

Burger King Says "Be Your Way"

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NEW YORK (AP) — Burger King is scrapping its 40-year-old "Have It Your Way" slogan in favor of the more personal "Be Your Way."

The chain says the new tag line will roll out across its marketing in the U.S., including in a TV ad that will begin airing Monday night. The line made its first appearance in an online video last month.

Burger King says in a statement that the new motto is intended to remind people that "they can and should live how they want anytime. It's ok to not be perfect ... Self-expression is most important and it's our differences that make us individuals instead of robots."

It may seem odd for a fast-food company to champion individuality, but Burger King isn't the only one trying to project a hip, non-corporate attitude to gain favor with customers. Since 2012, for instance, Taco Bell has been touting its "Live Mas" slogan, which means "live more" in Spanish.

Fernando Machado, Burger King's senior vice president of global brand management, noted in an interview that "Have It Your Way" focuses only on the purchase — the ability to customize a burger. By contrast, he said "Be Your Way" is about making a connection with a person's greater lifestyle.

"We want to evolve from just being the functional side of things to having a much stronger emotional appeal," said Machado, who joined the company in March.

Whether the new tag line can help Burger King's image over the long term remains to be seen. The company, along with McDonald's Corp., is fighting to boost sales at a time when people are moving toward foods they feel are fresher or higher quality. And Laura Ries, president of the brand consulting firm Ries & Ries, noted that companies can come across as trying too hard to be cool.

"The problem is that people don't see themselves as living the Burger King lifestyle," she said. "You've got to be realistic with the place that your brand holds in real life."

Burger King says new slogan was developed with ad agency DAVID, a unit of WPP.

Machado noted that Burger King hasn't been actively using the "Have It Your Way" slogan for some time in the U.S. The company, which is based in Miami, Florida, also will stop using its more recent "Taste Is King" motto. "Be Your Way" will start in the U.S. but eventually be rolled out globally, the company says.

The switch is the latest in a series of marketing and menu changes under Burger

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King's new management. The chain was bought by investment firm 3G Capital in late 2010, then taken public again in 2012. Soon after, 3G replaced the chain's CEO and early this year, Axel Schwan was appointed as global chief marketing officer.

In the latest quarter, Burger King said sales at U.S. restaurants open at least a year edged up 0.1 percent, hurt by bad weather.

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