

SAY CHEESEBURGER

This speaker box holds a 2.5-inch camera that takes a photo of the driver, which is then paired with the food order so that both can be sent to the Wendy's employee at the drive-through window. (With multiple ordering lanes, cars can get out of sequence.) The weatherproof camera has a list price of \$150 and records color images day or night. It's made by **Speco Technologies** in Amityville, New York, which started out, in 1960, making audio equipment, including speakers for pull-string talking dolls. Today, the company's more than 100 employees mostly make security cameras—about 500,000 of them a year.

A SIDE ORDER OF BRANDING

Total Image of Columbus, Ohio, created these menus and gives thousands of Wendy's (and Quiznos and Subway) franchises a branded look. The 45-year-old company created signs for the very first Wendy's, in 1969. CEO Dennis Kaufman bought Total Image in 1987, and now his 150 employees design and install products that include restroom signs, counters, and comment boxes for franchisees. Total Image recently finished revamping the menus inside 5,600 Wendy's locations.

BLOWN OUT OF PROPORTION

Sky Signs Balloons, based in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, makes more than 18-foot-tall inflatable Wendy's cups. The company, which was founded by David Norris—a hot-air balloonist—in 1978, also whips up giant phones, cowboy boots, gorillas, and potato-chip bags. Its 12 employees design the balloons, which are then cut out of vinyl-coated nylon with an automated roller knife, sewn together, and eventually inflated with a fan. Making the Wendy's cup took about three days; the cost, about \$3,100.

ORDERING OUT

Pull up to the speaker, and you'll be chatting with someone in a call center 120 miles away, in Wilmington, Delaware. **Exit41**, based in Andover, Massachusetts, devised this setup. It uses multiple ordering lanes, a T-1 Internet connection, and VoIP technology to link to a call center, which relays the order back to Wendy's. Exit41 employs 47 people and works with three outside call centers. A system like this one can cost as much as \$20,000, but CEO Joe Gagnon says many of the 50 fast-food locations with Exit41's system have been able to double drive-through orders during their busiest times.

