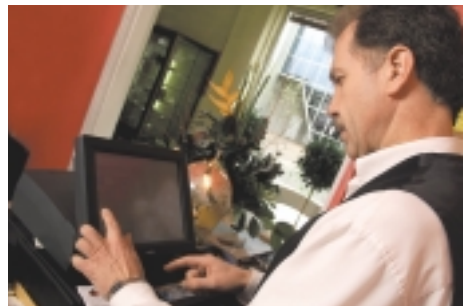


CASE STUDY
EPSON AUSTRALIA

La Bella Vista Restaurant

Changing Practices To Fit The Times

Located in Parramatta, serving lunch and dinner seven days a week, La Bella Vista is one of the growing number of restaurants recognising technology as a key tool in improving customer service, reducing waste from incorrect orders, and increasing overall profitability. With the aid of PalmTeq's WaiterPad wireless point of sale technology and EPSON's Point of Sale hardware the restaurant has gained a competitive edge.



Recognising the need for change

For Julio Clavijo, co-owner of the 200 seat restaurant, there's little doubt that the restaurant industry is steeped in tradition. But while tradition certainly has its place, it is overshadowed by the need to change business practices to meet the demands of social change. "In the United States and Europe, restaurant customers are used to having waiters spending time at the tables explaining dishes and discussing the best accompaniments and wines," explained Julio. "We're now seeing this in Australia, but under the traditional pen-and-paper ordering system, waiters are too busy getting drinks from the bar and taking orders to the kitchen."

While that may be the case in all too many Australian restaurants, at La Bella Vista EPSON technologies have enabled staff to change with the times. Replacing the pen and paper is PalmTeq's WaiterPad solution, which utilises an EPSON SR-600 Point-Of-Sale (POS) Terminal, U230 EPSON heavy duty Kitchen Printer, two EPSON Receipt/Coupon printers and PalmTeq's hand-held WaiterPads.

Now when a waiter takes an order, it is entered into the hand-held WaiterPad; and once completed sent automatically to the EPSON POS Terminal. There, PalmTeq's WaiterPOS software directs the order to any one or more of the three EPSON POS printers located at key order preparation points throughout

the restaurant. This all happens within seconds of the order being taken and gives the waiter ample time to achieve one of a restaurant's most profitable exercises - upselling.

"The system gives us the two most critical things when it comes to up selling," said Julio. "Time and information. We gain the time by avoiding the need for waiters to take orders back to the bar, kitchen or pizzeria; orders have been dealt with and issued via the touch of a button on the WaiterPad handheld. With information, we can programme the system to provide prompts back to the waiter based on the order that's been entered.

"For example, if a customer orders a Tiramisu for dessert, the system can be set up to prompt the waiter to ask the customer if they'd like an accompanying port. We can also set it up to give the waiter the best side-order and wine accompaniments for any dish right across the menu from entrée to dessert."

A Guaranteed Tally

At the end of the day, profitability is the successful measure of a restaurant. Everything else - cuisine, atmosphere, personality and up selling - contributes to the bottom line outcome; and what's crucial is that every meal and drink is accounted for and included in a customer's bill. The vast majority of restaurant managers and owners are well aware of the lost revenue caused by incorrect bills.

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Regardless of whether it's a lost docket, a drink that wasn't noted down or anything else, it all equates to a definite downturn in profits.

With dockets now relegated to La Bella Vista's annals of restaurant history, the bottom line continues to improve. When a customer requests the bill, the EPSON Point-Of-Sale Terminal running the WaiterPad software ensures every item delivered to a particular table or even set of tables is accounted for. It takes only a few seconds for the waiter to generate an accurate bill for the customer.

Bringing Order to Orders

According to Julio, day one of the new system's introduction marked the first sign that it would pay for itself within a very short time. In fact, he believes it will take barely six months before he has fully recouped its overall cost. "It all stems from the fact that the two bars, the pizzeria and kitchen will prepare an order only when it comes through the system and is printed on one of the EPSON POS printers. This means doubling up on orders is no longer an issue; and that's something that happens more often than most restaurateurs are prepared to admit.

"In a restaurant of this size, doubling up on orders, items missing from bills and incorrectly tallied bills are a real problem. In most cases it's simply a case of staff being too busy. Where it really hurts is that you can lose anywhere up to \$5,000 a month just because of these issues.

For PalmTeq's New South Wales State Manager, Mr Stephen Gavan, who oversaw the introduction of the WaiterPad solution at La Bella Vista, developing technology solutions for the restaurant industry has its own problems. "A restaurant is definitely not a friendly environment when it comes to technology," he stated.

"Any piece of equipment you install has to be able to withstand shock, water, grease, steam, heat and any number of other technology-unfriendly influences. Quite aside from ease of use and advanced technology, the reason we install Palmteq Hospitality Solutions with EPSON hardware is because they've been designed specifically to work in this type of environment."

Business Protection

The technology nuts-and-bolts aside, Julio's key goal is to establish La Bella Vista as a profitable business. "I'm an accountant by trade and have been in the restaurant industry as an owner, consultant and manager for over 18 years. Regardless of what some people think, you can make money out of a restaurant, but you have to protect your business. This system is definitely one of the most effective ways of doing just that."



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