



## **Systopia Resource**

### **Going cashless for improved waste management**

The amount of food that is wasted each year in the UK is equivalent to 1.3 billion meals, costing the UK hospitality industry over £2.5 billion<sup>[i]</sup>. With the prevention of avoidable food waste potentially able to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2.7 million tonnes (CO2 equivalent)<sup>[ii]</sup>, it is now more important than ever for caterers to assess their sustainability and find new ways to tackle their waste management.

While most caterers have practices in place to reduce excesses, such as installing recycling points, sourcing local produce and purchasing energy efficient appliances, what many may find surprising is that through the implementation of new technologies, operators can overhaul their waste management and experience a direct impact on their bottom line.

With 920,000 tonnes of food waste produced by outlets each year, of which 75% is avoidable and could have been eaten<sup>[iii]</sup>, the need for caterers to manage their stock more efficiently is continually increasing. This is where technology such as cashless payments come in. By investing in cashless payment systems caterers will have access to extensive analytical tools which provide in-depth real-time analysis of sales data, trends and total control of article prices, all on a single, central database. Using this information caterers will be able to assess what the most popular selling items are, peak serving times, the average amount spent per customer and the dishes which generate low sales. As well as this, caterers will have instant feedback on the success of new items which they introduce to their menu.

With this insight, caterers can amend their menus accordingly to ensure every item on their menu meets changing consumer needs and food trends, streamline their purchasing, amend pricing and alter staffing levels to match peak serving times – all of which significantly reduces waste.

As well as this, through cashless payment systems caterers can administer loyalty or reward schemes to encourage consumers to purchase more sustainable items and inspire their

customers to get involved in the recycling process. For example, caterers can reduce the amount of disposable waste produced at their establishment by rewarding customers through money off points on their cashless card. These can be rewarded to consumers who choose to dine in using crockery rather than taking out disposables, which have a negative environmental impact, or offer those who bring in their own reusable coffee cups money off their beverage. By implementing bespoke loyalty schemes such as these, caterers can reduce their disposable waste and also cut costs through not purchasing large amounts of disposable items.

With research by WRAP finding that the hospitality industry could save an estimated £724 million a year by increasing recycling rates and that the sector produces over 3.4 million tonnes of mixed waste annually<sup>[iv]</sup>, cashless payment systems are a simple way caterers can reduce their non-recyclable waste and improve their green credentials.

The last few years have marked a significant shift from cash payments to cashless transactions, so much so that cash transactions are expected to decline from 21 billion in 2012 to 14 billion in 2022<sup>[v]</sup>. As a result, many consumers are coming to expect cashless payment options when eating out of home.

Furthermore, with sales indicating that consumers are more likely to spend more when using cashless payment methods<sup>[vi]</sup>, the implementation of cashless payment systems can not only considerably reduce a catering outlets waste, it can also encourage sales and ultimately increase profits.

In a highly competitive market and with the UK foodservice sector set to grow to £56.3 billion by 2019<sup>[i]</sup>, it is important that caterers stay ahead of the curve and safeguard the future of their business by improving their green credentials. Through effective waste management caterers can build a strong sustainable future for their businesses and as a result, will continue the growth of the hospitality industry.

**To find out how your business can benefit from Systopia's cashless payment systems visit [www.systopia.co.uk](http://www.systopia.co.uk) or call 0800 085 2056.**

---

<sup>[i]</sup> WRAP, Overview of waste in the UK hospitality and food service sector, November 2013

<sup>[ii]</sup> WRAP, Overview of waste in the UK hospitality and food service sector, November 2013

---

<sup>[v]</sup> Theguardian.co.uk, Card payments to overtake cash 'within 10 years', 19 August 2013:

<http://www.theguardian.com/money/2013/aug/19/card-payments-overtake-cash-transactions>

<sup>[vi]</sup> Theguardian.co.uk, Cashless society – why there's no pain or gain from a plastic future, 15 February 2014:

<http://www.theguardian.com/money/blog/2014/feb/15/cashless-society-no-pain-no-gain-plastic-future>

<sup>[i]</sup> Horizons, UK foodservice sector set to be worth £56.3bn by 2019, 11 March 2015:

<http://www.hrzns.com/news/uk-foodservice-worth-56bn-2019>