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## McDonald's will need more than a bigger Big Mac to supersize profits.

Nick Fletcher. Sunday 22 January 2017.

Ever thought a Big Mac was not big enough? Me neither. But McDonald's clearly does, as it is introducing a new Grand Mac, which apparently has to be eaten with two hands. To be fair it is also adding the Mac Jr – presumably for those who eat with one hand.

The move is part of a plan to boost its struggling business, which has also included letting franchisees put Aloo Masala in a burger bun in India and – controversially – introduce nuts to its menu in Canada. It has also sold or is selling off stakes in its Chinese and Japanese operations, aiming to own just 5% of its 36,000 outlets in future.

The problem is McDonald's sales are currently more Jr than Grand. Third-quarter sales grew by just 1.3%, and some analysts believe fourth-quarter figures on Monday could see a drop of around 1.4%. They have been hit by bad weather, growing competition and general sluggishness in the sector. This was partially mitigated by promotions and a bout of cost-cutting, which may help earnings edge higher. But the first three months of 2017 could see a sales decline of up to 1.9%, given there is no extra leap day this year.

What would Ray Kroc, the man behind its rapid expansion – currently being immortalized on film by Michael Keaton in *The Founder* – think? After all, some of its food may still be supersized, but McDonald's itself is looking decidedly downsized.

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