



Digital Dining: Get your network right and transform your restaurant

The Digital Demand: Technology's pivotal role during the pandemic

Technology was pivotal for the Restaurant and Bar Industry during the pandemic, and began an accelerated digital transformation within a sector previously not as concerned with the emerging technologies of the 21st century. Many businesses pivoted with online sales, the restaurant industry included. 48% of restaurant and takeaway owners have adopted new technologies since the start of the pandemic, with over two-thirds of restaurant owners planning to continue using technology adaptations as they come out the other side of the pandemic.

For restaurants who operated reactively to this new reliance on technology, shortcuts and temporary solutions were put in place. As we edge towards a post-pandemic scenario, customers are in favour of these technologies staying put. Not only as consumers used to a new way of interacting with a restaurant, the scale of technology implementation across all sectors during the pandemic has left customers with higher expectations. Speed, connectivity, availability and flexibility have become essential to a good customer experience. This is where a solid network foundation comes to the forefront. Any strain on your network that causes poor speed or connectivity can drastically impact your customer experience and rate of return.

70%

**of Irish adults want
pubs and
restaurants to
continue to offer
QR code ordering
and payment
technology post-
pandemic**

Flipdish, Jan 2022

Challenges for restaurants and bars

Staffing Shortages

Labour shortage is a key issue, with 59% of restaurateurs citing hiring, training and staff retention as top challenges to success. With an increased scarcity of people available to work and rise in minimum wage, restaurants are adopting new technologies to combat these issues.

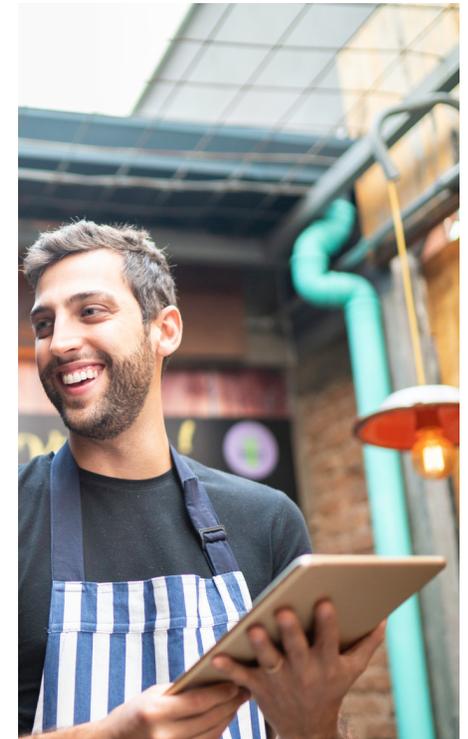
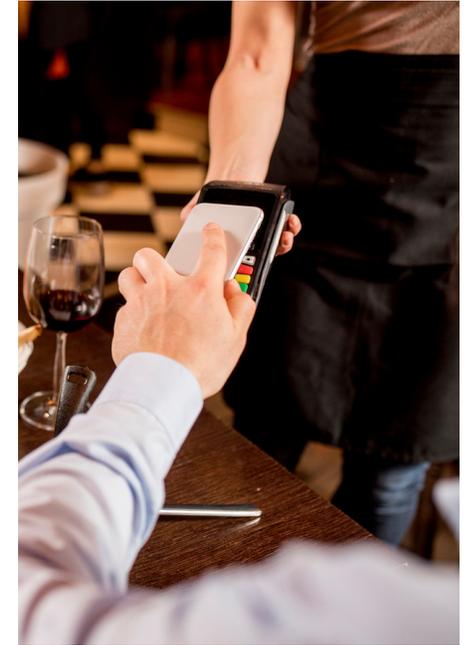
With the restaurant business no longer restricted to the brick-and-mortar structure and with limited or no on-site IT staff at most sites, operators are relying on persistent access to multiple cloud applications for seamless delivery of omnichannel customer experience.

The legacy network infrastructure can be costly to install and maintain. Skilled IT resources are needed to ensure all cloud applications are integrated tightly and that there are no gaps whenever a new application is added to the restaurant technology platform or a new location is added.

Connectivity and Bandwidth

Better networking capabilities are a must for restaurants that are expanding rapidly. As restaurants scale, they are increasingly adopting cloud solutions and automating back-office functions such as payroll, inventory management, and shift scheduling. For the successful execution of these applications, restaurants need to ensure that they always have adequate bandwidth and are always connected with the on-site network, as an outage can result in lost revenue, excessive costs and operational inefficiency.

A restaurant needs high quality, always-on connectivity to be successful. With digital menus, digital ordering kiosks, loyalty programs, online ordering, phone-in ordering, multiple customer devices, and food quality at stake, an outage can be catastrophic. Similarly, restaurant franchise operators with multiple locations need real-time access to inventory and accounting details. If a link to a site fails, they lose access to that site's data to make informed decisions in a timely manner.





Digital Dining is only as strong as the network that powers it

For successful digital transformation restaurant operators must ensure there is cloud connectivity at all times, with enough bandwidth to support growth and run critical cloud applications. Network outages are a risk because they can halt business processes. When digital reservation and ordering applications are not connected, or when customer PoS transactions can't connect, this creates friction in the seamless delivery of exceptional customer experience in all types of situations and at all sites. In addition, bandwidth is also required for guest-facing technology and is a must to keep customers happy.

Your Network is Essential

For restaurants, simplifying network operations, optimising network bandwidth, getting resilient high-quality cloud connectivity and maintaining network security at all times are critical success factors.

With an Edge7 Networks solution, you can reduce networking costs while eliminating dependence on complex and resource-heavy IT infrastructure and capital overlays. We work with Aruba technology to create an edge-to-cloud network foundation, that can adapt over time, which is necessary to stay competitive and meet consumer expectations.

Having already invested in technologies during the pandemic, Edge7 Networks offer a network solution that underpins these investments to ensure you are seeing a return on investment.

Benefits of an SD-WAN Solution

Cost Efficiency

Cost efficiency is critical for restaurants. SD-WAN connectivity delivers higher productivity for less cost (a lot less) than MPLS. The costs of remote access from bandwidth providers and MPLS can add up quickly. SD-WAN can dramatically reduce overall network costs and provides better performance using broadband connections that have lower cost per megabit. SD-WAN further eliminates hidden costs related to the complexity of setting up and maintaining network infrastructure with dedicated in-house IT staff. SD-WAN can scale quickly as restaurants add more sites, and operators do not need to worry about maintaining the network infrastructure or hardware.

Always-on Connectivity

One of the main features SD-WAN provides is automatic failover that ensures every employee, application, customer and restaurant site has reliable and consistent online connectivity. If one link fails or becomes congested, traffic is automatically redirected to a different link, thus reducing latency and mitigating downtime risks. Seamless failover instantly reacts to keep all of the restaurant digital operations connected.

Increase IT Efficiency & Remote Management

A managed SD-WAN solution reduces networking costs and time-to-value for application rollouts on a site-by-site basis, while eliminating dependence on complex and resource-heavy IT infrastructure and capital overlays. Your IT team can also monitor each store's service and make changes remotely from a central location. A robust managed network solution does not require any skilled on-site IT staff. Working with managed service providers allows restaurants to focus on their core business of servicing and engaging customers in an always-on, alwaysconnected environment.

Uninterrupted Business Operations

To minimize potential business impacts, restaurants need information that helps them understand their current bandwidth usage and how network connectivity is supporting their growing success. New customer engagement options like kiosks and online ordering from the lobby are driving increased connectivity demands. Our intelligence allows you to make accurate network planning decisions. Whether more capacity is needed to support new self-ordering kiosks or new kitchen technology, restaurants need to know ahead of time if networks can deliver the bandwidth required to run these new applications successfully.

Managed SD-WAN Service

With an Edge7 Networks SD-WAN Managed Service, all Network and SD-WAN monitoring and management is conducted by Edge7 Networks. Our Network Operations Centre (NOC) monitor WAN activity and alerts from a customer's environment, reacting to any events, alerts or outages proactively in accordance with defined SLA's. Any event that impacts the performance of a circuit or a location is actively managed to resolution and as SD-WAN provides a highly resilient environment, this is normally resolved before the customer experiences a deterioration of service.

In addition to real-time monitoring and resolution of your environment, the service can also include all required ongoing maintenance of the SD-WAN components. Required changes to optimise performance, detailed reporting on application and circuit behaviour, security updates and required upgrades as well as adding or modifying sites.

We can also simplify the network management process for customers by contacting carriers directly in the event of an issue or outage on a physical circuit and working with them to restore the service. This reduces the admin and overhead for the customer, reduces the steps required to engage the correct resolution team and helps ensure a faster restoration of circuits.

How Restaurants Benefit from a Managed SD-WAN Solution

Managed SD-WAN services provide ongoing monitoring and management for the customer network, as well as the SD-WAN solution. This ensures you are maximising your investment, achieving increased reliability and better performance of application delivery, as well as reduced application and WAN downtime.

- Reduced downtime and improved availability
- Up to 24x7 monitoring and alerting for WAN issues
- Faster resolution for issues & incidents
- An optimised SD-WAN environment as a result of regular reviews and recommendations to improve performance and add new features/functionality
- Vulnerabilities and patches applied in a timely risk based manner
- Leverage Edge7 Networks expertise in design, integration and development of SD-WAN and enterprise networking
- Efficient capacity management and planning by reviewing network traffic across all circuits

Learn more about SD-WAN Solutions from Edge7 Networks

Edge7 Networks is an SD-WAN leader in the Data Networking and Enterprise Security space. We supply services, equipment and managed services to our customers around the globe. As recognised experts in SD-WAN with unrivalled experience, we work with large enterprises to deploy connectivity, SD-WAN and Managed Services. In response to customer demand as a trusted partner, we also specialise in Security and LAN/WiFi services.

We focus on 4 key technologies and work with only the best of breed vendor in each sector to guarantee we have the detailed expertise and focused vendor support to deliver high quality tailored solutions to our customers. We also work with a range of providers to supply connectivity to customers at the best possible price.

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