A HEALTHY APPETITE FOR BUSINESS INSIGHTS

A NEW POINT OF SALE SYSTEM PAYS MAJOR DIVIDENDS FOR A GROWING FRANCHISE

CASE STUDY

N **WHO:** The Pita Pit

N **WHAT:** A progressive fast food franchise uses data provided by its POS system to fuel growth & maximize efficiency.

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INTRODUCTION

The Pita Pit has always been a little ahead of the curve. When the first location opened in the early 90's, the concept of healthy eating was still years from mainstream popularity. So when the company looked to upgrade its point of sale (POS) system, its progressive leaders looked to Vivonet Cloud POS to help them. This case study will look at how the system became an invaluable partner as the chain re-branded and expanded.

A FRESH TAKE ON FAST FOOD

In 1995, the average consumer was far more concerned with high taxes than they were with high carbs. Still, friends John Sotiriadis and Nelson Lang knew if they offered people a lighter, healthier alternative to burgers, fries and greasy pizza, and gave it to them quickly, they'd eagerly choose it.

They opened their first The Pita Pit in Kingston, Ontario, a university town three hours east of Toronto. The shop's fresh, healthy sandwiches (along with its student-friendly hours) made The Pita Pit an instant hit. A few years later, they began franchising across Canada and the USA.

Today, The Pita Pit boasts 300 stores across North America and a wall filled with accolades and awards. And as it begins to expand internationally, the ambition and business savvy of the senior executives should be applauded. But a closer look revels The Pita Pit also owes a measure of its success to a rather unconventional source; its point of sale system.

CHOOSING A SYSTEM THAT WORKS

As the business grew, the leadership team at The Pita Pit knew they needed a tool that did a lot more than calculate change and spit out receipts. "Cash registers offered no control on menu mix, no financial data or business intelligence," said CEO Chris Fountain.

They researched other systems, but found them all lacking. "There was perpetual fees on features you didn't need."

But the team found everything they were looking for with Vivonet Cloud POS—data collection, flexibility, customization, market-leading support, implementation experts and more.

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The company-wide roll out went smoothly, with a robust training program led by Vivonet allowing for virtually seamless adaptation. The impact of the increased functionality and data reporting were immediate, and significant.

MINING FOR INSIGHTS

As the data poured in, Fountain and his team quickly found key metrics to focus on. "We saw why our top 10 stores were successful and what the bottom 10 needed to do to improve." Corporate shared the insights gleaned from the top performing stores with the rest of the franchises. They also used their learnings to formulate an action plan to help the poorer performing stores.

Today, Fountain and his team garner further insights from Vivonet's proprietary Enterprise Manager. They look at sales data daily, even from home on the weekends. "Enterprise Manager has helped turn sales transactions into business insights."

The team also focuses on sales per store, purchase to sales ratios and menu item reports to spot trends and be more proactive. "We look at the Vivonet Cloud POS as more of a data platform."

> " Enterprise Manager has helped turn sales transactions into **business** insights. "

TIME IS MONEY

There are few industries where time is more important than the fast food industry. "The average service time for a custom made pita is under three minutes," explained Fountain. "Each additional five seconds on an order will cost the location $10 in lost transactions."

But during the stores' peak period (65-75% of a store's business happens between 11am and 2pm), complex orders with multiple modifiers are the norm. The simplicity of Halo's interface allows front line employees to customize orders accurately and quickly—essential in keeping the line moving.

The menu item reporting also became an integral part of the planing process. "Once a year we evaluate menu and price to see whether to adjust."

The data also helps with inventory control, showing which modifiers are selling and which can be discontinued. In one case, the report showed a limited time offer was so popular, it was added permanently to the main menu.

LOOKING FORWARD

Fountain said the company's revenues have risen 10% in the last quarter. He attributes part of this success to an in-store rebrand and refreshed menu. But he says a larger reason for the growth stems from the support corporate now gives to individual stores thanks to the data collected by the Halo system. "The insights have absolutely changed the way the business performs."

With an eye to the future, Fountain says Vivonet will continue to play a big part in The Pita Pit's success. "The data helps fuel the company's motto to 'stay hungry' and continually improve."

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