

Case study



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Lee Cash, founder, Peach Pubs



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Client - Peach Pub Company

Peach Pub Company has grown organically since it was established in 2002 and now incorporates 13 food-led pubs serving locally sourced, modern cuisine, including three pubs offering overnight accommodation.

From day one the company's philosophy has centred on delivering engaging and charismatic service to customers and this ethos has been fundamental to the group's growth and reputation.

The pub group teamed up with The Mystery Dining Company and its UK-wide team of assessors in 2004 as it wanted to gain an impartial view on individual pubs' performance.

Peach Pubs is passionate about the image that it presents to its customers. With every new site opened, a new team of staff need to be trained in the company's individual service style. Wanting to ensure both consistency of approach and the ability to adapt and evolve as new challenges arise, mystery visits have become an integral part of Peach's training and benchmarking process.

Challenges

- Achieving a consistency of service-style during a period of organic growth
 - Reinforcing a brand identity; 'The Peachy Way'
- Monitoring service for multi-discipline sites (pubs with accommodation)
 - Upholding staff morale while improving customer experience
- Evolving service delivery to meet the needs of a changing client-base

Benefits

Mystery visits help to provide the Peach team with:

- A clear understanding of the customer experience
- A means for improvement; standards raised through better awareness
 - An enhanced brand reputation
- A measurement tool for team and individual performance

Results - Through an operator's eyes

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The Mystery Dining Company has worked closely with Peach Pub Company's senior management team to deliver a mystery dining programme that delivers tangible results for the business.

Lee Cash, one of the founders of the dynamic pub group shares his view on why working with The Mystery Dining Company has helped Peach establish its niche in a competitive market.

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Growing a business the right way

"Starting with one venue means you can generally be intuitive about what you do but as you begin to expand you need to work out a way to help bottle that intuitiveness to replicate it across a number of different pubs. Monitoring customer service is crucial."

"Having systems in place is important and we see the work we do with The Mystery Dining Company as a management and improvement tool. There are so many influencing factors that make a difference between good and great service. You can't ever have too much information about your business. Even a bad report is a good one because every single person in the team can learn from it."

"The feedback from the mystery visitors - both those eating in our pub as well as those using our accommodation - reminds us to always look at things through the customers eyes, in turn making us to focus our attention on improving service on a day to day basis."

Making positive changes

"The biggest sin would be to have access to feedback and not act on it. We don't necessarily judge performance on one-off results -we want consistency across all the areas that we monitor and measure. We've found it really useful to review the mystery visit results over a longer period of time to identify common trends and particularly recurring weaknesses across specific pubs and the whole group. For example, we discovered a proportionally high number of bar tabs were incorrectly added up amongst our mystery diners. We presumed this may also be the case across the board so we've implemented measures to tighten this up, making sure neither we nor our customers lose out."

Enhancing staff performance and motivation

"Our staff are ambassadors for our brand, therefore sharing of the feedback we receive is important. Asking customers to highlight what we are doing, good or bad, or where they feel we could do even better, really works to our advantage. There's no finger pointing."

"The monthly reports are clear and concise and importantly, they reinforce the need for teamwork. A sense of friendly competition helps to



boost morale at each pub, as they look to compete with the other pubs within the Group. No one wants to be the weakest link so for the staff, knowing that they are going to be regularly assessed, helps them pull together as a team. Mystery visits definitely keep us on our toes."

Steven Pike, director, The Mystery Dining Company:

"Peach Pubs sets its own benchmarks in terms of its customer-focus. The group is committed to delivering a unique experience for every individual who walks through its doors; from someone dropping by for a drink, to a group having a meal or a couple staying overnight in its accommodation. Working with a company who isn't prepared to compromise this passion is fantastic and our assessors, with their critical eye and need to assess the minute details of their experience, are regularly impressed with the Peach team's standards."



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