

Simon Kaye, Chief Operating Officer, Intertain

Simon Kaye is Chief Operating Officer at Intertain who operates 51 bars, restaurants and comedy venues across Britain including brands such as Walkabout and Old Orleans. These are large, high throughput managed venues turning over big money with a high cost base both in terms of equipment and product and therefore are always looking to reduce operating costs and improve margins.

One major area of cost, and key for delivering the perfect pint, are the cooling systems for product dispense. These are key to keeping beer in top quality yet can be extremely expensive to buy and maintain.

When Intertain were looking to replace the existing dispense systems they wanted to look at the difference in performance between the various systems as costs varied between £10,000 and £25,000 per pub, a serious investment when looking at 58 pubs. To help make that decision Simon involved Brulines and used i-draught to monitor performance on the different types of equipment.

“It was an invaluable piece of research” he said “what we learnt was that we didn’t need a Rolls Royce cooling system to be able to maintain top quality product. This saved us a fortune in capital expenditure”



Simon then got the Brulines team to come in and refine the reporting so that he could use it to manage the 6 pubs it was in. He wanted the system to help him in terms of yield both pouring yield and till yield. Pouring yield is the difference between beer available for dispense and pints actually sold whilst till yield compares dispensed beer to epos till sale data. Reports were set up online presenting the information in accessible, easy to use formats demonstrating what was happening in each pub and pinpointing the areas that needed attention.

Initially Simon was quite cautious about the system but now says

“I really like the system, it gives complete transparency using an intelligent bar management system. The data is accurate and provides excellent, accurate information in an easy to use format and the managers are now getting to grips with it. The system is only as good if the data is used properly so we arranged training sessions to educate the operational team and are now seeing an increase of between 3% and 5% in terms of yield. We are looking to roll it out to further sites, it is a great product backed up by an excellent team.”

Adam Sheperd is one of those operators as a Venue Manager at Walkabout, Watford. He has been there since March and prior to that was in Walkabout, Edinburgh. When he took over there was a problem with losses from draught products and he had no idea if it was from line cleaning, fobbing, over pouring, staff errors or pilferage. What he did know was that he had a problem with dispense times and temperature and that he would have to wait for his super chilled T bars. He very quickly got into using the Brulines system and found the spreadsheets self explanatory.



“If you do your bit in keeping data up to date and inputting sales figures then the system does the rest” he said “it is very simple to use and quite intuitive. In the short term before the new cooling system came in I had to sort out as many issues as I could as I was losing £600 per week at cost of draught beer”

I-draught helped identify what was happening on a product by product basis and it quickly became apparent to Adam that he had too many feeds into too many founts and needed to rationalise his bar layout.

“Even before the new cooling system was introduced I managed to improve my yield from 98.7% to 100% using the information provided by the system” he said “As you can imagine that really helps my bottom line profit”.

Since the super chilled system has been introduced Adam has changed how he uses the information.

“Initially it was simply about overall beer loss” he said “now I am identifying where pints are going missing to see if it is down to fobbing, keg changes or poor staff training. I am also pre emptying maintenance issues. I can look at the temperature on one T bar chiller plate and see if it needs attention. This is fantastic as I can put it right before busy weekend periods ensuring service isn’t interrupted and preventing wastage from fobbing. You need to embrace it as it is just another part of your management information system. Previously when my manager asked what was causing the issue I couldn’t tell him, now I can pin point the exact time, pump, product and member of staff, how much simpler can it get?”