Taco Bell’s drive-thru AI might take your next order

Your next Taco Bell drive-thru order might be handled by AI — and AI may have helped you get a Chalupa already. Parent company Yum! Brands has been testing its “Voice AI” technology at more than 100 Taco Bell drive-thru locations in the US, and now Yum! aims to bring the technology to “hundreds” of Taco Bell stores by the end of the year, according to a press release.

Yum! is pitching the AI tech as a way to ease the workloads of its staffers, improve order accuracy, and reduce wait times — all, of course, while “driving profitable growth for Taco Bell, Yum! Brands and their franchisees.” But the fast food industry’s experiments with AI have had mixed results so far: while Wendy’s has been thrilled with its tests, McDonald’s recently pulled back its plans.

There are more than 7,400 Taco Bell stores in the US, so this will still be a small rollout. The original tests at more than 100 stores have been going on for around two years, *Bloomberg* reports. Yum! is also bringing Voice AI to five KFC restaurants in Australia.

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