Case Study

Ditching the Cash Register for a Modern POS System Yields Unprecedented Benefits

Flying Pie Pizzeria is a five-store chain in the Portland, Oregon area. Ty Dupuis, owner, worked in or owned a pizza restaurant his entire life. After starting out at a local pizzeria in high school, Ty spent time working in a dough commissary for a 26-unit pizza franchise before landing a job at the neighborhood Flying Pie in 1988. After rising through the ranks, Ty negotiated a buyout agreement with the previous owners in 2000 and has since opened additional stores alongside ambitious employees. Today, Flying Pie is a family-focused pizzeria serving multi-generational families and local kid's sports teams. It's a place where families come to eat, relax, play board games and have fun.

Challenge

Prior to HungerRush®, Flying Pie relied on an outdated cash register to take orders and tally sales. Handwritten orders were clipped to a string and would zip down a 30-foot long line to the kitchen. It was fun for guests to see orders zinging by, but it created problems in the kitchen. Handwritten tickets were difficult to read, and incorrect orders were challenging to correct. Additionally, each restaurant used paper timecards and an obsolete time clock. Flying Pie didn't seem to have a problem with employee theft or losses, but it was hard for Ty to really know without the proper technology.
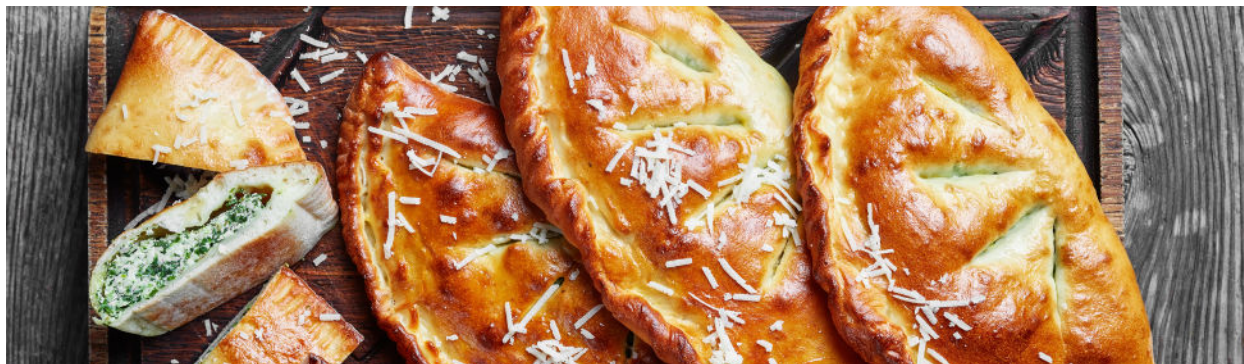
Customer
Flying Pie Pizzeria

Challenge
Gain visibility into pizzeria operations setting the stage for future growth. Was hindered by an outdated cash register and paper timecards.

Results
Flying Pie implemented operational changes, modified menu items and streamlined its staffing plan to drive a better customer experience and improve profitability utilizing the HungerRush POS system.

Key considerations for Flying Pie included finding a POS system that was easy for pizza restaurants to use. Menu customization was also a top priority. Flying Pie also needed a more efficient system for employee time tracking to monitor labor costs and reduce the risk of employee theft. Lastly, the chain wanted to easily understand which items customers purchased most, and how to build a better customer experience while reducing food inventory costs.

The Results

Ty carefully researched six different POS systems over an 18-month period to find the right one.

> **"We did trials with Aloha, Thrive, and I met with Speedline. I asked friends all around the pizza industry what they were using. What I found was the pizza owners I trusted the most were all using HungerRush,"** says Ty.

The HungerRush system was a perfect fit for Flying Pie's stores. Referring to the system as "pizza-centric", Ty likes the simplicity of the system with its easy reporting and flexible menu customization. Once implemented, he was amazed at the effect the new POS system had on the business. Within weeks, Flying Pie was making operational changes to improve profitability and better serve customers. Leveraging information from the HungerRush POS, Flying Pie has been able to:

- Gain clarity on purchase history. The cash register could provide a general purchase history, but not by item or ingredient. "We were able to make changes in our menu and

promote certain items based on the data. Now we can easily decide which menu items or pizza toppings that people like, or ones that we should get rid of," says Ty, "it also helps us reduce food waste and negotiate better pricing with our suppliers."

- Modify menu pricing in real-time. Flying Pie steers customers away from buying pizzas that are half and half. The belief is that one-style pizzas are more evenly cooked, the flavor is more complete, and there is no cross contamination between meat and veggies. For customers that can't decide, Flying Pie introduced a smaller 8-inch option to compliment the standard 12, 14, 16 and 18-inch staples. "The easy ordering process on the HungerRush systems allows us to give customers quick price comparisons between sizes. We can add and delete pizzas and toppings on-the-fly to help customers compare pricing between sizes and steer them to the one that make most sense," adds Ty.

- Forecast scheduling needs. Streamlining the timekeeping through the HungerRush POS has produced cost benefits that have helped Flying Pie's profits. According to Ty, "We cut our labor costs by 5% using reports from the HungerRush POS system." Previously, Flying Pie brought in additional staff on busy days but not necessarily at the optimal time. As a result, employees stood around waiting for the rush to start. "I was just guessing at our hourly sales, but by using the reports I can shuffle schedules around and reduce our opening or closing crew. I can even adjust store opening and closing hours to improve profitability," adds Ty.

Summary

For Flying Pie, the HungerRush POS system brought the restaurant locations into the modern age of technology. The chain has leveraged the system's reporting tools to:

- Reduce labor costs

- Improve sales per hour of labor

- Streamline menu options to better serve customers

- Improve inventory management

- Adjust operating hours and staffing for peak times

- Negotiate pricing agreements with suppliers based on sales data

What's next for Flying Pie? Ty says, "We know the customer trend is moving towards online ordering and delivery. Now that the HungerRush POS system has provided the right foundation, we are ready to take that next step to keep up with changing consumer purchasing habits."

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