

# Domino's invests in tech to improve quality

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Domino's Pizza is taking on one of its customers most common complaints, that the ordered pizza "doesn't look like it should", with a nationwide roll-out of its Pizza Checker technology.

The technology takes the form of a camera system that grades individual pizzas on certain qualities, such as the topping volume and spread, as well as the amount of cheese used, and it's already showing results according to Domino's Australia and New Zealand chief executive Nick Knight.

"So far, it's analysed more than one million pizzas, and there is a lot of learning that we've captured," Knight told analysts during a briefing call last week.

"It's early days, but I'm really pleased with what we're seeing. Team members are using this technology to put a much needed extra focus on product quality."

According to Knight, while customers so far can't see or tell that the pizza they receive has been 'checked', customer metrics show that they are reacting positively to the results.

"In my experience, when we've tackled one of the biggest customer tensions, like we did with GPS drivers, those things have flowed through to sales," Knight told analysts.

The technology uses artificial intelligence to grade pizzas, and will eventually allow customers to view a real-time image of their pizza on the cut bench, and will notify them if their pizza failed the process – resulting in a remake, though it's possible this situation could lead to longer delivery times.

The technology is now active across all Australian and New Zealand Domino's stores.

During the call last week, Knight also discussed Domino's effort to improve the overall health of its franchise business through its Operations 360 initiative, which launched 18 months ago.

The initiative provides franchisees with data on sales drivers at the store level, and gives the company's operations team members an opportunity to provide advice and training in those areas where certain franchisees may be struggling.

While this has helped some franchisees to improve, it has also led some franchisees to exit the business, Knight said.

“Unfortunately, some franchisees don't have the passion or capability to take their business to that level, and they aren't able to run with us,” Knight told analysts.

To help these franchisees in their exit, Domino's has purchased some franchised stores back from franchisees and will, in the short term, run them as corporate stores.

Knight said some franchisees who left may have been unhappy, and cautioned that they might lodge proceedings in an attempt to bargain with the business, or out of a genuine issue.

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