

Center Parcs

How Center Parcs has 'revolutionised its service offering' with QikServe

Center Parcs came to the UK in July 1987, offering short break holidays on a year-round basis. More than 30 years later, the name Center Parcs has become synonymous with the provision of an exceptional short break experience. It employs more than 9,000 staff and welcomes over 2 million guests each year.

At the end of February, Center Parcs announced its plans to reopen its UK villages in line with the government's lockdown exit strategy, on 12 April. It did this with great attention paid to the health and safety, as well as the enjoyment of its staff and guests.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Center Parcs hadn't yet made the move towards a digital food and beverage offering. The short break provider had been exploring options within the market but hadn't found a provider that it felt was the right fit for it, and its guests', needs. Fast forward to August 2020, six months on from the start of the pandemic restrictions and the company described its QikServe ordering platform as having 'revolutionised our service offering'.

The Challenge

COVID-19 wasn't the only motivation for digital ordering, it was already looking at ways to enhance the guest experience in line with modern consumer expectations. So, when the UK entered its first lockdown in 2020, the company moved quickly to develop a digital ordering solution that would supply guests with food and drink on-site in a safe and efficient way. It wanted a way to offer guests an excellent dining experience in lieu of being able to 'eat in' at venues, and support in overhauling its existing takeaway service, allowing for greater demand and expectation.

The solution it chose, had not only to suit the circumstances that the

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world found itself in at that moment, but be future proof and able to adapt as restrictions were tightened or loosened. Flexibility would be key, but the speed of implementation was a focus. It needed a great solution, and it didn't have time to wait. It wanted the chosen solution embedded into the Center Parcs website, something it saw as an important as part of the overall guest experience. Vitally, it needed to provide excellence beyond the pandemic, meeting evolving consumer demand now and in the future.

While QikServe was known to the Center Parcs team; it felt it important to review the wider market, and in doing so, identified a few contenders for the project. However, almost as soon

as the vendor selection process began, it became clear that QikServe was the best fit for the business. Its strategic partnership with Oracle, as well as the company's approach to technology development, meant Center Parcs felt comfortable that further integration between any future systems implemented would be possible and its pre-COVID reservations would be resolved.

The Solution

Since the start of the pandemic, Center Parcs has overseen three key digital projects. The first of these is the digital ordering solution, powered by QikServe. Using this, guests can now enjoy contactless ordering and payment on-site at brands including Las



The implementation of this solution has revolutionised our food and beverage offering for guests. Not only was this an integral project to allow us to re-open, but it's also enabled us to use this as an opportunity to increase our offer for many more of our brands, not just via the dine-in offer that we have historically had.



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Iguanas, Huck's American Bar & Grill, Café Rouge, The Pancake House, Bella Italia, Foresters' Inn and Rajinda Pradesh. Alternatively, guests can order ahead for collection, or lodge delivery, by selecting their meals and paying online before choosing a delivery time from carefully scheduled time slots.

As an extension of its use of QikServe's platform, Center Parcs has gone totally cashless, all its systems and processes now operate without the need for physical money, enabling the teams to alleviate the cash handling issues Covid brought about. Understanding the difficulty of social distancing within a holiday setting, Center Parcs introduced an IT led solution, using sensors to monitor footfall and generate capacity alerts.

Rounding out its digital transformation, Center Parcs introduced a new Live Chat and Digital Assistant to its website, ensuring guest service was optimised across every channel.

The results

The popularity of the QikServe platform has exceeded Center Parcs' expectations; guests have reacted positively to the opportunity to access a more varied menu via a digital interface and the average check size has grown accordingly. And it is not just guests that approve of the service, staff have benefited from the efficiencies it provides and have been quick to praise its ease of use.

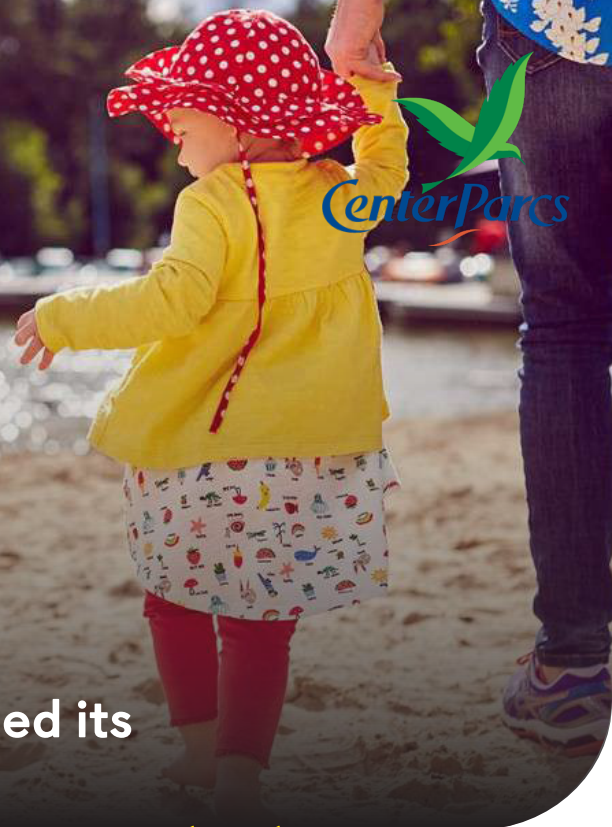
The longer the software is in play, the more useful it becomes to Center Parcs.

The platform is already playing an integral role in how Center Parcs promotes, communicates and build responses to guests, helping it to provide the very best quality of service.



There are many operational features available within the dashboard and, as we are becoming more acquainted with the solution, we are beginning to see the role these will play in enabling us to achieve our future goals.





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Given the necessity of a contactless ordering solution during the months of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's difficult to assess the true revenue return via the platform. Nonetheless, Center Parcs says that in-platform spend has been beyond its predictions. From the first week of launch in mid-July, to the final week of August, the company saw a week-on-week increase in spend and, across the 21 weeks that Center Parcs was open and using the QikServe technology in 2020, it welcomed more than 303,000 guest orders.

Beyond COVID-19

Once the pandemic has passed, Center Parcs intends the digital ordering platform to continue taking an active role in its food

and beverage offering and says that IT solutions are now an expectation rather than a nice to have. This, it believes, helps support the overall user experience and drives loyalty.

It has also begun to explore the direct integration of the solution to its ePOS system with the intent that it will then provide a single, integrated service to guests across all channels, from eat-in to order for collection or delivery.

As the UK slowly moves out of lockdown, Center Parcs' programme of technology investment is set to continue, and the company has several exciting digital projects on the go.

The future is not only bright, it's digital.



Bookings for the Center Parcs villages in 2021 are very strong and we expect this to continue. Guests trust us and feel safe at Center Parcs; we cannot wait to welcome people back to our villages. We see QikServe playing a vital role in the seasons ahead. Customer and brand loyalty is strong at Center Parcs; solutions like QikServe's that are forward thinking and provide an increased level of service will only further increase loyalty.

