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# SOPHISTICATED SERVICE WITH A SIMPLE STRUCTURE

BUSINESS  
SYSTEMS

## CASE STUDY

BUSINESS  
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### Masuya Restaurants

Renowned as one of the first sushi train restaurants in the Southern hemisphere, the Masuya Restaurant and others in its chain have been operating since 1994. Owned by Ken Sadamatsu, the four restaurants - Makoto One and Two, Musashi and Masuya - are located at Chatswood and throughout Sydney. Open six days a week for lunch and dinner, the restaurants attract business people, locals and tourists, with an average day seeing a combined patronage of anywhere up to 2,800.

#### Challenge: Automating service

Starting with just the one restaurant, Sadamatsu has built his business around keeping in touch with what the customer really wants and striving to provide exactly that. Staff plays an important role in this, and Masuya Restaurant Hall Manager, Lachlan Gelling works closely with Sadamatsu on various aspects of the business.

"Ken (Sadamatsu) is always looking to improve the business and this time around he wanted to better the levels of service we provide to patrons," Gelling said. "We're very stringent when it comes to quality service, though this time we needed more than that. It was about automating the serving process and ensuring the restaurants were run in a much more orderly fashion."

With a paper-based ordering system in place and a pigeon hole at the front desk for each table's orders, Sadamatsu decided it was time to look at what the Point-Of-Sale market had to offer. "We needed a cost effective POS solution that would automate service and be reliable in such a high demand environment. It also needed to use incredibly intelligent technology, as we would be programming new things into it on a regular basis to keep up with our clientele's needs," Gelling said.

#### Solution: Increased sales and productivity

After much research, the Masuya Restaurants decided to implement an EPSON and PalmTEQ solution in three of its four restaurants. The total installation for all three restaurants included: one EPSON MR-800 and two SR-600 Terminals; six EPSON TM-T88IIIs, two TM-U220 and two TM-U230 receipt printers; and 13 PalmTEQ hand-held WaiterPads.

Gelling commented: "Since the implementation, our in-house productivity has doubled, giving us the ability to speed up our turn-over of patrons and resulting in a 40 per cent increase in sales. This is fantastic news for the restaurants, considering the EPSON and PalmTEQ POS solution has only been implemented in the three restaurants over the course of the last two years."

#### Withstanding the unpredictable

A restaurant's kitchen is an unforgiving environment for electronic equipment and with a minimum of three EPSON TM-series printers in each restaurant, it has been a sure test of their reliability and robust nature. "We have three food preparation



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Lachlan Gelling  
Hall Manager  
Masuya Restaurants

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areas in each restaurant, all of which required a printer to convey clientele orders to the chefs and barmen," Gelling said.

"As in most restaurants, the Makoto, Masuya and Musashi have a hot area for the grill; a cold area, in this case, for the sushi bar, and a beverages bar. It was essential that the printers we put in would withstand the unpredictable everyday hazards such as steam and spills."

The ability of the EPSON TM-series printers to withstand "the unpredictable" was put to the test in 2004, when the Masuya kitchen's air ventilation system broke down in 2004.

"We had an instance late last year where the ventilation system in the hot section of the kitchen ceased working and set the emergency sprinkler system off. As you might imagine, the microwave and similar appliances were zapped and destroyed in the event, though to our amazement, the EPSON printers went about operation as though nothing had happened. They're still working perfectly to this day...that's reliability!" Gelling stated.

### Time saving

Prior to the implementation of the EPSON and PalmTEQ solution, the Masuya Restaurants were using a paper-based ordering system, which required the waiters to use the traditional triplicate-style notepads. This meant that after taking each order, the waiter would have to deliver the copies to the kitchen, the bar and the front desk where the EPSON POS terminal was located.

"With the new EPSON and PalmTEQ solution, all the waiter has to do is enter the order details into the hand-held WaiterPad and press the send button. This information is then transmitted, using radio frequency, to the POS terminal, as well as the kitchen and bar areas where it is printed out for the chef or bartender to begin preparing the meals or drinks," Gelling said.

Another time saving factor since using the EPSON and PalmTEQ solution is the cut-down on training time for staff at the Masuya Restaurants. With approximately 120 staff members to train every three months due to the time limit on working visas, training used to take anywhere up to 10 days. Gelling commented: "We invest time and money in training the staff members at each restaurant,

and by the end of that training, they have to know as much as possible about the job because our reputation relies on their ability to do their job well. In saying this, the new system allows us to provide that same high level of training but in just five days!"

### Quality of service

Operating to a very strict total quality of service formula, the Masuya Restaurants are able to gain more than enough business by word of mouth. "Our service is always 110 per cent because we work on the theory that impressing one patron is as good as impressing 30 - the approximate amount of associates, friends and family they will recommend the restaurant to," Gelling explained. "On the other hand, this figure works the same in reverse should we disappoint a patron, so the level of service is incredibly important here."

At the Masuya Restaurants, quality is based on the overall experience, from the way the napkins are folded and the speed at which the table can be set, through to the professional appearance of the restaurant and of course, the quality of the food. "To us, quality has a lot to do with automating processes in order to give the patrons more attention and the EPSON MR-800 and SR-600 Terminals working in combination with the EPSON TM-T88III and TM-U220/230 Receipt printers and PalmTEQ's hand-held WaiterPads are all a vital part of this," Gelling said.

"With the old paper-based system, the waiters were required to spend so much time taking the orders and making sure they were reported accurately to the kitchen staff that the patrons were being, to some degree, neglected. Understandably, you can't give every patron that special one-on-one treatment, but with the EPSON and PalmTEQ solution working together and keeping waiters on the hall floor, we come pretty damn close."

