How Wendy’s Modernized their IR Website for Today’s Investor

1. Built a best-in-class IR website with limited resources and timelines.

2. Optimized their site for engagement with the investment.

3. Brought the brand to life for modern day investors, including a robust ESG section.
The iconic catch-phrase of the ‘80s, originated as a slogan for Wendy’s®, the global quick service restaurant (QSR) franchise. But what started with an old lady demanding more meat for her burger is now an all-purpose phrase for searching for substance. It has also come to represent what differentiates the chain that turns 50 this year.

Wendy’s was founded by Dave Thomas in 1969, as a “family business” named after his daughter, on the premise that “Quality is our Recipe®.”

Today, the franchise has a market cap greater than $4 Billion with more than 6,700 international restaurants. At its heart, the Wendy’s Company (Nasdaq: WEN) has a vision to become “the most beloved” restaurant brand in the world. This is visible in their use of fresh ingredients, most notably the “fresh never frozen beef”* in their classic square hamburgers, and on a much deeper level, in their commitment to doing the right thing and making a positive difference in the lives of others."

A prominent example is Wendy’s Wonderful Kids® program, which seeks to find “loving” permanent homes for children in the North American foster care system.

When Marsha Gordon, Wendy’s Manager of Shareholder Relations was faced with the critical task of redesigning their investor relations website, she had limited resources and timelines to bring their story to life for modern day investors. Partnering with Q4, she leveraged “Studio One,” a theme-based

*Fresh beef available in the contiguous U.S., Alaska and Canada.
"We’re so excited about our new IR site. Everything went smoothly and was delivered as promised. I couldn’t be happier."

Marsha Gordon
Manager of Shareholder Relations, Wendy’s
Working with the retail side of the shareholder base, one of Marsha’s core responsibilities is creating, maintaining and continuously improving Wendy’s investor relations website. The Wendy’s IR site was in serious need of a redesign. The look and feel of the site was outdated and the content was hard to navigate. Marsha describes their old site as “clunky to move around” and “not doing the Wendy’s brand justice.” She wanted to raise Wendy’s online presence to “current day standards” and “evolve to a next level website,” which was fresh, clear, and engaging for investors.

Marsha realized that Wendy’s had to have the expertise of a niche IR website provider. She explains: “I’m not the expert and needed guidance.” She chose Q4 for their proven expertise in designing IR sites for well known brands. She also appreciated Q4’s streamlined implementation and quarterly earnings process: “It was clear that the whole Q4 team worked tightly together to make things happen.”
“It incorporated all of the best practices in IR web design, but also had enough flexibility to make our own. We didn’t see any reason to start from scratch or reinvent the wheel.”

Marsha Gordon
Manager of Shareholder Relations, Wendy’s
Modernizing a Classic Brand on Limited Resources

Despite being a large company “with a lot of stakeholders to make and keep happy,” Wendy’s had a small IR team comprised of three.

Wendy’s had a small IR team comprised of three. Like most companies, budget was also a concern, compounded by the fact that moving their site to an external vendor wasn’t part of their initial plan. Their goal was to launch the site between their quarterly earnings cycle, so timing was also limited: “We wanted to make sure we were comfortable with the new site, before earnings.” Marsha needed an affordable and low burden solution, which efficiently delivered a modern and user friendly site that met their high brand standards. For them, Q4’s theme-based “Studio One” solution was a natural fit. The out-of-the-box solution enabled them to leave the design to the “design experts,” with fewer decision points and less commitment of time from their team than traditional custom site builds.

She chose a Studio One template which she describes as “exactly what we were looking for.” She explains: “It incorporated all of the best practices in IR web design, but also had enough flexibility to make our own. We didn’t see any reason to start from scratch or reinvent the wheel.” Marsha says that the template design itself enabled them to simplify their layout, prioritize content, and highlight key information:

“We were able to easily communicate important messages and documents, especially featuring them on our homepage as a powerful landing page and gateway to the rest of our site.”

Marsha Gordon
Manager of Shareholder Relations, Wendy’s

Wendy’s also leveraged a rotating carousel at the top of their homepage, to showcase their latest news including their work on sustainability, dividend increases and earnings announcements. And they experimented with a “Request a Meeting” button, which has given their investors a simple way to connect with them directly.

Marsha worked closely with Q4 to repackage and add more content around best practices.
Marsha also appreciated the online editing tool “as a great way to look at the site in progress.” She was able to make comments and see real-time edits directly on her test site.

Wendy’s Implementation Manager was at the heart and soul of the project. As the project leader, she guided them through every step of the process and kept them on schedule. Marsha says: “My Implementation Manager was wonderful. I’d give her ‘10 out of 10’ for her project management and guidance with the technical process and essential best practices. She kept us sane throughout the whole experience and made it as easy as possible for us, helping us navigate the build and meeting our milestone deadlines.”

She adds that Q4 was “highly cognizant of and worked around their busy schedules.” This was particularly crucial to them, because they had an earnings cycle in the middle of the implementation process. The entire process took only a few weeks, enabling them to finish ahead of schedule and launch their site on time.
Since launching their new site, Wendy’s IR team has received accolades from their senior management team for “a contemporary and interactive best-in-class IR site, that’s also a trendsetter with ESG.” Marsha was also presented with a “CFO Award” for her work on the new website.

Above all, Marsha says that she realizes the importance of using an IR website expert: “As an IR manager, you have enough daily stress and tasks to focus on, outside of creating a new website from scratch. My advice is to have an expert behind you like Q4 and rely on them to do the heavy work.”

Looking ahead to the future, Marsha concludes:

“Our aim is to ensure that our website continues to convey our goals and strategies. Our brand mission is to be the world’s most thriving and beloved restaurant brand, with our IR site as a critical platform for communication.”

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About Q4 Inc.

Q4 Inc. (TSX: QFOR) is the leading capital markets access platform that is transforming how issuers, investors, and the sell-side efficiently connect, communicate, and engage with each other. The Q4 Platform facilitates interactions across the capital markets through IR website products, virtual events solutions, engagement analytics, investor relations CRM, shareholder and market analysis, surveillance, and ESG tools. The Q4 Platform is the only holistic capital markets access platform that digitally drives connections, analyzes impact, and targets the right engagement to help public companies work faster and smarter. The company is a trusted partner to more than 2,650 public companies globally, including many of the most respected brands in the world, and maintains an award winning culture where team members grow and thrive. Q4 is headquartered in Toronto, with offices in New York and London.

Learn more at www.q4inc.com.