PROFILE

Name: Bully's East
Location: San Diego, California
www.bullyseastsd.com

CHALLENGE

Bully's East was looking to reduce labor costs, improve order accuracy, and step up the pace of its servers for a smooth dining experience that would keep loyal customers coming back for more.

SOLUTION

Move to a modern, mobile POS system using iPads and Epson Mobilink P20 wireless printers for fast and accurate tableside ordering with fewer servers.

The Outlook is Bullish At Bully's East

Epson's Mobilink P20 wireless printers with iPad-based POS ensure flawless service for even the largest parties.

Bully's East is bullish about the future. Founded in 1971, the venerable full-service restaurant and bar is a San Diego institution—sought for its dimly lit leather booths, bustling happy hours and hefty portions of horseradish-encrusted prime rib. Located near the San Diego Chargers' stadium, the restaurant is a family affair, started by dad J.D. Dahlen and wife Ginny. And, with son Derek Dahlen now at the helm, Bully's East employs 60 people seven days a week to uphold the long-standing tradition of "the best prime rib in town."

"Customers have lots of choices in our area so we've had to really reinforce our brand, offering weekly and daily specials to get people in the door," said Dahlen. As a result, the restaurant often serves large parties of multiple tables and must service peak customer volumes while keeping order accuracy high.

"Our stationery POS system was a dinosaur," noted Dahlen. "When we had a problem it could literally take weeks to get service, and that was just crippling us." Servers took orders by hand, then walked to a stationery POS terminal to send batch orders to the kitchen. With the old system, order changes created kitchen confusion, often resulting in wasted food. "Order changes are inevitable, but you have to serve the customer first or they'll go somewhere else."

With a state minimum wage increase on the horizon, Dahlen sought ways to reduce growing labor costs. "All restaurants struggle to balance labor costs with service delivery. So if I can work more efficiently with fewer employees, it's a win-win;

> *"The Epson Mobilink P20s just crush it on order speed and customer service."*
>
> – DEREK DAHLEN, OWNER, BULLY'S EAST

my servers can handle more tables in a shift, so they'll make more tips, and customers have a smoother service experience," he noted.

In 2015, Derek started thinking about moving to a mobile POS system. While reviewing merchant services with Allen Andrews, a rep from Heartland Payment Systems (and friend who played rugby with the Dahlens), Derek got a lead on a mobile system from Digital Dining that supported both EMV payments and the latest mobile POS devices. After meeting with Hospitality Technology Systems (HTS), the local reseller of Digital Dining software, he was convinced that moving to mobile would solve his most pressing problems.

Fixed to Mobile in a Single Bound

In March 2016 Bully's East took the leap, deploying the Digital Dining application throughout the restaurant. "We went from fixed to mobile POS in one fell swoop," noted Dahlen. The restaurant kept only two of its fixed Posiflex POS stations on the floor, arming wait staff with iPad Minis for tableside ordering and payments. Together with Epson's Mobilink P20 wireless printers, servers were able to really speed up service for large parties.

Servers quickly ditched their old-school notepads and fell in love with the new mobile devices. "The printers were so easy to use there really was no training required. When we have large parties that need separate checks, now it's a breeze to process them." The server just swipes the card on the iPad Mini and the Epson Mobilink P20 prints the check right at the table. "It's so fast they can take orders for the entire table and send each to the kitchen with the touch of a button."

For iPad orders, Epson TM-T20 thermal printers are positioned at print stations around the floor for quick receipt pickup. Servers simply enter the order on the iPad, and then walk a few steps to the closest receipt printer. The iPads are armed with card readers so diners never lose sight of their credit cards. (Heartland will release a combination card swipe / EMV chip reader in 2016, a feature Bully's is anxious to implement.)

The Digital Dining POS application supports wireless delivery of orders to the kitchen, where Bully's uses Epson TM-U220 plain-paper impact printers to streamline kitchen operations. "We've used the same Epson printers in the kitchen forever. We've set up our system so that hot orders print on one side of the kitchen and cold orders print on the other. This streamlines food prep, saves time and keeps kitchen staff moving efficiently."

Since adopting the Epson mobile printers, Bully's has significantly improved order accuracy. Servers can easily make changes on the fly, cutting entry errors and food waste. They're also turning large tables faster while cutting foot traffic traversing the floor to pick up receipts. "With the Digital Dining app, a customer can request a drink while you're in the middle of taking orders for a large table. The server can press 'send' on a food order, send the drink order to the bar, and move to the next customer at the table without missing a beat."

Dahlen is sold on Epson printers. "When we evaluated mobile POS systems, we never looked at other printer brands. We've had Epson printers for 20 years, and they've moved from one POS system to another. We just add a network card if we want to move a wired printer to a wireless location," he said, noting that Epson's handy printer utility makes it easy to connect Epson printers anywhere.

Mobile Delivers Savings—and Happier Customers

Bully's has nothing but praise for Hospitality Technology Solutions, the experienced Digital Dining reseller who sold and services the mobile POS system for Bully's. "We're something of a mobile pioneer," said Scott Weiss, HTS partner. "Since rolling out our first mobility site in 2002 at Palm Springs' Kaiser Grill, we've become experts in moving customers from fixed to mobile POS. We're all about creating a seamless transition."

Since adopting the mobile system, Bully's has seen the greatest savings in labor costs. "In the first two months, food costs have also dropped, and customer complaints about inaccurate food orders have virtually stopped," noted Dahlen. "We need fewer servers during a shift because they don't have to run all over the restaurant."

HTS partner Weiss recently visited as part of a 20-person group. "It was amazing to watch the server blow through orders. The 'Send and Stay' feature in the app allowed her to fire 10 tickets to the kitchen while she took care of the next check. The food came out of the kitchen order by order, without missing a beat. The second large table in our party got their food at the same time as the first, which never happens!" Weiss exclaimed.

Adopting the mobile POS solution has brought a new level of cachet to the 45-year-old establishment. "The iPad Minis bring a sexier image to our dining room and the Epson Mobilink P20s just crush it on order speed and customer service," boasted Dahlen. With mobile POS in place, Bully's wait staff is on the go, delivering a seamless and sophisticated dining experience. It's no wonder they're feeling bullish.

> *" Epson Mobilink printers have improved order speed and accuracy, reducing labor costs and food waste. "*