### 8 POINTS to consider when buying Point of Sale for your restaurant



Hospitality is a fast-moving, highly competitive industry, and eating out is more popular than ever. Consumers have never had so much choice when it comes to restaurants, cafés and fast food outlets, and it's not just food they're hungry for. Today's diners want to choose the ingredients in the food they buy. They want to know where those ingredients came from and how the dish was prepared. They want fast, convenient ways to order and pay, and from the moment they discover the restaurant, they expect to be at the center of a personalized, rewarding experience.

The POS as both a Point of Sale and a Point of Service has become a key focus for restaurants as they respond to these trends.

Just a few years ago, Point of Sale systems had a single purpose: to conduct sales transactions. Serving staff jotted down customers' orders on slips of paper and took them to the kitchen; deals and specials were written on a chalkboard; schemes to reward frequent purchases depended on the cashier stamping a card, and regular customers might be recognized by long-serving

staff at the bar or table. All these interactions – from taking customer orders and payments to implementing deals, and assigning rewards that help keep diners coming back – are now **part of the POS**, which has transformed from a mere Point of Sale into a **Point of Service**.

Recent research has found that 60 percent of restaurants are looking to add new functionality or features to their POS software, while 33 percent plan to test and research new POS solutions for implementation in the coming years.

The right POS system can provide restaurants with great savings, while at the same time helping put each customer at the center of an efficient, convenient and personalized experience. But with so many solutions on the market, finding the right one can be a challenge.

This white paper outlines eight issues that decision makers should consider when they are looking for a POS system that can help them achieve their business goals:

ref: 'Frictionless POS: 2017 POS Software Trends Report', Hospitality Technology.

Tailor the POS Show every user the information they need to fit your business Give mobile, Reduce errors with seamless fast service connection to the kitchen Guarantee a personalized Bring it all together with experience an integrated system Offer secure, Choose a flexible payments trustworthy vendor





### Tailor the POS to fit your business

The ideal POS is quick to react, easy and **intuitive to use**, and really empowers your staff.

A complex interface in a POS can undermine even the greatest system by slowing down service and stopping users making full use of its capabilities. If tools and information are hard to find, or the workflow doesn't fit with the restaurant's own processes, the staff is left to stumble through a maze of irrelevant options.

The POS needs to **support the processes of your restaurant**, rather than ask you to change your ways to adapt to the system. For restaurants, this support can mean being able to **tailor the look of the POS easily**, incorporating buttons and shortcuts in a **layout that fits the restaurant's workflow and menu**.

The ideal system will be easy enough to allow restaurateurs to change POS layout on their own, without having to ask for help from an IT expert or consultant. Every restaurant business is unique, from the layout of tables in bar and restaurant areas to the dishes on the menu and the people who prepare and serve them. For those people, something as simple as a choice between **graphical and list views** of the tables can provide better supervision of the status of orders, reservations and available space to sit new customers.

Easy-to-read, color-coded displays can be of great help when it comes to finding information on menu items and special offers easily, so they can respond quickly to customers' questions. Put simply, the service your staff give customers is more likely to flow smoothly if the POS is intuitive and can be tailored to your specific needs.







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#### Guarantee a personalized experience

When diners can **add or exclude ingredients** to get a dish that is exactly to their liking and get **personalized offers** at the POS – that is a truly unique experience that's worth coming back for.

Many customers want to tailor their dish to their own tastes or exclude ingredients because of allergies or special dietary needs. In fact, research by Deloitte found that **85 percent of people think being able to customize their order is the most important part of the restaurant's menu**. When researching POS software, make sure that the system you select enables you to add and exclude ingredients easily from any dish, and that this information is sent straight to the kitchen to avoid risks of miscommunication.

Customers also want **offers** that reflect their personal preferences and interactions with the restaurant. As well as making it easy to **modify items** on the spot, the POS needs to also enable staff members to quickly **view and activate meal deals and offers** which the customer might be interested in based on their preferences and past purchases.

The POS can be a great tool to enable **conversational selling**. Whether the customer is talking to restaurant staff or using a self-serve kiosk or mobile app, intelligent, personalized recommendations can be used to engage them and keep them coming back. Ability to offer all of this should be a priority when considering a new POS system.







Many restaurants are still working with frustrating POS systems that can't handle the ways their customers want to pay. Amid new global payment standards and customers' demands for mobility, payment is a key area of focus: 66 percent of restaurants say preparing for EMV is the primary goal of their POS upgrades, and 46 percent are focusing on adding new payment options. Allowing customers to pay **securely** in the way they want will be a key factor of success in the future.

A good POS system will be both secure and flexible when it comes to payments. People may eat in a group but they often like to **split the** bill, and this means that restaurants face unique challenges when it comes to taking payment. The Point of Sale system should be capable of splitting the bill in seconds to reflect instances when people want to pay equal amounts or per individual consumption. A good POS should also allow staff members to easily move the bill from one section to another, suspending and recalling orders, for example in case of people moving between the bar and restaurant.

To be ready to serve any customer who comes through the door, the POS needs to accept multiple payment and tender options – for example credit and debit cards, gift cards and promotional codes, cash and checks - and

> to make it easy for managers to add new ones. Support for

multi-currency transactions is also increasingly important, especially for restaurants that attract many foreign tourists or are located on ships, at airports or close to a border.

> ref: Deloitte, The restaurant of the future: Creating the next-generation customer experience.



## Show every user the information they need

Each Point of Sale can have many users, from cashiers to managers – and they all need **different tools and information**. Waiters need seating, menu, order status and payment information at their fingertips, and for each role there may be separate groups of staff members who focus on certain areas such as the bar, restaurant or takeout desk.

Managers should be able to access all the sales and operations data they need to plan the staff roster, organize promotions and make timely business decisions. They also need to be able to set **permissions** for individual users or groups of users, and to set up **additional logins** to carry out specific operations – for example, to make sure that only authorized staff are able to serve alcohol, or provide refunds or discounts over a specific amount.

A POS system that gives each role access to the tools and information they need for various tasks, **without forcing users to log in and out of different systems**, will make everyone's job easier and enable more efficient operations.

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## Reduce errors with seamless connection to

When the **POS connects directly to the kitchen** the service is much faster and more efficient, and the risk of mistakes is minimized.

the kitchen

Picture the scene: a customer places an order through the in-store kiosk or the waiting staff, including details of ingredients they want to exclude from the dish, and how they would like their steak to be cooked. That order is immediately transmitted **straight to the kitchen**, where all the customer's requests are displayed on the monitors for the kitchen staff, or sent to a printer in the correct section in the kitchen. With an overview of all the orders coming in, the chef can prepare the exact dish the customer asked for, when they want it. And in case of any queries, staff members can **monitor the order's progress** on the stationary and mobile POS devices.

Connecting the front of house with the kitchen in this way can significantly **speed up service** and help reduce waste, as meals are prepared exactly to customers' specifications. No more orders and specifications jotted on a piece of paper, only to be misread in the kitchen. No more errors due to the fact that the waiter who was stopped by another table wanting more drinks while he was running from the table to the stationary POS.

Restaurants that can provide accurate, streamlined service will be the ones customers come back to.



# Bring it all together with an integrated system

Working with multiple systems is a challenge for any business, and many restaurants are now struggling to deliver the connected experience modern customers expect. Creating and maintaining interfaces between different internal systems is costly, time consuming and inefficient, as any updates to one system often entail changes to all the solutions operating in the business.

A **single**, **integrated system** is the best way to achieve the insight and efficiency restaurants need. When the POS takes all its information from the same source as all the other business applications, everyone can be confident that they're working with **accurate**, **up-to-date data**. POS users – and loyalty app users, if the system is truly integrated across the channels – will have up-to-the-minute knowledge about menu options, the latest offers, prices, ingredients and possible customizations. When the system is integrated front to back, all information from the POS is also immediately available to management, who can **analyze sales and loyalty data** on the spot to make sure they keep delivering what diners want. This kind of system also enables restaurants to reorder ingredients as necessary, based on a **real-time view** of sales and customer demand, so the inventory is never bloated or understocked.

This type of joined-up thinking – empowered by POS as part of an integrated system – is already enabling leading restaurants to create **unique**, **efficient and engaging experiences with the customer at the center**.







## Choose a trustworthy vendor

Unsupported technology soon becomes outdated. When choosing a new POS system, don't just focus on the software specifications: also think about the **provider's reputation**. You don't want to select (and spend money and time to install, and train your staff on) a random online POS just because it's from a cheap startup – to then find out, a few months later, that the vendor offers absolutely no **support** and that the system doesn't get **updated**. Or even worse, that the vendor has completely abandoned the platform.

Pick a company you can trust will be **there in the future**, providing you with support and updates when you need them. Providers with a large **partner network** tend to give a higher level of reliability. On the one hand, a large partner environment is a sign that the technology is very **well established**; on the other hand, it guarantees that you will never be stuck without support.

During the selection process, it's a good idea to contact different vendors and ask for references. The best software providers will be able to give you a **list of businesses** that use their systems. You can then reach out to those businesses to get their opinions, and see first-hand how the POS system works.



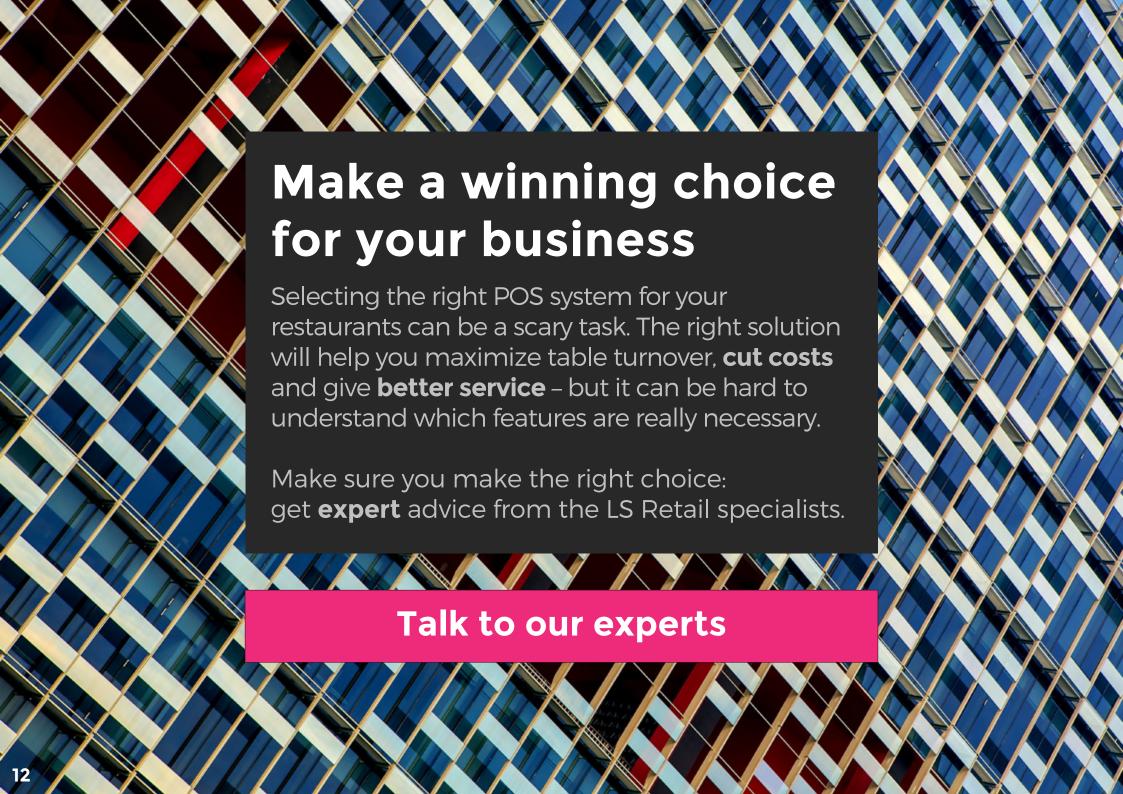
#### Summary

Restaurant POS software is a key element of the connected experience today's diners expect. It can give consumers all the information they want and allow them to choose how their dishes should be prepared. Role-based workflows and connection to the kitchen can help not only to deliver faster, more efficient service, but also to eliminate mistakes – which means more, satisfied customers. Making all this available through mobile devices literally puts time in the hands of customers and restaurant staff. Customers can order quickly with instant access to the information they need; staff can offer speedy, efficient and convenient service as orders are sent directly to the kitchen; and when it's time to pay there is no need for

customers to queue at the counter. With the right POS in place, diners can pay quickly and securely in the way they want, leaving staff free to get on with providing excellent service to other customers.

The trends highlighted in this paper provide a starting point on the path to POS modernization. Exploring these issues alongside key business goals will enable decision-makers to visualize how modernizing their POS can help shape their business for future success. The next step is to discuss that vision with solution providers to find the system that can **truly support the business** and enable it to deliver the experiences tomorrow's customers expect.









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