Setting up your digital menu

Best Practices

A definitive guide on how to set up your digital menu

DIGITAL ORDERING SUCCESS

The use of online ordering in the hospitality sector has grown rapidly but what steps can you take as an operator to ensure you make the most of your new platform and create a menu that customers remember?

We've tapped into our in-house online ordering deployment expertise and experienced marketing team to bring you our definitive guide on putting together your digital menu.

MENU
PSYCHOLOGY

MENU PSYCHOLOGY

Menu designers use behavioural economics to nudge customers into ordering what they want them to. Luckily, you don't need a psychology degree to design an effective menu.

Here are some simple principles to pay attention to:

Analyse menu items

If you have the data, look at which items are the most popular and profitable – then construct your menu around these items – you might want to limit the number of items and make the menu scannable.

Adapt your menu

Once your menu has been configured, there's plenty of opportunity to refine the details. You will be gathering data in real-time and this will tell you what menu items are most popular and when. Knowing this enables you to shrink or expand your menu based on the purchases of customers at different points within the year.

Variations can be experimented with. Different meal sizes and modifiers can be employed to test whether average transaction value (ATV) can be increased. More on this below.

Reordering items

Use the data you gather to update the order of items to make the purchasing journey smoother for customers. If you sell a long list of hot drinks, and lattes are the most popular item, then you can move it to the top of the menu section, making it even easier for customers to find.

Paradox of choice

People don't like too much choice, they'd rather avoid the decision entirely. The rule of thumb is 'no more than 7 options' visible at any one time.

In order to sort this, "cluster" similar items on the menu together and create sub-sections. These sections might be as simple as 'starters', 'mains' and 'desserts'. If you have a wider menu, you might need to split your menu further: 'Noodles', 'Salads', 'Cold drinks'.

We suggest always including a 'popular' items section, here you can put top sellers and items you'd like to sell more of; this will help speed up the selection for customers. You should consider a Vegetarian/Vegan section as those food choices are increasingly popular.

Grab their attention

Include photos or graphics to highlight items – people respond to colour in emotional, subconscious ways.

Images are always important, and a nice-looking picture, placed alongside the described dish can be a deciding factor in making a sale. Attractive images, associated with a food items are said to increase sales by 30 percent; it's a significant amount and therefore worth the investment in quality photography.

Pick a style and stick to it

Each picture you use should follow a pattern that ties the entire menu together and satisfies the eyes of the customer. For example, you should use one background for all images, one style of plate/bowl and one type of lighting.

Accessorise the plate and/or surroundings

While your food may look and taste delicious, adding a garnish or using background 'props' can give the item a wow factor. Your addition might be as simple as a sprinkle or herbs, or perhaps some artfully placed wooden spoons.

A word of warning. It can be tempting to throw decorations around a table, but more isn't always more. Keeping it simple with just a couple of props should be enough to jazz up your dishes without making everything look too busy.

Choose your angles

Chosen correctly, the angle from which you take your photograph can hugely enhance the visual appeal of your food. If you are shooting a large dish with a lot of parts, taking the image from above will ensure no element is lost. A close up on a smaller dish can make it look larger, while a side shot of a layered and highly textured plate will make every part stand out.

Whichever angle you choose, it's important to consider how it impacts the next point…

Get the lighting right

Natural light is best when taking photographs of food. Take your images near to a window that throws soft shadows, rather than with artificial light that can be too 'fake'. You also want to avoid using a flash which can be very harsh and difficult to soften in post-production.

Too much light can also wash your food out, to keep your tomatoes looking bold and juicy, steer clear of overly bright lighting.

Keep it real

You never want to receive complaints that the meal your customer has not as expected. If you post amazing, photoshopped images or stock photography that only barely resembles the actual dish, this can easily happen. That's why it's important to be realistic in the photos you use. Your pictures should be of a high quality, with good lighting and nicely arranged, but they must also be recognisable and should give the customer an accurate idea of what to look forward to.

Use selective, descriptive language

Take advantage of descriptions when creating your menu. Some diners will make their final decisions from this information. Descriptive menu labels lead to customers feeling more satisfied with their meals, and appetising descriptions can also offset a high price.
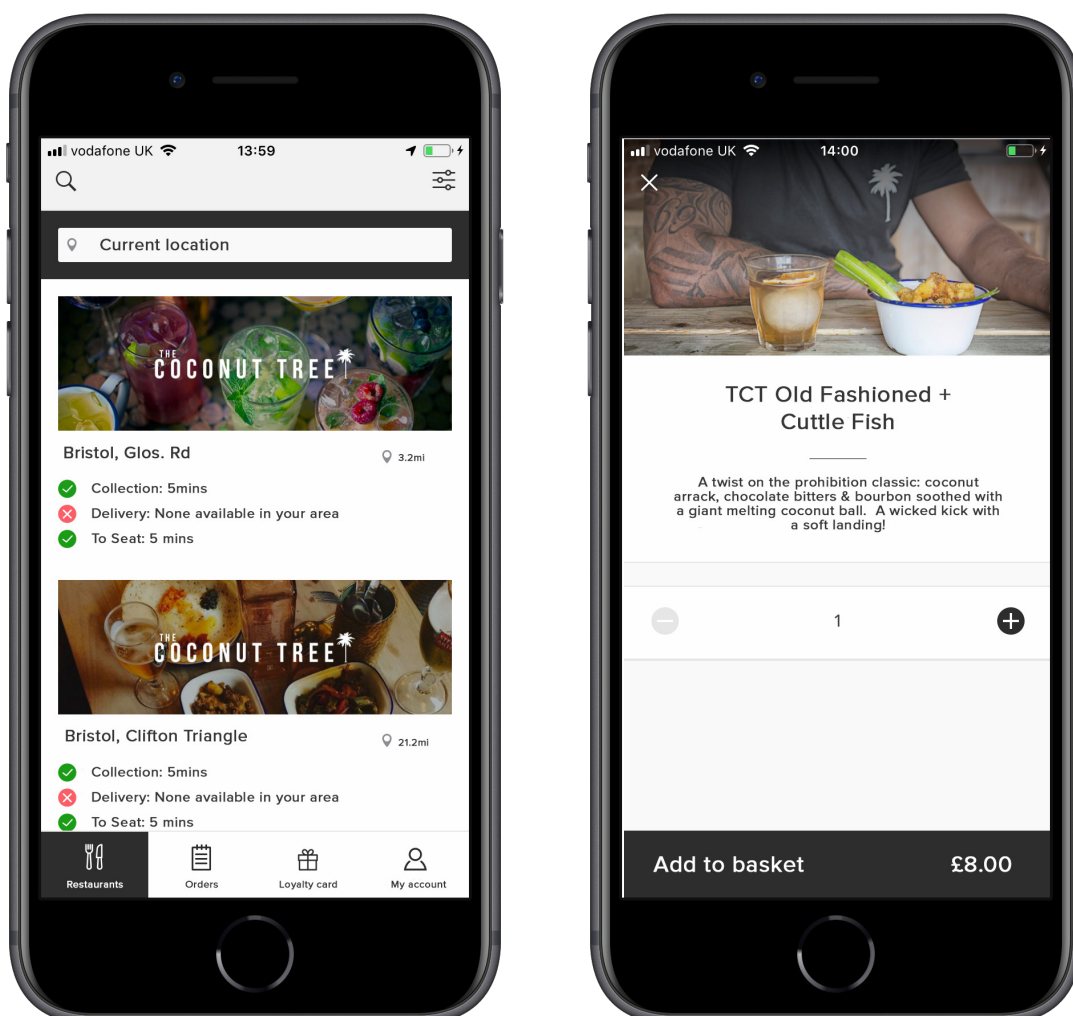
PLATFORM FEATURES

QikOrder includes a host of built-in features that you can use to your advantage; improving the guest experience and encouraging higher order value.

Modifiers

On our QikOrder platform, you can offer customers different sizes of the same items by creating modifiers.

Paying fifty pence more for a bigger portion suggests a discount and seems like a no-brainer to most, even if they would've been content with the smaller meal. Choosing the smaller one might make the customer feel they're being healthy, but the larger item will make them feel they are getting a lot more for just a small increase in spend.

Drinks are a particularly successful item for 'upselling' in this way. Why? Because people don't usually pay as much attention to the price of these, or their starter dishes and desserts, as they do main dishes.
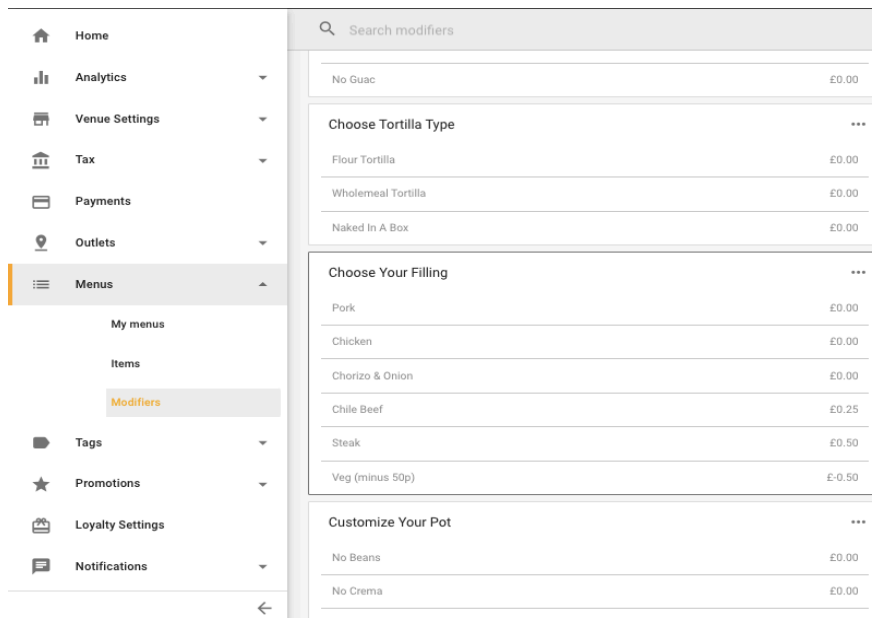
Input modifiers within your dashboard. Click:

**Menu > Modifiers> +
to add your options.**
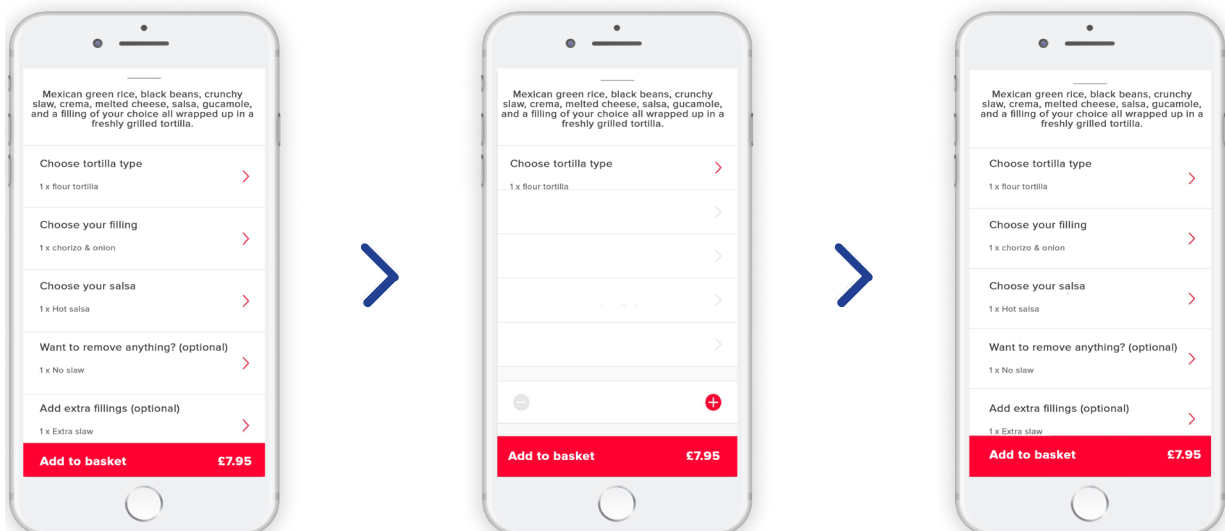
Promotions

The platform allows you to set up individual and group promotion codes. Let potential customers know that an offer exists through traditional and digital marketing to encourage them to make their first order with you. We've seen customers offer 'first order' discount codes ranging from 5% to 30%; the important thing is to remove the promotion after a set amount of time so as to avoid customers creating multiple accounts.

Once a guest has used the service, you can begin to target them with more personalised offers and build loyalty.

To add and amend promotions, click:

Menu > Promotions > +
and complete the pop-up form.

Scheduled menus

This feature allows clients to display menus or sections for specific times such as breakfast menus or day-specific menus. Or you can display special healthy menu options at certain times for all those people who need a health kick for example.

Scheduled menus are easy to implement, all that's needed is some time spent thinking about the menu layout. Just follow the suggestions above and you'll soon see your customers' average spend grow.

To schedule a menu, click:

Menu > My Menus > (...) > Advanced

Select the box for 'Restricted Ordering Hours' and set the times you *want* the menu to appear

Labels

With the tag function, allergen, alcohol and ingredient notices can be easily assigned. These generate a pop up to notify customers when they make an order, thereby making their presence extra clear.

Having the capability to tag menu items not only creates greater transparency with customers and helps them avoid specific allergens, but also allows operators to respond to customer lifestyle choices such as veganism. In other words, it makes choosing where to dine easier for guests!

To add a label:

Menus > My Menus > (select menu) > (select '...' on item) > Labels

Check the relevant boxes

Push notifications

Within your dashboard you have the ability to send out notifications to customers who have agreed to be contacted by your marketing team (when signing up for an account during their first order). This useful tool lets you send reminders to customers or make them aware of special offers.
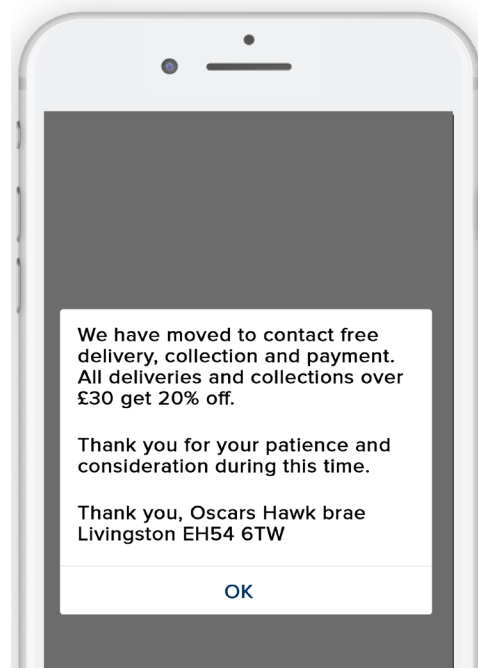
For example, within the dashboard, you can view which customers are the largest buyers of item X – you can then select to send a special message and offer specifically to these customers. By doing so you are engaging with them on a more personal level and encouraging further spending.

Note: Push notifications only work with the app, not web ordering

To send a push notification:

Analytics > Customers > select the customers you want to contact > '...'

We have moved to contact free delivery, collection and payment. All deliveries and collections over £30 get 20% off.

Thank you for your patience and consideration during this time.

Thank you, Oscars Hawk brae Livingston EH54 6TW

OK

QikServe

QikServe is the enterprise platform for guest self-service in hospitality. Using any channel from kiosks and tablets to web and mobile apps, hospitality operators can provide powerful in-store and off-premise solutions from ordering to payment, giving guests the convenience to order and pay for their food and drinks whenever and however they want.

www.qikserve.com