



Location
Nationwide

Project Type
Restaurant

Areas Supplied
Restroom walls & floors
Dining room walls & floors
Kitchen floors

Products
Custom porcelain tile
Setting materials

Panda Express was founded in 1983 and now has more than 1,900 locations throughout the U.S., Puerto Rico, Guam, Guatemala, Canada, Mexico, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Korea, and Japan. Panda Express is part of the Panda Restaurant Group (PRG) that consists of multiple brands.

CHALLENGE | SOURCING INEFFICIENCY, ASTRONOMICAL FREIGHT COSTS

Creative Materials first started working with the Panda Express team close to ten years ago, and learned very quickly that Panda Express places a strong emphasis on frequent redesigns using a wide variety of tile and very unique design schemes. While the designs were trendy, and resonating with customers, the tile selections were difficult to procure from a number of local sources that were being used to find material. Tile and setting material procurement was becoming costly, complicated and far too slow.

In addition, the company was based on the West Coast and starting to expand East. As is typical, tile and setting materials were being procured from West Coast suppliers. As the company started to expand East, freight costs skyrocketed because the West Coast suppliers did not have a nationwide distribution supply chain.

SOLUTION | VALUE ENGINEERING, INCREASED SUPPLY CHAIN SUCCESS

The Creative Materials team was brought in and ascertained that Panda Express needed:

- Cost effective, quality matches for tile products in the current design scheme
- Reduction in overall construction budget while maintaining design scheme
- Readily available, consolidated shipments of tile and related products
- Control of product supply, ensuring specified product would be used

Creative Materials offered vast product selection capacity to source materials from the most efficient manufacturing partners. (The current program compiles 16 tiles from 4 different countries in 1 shipment to each site.) An optimized warehouse system would ensure low cost shipments of those materials with quick turn around. Creative Materials would offer sole source accountability for all tile and associated setting materials thereby reducing complexity.

“Creative Materials continues to reliably deliver quality, efficient matches for the tile product that the PRG design team assembles from around the world.”

~ Craig Lansley,
Vice President, Supply Chain,
Creative Materials Corporation

RESULT | LASTING PARTNERSHIP

Creative Materials built Panda Express a consolidated program where all floor tile, wall tile, grout, setting materials, and trim pieces could be ordered from one source and delivered to any jobsite in the USA with 2-3 day average lead times. Ten years later, Panda Express continues to rely upon the same consolidated tile supply program from Creative Materials that has expanded with them and accommodated Panda's needs throughout. Today, a team of designers employed by PRG scans the globe for innovative tile finishes. This team specifies all of the finishes for the Panda Express designs and requires assistance in sourcing the tile products to make their visions come to fruition in a cost-effective, controlled manner. Creative Materials continues to reliably deliver quality, efficient matches for the tile products that the PRG design team assembles from around the world. Upon approval of the tile matches, Creative Materials produces and imports inventory that is warehoused at four national distribution centers and used exclusively for Panda Express projects. Panda Express and Creative Materials continue to enjoy an industrious partnership.

