



JAY CHIAT AWARDS

KRYSTAL SIDE CHIK
2023



SUMMARY

Going from unknown in the chicken game, to unmistakable in the chicken game.

By 2022, the Chicken wars had come and gone, and everyone had a favorite chicken sandwich. So, how could Krystal – a regional burger slider franchise – convince the South to try its brand-new chicken sandwich?

The strategy was simple. Instead of shying away from how late we were to the chicken wars — which were all about being everyone’s favorite sandwich — we decided to own it.

With help from Brittany Renner, we asked America to cheat on their favorite chicken sandwiches, and tripled sales of the chicken sandwich, ended the brand’s 40 week streak of negative comp sales, and increased total comp store sales 4% nationwide. Proving that maybe the best way to be the new favorite isn’t begging to be their number one – just ask them to try a lil’ something on the side.

BACKGROUND

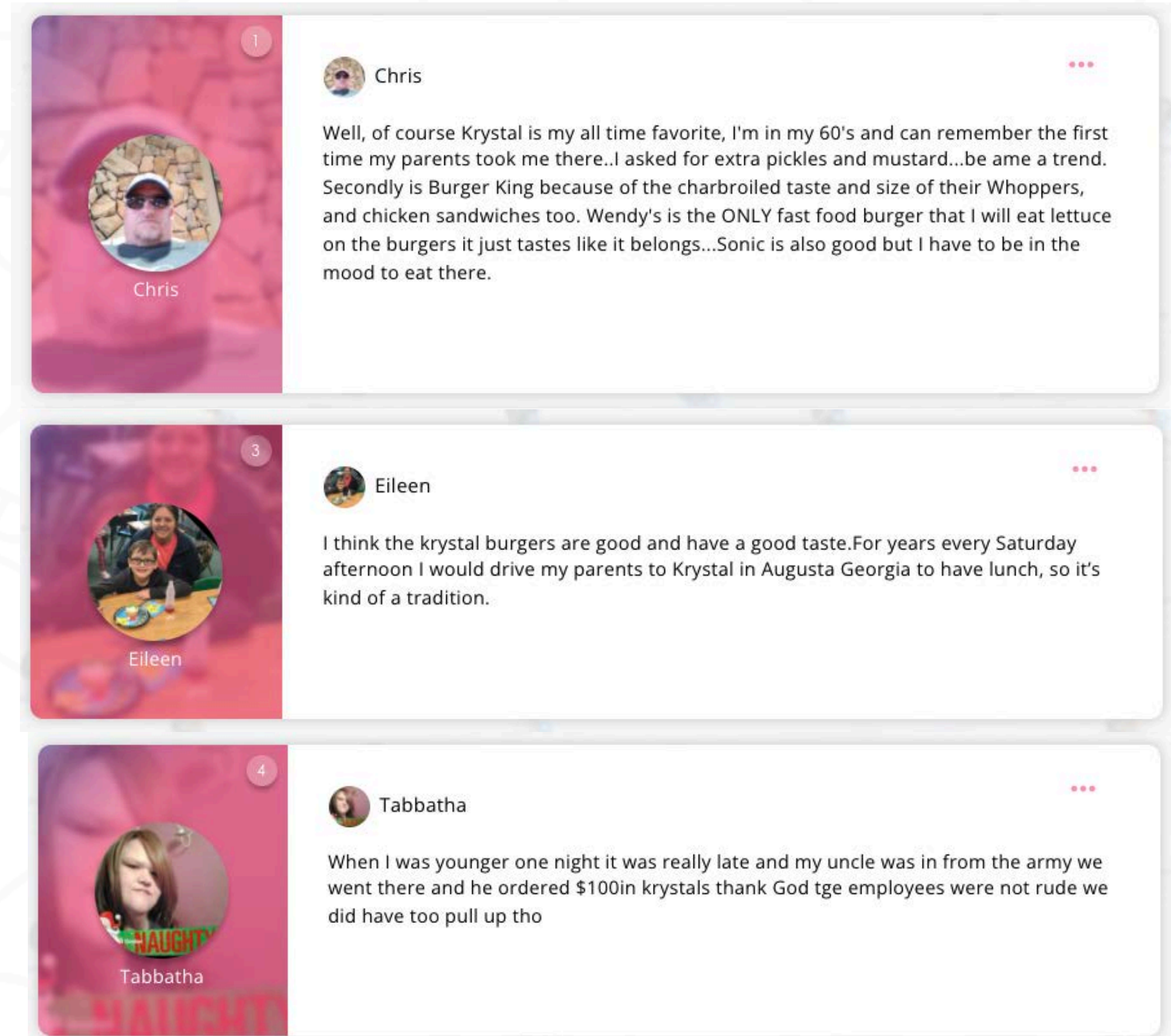
For 90 years, Krystal has owned a niche in the fast-food landscape of the south with their signature bite-sized food, anchored by their steamed hamburger sliders.



BACKGROUND

Customers have fond memories of Krystal.

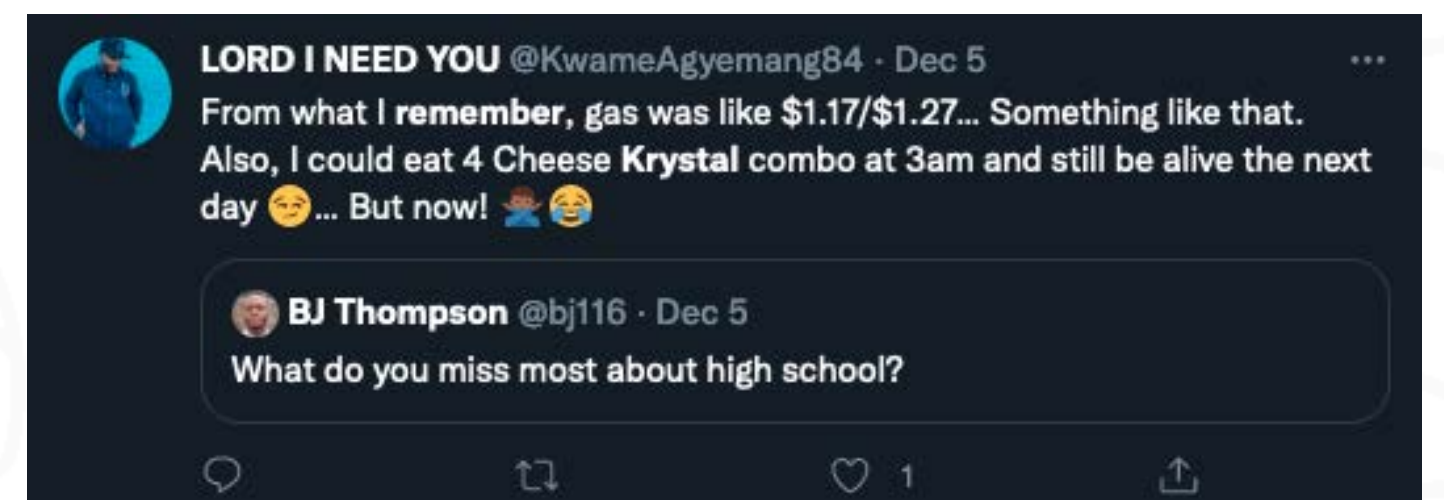
They're especially nostalgic about eating the chain's beloved sliders.



IT'S A Southern THING

An ode to Krystal, a Southern fast food gem

Jared Boyd July 31 | 2018



BACKGROUND

But lately, the business was suffering.

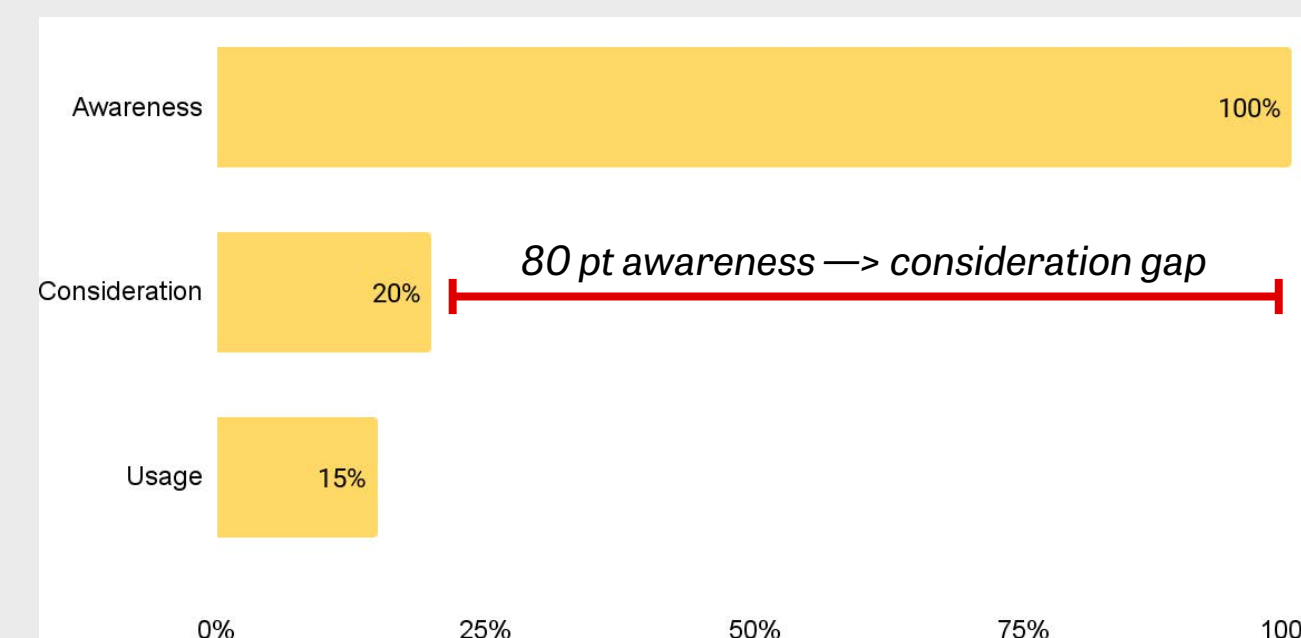
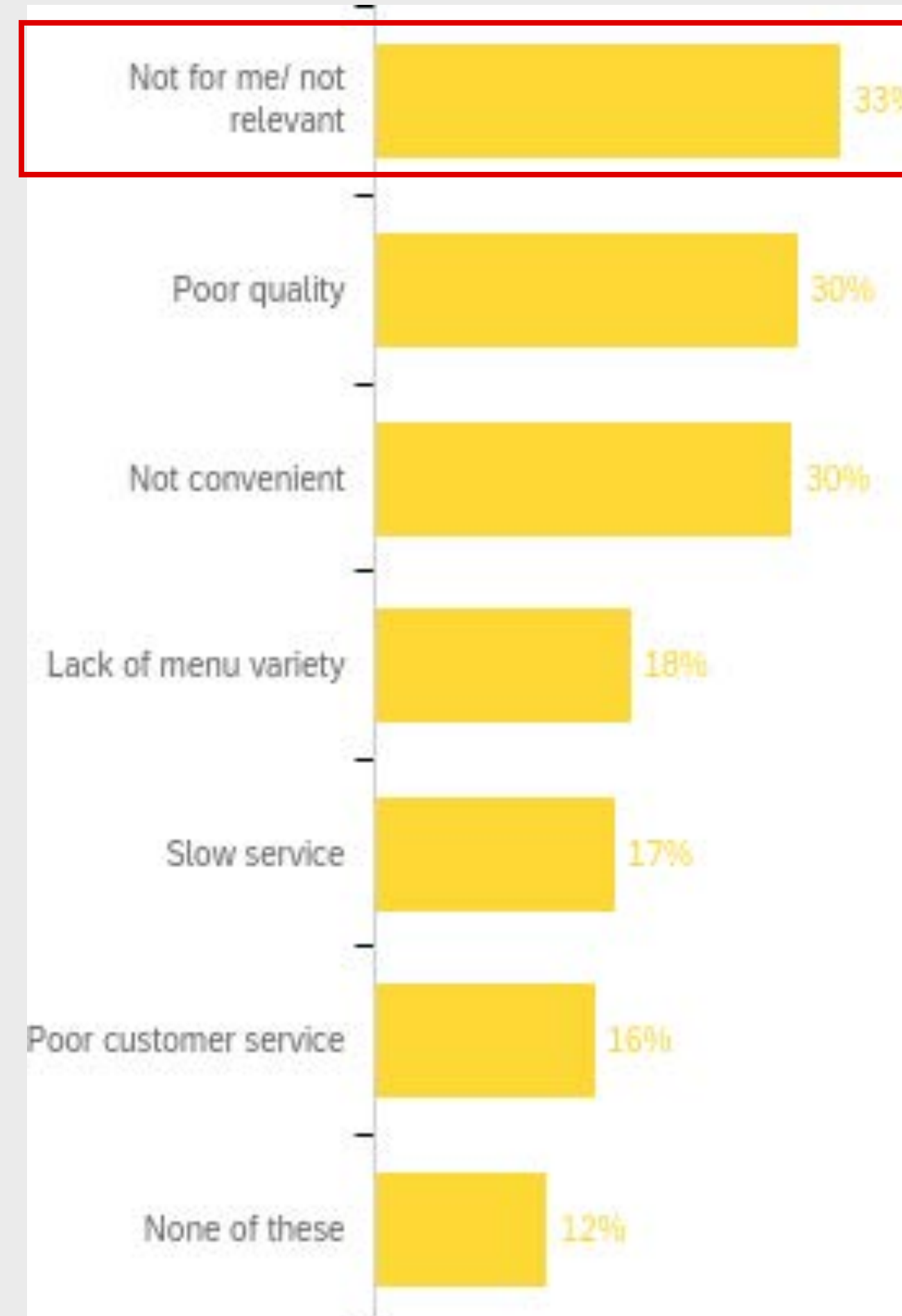
Sales had been down for years and the brand was irrelevant to the younger, more multicultural audience that's most influential in culture and in dining choices.

BACKGROUND

The new target

This target was younger, edgier, and more diverse than Krystal's legacy customer. They're more culturally connected and more plugged into social.

They weren't going to Krystal, not because they don't know it, but because **they felt the brand wasn't for them.**



Source: Consumer survey, 2022



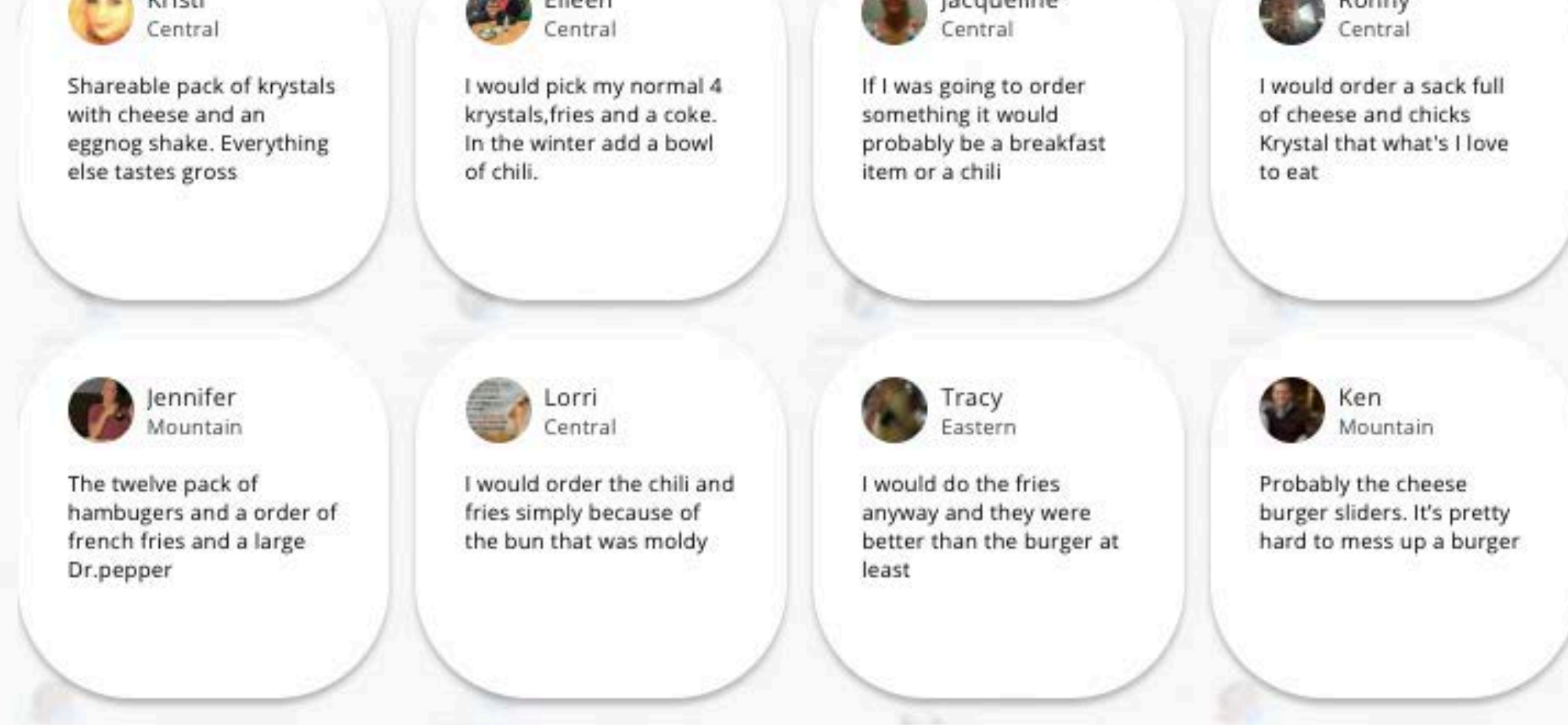
BACKGROUND

Despite the nostalgic love for their slider, Krystal needed to pivot to be known for more than small, steamed meat in order to capture this new target & future-proof their business.

BACKGROUND

The pivot? Chicken.

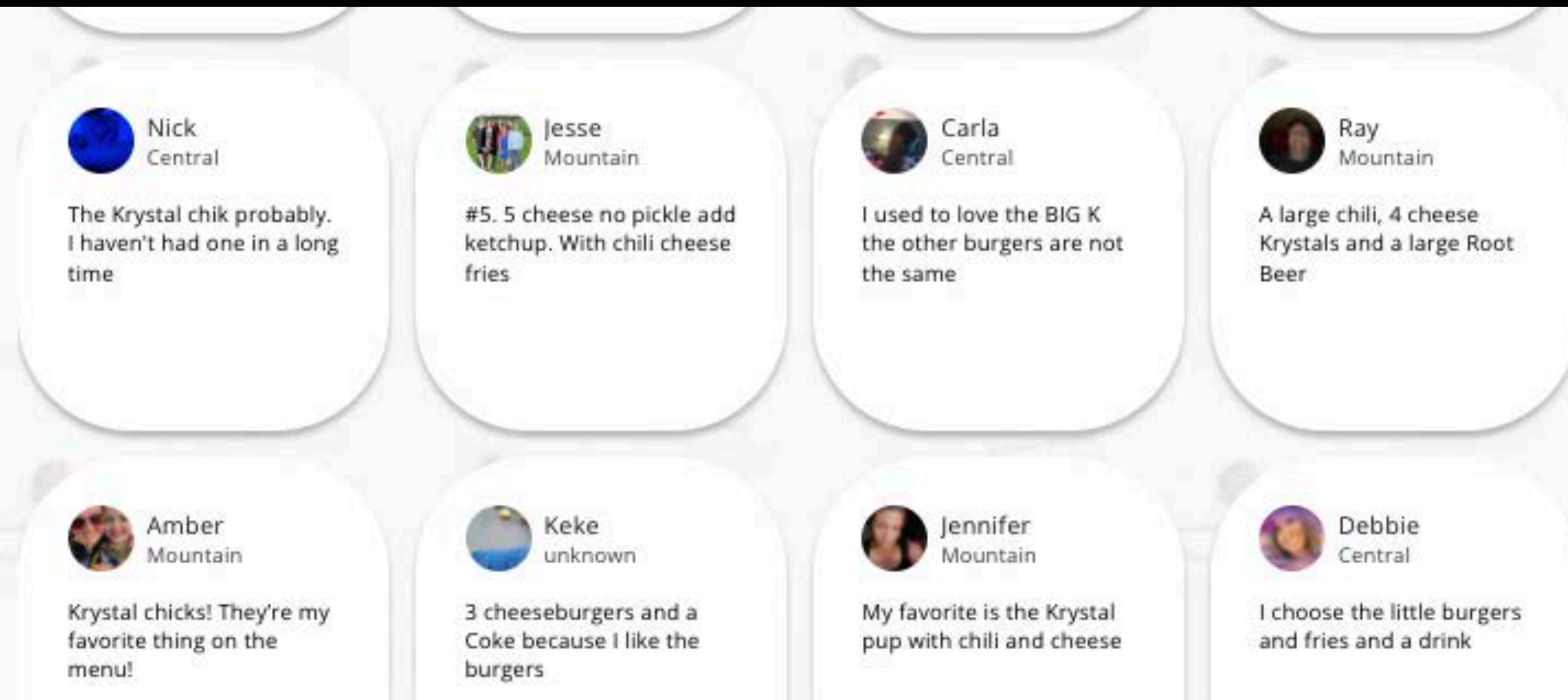
Krystal isn't the restaurant you think of or go to when you're craving a chicken sandwich. Their original chicken sandwich — "The Chik" — was cost-engineered into an inferior product and consequently was one of their least popular menu items.



When asked "What do you order from the Krystal Menu"

ONLY 13% SAY THE CHIK

Source: Consumer survey, 2022



BACKGROUND

A new Chik.

Krystal reformulated their chicken sandwich to be bigger, crunchier, and tastier than ever. They tested it with consumers and learned it was preferred over the old Chik unanimously — which means that people wouldn't be disappointed once they tried it.



THE ASK

Our ask was two-fold:

Get the **new target** to
give us a chance

Get our **legacy
customer** to give the
Chik another chance

THE PROBLEM

The New Hand-Breaded

Ch'KingTM

(Hey! Don't forget we still sell the Whopper[®])

The chicken sandwich wars had come and gone, and everyone already had their favorite chicken sandwich.

**HOT HONEY
BREAKFAST BISCUIT**

**HOT HO
CHICKEN SA**



THE PROBLEM

We're late to an already crowded game.

Since the infamous launch of the Popeye's Chicken Sandwich in 2019, at least 20 different fast food places released new or reformulated chicken sandwiches. It's noisy and crowded and available literally EVERYWHERE. And no one thinks of Krystal for chicken, **so we had to get them to think of us for chicken AND be willing to give our new Chik a try.**

FOOD

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHICKEN SANDWICH WARS

For more than a year, rival chains have been duking it out for chicken sandwich dominance, with new players continuing to enter the fray. Our timeline tracks the battles.

By *Patricia Cobe* on Jan. 07, 2021



THE INSIGHT

Americans love a good chicken sandwich so much, they'll try most any new sandwich released.

The vast majority of Americans order fried chicken sandwiches regularly. Now Krystal has a contender that can hang with the best of them — it's just coming out 2 years later than everyone else.

2.5 billion fried chicken sandwiches were ordered in the U.S. in 2020 alone

65% of the Americans ordered a fried chicken sandwich in the past six months



Jake @Gettin_snakey · Jun 3, 2021

I vow to **try every new chicken sandwich** on the market no matter the quality of establishment



The Black Heffa SZA Gma Was Talumbo... @HBreez... · Jun 10, 2020

Is It Bad I **WANT to Try Every New Chicken Sandwich** That Comes Out



THE STRATEGY

Instead of shying away from how late Krystal is to the chicken sandwich game, let's own it.

If the chicken wars were all about becoming everyone's favorite...how could we stand out?

THE CREATIVE IDEA

SIDE CHIK


Instead of fighting to be their new favorite chicken sandwich, we just asked America to let us be their Side Chik.

We know, we get it. There's been a lot of new chicken sandwiches coming out lately - and most people probably already have a favorite. But that doesn't mean they have to stay loyal. Because sometimes something new comes along that you find yourself attracted to beyond your control.



THE CREATIVE IDEA

We asked America to cheat on their favorite chicken sandwiches with help from Brittany Renner, a proud side chick & outspoken influencer who's known for controversial opinions on loyalty.



**YOUR MAIN CHICK
COULD NEVER**

Krystal
THE NEW
SIDE CHIK

CLICK TO WATCH THE AD



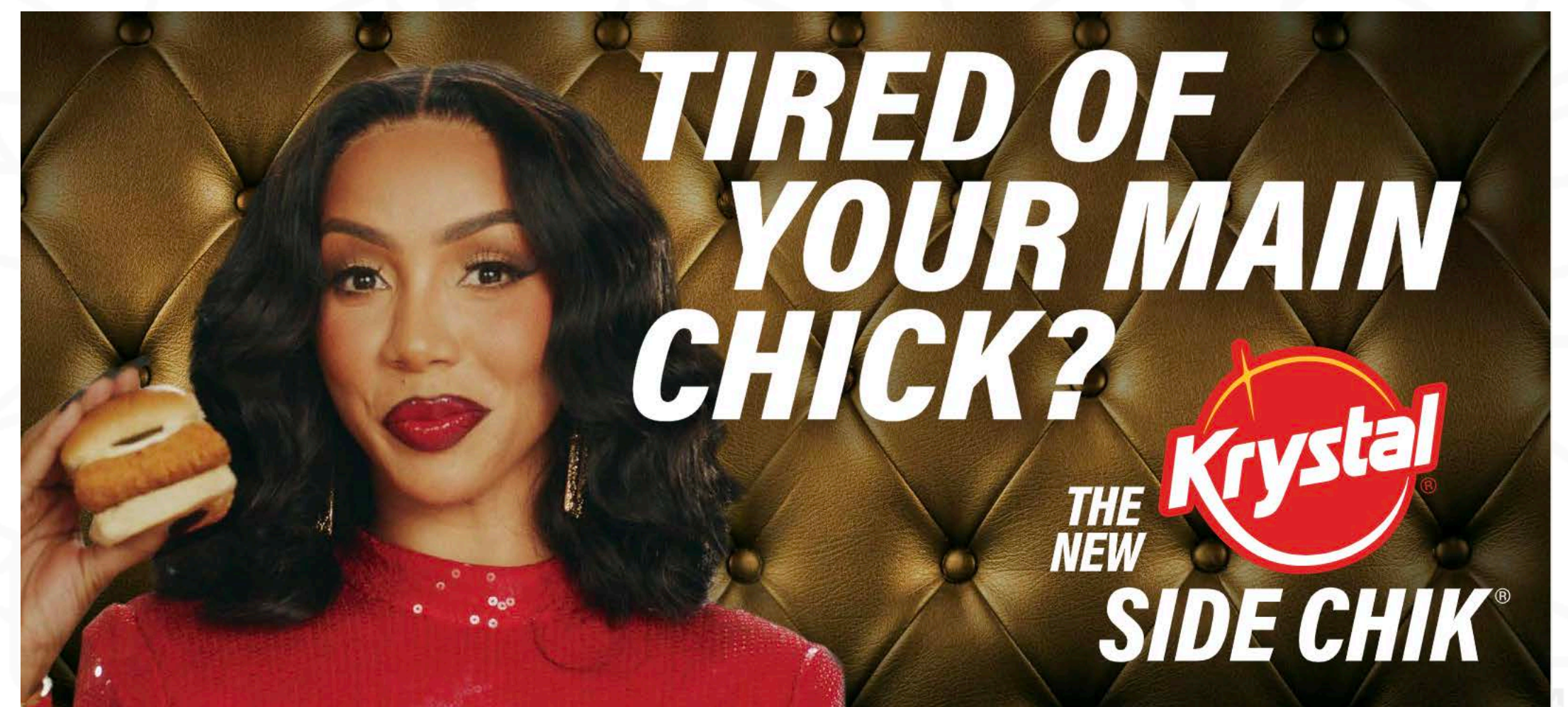
CLICK TO WATCH THE AD



THE CREATIVE IDEA

We played up the double entendre everywhere we could. We even named the new sandwiches "Side Chiks".

Instead of arguing on quality or hard-selling our sandwich, we just offered something different from their go-to chicken with the key line: *"Keep your main chick if you want. We just wanna be your Side Chik."*



THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign ran for 8 weeks in TV, OLV, OOH, PR, and social.

With a smaller media buy than our competition, we leaned into PR opportunities around Brittany Renner embracing the “side chick” narrative around her and prepared for real-time response opportunities around the brand’s bold stance, too.

In social, we sent influencers “Side Chik Cover-up Sprays,” which were real perfumes that smelled like our competitor’s chicken sandwiches (to hide the scent of your Krystal Side Chik).

And after spotting organic moments of fan’s telling their favorite chicken sandwiches they’d been cheating with us, we started collecting and reposting them as #SideChikConfessions.



THE RESULTS

Culturally, it was a huge win.

Even though Krystal is a regional QSR, we punched up to a national level with earned coverage in publications our new growth target cares about including Complex, BET, Vibe, Shade Room, and the Breakfast Club.

COMPLEX

2 Chainz and Krystal Launch New Side Chik Campaign Starring Brittany Renner



BY TRACE WILLIAM COWEN

Trace William Cowen is a writer who also tweets with dramatic irregularity [here](#).

Oct 03, 2022

BLAVITY

NEWS

2 Chainz And Brittany Renner Want You To Drop Your Main For A 'Side Chik' In New Campaign

Adding a "Side Chik" could be a delicious idea, in this instance.



by Martie Bowser · October 03, 2022 at 6:13 pm



THE RESULTS

We went from unknown in the chicken game to unmistakable.

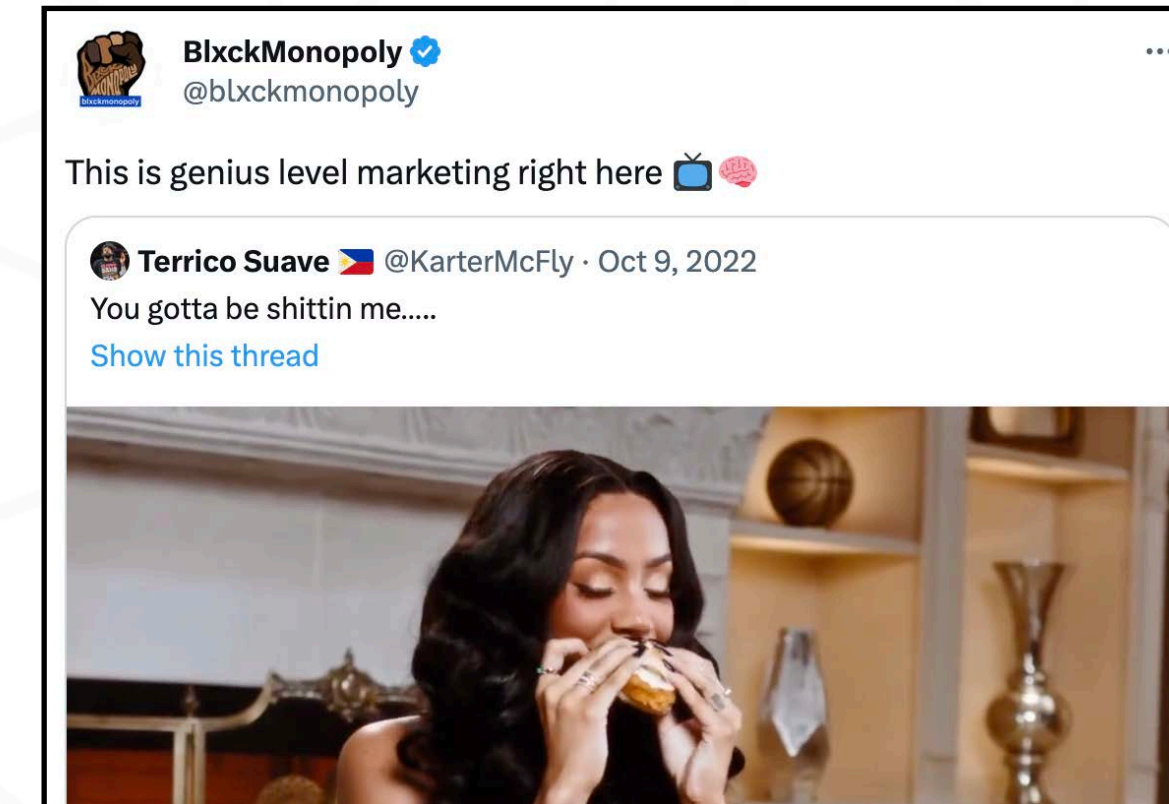
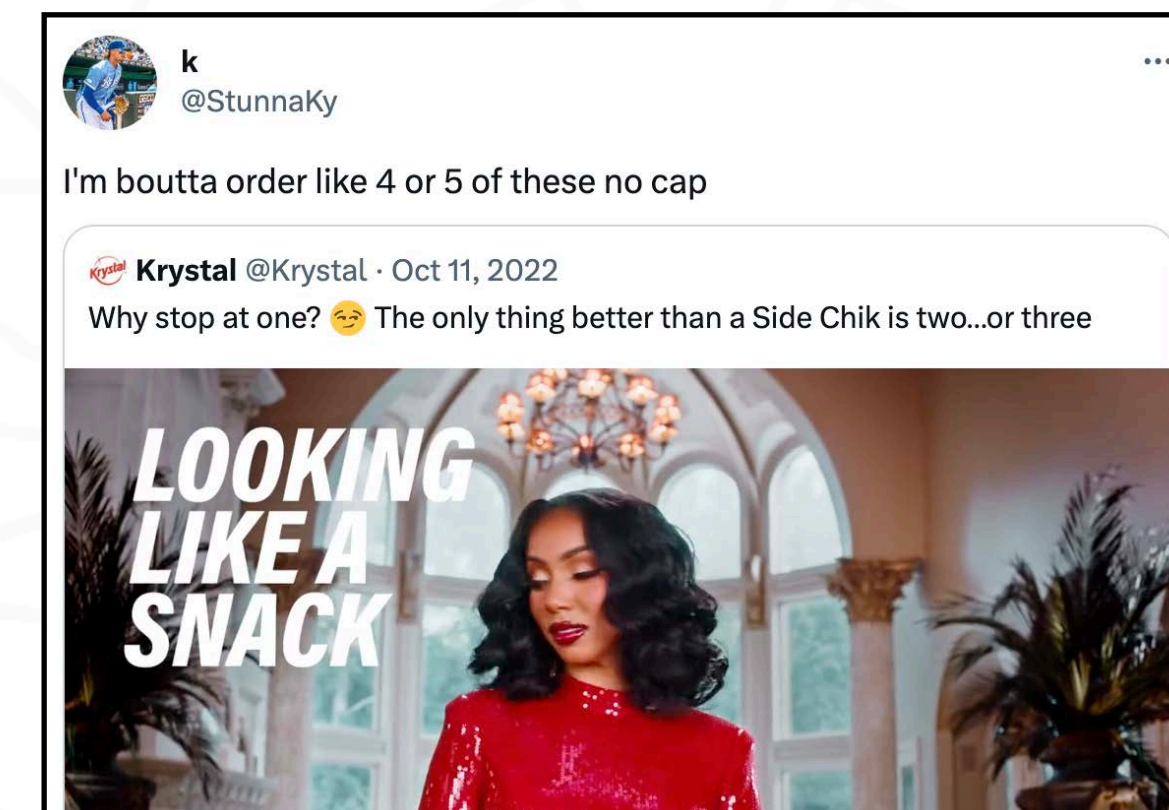
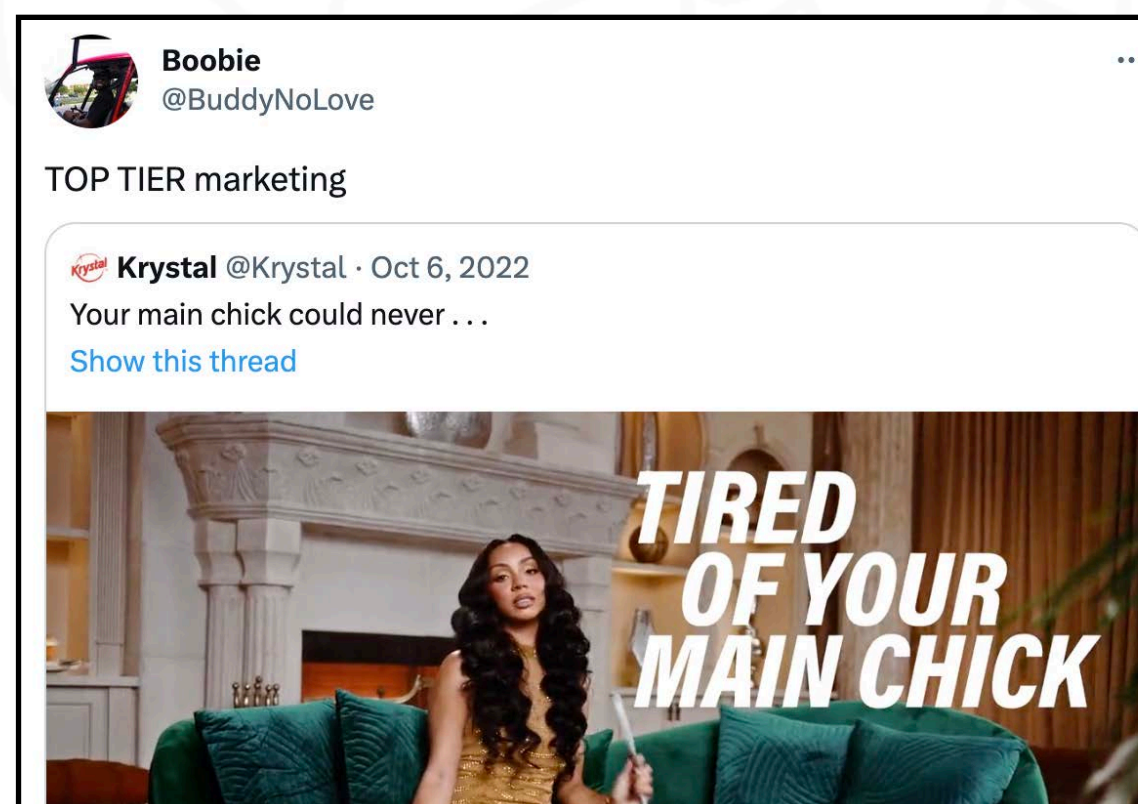
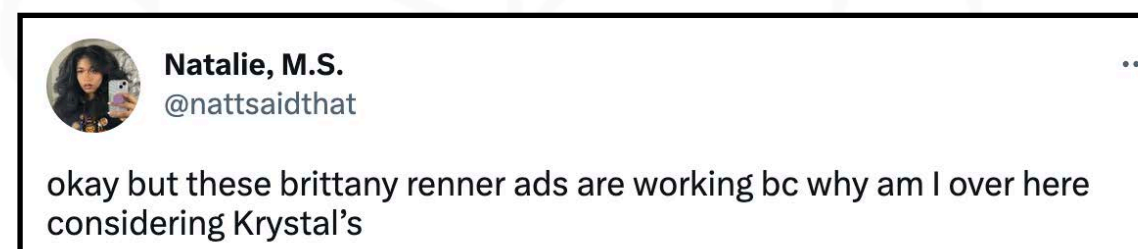
People organically recorded and posted the spots on Twitter, Instagram and TikTok where the conversation took on a life of its own.

And in an unspeakable act of non-best practices, we posted the launch ad as an organic post on Instagram and Twitter where it remains the brand's top post of all-time on both platforms.

739,573,016
impressions

4,317,216
engagements

78% positive
net sentiment



THE RESULTS

Ultimately, we drove business results.

Tripled sales

of the Side Chik
during the campaign

*(which launched after the
sandwich was already
in-store)*

As soon as the
campaign launched, we

**ended a 40
week streak**

of negative
comp sales

Total comp
store sales

increased 4%

during the campaign

(and 12% in key DMAs)



THANK YOU