

If You Can't Stand the Heat

How Hot Kitchen Technology Maximizes the Guest Experience

When it comes to streamlining operations and ensuring guest satisfaction, deploying the right mix of people, process and technology is typically the golden ticket to realizing results. For operators of table service restaurants, however, this process becomes a difficult one to follow unless one key area of the business is mastered: the kitchen.

Operators of table service restaurants need to know their kitchens inside and out. By doing so, food quality is enhanced, ticket times are improved and communication is clearer, thus reducing stress and confusion among staff and management — which best serves the guest.

Leading operators such as Ruby Tuesday, BJ's Restaurants and Cheesecake Factory are reaping the rewards of mastering their kitchens by using cutting-edge tools from QSR Automations.

Food quality

Sending items to individual prep stations (Item Routing) means chefs only worry about the items they are responsible for preparing. Timing the process so that all items on an order complete at the same time (Delay Routing) reduces wait times in the expo window — where items risk getting cold. To efficiently route items, The Cheesecake Factory deployed QSR's ConnectSmart Kitchen (CSK) system to maximize operational efficiencies in its high volume, high complexity kitchens, which support 200 menu offerings.

Ticket times

Tracking orders (Expo Management) for runners, servers and managers, including speed of service timing at the order level, is of paramount concern for a high volume operator like Ruby Tuesday. To gain a higher degree of insight into its operations, Ruby Tuesday depends on QSR's CSK graphical software running with QSR's eXpert hospitality controller and KP-3000 keypad. With access to production information and the ability to compare this critical data to other store information, restaurant managers and cor-

porate team members can now make better decisions to boost overall efficiencies.

Communication

In addition to operational efficiencies, item routing and expo management reduce stress and confusion because the staff understands what is happening at all times. Tools from QSR Automations also remove the guesswork and confusion of order status by preventing servers from hounding chefs to ensure orders are being cooked. BJ's Restaurant and Brewery knows that communication between the kitchen and servers is key to keeping on top of the flow of food. That's why the operator turned to QSR

Automations. Before BJ's implemented QSR's CSK, if one guest ordered a steak, and another at the same table ordered a salad, the salad would be ready right away, and sit in the window getting warm, while the steak was still being cooked.

"Now the salad hits the window the same time as the steak," says Brian Pearson, vice president of information services at BJ's Restaurant and Brewery. "We looked at a lot of solutions, but

QSR had the largest footprint in the industry. It's POS independent — it doesn't matter what POS the system is attached to."

The bottom line

Clearly, if your kitchen isn't running at optimal efficiency, neither is your restaurant. Know the kitchen, own the kitchen (and with a solution like QSR's ConnectSmart, tie the kitchen into other key areas of the restaurant — such as the hostess stand) — and you can truly improve efficiencies and maximize the guest experience.

Know the kitchen, own the kitchen, and connect it across key areas of the restaurant — such as the hostess stand — to truly improve efficiencies and maximize the guest experience.



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