

Byte

Oklahoma State University

Introduction:

Byte is a groundbreaking dining concept that reimagines the way students experience food. It brings together 10 unique "ghost" kitchen dining concepts, each offering a different culinary experience, all housed under one roof. Using a smart locker system, customers can order from a kiosk or through the GrubHub app on their smart phone. Their meals are delivered directly to individual lockers for convenient, contactless pickup. This innovative approach allows food lovers to enjoy a wide variety of flavors without leaving the location, providing a dynamic and efficient way to satisfy diverse tastes in one location.

Essay:

Byte offers a diverse dining experience with 10 distinct concepts, each uniquely named, branded, and designed to reflect both familiar and new flavors. Some menus replicate successful campus concepts, while others introduce fresh options, keeping dining dynamic and exciting. Closed concepts were reimagined, with updated recipes to revitalize familiar favorites.

At Byte, a locker-based dining system provides unmatched flexibility. This system allows University Dining Services to easily update menus with seasonal and event-based specials. In winter, hearty soups offer comfort, while lighter, fresher options rotate in for spring and summer. Holidays and campus events also inspire themed or pop-up menus, keeping offerings timely and relevant.

Students benefit from a rotating menu at each locker station, ensuring a constantly evolving selection of dishes. Whether it's a crisp salad, decadent dessert, warm bowl of soup, or hearty meal like BBQ or meatloaf, Byte caters to every craving with a range of colors, flavors, and textures. This adaptability keeps the dining experience fresh, satisfying, and aligned with current food trends, ensuring that there's always something new and delicious to enjoy.

Introduction:

Byte's design was thoughtfully crafted to enhance both student convenience and staff efficiency. The key feature is the innovative locker system, which streamlines order pick-up and reduces congestion. Strategically placed lockers ensure smooth access for diners, while the kitchen operates seamlessly behind the scenes. With clear pathways and a functional layout, staff can efficiently prepare and deliver meals. This dual focus on user experience and operational flow creates an organized, fast, and satisfying dining experience, making Byte a model of modern, efficient campus dining.

Essay:

Byte's design fosters community, sustainability, and efficiency. Open seating areas encourage students to connect over meals, while strategically placed lockers simplify the pick-up process, drawing diners to communal spaces and creating a lively, social atmosphere.

The layout also maximizes operational flow. Lockers open directly to the back-of-house kitchen, allowing staff to place fresh meals quickly, reducing handling, wait times, and congestion. Inside the kitchen, optimized workstations and streamlined prep areas enable seamless, high-volume production across multiple dining concepts, even during peak hours. This efficiency supports diverse, high-quality menu offerings while maintaining smooth operations.

Sustainability is central to Byte's mission. By consolidating multiple dining concepts under one roof, the facility reduces its physical footprint and optimizes resource use. The standardized ingredient system minimizes food waste, as menu items are crafted based on available inventory. Eco-friendly practices, including biodegradable packaging and a la carte dining, further reduce waste while promoting responsible dining choices. Nutritional data integration empowers students to make informed, sustainable meal decisions.

With its thoughtful design and eco-conscious approach, Byte offers a modern, engaging dining experience that balances social interaction, operational excellence, and environmental responsibility.

Introduction:

All marketing materials, menus, and signage for Byte were designed with a clear understanding of our target audience—18- to 22-year-old college students. Knowing this demographic values simplicity and efficiency, the design was kept clean, modern, and easy to read, ensuring information was accessible at a glance. Since Byte is an innovative addition, we embraced a technology-inspired theme, incorporating sleek fonts, minimalistic layouts, and a cohesive digital aesthetic throughout signage. This approach reinforces Byte's forward-thinking identity while resonating with a tech-savvy student audience, creating a visually engaging and intuitive brand experience.

Essay:

To effectively reach our target audience, we focused marketing efforts on platforms students engage with most. Social media became our primary tool, enabling direct connections through eye-catching posts, stories, and updates. We supplemented this with posters placed in high-traffic campus areas and within Byte, capturing attention where students naturally gather. Digital signage and weekly university newsletters further reinforced key messages and promotions.

In addition to our campaigns, Byte gained national recognition. An article in *American School & University* (January 2025) highlighted OSU's innovative locker system and its unique approach to campus dining.

To support Byte's rotating menu and diverse offerings, we prioritized clear, polished informational signage. Given the potential for confusion with multiple dining concepts, our design emphasized simplicity, readability, and intuitive organization. Clean layouts, concise language, and cohesive visuals helped students quickly grasp menu options without

feeling overwhelmed. This consistent design approach created a seamless, user-friendly experience, allowing students to effortlessly navigate their choices and make informed, confident dining decisions.

By blending strategic marketing with thoughtfully designed signage, we ensured Byte remains highly visible, accessible, and easy to enjoy for the entire campus community.

Introduction:

We publish nutrition and wellness information through NetNutrition, a comprehensive program that provides a full nutritional breakdown of each menu item, including ingredients, allergens and key nutritional details. This tool allows individuals to make informed dining choices based on their dietary needs and preferences. Additionally, we regularly update our dining app to highlight allergens, ensuring easy access to essential information. To further support diverse dietary needs, we offer specialized dietary handouts that categorize menu items based on specific preferences, such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten-friendly and more. These resources empower our guests to make confident and well-informed meal selections.

Essay:

At Byte, we prioritized a dining concept specifically created for meeting the needs of special diets. Green Spoon Vegetarian Kitchen, a concept designed to ensure every student has access to delicious and satisfying vegetarian options, takes the daily rotational concept and offers a fully vegetarian version of the menu. This allowing students to enjoy the same great flavors in a plant-based way. University Dining Services is committed to providing options for everyone.

"Having vegetarian options on campus is about offering diverse menu options that is more than offering a salad. We want to include options that everyone can enjoy. It is a simple way to meet different dietary preferences and special dietary needs. Eating more plants is great for everyone's health; it can improve your digestion and provide important nutrients such as fiber, vitamins and antioxidants. Plant based options are a simple way to celebrate diversity while promoting better well-being." - Patty Anson, Registered Dietitian

Introduction:

When setting financial goals for Byte, we approached it with the understanding that, as a new concept, success would take time and growth wouldn't happen overnight. We established realistic expectations, knowing that building awareness and a loyal customer base would be a gradual process. Additionally, we took into account historical dining sales trends on campus, recognizing weekend sales would naturally be lower than weekday sales. By considering these factors, we created a strategic financial plan that allows for sustainable growth while ensuring Byte continues to meet the needs of our campus community.

Essay:

At Oklahoma State University, Byte has received positive feedback from students, with food freshness rated 4/5 stars, overall satisfaction at 4.5/5 stars, and food options at 4/5 stars. In a survey, 70% of students rated their experience positively, with an average score of 4/5 stars. Byte aligns with key dining trends, such as restaurant-style dining, creative twists on traditional meals, allergen awareness, and smart food technology. Byte's menu includes inventive items like a Hot Honey Chicken Sandwich and fried mushrooms. The space's modern design and food locker system enhance convenience, offering self-ordering kiosks and GrubHub integration. Byte stands out as a tech-forward dining option while catering to various dietary needs with its registered dietitian's involvement and the Green Spoon Vegetarian Kitchen.

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OUR BYTEFOOD LOCKER CONCEPT OFFERS US THE COOL, EXCITING AND FUN WAY TO DELIVER FOOD TO OUR STUDENTS. STUDENTS ARE ALWAYS DRAWN TO SOMETHING NEW AND EXCITING. THE BYTE CONCEPT MORE THAN DELIVERS ON THAT.

— Tracie Brown, Assistant Vice President of Student Union Business Affairs



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MENU DESIGN

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