

POS SYSTEM DURABILITY IS A MUST FOR RESTAURANTS

Few industries test a POS system's toughness like restaurants

In most workplaces, people treat computers as fragile devices needing some TLC to operate correctly. And then there's the restaurant industry, where computerized POS terminals get no such love when:

- Hurried servers can treat touch-screens more like "poke screens."
- Humidity and salt air accelerate component corrosion on POS terminals placed outside.
- In cramped, cluttered server stations, terminals get banged up as rushed servers maneuver for silverware and plates in tight spaces.

That describes an ordinary day for POS terminals at Duffy's Sports Grill. According to Meghan Clausell, director of IT at the 34-unit Lake Worth, Fla., chain, it's expected that POS terminals will get roughed up by employees pressured to please customers quickly, as much as owners don't like it.

"We've had terminals that didn't last for more than two to three years because of all the wear and tear, and replacing them is costly," says Clausell. "Our terminals have to be durable when things get dropped on them and they are used frequently to serve 7 million customers across all of our locations annually."



Defense is the best offense

About a decade ago, Duffy's owners decided the best way to avoid equipment failures was to purchase terminals able to withstand unintentional employee and climate abuse. Year-round warm weather allows outside customer seating at the chain, and that requires their POS terminals be installed nearby. The heat is hard enough on them, Clausell says, but at Duffy's locations near the water, "the moisture and salt air are particularly challenging."

After a lengthy search, the company settled on Posiflex POS terminals because of their reputation for durability and fast performance hardware. The results have been impressive, she says.

"About a year ago we replaced a few Posiflex terminals we've had in our restaurants since 2006," Clausell says.

"They're just workhorses that allow us to stay online and operate efficiently."

A tough touch is OK

Clausell says the terminals' projected capacitive touch-screens are essential to their durability. Like a smartphone screen, projected capacitive touch-screens utilize electrodes to sense the conductive properties of the operator's finger as an order is entered. Older style resistive touch-screens flex under a finger or stylus and wear out faster.

"We've dropped pints on those terminals and didn't have a problem," Clausell says. "With that kind of durability, we're not making replacement parts calls like we used to and can continue to provide the best customer service to our guests."

The terminals are equally durable on the inside, she says, pointing to their cooling fan-free design as “one less thing we have to worry about. With a typical fanned terminal, we can’t hear a fan fail, so if it does and that terminal overheats, it’s offline and maybe worse.”

Smaller is better and prettier

Knowing restaurant order stations are cramped, Posiflex’s newly released RT Series hardware provides a line of smaller footprint terminals which consume less space. Power and video screen cable clusters are largely enclosed within the new terminals, virtually eliminating the common tangle of cords spilling out from the back of most POS configurations.

The back of each ultra-thin RT terminal is also easily removed without tools, allowing quick repairs if needed. The use of solid-state hardware allows for leaner enclosures, faster performance while operating and, in the event of system reboots, shorter recovery times. This is crucial for Duffy’s, says Clausell, since its IT team is small and already busy managing more than 200 Posiflex terminals in its system.

“We do all our own installs, preventative maintenance and repairs,” Clausell

says, “and with basically a one-man show, we need to have any repair done quickly to maintain our top quality service.”

Though Duffy’s is not yet using Posiflex’s RT terminals, Clausell believes they’ll be added to the company’s network as older units are replaced. She’s looking forward to enjoying their greater speed and smaller footprint, and their sleek design will also be a plus.

“It does matter that it looks better, because the sleek design adds to the overall atmosphere,” she says. “The décor, equipment and lighting in a restaurant set the mood visually, so you don’t want a big, bulky terminal in a space where customers see it. Streamlined and out of the way is better.”

Happy employees equals happy customers

Clausell says Duffy’s investment into its POS system is also an investment in its employees since equipping them with reliable, highly functional equipment makes the chain a desirable place to work. When servers place orders



Posiflex RT Series

- Ultra thin body
- Snap on/off rear cover
- Projected Capacitive Display
- Widescreen and Standard available

quickly, they spend more time with guests at the table and in turn guests have a more enjoyable experience as well. And when its IT staff spends less time making repairs and maintaining the systems, it can focus on innovating.

“By using Posiflex, which is far more durable and consistent than other brands we have used, we found that our IT department has been able to put its energy toward developing new technology to improve our guest experience,” she says. “We feel that investing in excellent equipment helps our team players focus more of their time on continuing to provide a high quality experience for our guests.” ■

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