



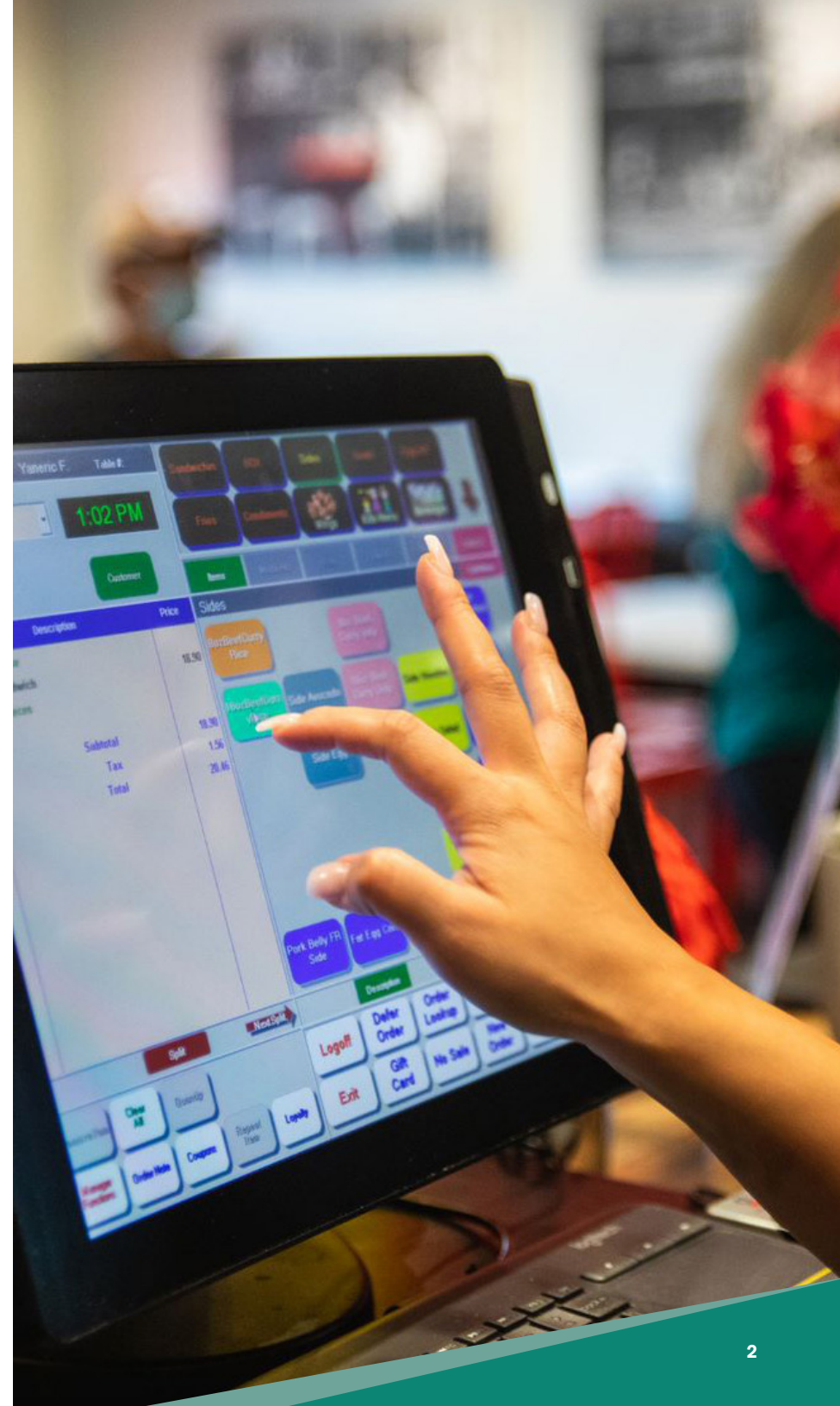
What I Wish I Knew Before Buying A POS System

How My Restaurant Point-of-Sale System Held My Franchise Back From Success



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A photograph of a restaurant counter. In the background, a menu board displays various food items like Banh Mi, Burgers, and Sides. A staff member in a red shirt is behind the counter. A customer in a blue plaid shirt is at the counter. A POS system with a monitor and a tablet is visible. There are also some decorative items like a white cat figurine and a vase of red roses on the counter.

For multi-unit restaurant operators, poor technology decisions have disastrous, rippling consequences. Whether you have twenty locations or two hundred, the decision of which POS system to use can define your operation, team culture, growth potential, and profit margins—either by unlocking opportunity, or holding you back from it.

Thankfully, there are thousands of pioneering men and women who have made some POS decisions they regret—and they're eager to share how you can avoid them.

Use this quick guide to learn from operators who have gone before, in their own words. Then apply their insight to your own restaurant franchise. Foresee challenges you wouldn't otherwise expect. Plan for opportunities you didn't know existed. And move forward with the right technology to accelerate the growth of your multi-unit operations.

MENU MANAGEMENT

“It turns out during the pandemic, there was a Canadian bacon shortage... Who would have thought?”

It's easy to get swept up in the fancy new features of a POS you're considering, but it's the day-to-day, mundane tasks that'll be impacted the most by new software, like updating your menu to reflect current stock.



“It turns out during the pandemic, there was a Canadian bacon shortage... Who would have thought? Canadian bacon is a key ingredient in a couple of our most popular items, so when we were told we weren't going to get any more, we were able to take it off the menu instantaneously — we didn't have to wait around for a few days for customer support to edit the system for us.”

Donnie Mixon, Director of Operations, The Toasted Yolk

We suggest making a master list of all the regular tasks your cashiers and servers must complete on a daily or weekly basis related to menu management and order taking. This may include things like:

- Removing items from the menu due to inventory shortages
- Customizing menu items to meet customer preferences
- Marking an order as for delivery or takeout

Ask the POS sales rep to walk you through these tasks during your demo as if they're one of your team members. If you really want to put them to the test, time them and compare the results to your existing point of sale. We recommend never switching to a POS that takes longer to complete these regular tasks than the status quo—switching systems should always be an upgrade, not a slow-down.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

“The system crashed all the time at night and we had to wait until morning to call someone.”

Every POS system works, until it doesn't. If you're mid-service, getting ready to open, or trying to count the cash drawer for the day, unreliable equipment—and worse, unreliable customer service—can disrupt everything.



“The system crashed all the time at night and we had to wait until morning to call someone. Because they have resellers, you would have to then wait for a tech to be paged and they would call you back 5 hours later. I was the one that actually ended up fixing the system! I slept in the restaurant for 3 nights straight and stood in the same spot for 13 hours at a time.”

Kortney Cycotte-Gaither, Operations, Coney McKane's

Questions, concerns, and glitches are inevitable, so push your potential software provider to prove that they will be there when you need them. Make sure they're up-front about their customer service hours, use US-based service reps, and can guarantee service deadlines if you need someone to come in-person.

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

“When an order came through, we didn’t even receive the full name of the person placing it.”

It’s not enough to generate more orders. Restaurants thrive in the long run by generating loyal customers who return over and over again. If you can’t own your customers and market to them, you’re building on rented land.



“Even though I negotiated hard with the third-party providers, I was still giving away 15% or more on every order placed. When an order came through, we didn’t even receive the full name of the person placing it. All we would get would be the first name and last initial. It was a very one-sided, unfriendly process that we wanted to fix.”

Tony Troiano, President, J.B. Alberto’s Pizza

Third-party marketplaces, like OpenTable and Grubhub, restrict the customer data you have access to by default (even though you pay commissions on the orders!), but some POS systems offer more control over those customers so you can build a relationship with them yourself.

Make sure your potential POS provider gives a crystal-clear answer on whether or not you’ll be able to capture customer data and build a customer database you can leverage long-term.



READ MORE:

[How Grubhub, OpenTable, and Other Technology Platforms Profit Off Your Restaurant Franchise Data](#)

ONLINE ORDERING

“With online ordering in place, our stores are seeing a more than \$3 ticket increase.”

Online ordering is a necessity in the modern restaurant industry, and the more user-friendly platforms result in higher average order values and greater customer satisfaction.



“We’d receive emails from customers saying how much they loved our food, and if we had online ordering they would order more often. With online ordering in place, our stores are seeing a more than \$3 ticket increase over in-store purchases. Our stores are making more money than ever before.”

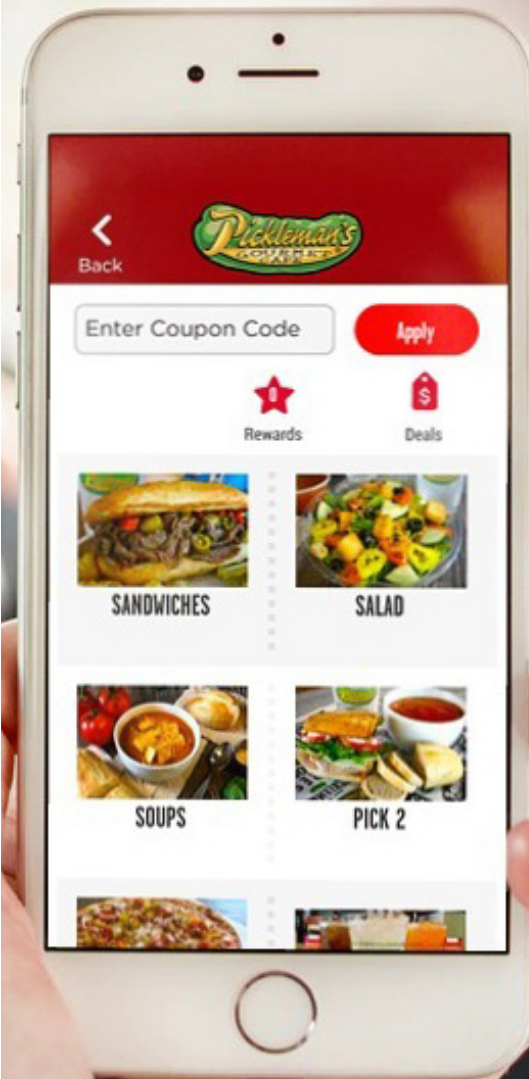
Brent Cordial, VP of Operations, Giovanni’s Pizza

Find out if you can expect an AOV increase by switching to a new POS. If the provider can’t demonstrate strong and repeated results here, we recommend looking elsewhere for a platform that’s optimized to maximize sales.



READ MORE:

[Goodbye, POS: The Restaurant Management System \(RMS\) is the Future](#)



REPORTING

“Our margins aren’t huge, and we have to be 100% looking at reports every single week.”

Your business success is guided by focused strategy and efficient operations. Without detailed and real-time reporting, you’re left relying on gut feeling and intuition to make big decisions.



“We have to be mindful all the time of profits. We use some of the cleanest ingredients on the market, so our margins aren’t huge, and we have to be 100% looking at reports every single week. Before it was a nightmare—It used to take 2-3 days to go over all that data. Now I can do it in half a day.”

Victor Martinez, COO, PieZoni's

Unfortunately, restaurant reporting is often severely limited, either because the data from the POS system is incomplete, or because the software places arbitrary limits on what data is visible. This makes most POS systems poor reporting and analytics platforms.

Look for a POS system that doesn’t just offer data from the terminal, but also aggregates data from your online ordering platform, mobile app, and loyalty program—across all your locations. Detailed above-store reporting that’s integrated with all your ordering channels gives you incredible clarity into the direction of your business and helps you identify new opportunities.



READ MORE:

[Take Command of Your Multi-Unit Restaurant: The 5 Pillars of Data Mastery](#)

THIRD-PARTY DELIVERY

“It was so problematic that at times Sbarro’s menu at the store didn’t match what was posted online.”

Integrating with third-party delivery platforms like Grubhub and UberEats is a necessary evil, so make sure you’re providing an ordering experience you’re proud of.



“As a company with a streamlined IT team, we don’t have the staff needed to manage the menu in multiple POS systems. It was so problematic that at times Sbarro’s menu at the store didn’t match what was posted online. In today’s restaurant environment it is critical to find a technology partner who can provide, manage and service the multiple ordering platforms required by our customers.”

Rohan Shearer, SVP, Sbarro

Many POS platforms do not naturally integrate with delivery marketplaces, which means you have to input menu changes manually to all your third-party vendors. That can take hours, and leads to menu errors and upset customers. Look for a POS that can integrate seamlessly with these platforms and makes it a breeze to streamline menus across vendors.



INTEGRATED LOYALTY

“We had separate systems for loyalty programs and online ordering.”

Customers love the ability to login to their loyalty program and order your food from any device or location. Providing that seamless flow is key for creating memorable dining experiences.



“We had separate systems for loyalty programs and online ordering, and this was posing a challenge for our cashiers, cooks, and management. We were looking for a single POS that had loyalty and online ordering integrated. Now customers are happier with the faster service and the more unified experience with the online ordering/loyalty program. Our online order sales are on the rise and my team now feels like they have the tools they need to do their job.”

Josh Katz, Owner, Ben Yehuda Pizza

Leveraging multiple tools to manage your in-store POS, online ordering, and restaurant loyalty programs is a recipe for poor brand experiences, disjointed data, and limited scale. Unfortunately, it's also standard practice in the industry.

Look for a POS partner with built-in loyalty and online ordering platforms so you can avoid the frustrating calls about broken integrations, gain access to cleaner customer and sales data, and create those customer experiences that build brand loyalty.

SECURITY & THEFT

“We lost more money than I care to remember dealing with internal theft.”

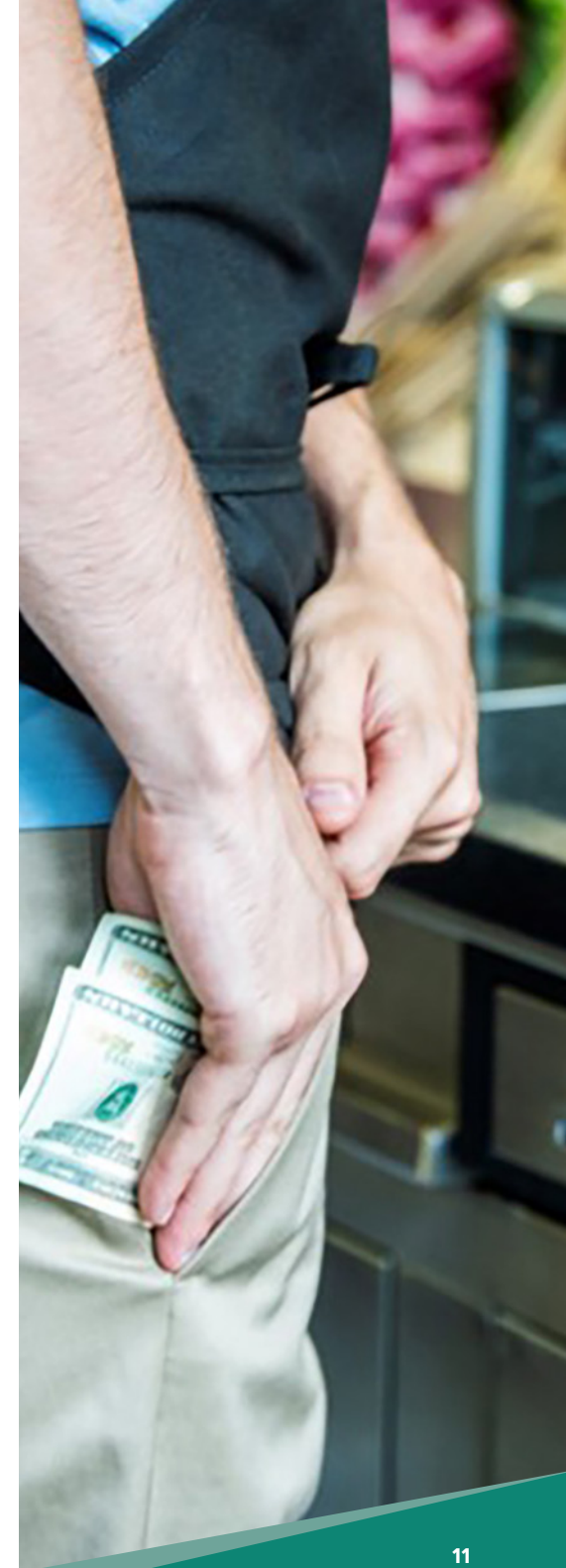
With margins as small as they are in our industry, even small amounts of internal theft can place a noticeable burden on stores. Extrapolate that across dozens of locations, and it’s a massive, ever-ballooning problem.



“We had some issues with employee theft. I would say most bars deal with this on some level, but since we were using a cash register, it made it a little too easy for theft to occur. We lost more money than I care to remember dealing with internal theft.”

Crystal Yocham, Owner, Texas Ave Tavern

Modern POS systems should leverage modern security measures, like biometric logins, blind cash outs, and detailed reporting that shines a light on numbers that don’t add up.



INVENTORY & PURCHASING

“Our invoices on ingredients and supplies remained at normal levels, but our sales dropped.”

Mastering daily operations, especially inventory and purchasing, is a powerful — and largely untapped — way for multi-unit restaurants to minimize food waste and increase profit margins.



“While I was on summer vacation, our invoices on ingredients and supplies remained at normal levels, but our sales dropped. Our outdated POS system wasn’t providing the transparency and depth of reporting required to assess the obvious leakage, and without being there on-site, I couldn’t figure it out myself. I needed an integrated POS system to help me measure and track every input.”

Rick Smith, Owner, Hometown Pizza & Grill

Running your inventory in spreadsheets or pen and paper is ripe for human error and inefficient purchasing. We strongly recommend finding a POS system with a built-in inventory system so you can match sales trends to inventory trends, then optimize purchasing for what you really need (not guesstimate) across all your locations.



READ MORE:

[6 Critical Insights Hiding in Your Multi-Unit Restaurant Data](#)

MARKETING

“We hired a media company and spent over \$100,000 to do some tests.”

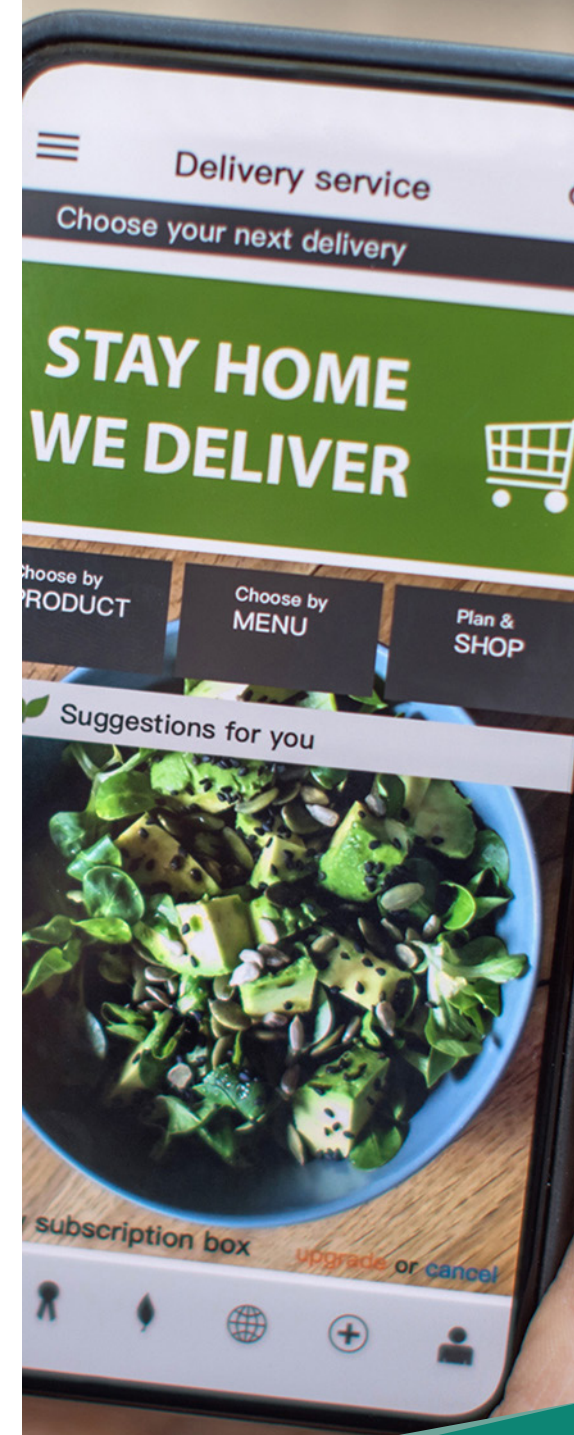
There’s nothing like running a major marketing campaign, measuring the results, and seeing exactly how it contributed to sales for a Chief Marketing Officer.



“We spent all of 2019 on digital marketing. We hired a media company and spent over \$100,000 to do some tests, and nothing works better for us than our internal stuff. We develop e-blasts from our customer database, and we’re able to send 2-3 per week. I actually stopped all the other marketing tools and put more money into this type of marketing because it just works for us.”

Victor Martinez, COO, PieZoni’s

Multi-unit restaurants are some of the most challenging businesses to market in the world, and campaigns run through generic third-party tools—or to generic audiences—frequently disappoint with unclear results. Look for a POS system that enables you to truly own your marketing, starting with your customer database, empowering you with the right tools, and ending with precise results reporting.



Meet HungerRush, the POS all these multi-unit restaurant owners wish they'd found sooner.

We built the next generation of Restaurant Management Software (RMS) to tap into the opportunities that traditional POS systems aren't designed to capture.

It all happens inside HungerRush, your go-to command center. From fully-integrated online ordering and loyalty programs, to remote menu management, to unrivaled reporting and analytics, we're changing how multi-unit restaurants run efficient and profitable businesses.

SEE HOW IT'S DIFFERENT

