

PROFILE

Name: Taziki's Mediterranean Café

Location: Birmingham, AL

Founded: 1998

www.tazikiscafe.com

CHALLENGE

With plans for rapid expansion, Taziki's looked to grow off-premise dining revenues and reduce labor costs in the face of changing labor laws.

SOLUTION

Adopt ToGo Technologies' online ordering solution with Epson OmniLink[®] TM-U220-i smart printers for cloud-based online ordering via Taziki's website, branded mobile app, social media and in-store kiosk—and a fully-integrated loyalty application.

Omnichannel Ordering Delivers at Taziki's Café

ToGo Technologies and Epson OmniLink Printers Fuel Restaurant Chain's Growth With Mobile Online Ordering.

On a Greek getaway in 1997, Keith Richards and his wife Amy fell in love with small-table Mediterranean cafés where communities gathered to savor fresh Mediterranean flavors. With a vision to recreate their amazing dining experiences, they opened the first Taziki's Mediterranean Cafe in 1998 in Birmingham, AL serving fast, quality food at reasonable prices.

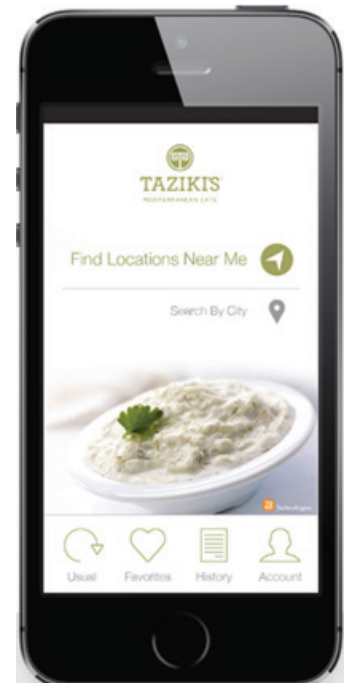
As Chief Innovation Officer for Taziki's (and parent company Fresh Hospitality), Dan Simpson describes himself as a man with eyes on the horizon, on a quest to marry consumer dining trends, technology and marketing to grow the Taziki's brand. With 65 restaurants now in operation, the line-service fast casual chain has aggressive plans to double its locations by the end of 2017. And, off-premise dining—takeout, catering, delivery and even third-party delivery—is the key to driving Taziki's revenue growth.

"Guests want chef-driven quality delivered at very fast speeds and they want it for \$10 or less, which is squeezing high-end restaurants," cited Simpson. With federal and state laws driving up labor and overtime costs, Taziki's lacked the technology to seamlessly support online ordering—and that capability is the lynchpin to off-premise dining dollars. "Operational efficiency is the backbone to success," Simpson said. "All orders, regardless of how they are placed, must translate very quickly to the kitchen line to keep food moving."

With Taziki's existing POS system, there was no way to integrate online ordering without a costly and painful POS integration. In addition, Taziki's kitchen display system had no backup when it went down, creating chaos in the kitchen and confusion at the register. Simpson needed a common platform for all order types—one that could funnel orders through a single gateway to the kitchen. When he met Shaun Shankel, CEO of ToGo Technologies, Nashville, TN, Simpson knew he was on the right path.

Make That ToGo, Please

ToGo Technologies brings best-in-class mobile and online ordering to restaurants of all sizes, with cloud-based solutions tailored to each restaurant's operations. The ToGo platform integrates third-party loyalty and analytics software as well as credit card and gift card processors, storing restaurant data in a centralized cloud container for easy access and management.



"OmniLink is essential—without it, our whole online ordering model doesn't work."

— DAN SIMPSON, CHIEF INNOVATION OFFICER, TAZIKI'S MEDITERRANEAN CAFÉ

Epson's OmniLink smart printers are the cornerstone of ToGo's online ordering solution. "We needed an intelligent printer that could connect directly to our cloud, one that we could configure and install easily at restaurants that lacked the time, money and bandwidth to go through a full POS integration. With Epson's OmniLink, we don't need to manage complex POS software to get orders to the kitchen. It's a very stable and flexible way to bring complete online ordering to smaller chains that otherwise couldn't afford it," cited Shankel. OmniLink comes completely configured—the restaurant just plugs the printer into their router and starts accepting orders.

Seamless Digital Ordering

The ToGo platform with Epson's OmniLink TM-U220-i is the backbone of Taziki's off-premise dining initiative. "You max out your capacity when you focus only on your four walls," noted Taziki's Simpson. "In 2017, we will offer patrons online ordering for takeout, delivery, catering and curbside pickup as well as in-store kiosk ordering and a fully-integrated loyalty program that seamlessly tracks all types of orders." Guests can order via the website, iOS and Android mobile apps or on Facebook—providing them four "digital front doors" to connect with the restaurants.

The ToGo cloud integrates with Taziki's kitchen display system (KDS) and to Epson's OmniLink. When an order is placed, it goes to three places simultaneously: to the KDS, to the OmniLink, which sends the order to the kitchen frontline and prints the receipt at the register, and to Taziki's ERP system for inventory management. ToGo's rules engine ensures that incoming orders are seamlessly funneled into the kitchen workflow.

"When we added online ordering, we removed the human interaction at the front end," Taziki's Simpson noted. "Since our staff no longer take the order, they rely on the OmniLink printer to make sure it's 100% accurate before the customer heads out the door. For us, OmniLink has become a critical guest interaction tool," he said.

The Power of the Cloud

When an order comes in, different items are routed through to the OmniLink printers in the kitchen. "Because it is cloud based, we have the flexibility to map our workflow any way we want. If an order does not get to the KDS screen, it will migrate to the OmniLink printer—even when our systems are down. With OmniLink as our failsafe, we have the redundancy to ensure that we can always keep operating."

Customers place orders via the mobile app, which offers different menus and fulfillment options—including in-store pickup, curbside pickup, as well as catering. They preorder and prepay, and all orders are automatically saved for easy reordering. "If I order for tomorrow, the cloud synchronizes when my order goes into the KDS and through the cloud to the OmniLink printer," Simpson noted.

OmniLink Grows With You

ToGo Technologies' Shankel appreciates OmniLink's ability to grow along with his customers' needs. "When you start out with one restaurant, you need a simple POS system and an OmniLink smart printer. Then you grow to ten locations. You can use an OmniLink at the POS for guest receipts and another for kitchen tickets, and maybe a third to drive your KDS. As your business evolves, Epson's OmniLink printer evolves with it."

Taziki's Simpson agrees. "We just added curbside pickup or 'virtual drive-thru' so after you place a to-go order and approach the restaurant, geofencing triggers a second notification on the OmniLink printer that lets us know you've arrived. The order has been prepared, this second notice tells us when to package it up. OmniLink truly scales with us as we scale." By serving patrons like never before, there is no doubt that Taziki's is going to scale.

"With OmniLink, we now have a very stable and flexible way to bring complete online ordering to smaller chains who otherwise couldn't afford it."

– SHAUN SHANKEL, CEO, TOGO TECHNOLOGIES