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McDonald's to revive McCafés

By Julie Jargon

McDonald's employees may soon be asking patrons: "Want cappuccino with that?"

The Oak Brook-based burger chain is revisiting plans to open more McCafés in the U.S. — a store-within-a-store concept that began in Australia in 1993 and gained popularity in other overseas markets but never took off here. (A short-lived McCafé in Chicago closed four years ago.)

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"We're looking at expansion of McCafé . . . where appropriate," CEO Jim Skinner recently told investors. A new McDonald's in Oak Brook that opened last week features one, and McCafés are being tested in approximately four other U.S. outlets. McDonald's won't disclose how many more are planned.

Offering coffee drinks and pastries in existing or remodeled stores is a way to

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wring more cash out of existing stores without spending much money. "McCafes boosted sales in New Zealand by \$300,000 per unit on an investment of \$150,000," Prudential analyst Larry Miller notes in a research report.

"The mom who brings in her kids for Chicken McNuggets may buy from a McCafe," says Jeffrey MALCOM, money manager at Horan Capital Management LLC in Maryland, which owns 142,000 McDonald's shares.

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