

MICROS help Criniti's broaden its base

CRINITI'S
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Criniti's Group

Darling Harbour & Parramatta

crinitis.com.au

No. of Restaurants

2, with 3 and 4 on the way!

Criniti's Ristorante opened in Parramatta in Sydney's western suburbs in 2003. Specialising in southern Italian cuisine, the 90-seat restaurant soon became a hit with locals, and regularly attracted queues to get in.

In 2007, Criniti's bought the restaurant nextdoor, and increased its capacity to around 200. Two years later they opened up a second restaurant in Sydney's iconic Darling Harbour, which is big enough to seat up to 500 guests.

Together, the restaurants serve around 10,000 customers per week. In 2011, that figure will increase by up to 5,000, with new restaurants set to open in Castle Hill and Manly.

Dominic Criniti is the Operations Manager of Criniti's. He is responsible for ensuring consistency of menus, crockery and merchandise across the different sites.

"We're a family-owned restaurant, so it's important for us to have a level of consistency with the food, and also with the branding and merchandising" Mr Criniti says. "It helps that we do a lot of our own printing and importing – 60% of our ingredients are imported from Italy and kept in our own warehouse."

Mr Criniti also looks after the technology aspects of the restaurants. He says Criniti's started using MICROS Point of Sale just before the opening of the Darling Harbour store.

"We knew the old systems wouldn't cope with the additional load, so we went with MICROS because they're a well-recognised name in the industry."

Improving customer service with handhelds

After installing MICROS POS at both restaurants, Mr Criniti introduced MICROS Handhelds to help increase the efficiency of floor staff. He believes having the handhelds has resulted in significant labour savings.

"In terms of efficiency, you can't do any better than the handhelds – they're brilliant," he says. "It effectively gives you a point of sale at every table. If we didn't have them we would probably need an extra staff member per section."

Criniti's uses a system of order-takers and drinks runners, which allows the order takers to spend more time with the customers.

"All our order-takers have handhelds, and it definitely minimises the amount of time they need to spend out of their section. Now they can always see when a customer needs their attention."

He believes the handhelds also allow staff to increase sales.

"Just having the order-takers in the section means people are more likely to make a drinks order – there's less time waiting for service, and less time to walk away or change your mind."

"with Enterprise Management, you can update all restaurants simultaneously on one server – it saves us time and money"

Dominic Criniti, Operations Manager, Criniti's





Simplifying menu changes with Enterprise Management

Criniti's has recently started using MICROS Enterprise Management at both its Parramatta and Darling Harbour restaurants. Mr Criniti believes the system dramatically streamlines the menu process – which will be even more important when there are more restaurants to manage.

"We have a large menu, and we like to introduce new items fairly regularly," he says. "And soon we're going to have four restaurants on the same menu."

"Before, any changes you wanted to make to the menu would mean manually updating separate servers, one by one. But with Enterprise Management, you can update all restaurants simultaneously on one server – it saves us time and money."

Mr Criniti says the greater consistency of menus helps him manage staff, who are occasionally required to switch between the restaurants.

"It used to be possible for one restaurant to tailor the menu to suits their chef, but now it's consistent," he says. "We can send staff from one restaurant to another and the menu works exactly the same – they can pick it up immediately."

"We've also been thinking about opening a restaurant in Dubai, and it's great to think that we can duplicate exactly what's happening here. It makes controlling the menu so simple."

Simplifying the reporting process with mymicros

Mr Criniti uses the Business Intelligence function in mymicros to keep a close eye on how the restaurants are performing. He believes this is one of the most valuable features of the MICROS system.

"We should've had something like that a long time ago – it's amazing what it can tell you."

"Before we would have to speak to the managers twice a day to get information about the restaurants, and there was no detail – things like average cheques, average spend per customer."

Mr Criniti says their new ability to analyse those finer details helps the restaurants see how staff are tracking against their KPIs, and identify any areas they may be able to improve their performance.

"mymicros has been fantastic for us. It's helped us with everything – making money, and saving money."

Rewarding loyal customers through iCare

One of the most recent initiatives for Criniti's has been the introduction of a VIP loyalty card for frequent guests of the restaurant.

Under the system, every dollar a customer spends at Criniti's earns them points. As they reach certain levels of points, they receive discounts at Criniti's restaurants. Earn enough points, and they can enjoy 'Platinum VIP' status – with 20% off all meals, and free weekend breakfasts.

"A customer can buy the VIP card online," Mr Criniti says. "We then load up a card with the customer's details in iCare, send it off, and when the customer comes in the system tells us if they're eligible to redeem any benefits."

The restaurant has also introduced a corporate card to attract more corporate business, and is using iCare to keep track of some of their other marketing concepts.

"We have a one meter challenge that means if a customer can eat a one meter pizza in one hour, they get a free three-course meal every week for a year – things like that can be monitored with iCare."

While it's early days for the customer VIP program, Mr Criniti says initial signs are promising.

"We've only been offering the VIP cards for a week, but the response has been fantastic," he says. "As a restaurant you know who your regular customers are, but it's nice to recognise them. People really appreciate any savings they can get these days."

"For us, it's great to know these customers want to be with us for a while."

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