

# Technology for Old-World Cuisine



## The Italian Village

Recognised as one of Sydney's most prominent and popular a la carte restaurants, The Italian Village changed hands in October 2002 and came under the ownership of Anthony Liberiou. The restaurant, which features three floors as well as extensive outdoor eating areas, has a seating capacity of 850. Quite aside from its enviable quality of food and levels of service, its popularity is enhanced by its location, with patrons able to enjoy their meals along with expansive views of Sydney's Circular Quay. For Liberiou, though, food, service and location are only part of the equation; and a PalmTEQ solution with EPSON technology is another vital component.

### *The Challenge: Improve Service, Revenue and Control*

According to Liberiou, it was only a few years ago that a successful 850 seat restaurant would almost certainly guarantee a profitable business future. "Times have changed, though," he said. "Restaurateurs are now faced with growing overheads and to be successful, you need to do more than provide good food and service – you need to address common challenges with more innovative measures."

### *The Solution: EPSON Technology with PalmTEQ Software and Expertise*

After reviewing eight separate solutions from various companies, Liberiou opted for an EPSON-centric solution from PalmTEQ, EPSON Australia's dedicated Systems Partner in the restaurant vertical market. PalmTEQ's solution for The Italian Village comprised: an EPSON SR-600 Point-Of-Sale (POS) Terminal, four EPSON U230 Kitchen Printers, three EPSON TM-T88III Receipt Printers and eight PalmTEQ hand-held WaiterPads.

In commenting on his decision to partner with PalmTEQ, Liberiou said: "PalmTEQ showed us a system that would meet our immediate needs, was highly customisable and utilised products that were extremely reliable and robust. With up to 850 customers during busy times, our billing and control system has to be the very best on offer."

According to PalmTEQ's New South Wales State Manager, Stephen Gavan, using EPSON POS technology has remained the focus of PalmTEQ's restaurant technology solutions. "We want systems in place for our clients that will operate faultlessly under the most demanding situations," he said. "EPSON's products in combination with our WaiterPads have proven themselves time and time again in an enormous number of restaurants right around Australia and the world." (UK/Nth America/Europe/SE Asia)



#### ***Benefit: Accurate and Quick Billing***

Any system that delivers truly accurate billing in a restaurant is guaranteed to deliver rapid return on investment. With PalmTEQ's solution, all items – food and drinks (bottles, glasses and nips) – are recorded and included in the final bill. "This is a major benefit," Liberiou stated. "It's quite common for several waiters to end up taking orders from a single table. Under the old paper-based system, the threat was always there that some of these orders wouldn't make it on to the bill simply because they were misplaced or someone forgot to hand them in. With PalmTEQ's solution, a table's bill is updated immediately after an order is taken from any waiter."

#### ***Benefit: Waiter Availability***

One of the major features of the PalmTEQ solution is the RF-based wireless connection that ties together the entire solution set; from the hand-held WaiterPads through to the EPSON U230 Kitchen Printers and SR-600 POS Terminal. As a result, waiters no longer need to leave their stations to take paper-based orders to the kitchen, bar or other food preparation areas. As soon as the order is taken, the system automatically directs it to the appropriate U230 Kitchen Printer.

"With waiters constantly at their station instead of running back to the kitchen and bar, they are on-hand to take orders for that final port, cup of coffee or extra dessert," Liberiou said. "It may not sound like much, but in an 850 restaurant operating seven days and nights a week, it adds up to a substantial amount very quickly."

#### ***Benefit: Planning Ahead***

One of Liberiou's greatest frustrations is turning customers away without being able to provide an accurate estimate of when a table will be vacant. "I've estimated that on a Friday and Saturday night, this can easily represent \$7,000 in lost custom each night," he said.

By taking advantage of the PalmTEQ solution's EPSON SR-600 POS Terminal, managers are able to view graphical displays of each of the restaurant's four eating areas, with every table colour-coded to represent its status – vacant, used and used but with the bill presented. This quick overview enables the managers to estimate with a great degree of accuracy when and where the next table will become available. "We may not necessarily be able to regain the full \$7,000 a night," Liberiou said, "but even if we were able to regain only 50 per cent of this, the system will pay for itself very quickly."



#### ***Benefit: Taking Control of Stock***

Accurate stock control has long been one of the restaurant industry's most sought after goals. With the restaurant's new levels of automation, Liberiou is able to access automatically updated stock levels. This provides him with information on which wines are proving the most – and least – popular, the number of bottles that should be remaining in stock and even how many nips should be left in spirits bottles.

#### ***Benefit: Ease-of-Use***

Utilising advanced touch-screen technologies for both the EPSON SR-600 Terminal and WaiterPad components, as well as Windows-based software on the terminal itself, ease-of-use is readily achieved by The Italian Village with its PalmTEQ and EPSON solution. "Training has proven to be extremely straightforward for the staff," Liberiou said, "and we saw this as a major benefit. We wanted a solution that was effective, easy to use and delivered real business benefits to The Italian Village – with the EPSON and PalmTEQ solution, it's what we received."