

TIPS FOR A SMOOTHER EPOS UPGRADE



Maitre'D®

Software that serves you better

www.maitredpos.com

Switching your Restaurant EPOS ?

Aim for Quiet Continuity

Our recent survey of over 300 restaurant owners and managers told us that 80% of respondents are currently using a restaurant EPOS solution, and 60% of them are currently evaluating systems. Our ten-finger arithmetic says that a lot of those restaurants are thinking about switching systems. We've been involved in making that transition thousands of times—and we thought we'd share some tips to help with a smooth transition.

For us, a successful switch always comes down to achieving a single goal:

Complete the transition without disrupting the business.

We call it Quiet Continuity.

There are a lot of elements to consider, like your technology, your data and your integration challenges. One of the most critical elements of Quiet Continuity is your people.

Quiet Continuity And Your Staff

Although you're making a transition to a new, improved EPOS—better technology, better functionality, better everything—the folks who use the EPOS should barely notice the change. It's always tempting to look at a new system—especially one like Maitre'D that has so much flexibility—as a blank canvas. But it's vital that interface design, kitchen video layouts, report formats—everything staff interacts with—be as familiar as possible. Logins should be the same. Buttons and menus should be accessed the same way, from the same layout, with colors and fonts the same. The reports and other analysis tools you spent so much time customizing and creating should still be available after the switch.

We're not advising you against implementing advanced features you didn't have before. Nor are we suggesting that you shouldn't improve and streamline how staff interacts with the EPOS. By all means: improve away! Instead, we're laying out what we think is a primary guiding principle “build on what you have.” That's the best way to ensure that there are no delays placing and serving orders while even your best servers struggle to remember “now where do I select condiments again?”



Auto makers are a great example. Every year they add new features and improved specs—10 years ago only James Bond could start his car with his phone. But no matter how many bells and whistles carmakers add, the ignition key, the speedometer, the seat adjusters: always in the same place (and, sure, designers could find better places for them). You could step out of a 1964 Falcon and into a 2012 CLS63 AMG and drive it another 50 years without ever opening the owner's manual.

That learning principle applies to EPOS systems too. Learning how to do brand new things is a whole lot easier than learning to do things a brand new way. You can integrate online ordering, loyalty, or any other advanced feature your new system offers—but make sure those new functions are the only thing people have to learn. That way staff training time is shortened, back office productivity accelerated, and the technology intimidation factor eliminated.

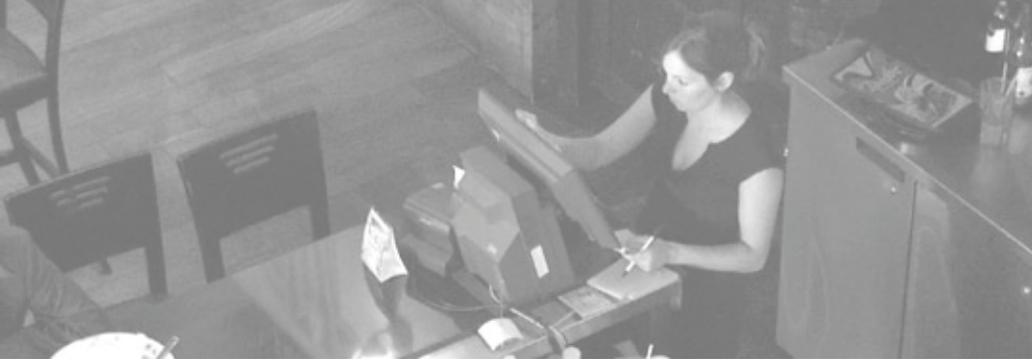
We mentioned earlier our recent EPOS survey of 300 restaurants. Something else we learned was this: the number one reason people are switching has to do with technology. So the next section addresses some of the issues related to achieving Quiet Continuity with your hardware—computers, cables, backup and more.

Switching Technologies—As Easy As Ordering Dinner

When we eat at your restaurant, what do we have to do get our meal? The answer is: nothing. We don't have to buy ingredients, prepare them, present them or serve them. We just have to order, and you do the rest. And we know that during the meal, if we need something, your staff is always there to help.

That's exactly what it's like when you switch your EPOS system (at least with Maitre'D and our partners it is). You don't have to do anything except tell us what you want. We do the rest—smoothly and without any disruption: just the way you serve your guests.

Almost all of the work takes place away from your restaurant, so there's no downtime for you, and no confusion while servers and chefs dodge programmers and engineers. The only exception to that—ahead of the actual installation—is an analysis of your existing hardware. We'll want to look at your computers to make sure they meet the system requirements. We'll be poking our heads into your ceiling to make sure your cabling is in good shape and up to specification. (And we'll work directly with any Electrical Contractor you might have if changes need to be made.)



Discovery—gathering all the information about your business—is the critical step. We have to analyze the way your current EPOS is formatted, and the workflows and processes you follow—on the dining floor, in the kitchen and in the back office. To maintain the tightest continuity between old and new solutions, we examine your screen layouts and menus, how instruction lists are presented, how additions and modifications are made, and so on. We examine your underlying systems: your operating system, drivers, databases and more. We also gather employee information to ensure there's no time wasted after Go Live doing things like resetting or recreating passwords. We reach into the back office as well, looking and learning about your closing process, your reports—both content and format—and any other functionality like Time and Attendance. We'll talk through it all with you, probing for the things you like about the EPOS you're replacing, the things you don't, and the things you want to add.

Then we go away and build your EPOS. Our development centres use the same hardware configuration and OS that you're using. We recreate the elements of your existing EPOS that you want to retain: from menu and screen layouts to employee data and reports. We add new functionality so that it integrates smoothly and intuitively. We establish the configurations for connectivity, backup and recovery, security and more.

Then we come back for a two-phase installation. First, we do a partial install at your site, for training. We'll work with you to figure out the best training schedule—including whether we do a “train the trainer” program, or conduct training for everyone. Then, we install it during a period when the restaurant is either closed, or traditionally slow. And when you Go Live, a Maitre'D support engineer will be with you on site, to answer questions, resolve issues and in general ensure things go smoothly.

You run a restaurant, not a data centre. You shouldn't worry about specifications, connections, integrations. Your EPOS vendor should make switching EPOS solutions just like dining out: easy, comfortable and disruption-free.



Quiet Continuity And Cost Control

The cost of switching EPOS solutions can be significant. Systematic data migration, well-planned training, maintaining familiarity and more: all figure in to controlling transition costs. In this final section, we're going to offer a few, more general guidelines to help you minimize costs.

Turn on the Tube

A kitchen video system is always a smart investment. Every time you eliminate a manual step you save money and reduce errors, and kitchen video eliminates a lot of steps. It lowers operating expenses as well. When you consider the ongoing costs of printer ink and paper—over \$1,000 a year—you'll see that over a 4-year period, the cost of printers is triple that of kitchen video.

Break the Back Office Blahs

Do you know who our biggest competitor is when it comes to the back office? Manual Steps, Inc. A surprising number of companies try to limit costs by handling closing, reconciling, reporting and so on as they've always done: manually, or using non-integrated spreadsheets. It's a perfect recipe for error. Accounting modules deliver information directly from the EPOS system to the back office, eliminating data entry, cut-and-paste, manual verification and more.

Don't Buy More Software Modules than You Need

Switching systems is a great opportunity to take advantage of new, advanced functionality. It's also a great opportunity to be oversold—to be convinced to buy EPOS modules you might use someday (emphasis on the "might"). Software isn't like car insurance: there's no advantage to buying it just in case you need it. Any EPOS system worth its salt lets you simply "turn on" modules when your business justifies it. For instance, we love our loyalty and mobile modules, but we don't try to sell it to our customers who don't have the staff or the business flow for either module to make financial sense.



Buy More Hardware Power than You Need

Hardware is a different animal altogether. In many cases the cost of buying more than you need is the smart investment. For instance, it's always best to buy the largest amount of memory for the DIMM slot. To ensure you get the most horsepower for the longest period of time, look at the high-end of the CPU lines. The more horsepower you buy now, the longer the computer will hold up as memory and CPU demands from software continue to grow. Peripheral devices on the other hand—like touch screens and external storage drives—don't have to be state-of-the-art: as long as they work.

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Learn more about EPOS.

Consider this tip sheet just the beginning of a fruitful EPOS process. To learn more about selecting the right EPOS for your restaurant or restaurant group, talk to a Maitre'D expert at 0800 074 5030 or visit us online at www.maitredpos.com.

Maitre'D Software is a leading provider of EPOS applications for restaurateurs worldwide. With 20,000 customers worldwide, Maitre'D boasts an international presence.



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