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LOCAL DELIVERY BUSINESS

Store offers cookies for late-night pangs

By Timothy O'Connor
Executive Reporter

Purdue students struck by the late-night munchies have a new doughy alternative to cure their stomach pains.

Insomnia Cookies, which began at the University of Pennsylvania in 2003, opened its 602 W. Stadium Ave. location more than two weeks ago. Since then, there have been a few setbacks and the store's interior remains temporarily bare, but business is growing.

One of the ways Insomnia Cookies is trying to appeal to students is to not just provide fresh cookies, but to provide them right to customers' doors. Cookies can be ordered online via the company's Web site, www.insomnia-cookies.com, and will be delivered in a hot box to keep them fresh.

"We're quicker on our delivery than pizza," said Elaine Carpenter, general manager of the Purdue location.

The use of a hot box in deliveries is just one step the store takes in ensuring freshness. Carpenter said they bake about 15 to 20 dozen cookies a day which are kept in a warmer when they're done. If the cookies aren't sold within three hours, they're donated or given to people to try.

"Eventually, we're going to

donate to soup kitchens," Carpenter said.

Although the business targets late-night customers, as the name suggests, the store keeps hours during the day.

"We're trying it right now at 9 a.m. in the mornings to see if we can get some local people," Carpenter said. "We're going to do that for a month and see how it works out."

Delivery is available only between 8 p.m. and 2:30 a.m., when the store closes.

But there were a few days last week when students couldn't eat at the store or order cookies online. Insomnia Cookies was temporarily closed for repairs but reopened quickly, Carpenter said.

Carpenter is still in the process of training new employees. She said there were between five and eight people working in the store and eight to 10 delivery drivers.

Some of those employees, like Kara Guest, a junior in the College of Consumer and Family Sciences, are pulling double duty to help the new store.

"I am a delivery person, but I help out in the store, too," Guest said. "Baking cookies and brownies, cleaning."

Guest thought the concept of cookie delivery was genius.

"I wish I'd thought of it," she said.