbook classes, easily making \$90 from a 90-minute session.

"I don't know a whole lot of people who make \$100 per hour," Meador said.

Clark said she put on 131 shows in 2005 and was able to make about \$27,000 for the year.

Several of the companies may not have quotas, but they encourage new consultants to book a certain number of shows within their first month of business so they can find a rhythm.

Though family support is essential, the women warn against just tapping into a network of friends and family for sales.

Being pushy doesn't work, Meador said. If she has friends or family who don't scrapbook, she doesn't continue to pester them to buy her products.

One of the hardest things about direct sales jobs is getting outside that comfortable network, Clark said.

The key to success is referrals and always making sure people know what you sell, she said.

"Your business is only closed when your mouth is," Clark said.

Sell, sell, sell

Consultants are always selling. Even when they're at a party for people selling other products, they're passing along catalogues and sharing tips about the product they sell.

Stubbs said she's never shy to talk to anyone, even striking up conversations with strangers in grocery aisles. She plans to pass out flyers about her new business, and knock on doors of people she doesn't know.

"You have to beat the path a little bit," Stubbs said.

Food, friendly talk and giveaways dominate the home parties, each element pointing back to the product on sale.

But there's also an air of fellowship about the get-togethers that draws many women to the job in the first place.

Webster left a banking job in 2004 to spend more time with her 3-month-old son, Bryce.

But she found that being a stay-at-home mom had drawbacks too.

"I was kind of getting stir crazy not having adult interaction," Webster said.

Selling the Mary Kay products and working with other consultants gave her the chance to meet new people and get out of the house, she said.

Clark, a self-proclaimed people person, said that most of the parties feel more like fun than work as she travels across the state to sell candles and candle holders.

Stubbs said she's always tried to keep busy when she's at home, whether it was learning about essential oils or how to weave a basket.

But she said she quickly tired of most activities.

She thinks that working as a consultant will be more satisfying, combining her loves of cooking and visiting with other people.

"You've got to have time and find something that gives you a purpose," Stubbs said.

INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY: STATE OF THE STATE

'Lap one, well done'

Governor satisfied with first year, wants more accomplished in second year's short session



Gov. Mitch Daniels delivers the State of the State address Wednesday to a joint session of the legislature at the Statehouse in Indianapolis.

By MIKE SMITH
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

During his State of the State speech Wednesday night, Gov. Mitch Daniels called on lawmakers to support local governments by giving them power to consolidate and use new ways of raising money and schools by getting more funds to the teachers and their classrooms.

Daniels also promoted his "Major Moves" highway plan and proposed a cigarette tax increase of at least 25 cents per pack to help reduce smoking.

Daniels said the state was still far from sound, and behind in changes "needed to restore income to Hoosier paychecks." But he said a lean budget enacted last year and administrative moves to cut costs had Indiana poised to eliminate its \$600 million deficit.

He also said his administration had adopted progressive approaches to government and become more activist in tackling problems. But he said lawmakers could accomplish more, even in a short session to end by March 14.

"To this Assembly, I say, 'Lap one, well done,'" he said. "But the second phase is all-important. We don't have a single day, let alone a legislative session, to rest or cruise or hesitate."

Daniels said his highway

IN HIS WORDS

On school reform

"This year, we must seize another opportunity to shift more dollars to the classroom, where it matters most."

On 'Major Moves' highway plan

"Perhaps the single most important step government can take for our economic future is to ensure the best possible infrastructure ... to support the businesses of tomorrow."

On InShape Indiana initiative

"No single step we could take would matter more than reducing the percentage of Hoosiers, particularly young Hoosiers, who smoke cigarettes. All the evidence shows that the most effective way to deter young smokers is at the cash register."

plan would trigger tremendous job growth.

It would allow the state to sell or lease the Indiana Toll Road in northern Indiana to a private venture, something Daniels says could bring in \$2 billion or more in upfront money to fund numerous road projects. The proposal also would allow the state to make the planned extension of Interstate 69 through southern Indiana a toll road and sell or lease it.

Daniels said local government needed a complete makeover, which included consolidation and transferring the state's township assessment system to counties. He planned to detail the proposal during a news conference today.

Dems say Daniels ignored state's real problems

By DEANNA MARTIN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

Democrats said Gov. Mitch Daniels' State of the State speech Wednesday ignored some of the state's most pressing problems, including the growth in property taxes.

"There was a lot of patting ourselves on the back in that speech, but it was pretty short on substance," said Sen. Vi Simpson, D-Bloomington.

House Minority Leader Pat Bauer, D-South Bend, said Daniels did not focus on property taxes, which he said could soon increase by \$1 billion because of the state bud-



House Minority Leader Patrick Bauer, D-South Bend, takes notes during the governor's State of the State address Wednesday.

get passed by Republicans last year.

"That is a crisis," Bauer said. "He never even talked about that."

Daniels mentioned in his speech that the state should begin to assume the costs of

care for endangered children, which would reduce property tax burdens in each county.

Bauer said Daniels should have had a comprehensive property tax plan. He said House Democrats wanted to use \$156 million in tax amnesty money to help reduce such tax increases.

Daniels also said in his speech that he'll use the money collected during a recent tax amnesty period to pay down the \$312 million the state owes to public school districts in back payments.

Simpson called the move a bookkeeping issue.

"There was no ... real substantive conversation about public schools and the funding

deficits that public schools find themselves in because of the last budget," she said.

Bauer said Daniels spent too much time disparaging past Democratic administrations and should focus on getting more jobs for the state.

"He needs to start being a champion of Indiana," Bauer said. "He used some diversionary things, such as a cigarette tax increase, for which he never explained what it was for or why it was needed."

"There was no discussion about health insurance and health-care costs, which in my opinion is the number one economic development issue in place in this state," Simpson said.

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