



Institute
of **Hospitality**

Management Guide



Self Serve

A Guide for Hospitality Management

Self Serve – a guide for hospitality management

Why should I be considering self-serve for my hospitality business?

There are a whole range of benefits when it comes to using self-serve. First and foremost - for most businesses it offers real return on investment, as a result of increased footfall. Self-serve ensures attractive, rapid and seamless service for customers who have come to expect nothing less. It also provides better utilisation of staff – allowing employees to focus on other key areas, such as the kitchen, resulting in a better overall customer experience.

What is self serve?

Self-serve enables your customers to order and pay for menu items themselves, for example: through a food-ordering kiosk, or a hand-held device. It empowers the customer – letting them order when, how and where they want.

Self-serve technology puts the customers in charge of ordering and paying, without the need for staff assistance. The technology is now becoming more affordable, and a must for up-and-coming hospitality providers - from grab-and-go, to coffee outlets, and even restaurants.



How do I know if self serve is suitable for my business?

The world is going cashless, and in today's fast-paced hospitality environment, self-serve is becoming a vital tool to generate ROI for hospitality owners and managers. However, before jumping in it's important to consider whether it will deliver the right service for your business, and will pay off in terms of ROI.

For those hospitality providers looking for more personal interaction, for example in the fine dining sector, self-serve may not be the right proposition. Yet, for many coffee outlets, cafe's, and grab-and-go dining establishments self-serve could make life easier and support growth. Ask yourself the questions below and if you answer yes to two or more, then self-serve could be a great fit for you!

- Would you like to drive higher footfall?
- Does your business rely on exceptionally busy periods, such as lunch or dinner rushes, where you could benefit from better utilising staff to deliver more, and higher quality service?
- Is face-to-face service at the point of sale not a key part of your business?
- Do many of your customers use, or want to use cashless payments?
- Do you want to serve your customers in the best ways possible?
- Do you always look to future-proof your business?

The benefits of self-serve?

Self-serve has a range of benefits, not just for your bottom line, but also for your customers, your staff, and your time!

For Your Business

Self-serve facilitates reduced queues and waiting times for customers, therefore increasing footfall, customer satisfaction and profit. More customers during peak trading times will help drive your bottom line.

For Your Customers

Self-serve technology is designed to empower the customer and meet the demands of today's market. Able to order in their own time, with clear attractive displays and fast, secure cashless payment - self-serve is perfect for customers looking for a quick, seamless experience.

Nutritional and dietary information can be clearly displayed at their fingertips, increasing allergen safety and helping your customers to make informed choices.

For Your Staff

Staff time is freed up for other tasks. Whilst some businesses may want to retain a mixed-service environment, utilising self-serve kiosks or tablets allows some staff to transition to other operational and back-office roles - supporting better service and more product and scope.

Upselling, one of the most challenging parts of service for many cafe or restaurant employees can be done attractively and unobtrusively with no-pressure offers shown to customers on the kiosk at the point of sale.

What should I look to spend?

Spend only what you can. However, putting forward a decent investment towards the right equipment will deliver a better outcome than going for the cheapest, or simplest looking, option.

Do your homework and make sure you understand the small print. You have to do your numbers right from the outset. Work out what you need, and what you can afford to spend. Consider scalable products, so your investment will be sustainable and grow with your business.

Make sure you are working with a partner who not only understands both requirements fully, but that will support you in making the best use of all the great benefits self-serve can have

Can self-service support my business in reducing waste?

Food wastage is a big profit drain in today's hospitality environment, especially if you are generating 80% of your profit during busy lunch periods.

Self-serve can definitely help to reduce wastage. By allowing the kitchen to prepare food according to specific requirements with a more direct line of communication between kitchen and front-of-house (customer), food and product waste will be reduced. This not only minimises carbon footprint, but less waste also means less money thrown away, and therefore greater financial savings.

Self-ordering takes front of house staff costs into the kitchen and prep areas delivering specific food just how your customer wants it. The PoS system will also enable you to track stock.

What kinds of self-serve units are available?

When it comes to selecting the right hardware or unit to support self-serve software there is a whole range to choose from, including hand-held, kiosk and wall-mounted units. As a hospitality provider you should be focusing on these core areas when making your selection:

- Is it simple to use (for customers and staff)?
- Does it provide super fast payments?
- Does it offer tailored orders to help eliminate wastage?
- Will the system put the full order process in customers' hands and help to generate loyalty?

Hand-Held

A small grab-and-go type outlet should start with a basic hand-held unit, which can be set up and installed within a short time period (typically 10-14 days) – resulting in minimal business interruption. Once this type of system has demonstrated its ability to generate additional income, then hospitality providers should consider upgrading it in order to capture more customers during busy grab-and-go periods.

Wall-Mounted

Larger hospitality providers can be faced with serious queuing issues during busy lunch and dinner services. In this instance you would benefit with multi-sided kiosks to help reduce queues and generate more sales.

Are there any challenges I might face?

Business Interruption

As with any new type of technology, there will be an element of business interruption for the installation.

Customer and staff education

Hospitality providers are introducing a new service and a new way of thinking – you will need to adapt and make changes accordingly. Whilst self-service addresses the new dynamic of shopping and the desire to browse and purchase in ones' own time, and creates truly personalised service, for some customers and members of staff it may take time to learn. Slowly integrating self-serve offerings into a business will not only allow some customers to evolve and adapt, it will also facilitate the transition into using technology to order and pay.

Upfront Cost

There is also an initial capital cost, but where used correctly, the technology will soon create real ROI.



Where do I start?

First of all, talk to a specialist who understands what you are trying to achieve. It could be as simple as a countertop system, which generates an order alongside your staff member on the till. The system - having demonstrated its worth - can then be scaled from there.

Always select a technology partner who listens to your needs, and builds a system that meets your business requirements.

How long will self-serve take to implement my business?

For small grab-and-go outlets that decide to launch self-serve, we recommend you decide on your menu set and provide your pictures/photos. We can then turn a system around in as little as 10-14 days, including installation.

What should I avoid?

Don't buy cheap consumer tablets and deploy these into a customer facing environment – they will not be tough or durable enough when it comes to being dropped or potential spillages. Hand-held tablets need to be tough and resilient. You therefore need to select a unit that is tailor-made and robust.

It's Lolly Ltd
Crystal Gate,
28-30 Worship Street,
London EC2A 2AH
0800 038 5389
www.itslolly.com

