



The food and beverage business of hospitality has got a technology boost, especially post the pandemic, which is giving a fillip to revenues.

BY BINDU RAO

When Suresh Khanna, a business honcho, was travelling to Bengaluru from Delhi, he had taken a late evening flight. Enroute his journey to his hotel Conrad Bengaluru, he opened his Hilton Honors app and placed his dinner order that was ready piping hot in his room when he needed it the most. And this is exactly how technology is changing the food and beverage scene in the hospitality context.

#### RESTAURANT POINT OF SALE (POS) SOFTWARE

A restaurant POS software is like the brain of a restaurant. It's the system that handles all the transactions and keeps everything running smoothly. In the old days, a POS was just a basic billing software that took orders and printed out receipts. But now, thanks to fancy cloud technology, the POS has become so much more.

Jazib Husain, Food and Beverage Manager, Hyatt Regency Pune, explains, "Nowadays, a restaurant POS is like a superhero with all



Jazib Husain, Food and Beverage Manager, Hyatt Regency Pune

these cool powers. It can manage your stock and inventory, crunch numbers to give you smart reports and analytics, and even help you keep track of your customers. You can connect it to online ordering platforms, e-wallets, and even table reservation systems. And if you want to reward your loyal customers, it can handle that too with loyalty programs."

The POS terminal is the central component of the POS system, often referred to as the touch screen cash register. It allows restaurant staff to effortlessly take customer

orders and instantly send them to the appropriate kitchen section. Additionally, it enables the seamless processing of bill payments and tips, as well as efficient table management. The POS terminal comes in various sizes to cater to specific usage requirements.

"With the help of a restaurant POS system, this process becomes a breeze, resulting in improved customer service and ultimately, better business. By utilizing a POS system, waiters can effortlessly take orders and provide top-notch recommendations for dishes, ensuring a delightful dining experience for all," adds Husain.

#### DIGITAL ORDERING SYSTEMS

Leveraging the power of digital innovation, Hilton is putting control in the hands of its guests like never before. The integration of Kipsu, a leading messaging platform, with the Hilton Honors app allows travellers to effortlessly communicate their needs, ensuring a remarkable stay from the moment they walk through the doors.

Imran Hiroli, Rooms Division Manager, Conrad Bengaluru, adds, "In a remarkable move toward enhancing guest experiences, Conrad Bengaluru is changing the way guests interact with technology before even setting foot in their rooms or the hotel. Through a ground-breaking integration with Kipsu, Hilton Honors app users can now conveniently place their food requests and customize room preferences ahead of their arrival, making their stay truly



Imran Hiroli, Rooms Division Manager, Conrad Bengaluru

personalized and seamless. By leveraging this advanced technology, guests can communicate their dietary requirements and meal preferences directly through the app, eliminating the need for lengthy phone calls or waiting until they arrive at the hotel to convey their requests. Whether it's a vegan meal, gluten-free options, or a special celebration cake, guests can simply access the app and have their preferences recorded in real-time."

Like every other touch point, the Food & Beverage space has also seen an enhanced level of technology inclusion and digitalization. This is not just in the marketing or visual space but also covers menus, food imagery, explanation of cooking processes, taste, suggested pairings, nutritional and allergen information, and of course, ordering. All of these



POS system allows restaurant staff to effortlessly take customer orders and instantly send them to the appropriate kitchen section

are interrelated to give a holistic view to the guest when they are looking at placing an order digitally.

“Our digital order system will allow guests to see how the final dish will look, provide nutritional and allergen information and what is the best side dish or beverage to order with each dish. For us, at Roseate Hotels & Resorts, this system is not restricted to online orders but is being used to complement the face-to-face interactions our teams are having in the restaurants. This allows our guests to have the best possible experience when they have an ordered meal with us whether it is in the restaurant or at home,” says Kush Kapoor, CEO, Roseate Hotels & Resorts.

**INVOICE MANAGEMENT**

In the realm of hospitality and the food and beverage industry, the management of invoices holds paramount importance. It serves as a vital component in facilitating the smooth and effective handling of expenses, guaranteeing a streamlined process and meticulous monitoring. By providing a comprehensive suite of tools and functionalities, it empowers businesses to effectively oversee their supplier management processes, effortlessly maintain financial records, and ensure accuracy and transparency in their financial operations.

“Furthermore, it facilitates the cultivation of strong and enduring relationships with suppliers, fostering a collaborative and mutually beneficial environment for all stakeholders involved. The art of proper invoicing holds great significance for hotels and establishments alike, for it serves as the cornerstone of financial stability. By



➤ Kush Kapoor, CEO, Roseate Hotels & Resorts



➤ Dr Malini Saba, Founder and Chairman, Serendipity Hotel

accurately managing invoices, these entities can ensure the availability of ample cash reserves, effectively handle recurring expenses, and diligently evaluate the profitability of their operations. The task at hand entails the delicate art of harmonising invoices with purchase orders and receipts, thoroughly analysing the invoicing process, ensuring the accuracy of information, evaluating the quality of goods and services, and assessing every minute detail of pricing. Invoice management encompasses not only the thorough task of identifying discrepancies but also the delicate art of resolving disputes and the strategic endeavour of preventing both overpayment and underpayment,” says Dr Malini Saba, Founder and Chairman, Serendipity Hotel.

**STAFF SERVICE TOOLS**

Post pandemic, hotel food and beverage services have undergone digital transformations and have be-



➤ Digital platforms are making the payment transactions in restaurants hassle free



➤ Whether it's a vegan meal, gluten-free options, or a special celebration cake, guests can simply access the app and have their preferences recorded in real-time.

come more data-centric. With automated systems and tracking tools, the operation team can take informed strategic decisions, resulting in revenue optimization, minimize cost and enhanced guest satisfaction through personalization.

“Tracking outlet performance through working man hours, revenue per staff and cost per cover further strengthen staff service efficiency. At Marriott, we have restaurant management systems which interact with other hotel control systems, hence allowing us to have a flow of information like guest dining preference, special dietary requirements, and his/ her special occasions. This information helps the restaurant team to create a unique dining experience for the guests which in lieu positively impacts restaurant reputation as a destination. Similarly, digital platforms are making the payment transactions in restaurants hassle free with little or no interaction of service staff. There are now systems and platforms to track training progress of staff, measure their workplace satisfaction and daily productivity. This helps the employers to create an inclusive working culture with work life balance,” says Rabindra Rai, Director of Operations, Courtyard by Marriott Bengaluru Outer Ring Road.

**FOOD WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Food management and wastage plays a critical role firstly with environmental and sustainability, secondly in cost controls. Food wastage increases the burden on sustainability on the planet and the hotel too. A major concern of the issue is that it deprives the poor from food on their plate to increase green-house emissions through agriculture. Reducing food wastage also helps reduce control costs in the hotel, with food cost being one of the highest cost items in the hotel.



➤ Rabindra Rai, Director of Operations, Courtyard by Marriott Bengaluru



➤ Hara Mohan Bora, Associate Director of F&B Aloft Bengaluru

“The waste is at first segregated in the kitchen stewarding area and the waste is then screened in scanning machines before being taken away by the local municipality. This ensures the waste management protocols are followed. Non-recyclable wastes like wrap packets are given to an NGO who works closely with the hotel for scientific disposal of the waste or used for making artifacts. Proper planning is the key to effectiveness of this thought. One such effort is daily updates on the house count, walk-in reservations, and banquet events with all the stakeholders, particularly kitchen team Regular training and importance of food management and zero wastage is highlighted in daily F&B briefings. The leaders of F&B and Kitchen rely on strategic decisions of occupancy, food habits of regular guests, highest and slowest moving items of history data and evaluate the menu daily accordingly,” says Hara Mohan Bora, Associate Director of F&B Aloft Bengaluru Outer Ring Road. **IN**