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B&I catering index /

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Editor's letter /



It feels a tad remiss – as I type this with exactly four weeks until D-Day and with Boris Johnson's new (or should that be 'new'?) proposals having literally just been announced – that there is very little mention of the B word in this issue. The reasons for this are simple: the situation moves so quickly (while, paradoxically, very little of substance seems to actually change); and we have been here before.

Just over six months ago, I thought we were on the verge of leaving and wrote a feature rounding up the positions being adopted by various industry bodies – only for the can to then get kicked even further down the road (... twice). So I thought it might be expedient to clarify here that Jane Renton and I have agreed to only return to the subject in any depth once we have actually taken a decisive step towards leaving/remaining/BRINOing/spontaneously combusting (delete as applicable).

In the meantime, anyone requiring industry advice on our apparently imminent exit could possibly do worse than read the aforementioned article. It seems unlikely that any of the sources consulted will have had much cause to change their positions since our March issue anyway.

On a more positive note, we undertook the FSM Awards judging recently. I would just like to say congratulations to all of our talented finalists and we look forward to greeting you next month. Who knows, the above issue may even have become somewhat clearer by then.

H Norman

Henry Norman
Editor

“
The situation moves so quickly,
while, paradoxically, very
little seems to actually change
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Page 22
StrEAT Food Awards



Page 26
Coffee – Hot and cold

 <p>GOING GREEN How Foodservice is aiding the environment</p> <p>H2O Publishing</p> <p>PUBLISHED BY: H2O Publishing Joyes House New Road Gravesend DA11 0AJ Tel: 0345 500 6008 Fax: 0345 500 6009</p> <p>MANAGING DIRECTOR: Jamie Robbins</p>	<p>DIVISIONAL DIRECTOR: Rob Molinari 07850 797 252 rob@h2opublishing.co.uk @RobMolinari</p> <p>DIRECTOR: Dan Hillman 07833 248 788 dan@h2opublishing.co.uk @hillmandan</p> <p>DIRECTOR: Marc Sumner 07730 217 747 marc@h2opublishing.co.uk @sumner_marc</p> <p>No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the publishers</p>	<p>EDITOR: Henry Norman 0345 500 6008 henry@h2opublishing.co.uk @HenryHNorman</p> <p>EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: Tristan O'Hana</p> <p>EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Jane Renton</p> <p>FEATURES WRITER: Gemma Bradish</p> <p>PROOFREADER: Jennifer Campbell</p> <p>STUDIO MANAGER: Marc Ayres</p> <p>DESIGN: Matt Bailey, Wiktoria Armstrong and Caspian Reynolds</p> <p>PRODUCTION: Hannah Broad</p> <p>CONTRIBUTORS: Tom Bourne and The Badger</p> <p>PRINTED BY: Buxton Press</p>
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Daren Nixon - ISS Food Services

Lorna Bell - ISS Food Services

Richard O'Keefe - Rapport

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY AWARD

Trevor Bostridge - FCA, Bartlett Mitchell

Emma Abruzzese - Hiscox Insurance, Vacherin

Pamela Millar - Allstate, Sodexo

CONTRACT CATERER AWARD

Bartlett Mitchell

Sodexo

Vacherin

CSR AWARD

Vacherin

CH&Co

CATERed

EDUCATION AWARD

Mariama Davis - St Anne's Catholic Primary School,
Principals Catering

Gavin Stevens - The Kingsley School, CH&Co

Karl Quarmby - Ackworth, Thomas Franks

EXECUTIVE CHEF OF THE YEAR

Dan Wilson - ISS Food Services

Simon Hellier - Amadeus

Dan Kirkpatrick - Atalian Servest

INNOVATION AWARD

Zoë Watts - Vacherin

Robert Kirby - Lexington Catering

BM Talent Team - Bartlett Mitchell

MARKETING AWARD

CH&Co

Sodexo

Artizian

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Natalie O'Dalaigh - Rapport

Miguel Camera - Bartlett Mitchell

Matt Vernon - Atalian Servest

RISING STAR AWARD

Ben Garnett-Sinclair - CH&Co

Felicity Barnes - Fooditude

Patricya Gora - Sodexo

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

Kevin Watson - Amadeus

Richard Taylor - Chartwells

Allister Richards - Gather & Gather

SPORTS, LEISURE AND EVENT CATERING AWARD

Laura Amos - CH&Co

Charlotte Stokes - Portfolio Events

Christopher Butcher - Street Kitchen Brothers

UNIT CHEF OF THE YEAR

Darren Passmore - BUPA Cromwell Hospital,
Medirest Signature

Gary Kimber - ABC, Sodexo

Alex Lovell - TATA Technologies, Blue Apple Catering

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Contents /

Oct
2019



18 **The big interview**
Chis Foulkes, managing director, Relish



26 **Coffee**
The bean scene



34 **Hot on the high street**
Market Halls



44 **Focus**
Fooditude

08
News

The latest from the industry

16
Movers & shakers

The latest appointments

17
Desert island dishes

Varun Udhin, Gather & Gather

22
StrEAT Food Awards
Gemma Bridges, BaxterStorey

24
BITES
High street trends

25
Rising stars

Rebecca Armstrong, Genuine Dining Co

37
Sandwiches and soups
Winter warmers

40
Foodservice forum
Independent advantages

42
Branded food concepts
Brand aid

46
Legal
Finance

47
Reader offers

Win a Sharp microwave!

48
New products
The latest innovations

50
The Badger
Young talent



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News /

Grazing acquires Purple Grape

⬇ Grazing has acquired Purple Grape Catering in order to strengthen its suite of catering services to businesses across London. The move supports a strategy to offer clients one complete catering solution, including delivered-in, in-house workplace catering, hospitality and events.

The acquisition, for an undisclosed sum, sees Grazing take over all Purple Grape operations. The acquired business will operate as Purple Grape by Grazing.

Purple Grape offers a wide range of event catering services and specialises in the corporate sector. The company has a strong customer base in the fashion and high-end retail industry, along with a large West End client base.

The move is expected to add circa £1m turnover to the Grazing business in the next financial year. Grazing currently provides catering to businesses and venues in the City and West End, and the move will see the company increase its coverage across London.

The company already offers award-winning events catering services, which will be bolstered by the addition of the Purple Grape acquisition. Emily Gillan, founder and MD of Purple Grape, will continue to work in the business, offering client relations counsel and support to the overall events arm of the Grazing business.

Sam Hurst, CEO of Grazing, said: "Having seen strong growth in our B&I business over the past 12 months, we wanted to complete the circle by being able to bring the highest quality events to our corporate client base and found the perfect opportunity to strengthen our events department at pace through this acquisition.

"Emily has built up an incredible business over the past 10 years and her creativity, passion for food, eye for detail and energy are an absolutely perfect fit with Grazing. I couldn't be more excited about bringing Purple Grape into the Grazing family."

“

The move is expected to add circa £1m turnover to the Grazing business

”

Gillan added: "Ever since we set up Purple Grape, we wanted to create a business that was fun and fresh, and provided exceptional food. In Grazing, we found a company and team that is incredibly passionate and experienced, which is why it felt like the right fit to take the business forward."



EMILY GILLAN AND SAM HURST



BILL TONER

CH&CO reports 19% increase in turnover

⬆ CH&CO has released its annual accounts for the financial year ending 31st December 2018 and they show a 19% increase in annual turnover to £286m, in line with the previous year's projections. The latest results for CH&Co Catering Group (Holdings) Limited, lodged at Companies House this week, showed a £46m increase in turnover from 2017 to 2018 and an increase in profits to £17.2m earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization, representing 6% of turnover.

In contrast to previous years, there was no merger and acquisition activity in 2018, but the integration of the 2017 mergers with Harbour & Jones and Concerto Group was completed.

Bill Toner, chief executive of CH&CO, said: "2018 was another strong year for CH&CO and all of the M&A growth of previous years was successfully bedded in. We introduced a simplified Group structure and undertook a complete rebranding to focus on seven core areas – workplaces, destinations, events, livery, venues, education and healthcare – which was well-received by clients and team members alike. The performance of the company continues to be strong and we have a good track record of successfully growing our business through merging with like-minded companies.

"Economic uncertainty, particularly surrounding Brexit, continues to be a challenge for us and many of our clients, but we are a resilient company in a resilient industry, and I am confident that we can weather any storms that may come our way."

Other successes for CH&CO in 2018 included the achievement of the Sustainable Restaurant Association's top-level 3-Star rating, developing a Get into Work programme with the Prince's Trust, and gaining ROSPA Gold accreditation again.

“

The latest results showed a £46m increase in turnover from 2017 to 2018

”

Community



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Compass signs Social Mobility Pledge

Compass Group UK and Ireland recently signed up to the Social Mobility Pledge in order to underline its commitment to equal opportunities and help improve social mobility across the UK. It is the first big player within the hospitality sector to do so to date.

The company employs over 60,000 people in the UK and has been recognised for its apprenticeship strategy and training programmes, so it is already taking a number of positive steps to support social mobility. The Pledge asks that its accredited employers partner with schools and colleges to provide careers advice and mentoring to people from disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as work experience and apprenticeship opportunities. Finally, they must embrace transparent employee recruitment practices which promote a level playing field.

Donna Catley, HR director for Compass Group UK and Ireland, said: "First and foremost we are a people business and signing the Social Mobility Pledge is an important landmark which goes hand-in-hand with the excellent work we're already doing. As market leader I believe it is our job to lead by example, raise awareness and do all we can to make a difference.

"In unison with our Pledge, we are also making commitments to our employees as we seek to continue to support, grow and develop them. Finally, we will train several thousand managers over the next year to equip them with the people management skills and tools to support our ambitions."

Justine Greening MP, joint founder of the Social Mobility Pledge, added: "I'm delighted that Compass Group UK and Ireland has signed the Pledge and by doing so it underlines its commitment to equality of opportunity. I hope many more organisations will follow so that together we can create genuine social mobility in Britain for the first time."

Since the Social Mobility Pledge was launched in March 2018, over 350 businesses have signed representing almost 3m employees.

“

First and foremost we are
a people business

”

DONNA CATLEY

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To download your free copy, or to request your free sample, visit our website or call our team on 01606 541 490.



Elior achieves Princess Royal Training Award

↓ Elior UK recently achieved a Princess Royal Training Award for its commitment to outstanding employee training and learning best practice. The caterer was commended for its extensive development programmes, which are inspiring staff to excel and therefore boost business performance.

This year, HRH Princess Anne, president of City and Guilds Group, recognised a select group of public and private sector organisations of all sizes across a wide range of industries, such as BAE Systems, The Co-op, The Royal Navy and IBM UK Ltd. The judges said they were impressed by Elior's in-house Chef School and its 90 different learning opportunities.

Matt Jennings, learning and development business partner for Elior UK, said: "We're delighted to receive this award recognising the hard work that goes into developing and inspiring our employees. At Elior, we know our business success is dependent on engaged and motivated individuals, forming expert teams that create exciting food and service for our diverse clients. This is why we continue to create new, interactive learning experiences, inspiring them to be the best they can be."

Elior is now part of a Community of Excellence made up of over 150 employers recognised through the Princess Royal Training Awards. This has proved extremely valuable for previous winners, who have reported increased investment into training programmes, improved recruitment and retention and more.



TWO

BaxterStorey recently received double award recognition from the Soil Association – for its catering operations at the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

“

We're delighted to receive this award

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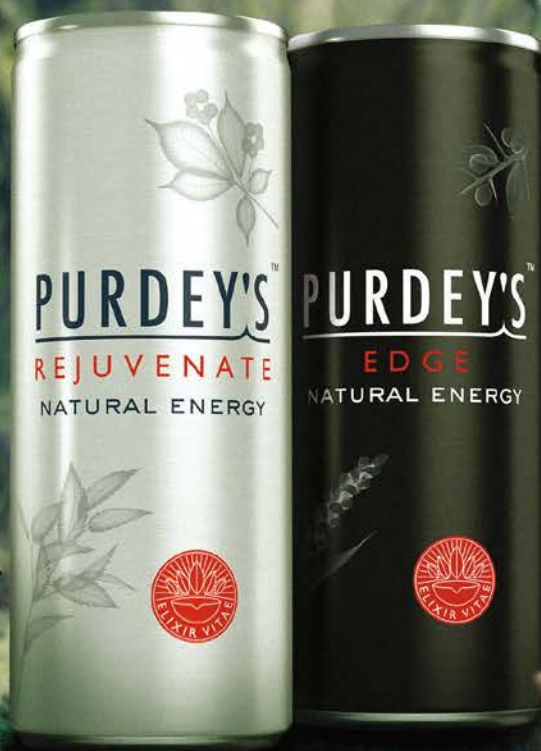
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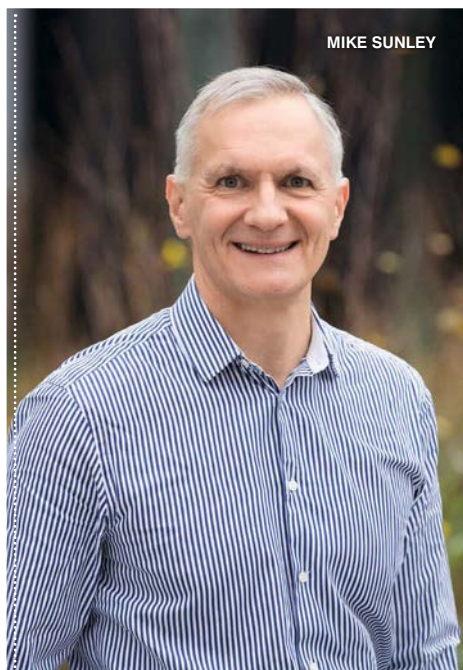
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The Water Plus category is currently worth £276m
and is expected to grow by 20% in the next 3 years* Source - Nielsen 12.05.18



Movers & shakers

Edmonds takes the lead at Lexington

Lexington recently announced that CEO Mike Sunley has decided to step down at the end of 2019 following 17 transformative years in the role. Managing director Julia Edmonds will take over the leadership of Lexington and the Elmor City business, with Sunley supporting the transition process until 31st December 2019.

Since launching the business in 2002, Sunley has overseen rapid growth and helped Lexington become one of the most innovative, trustworthy and people-focused contract caterers in London. Edmonds joined the company's executive team in 2007 when she was appointed sales and marketing director, becoming managing director in 2011.

Sunley said: "It has been an absolute pleasure and a lot of fun leading Lexington, working alongside some of the very best in the industry and with some truly amazing clients. While I am incredibly sad to be stepping down, it is absolutely the right time for Julia to take the reins and I look forward to seeing how the business evolves."

Edmonds added: "Over the years I have worked here, I have seen the many ways in which our team improve people's working days and have a positive impact on workplace culture. It has been fantastic to work alongside Mike over the last 12 years and is a real privilege to take over from him to lead the Lexington and Elmor City team."

bartlett mitchell team grows with Goodwin

bartlett mitchell has announced the appointment of Katarina Goodwin as people and talent director in a newly created role. She will be responsible for all areas of the people and talent function, including all transactional HR, people experience activity, payroll and training.

The company has also promoted Murray Soper to the role of talent and team manager. Soper, who has been with the business for 17 years, began his career as a junior team member at one of the caterer's first sites and has worked his way through the ranks to his current role. He will report to Goodwin and support the development of the company's talent pipeline.

Goodwin said: "I am very proud and excited to be part of the BM family and take care of its people and talent function. The people in this business are some of the most inspiring and incredible professionals I have ever met, and I cannot wait to work with them as we collectively move towards an even bigger and better BM future."



Choudrey appointed to House of Lords



It was recently announced that Zameer Choudrey CBE, chief executive of Bestway Group, will be appointed to the House of Lords under the Queen's intention of conferring Peerages of the United Kingdom.

The move comes in recognition of his considerable contributions to Britain's domestic and foreign trade as a leading businessman and entrepreneur; his wide array of philanthropic work, both in the UK and abroad; and his role as chairman of the Conservative Friends of Pakistan. In his role at Bestway Group, Choudrey has overseen the growth of the company into one of the UK's largest family-owned businesses, employing over 27,000 people worldwide.

Choudrey said: "It is an immense honour. I am truly humbled to have been appointed to the House of Lords. I have always viewed the UK to be the land of opportunity and I look forward to contributing to the continued advancement of our great country."

Hyun joins Sodexo

Sodexo has appointed workplace specialist So Young Hyun as workplace experience leader. She is the first hire to Sodexo-owned workplace experience consultancy Wx in the UK and Ireland.

Wx is a fully owned subsidiary of Sodexo and helps improve its clients' workplace experience through ethnography, the Internet of Things and data science. In her new role, Hyun will support the strategic development of Wx's business in the UK and Ireland, while at the same time developing Sodexo's workplace offer as a member of its business development team.

Hyun said: "I am a great believer in the potential for great workplace experience. I am also passionate about complementing sustainable building practices with science-based insights and leveraging emerging technologies to enhance human experience and wellbeing."



In this series, we ask the great and the good of the B&I world: if you were to be cast away alone on a desert island, which favourite eight dishes would you choose to have with you – assuming of course that you had a kitchen and an inexhaustible supply of ingredients?



DESERT ISLAND DISHES

VARUN UDHIN

Barista of the Year 2019, Gather & Gather



CHICKEN BIRYANI

One of my favourite childhood memories is eating a big bowl of my mother's chicken biryani. I grew up in Mauritius, so going back to see my family is considered a special occasion. Being welcomed home by a fragrant chicken biryani prepared by my mother is definitely a highlight, as well as seeing my family of course!

DHOLL PURI

Dholl puri is a split pea wrap – common street food found on every corner of every town in Mauritius. It's often filled with curried vegetables and pickles and is packed full of flavour. A visit to a local food market to experience a dholl puri is a must when in Mauritius.

CRAB SOUP

As the evenings get shorter and the weather gets colder, I like nothing better than a steaming hot bowl of well-seasoned crab soup, finished with some fine herbs like dill, tarragon and chives. Accompanied by a thick slice of crusty sourdough smothered in real Irish butter, it's a pure delight on a chilly winter's evening after a long day on my feet running the barista bar.

MAURITIAN SUMMER SALAD

I love dishes that are simply prepared, seasonal and nutritious. In summer I love preparing a simple Mauritian-style salad of pineapple, cucumber and mango, tossed with some seasonal garden leaves and lightly dressed with chilli and salt. I tend to serve this with grilled meat from the barbecue or whole roast fish like seabass or salmon.

STEAK, POTATOES AND GUINNESS

I love steak. I love potatoes. And I love Guinness. Having all three together is a true love affair of mine that I treat myself to every so often. You can't beat a nice thick-cut grilled steak from the local

I can't live without coffee!

butcher, served with crisp golden roast potatoes tossed in herbs and a nice sauce of pepper or béarnaise, all washed down with a creamy pint of Guinness. Food heaven for me.

AFFOGATO

I suppose this one is no surprise as I am coffee-obsessed and love to incorporate it into a meal at any opportunity! Good vanilla ice-cream drowned in a double espresso. Sometimes I like to add a shot of Amarula for an extra little kick. So simple, so delicious.

WOOD FIRE GOULASH

This is a Slovakian specialty. Tradition has it that this dish is best enjoyed around a wood-burning fire with good company. A one-pot wonder in which all the ingredients are placed in a pot over the burning embers and allowed to simmer gently while the guests imbibe and catch up. The goulash is served up in bowls, topped with sour cream and served with a pickled cucumber salad.

SPAGHETTI BOLOGNESE

My wife Zuzana adores pasta and makes a superb bolognese. I would go as far to say that she is a master of this recipe. I love home-cooked meals and enjoy them even more in her company. Freshly torn basil and a grating of parmigiano-reggiano completes the dish.

What one book would you take with you?

The one book I would like to take with me is The Official Driver Theory Test, as I am currently working towards passing my driving test. A desolate island would be the perfect place for me to catch up on my study.

What luxury item would you take with you?

Without question, my V60 brewing set. I can't live without coffee!

Finally, if you were allowed one dish, what would it be?

I would choose spaghetti bolognese, as it would remind me of my beautiful wife Zuzana.





VEGAN FOOD BY RELISH AT THE LUSH CONFERENCE

Scouse nous

By sticking to its roots and creating the right level of buzz, Liverpool event caterer Relish has secured both local and national business, as its owner Chris Foulkes explains to Jane Renton



CHRIS FOULKES

Liverpool is famous but often for all the wrong reasons. Its football fans were blamed – wrongly as it turned out – for the Hillsborough Stadium disaster of 1989, which remains the worst in UK sporting history. The city's people, with their us-against-the-world chippiness, also spawned former fire-fighter Derek Hatton – of hard-left Trotskyite militant tendency infamy – who set Liverpool City Council alight with his incendiary politics. Then there's Cherie Blair, the barrister and former prime minister's wife polarised between being viewed as a particularly grasping version of the Labour Party's very own Marie Antoinette and a career role model for ambitious young women.

That sort of prejudice, however, tends to be fuelled by those who have never stopped over in the city, with its seafaring heritage, magnificent Victorian architecture – it was the second city of Empire – and unrivalled musical heritage. The people may be tough, but as the descendants of sailors and dockers they've had to be. But find yourself lost and looking for directions, the chances are that someone will happily walk you to your destination while proudly pointing out

the city's landmarks to you, or help you with your luggage as you struggle with it down a steep flight of steps at the railway station. Liverpool, as native son Chris Foulkes tells me, is also on a roll.

Classified as a World Heritage Site, the city is undergoing something of a renaissance. Liverpool has more listed buildings than anywhere in the UK outside of London. It is also the second most visited tourist destination, with more than £670m invested in its historic assets since 2012. When the world held its breath in 2008, as stock markets and banks began crashing, the city breathed a sigh of relief. "Liverpool was transformed in 2008 when it became the capital of culture," says Foulkes. "It changed the city forever."

But it wasn't just Liverpool that was on a roll, as Foulkes' own fledgling catering business was about to take off. It has since grown into a one million pound venture, handling outside catering events for Everton FC, the BBC and Audi; and more recently for Lush, the natural skincare and cosmetics chain, based in Dorset, which chose to hold its staff annual conference in Liverpool, where Foulkes' company, Catering by Relish, provided the biggest vegan food offering in the UK outside of London. "We were really proud of that and the feedback we received was tremendous," he says. "It also reaffirmed our ability to handle really big events."

But Relish has prospered on the back of smaller, neighbourhood events that grew from word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and families. Foulkes, who made his first foray into catering by buying a sandwich shop in Smithtown Road, popular with students, had no previous experience in hospitality at the time. He worked for many years on the production line of Jaguar Land Rover, a job he says taught him discipline, the importance

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The business has now been split into two separate entities

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THE RELISH TEAM AT THE LUSH CONFERENCE

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With that level of year-on-year growth it quickly became apparent that we needed new premises

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of proper business processes and provided the money to start up on his own. The shifts also gave him the flexibility to work out of hours while he established his sandwich shop. “The business I took over was a bit of a greasy spoon, but I knew I had picked a good area in which to operate and that if I spent a bit of money doing the place up I would prosper,” he says.

The former Cotton Sandwich Shop was also given a name change by Foulkes and became instead the Deli Sandwich Shop, which operated six days a week. It was a hectic time. Yet within six months, Foulkes was already looking for another sandwich shop to open, this time closer to home in Mossley Hill in Rose Lane. The new Relish café ran reasonably successfully for several months, before it began to dawn on Foulkes that what local people there really wanted was more of a café where people could come and sit down for breakfast, lunch and coffee. “I had made a bit of money and was running my two businesses side-by-side, but I realised the fit wasn’t right,” he says. “So I sold the deli, which went for a good price very quickly, and converted my second shop into a seven-day operation.”

It proved a good decision. The conversion of the Rose Lane shop into Relish, a family-run bistro and wine bar, resulted in the business becoming one of the most popular eating out venues in south Liver-

pool. Around the same time, Foulkes kept on being approached by customers to cater for their own house parties. Those demands were to sow the seeds of his move into event catering. “I undertook the catering for my own daughter’s christening and was struck by how many different suppliers I ended up approaching,” he remembers. “There were people doing buffets and people hiring out machines but no-one doing it all – there was clearly a gap in the market.”

It was one he set out to fill. Relish Outside Catering was established in 2010 and quickly became involved with local venues as well as private parties. Such was the pace of growth that Foulkes’ sister, a former manager at a local nursery with strong organisational skills, joined him in his business. “She helped take us to a completely new level,” he acknowledges.

As the company’s reputation grew so did interest, including from Palm House, a magnificent listed Victorian Glasshouse in Sefton Park and the setting for private and corporate parties, events and weddings. “We took on their catering and with that level of year-on-year growth it quickly became apparent that we needed new premises,” says Foulkes.

Relish took over an old building yard opposite the bistro and converted it into a production kitchen, but within six months it became apparent yet again that the company still needed more space. This

resulted in the acquisition of yet another bigger unit in 2016, this time in Upper Parliament Street in the city where Relish created a new kitchen. A year later it took over additional premises across the road for equipment storage.

But the challenge of running split sites started to become painfully apparent to Foulkes. “I got to the point where I wanted everything to be on one site,” he says. It led to him selling the bistro in Rose Lane to take advantage of an opportunity to acquire a 5,000sq.ft. building, the site of a former cake factory in Old Swan.

Again, it was to prove another fortuitous move because the more central facility enabled them to take on yet more event catering contracts. These included work for Hinterlands, the huge former warehouse venue that runs major events that is situated in the famous Cains Brewery site, which has recently been redeveloped with surrounding artist studios, numerous bars and a food and drink market. It also boasts a thriving working community and is a popular nightlife destination.

Hinterlands needed a commercial kitchen on its premises, which resulted in Foulkes making a £70,000 investment in the project to create what he calls a state-of-the-art kitchen. It has taken business to a new level. Not only has Relish been able to handle events, such as the one recently held at Hinterlands for Lush,



where it was told by a satisfied client that it had produced “the best vegan food ever”, but also new business opportunities. “We knew we could handle really big events, and the fact that we are in a city centre kitchen has opened up new opportunities for us,” says Foulkes.

The company’s presence had already extended beyond the Mersey. Relish started undertaking pop-up events at the Bolesworth International Horse Show, Tattenhall, Cheshire, where in 2016 it ran a bar and food offering, all put together with only a two-week lead-in time. That was repeated the following year with a larger involvement by Relish, which operated five bars and two food outlets. This year it also undertook the VIP catering for family and friends of Chris Evans at Car Fest North, again at Bolesworth. But small events remain at the core of the business. As Foulkes says, it is “the bread and butter of what we do and where we came from”.

In order to avoid eclipsing that side of the business, it has now been split into two separate entities with the help of a new marketing agency. Catering by Relish will handle large outside events, while Spread by Relish, which is on the verge of being launched, will operate out of the former cake factory at events focused on a specific price point. “Spread will concentrate on everything from corporate events to weddings and high-end private dining,” says Foulkes.

Foulkes may have concluded that so many sites was a logistical nightmare, but splitting the business into two is surely a sensible way of avoiding cyclical downturns that can be especially harsh in event catering. By standing by, and staying close to, his Merseyside roots, Relish can surely relish the future.



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Every month we catch up with the finalists from our third event, which was held in March.

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This time we speak to
Gemma Bridges,
head chef for BaxterStorey



GEMMA BRIDGES

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WHY DID YOU ENTER THE AWARDS?

It was a different challenge to anything I have done before. The StrEAT Food Awards entailed creating three dishes in 55 minutes, which is certainly more pressure than I'm used to, and I wanted to see how I'd cope.

“
More
plant-based
dishes will
become
the norm
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STREET FOOD HAS BECOME SO BROAD. HOW DID YOU DECIDE WHAT TO COOK?

I wanted to incorporate plant protein and show that you can be confident in street food and still be plant-based. Street food is traditionally meat-based, but there's 60% more vegan fare available than two years ago.

As I knew there was a time limit, I went with tofu as it's quick and easy. Street food is supposed to be fresh and seasonal and I wanted to capture this with my Buns and Roses burger, which used half animal protein and half plant protein.

HOW DO YOU STAY CALM UNDER PRESSURE WHEN COMPETING?

It's my first time competing so I wasn't expecting to see so many



people there! I just had to get it done, so I kept my head down and concentrated on cooking.

WHY HAS STREET FOOD BECOME SO POPULAR?

It's quick, authentic and often cheaper than going to a restaurant. People love the theatre of cooking and it's more sociable; it fosters more social interaction as people can grab and go.

HOW DO YOU GET STREET FOOD ONTO YOUR MENUS AT WORK?

Our customers are largely students so we're pushing against an open door, as they demand more variety in their food offering. We kick off the year with a street food market where we show off the up and coming dishes.

We also run pop-ups at work, which we advertise. They're popular because they provide quick, quality food, which suits the studying lifestyle of our customers. This allows us to flex our daily offer with different authentic dishes from around the globe, which is ideal for meeting the needs of an internationally diverse customer base.

WHAT AFFECT HAS IT HAD ON CONTRACT CATERING?

Street food pushes us to be current and challenge our traditional cooking methods. The authenticity largely comes from our own people. The great thing about contract catering is the diversity and range of skills. Within my team, there are 70 nationalities. Our commis chef Christian is from Spain and loves to cook up a paella in hot weather during our

garden festivals. It's his time to shine and it gives our customers authentic dishes.

DID YOU ENJOY THE COMPETITION?

Yes, I did. I liked the opportunity to meet others in my industry and to see how innovative other contract caterers are with their street food offerings.

WHAT'S NEXT IN THE WORLD OF STREET FOOD?

More plant-based dishes will become the norm for us. I don't believe in processed foods. In my mind, some replacement animal products are just as processed. The best dishes are made when you don't use anything processed, you just work with the raw ingredients. For me, we should just enjoy food and not label it as being 'vegan' or 'vegetarian'.

“

Street food pushes us to be current and challenge our traditional cooking methods

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THE STREAT FOOD AWARDS

This year's event was the third annual search for the UK's most innovative street food chef from the workplace and event catering sectors. Following the initial judging process, 16 chefs went through to the live cook-off final, which was held in London in March.

The winners were then revealed during a presentation and drinks reception that evening, with over 200 exclusively invited trade guests from the contract catering industry. The awards were presented with the overall winner, Andrew Taylor from Restaurant Associates, taking home the £1,000 prize. For more info, go to www.bandistreatfoodawards.co.uk.

BITES

OCT/19

H2O Publishing is generating BITES, a digital product that keeps foodservice and hospitality operators up to speed with high street activity. Arriving by e-mail, it summarises key high street findings every two weeks, allowing operators to shape their business according to the lessons learned that fortnight...



BRANDS, INSIGHTS, TRENDS AND EXPERIENCES

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In recognition and celebration of the most emotively connected brands within our industry in 2019, attendees at this year's London-held BITES Live conference will be the first to find out which eating out propositions consumers are truly in love with on 9th October. In the exclusive national launch, consultancy Savanta will reveal the most loved eating out brands on the high street at BITES Live.

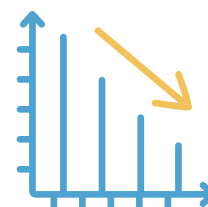
BITES

Live

RESTAURANT NUMBERS DROP

The UK's restaurant numbers have fallen for the sixth quarter in a row, research from CGA and AlixPartners reveals. Independent operators have faced the most closures, with group-owned restaurants proving more resilient despite the problems faced by some major brands. In the 12 months to June 2019, there has been a 3.4% drop in restaurant numbers – an average of 18 closures a week.

3.4%



BRUMMIES LOVE A DEAL

People in Birmingham are the hungriest for casual dining deals, according to sales data from e-commerce platform Wowcher. People from Birmingham spent the most per person during the first half of 2019, followed by Liverpool, London and Manchester. Those in Birmingham spent 266% more per person than those in London, and those in Liverpool spent 38% more per person than those in Manchester.

266%



CRITICAL CUSTOMERS

Customers are the most critical in the evening, according to data from Feed It Back. The company analysed hundreds of thousands of reviews across the restaurant and bar industries. The statistics track customer satisfaction scores across breakfast, lunch and dinner, and show that overall satisfaction is lowest in the evening at 90.8%. This compares to lunch at 92.4% and breakfast at 93%.

90.8%



CDG CHICKEN COMMITMENT

Casual Dining Group has signed up to the European Chicken Commitment. The Commitment requires companies to commit to a range of key standards around slower growing chicken breeds, reduced stocking density, environmental enrichment, natural light and humane slaughtering processes by 2026. Everyone involved in the agreement has to be audited by an independent body to ensure they are meeting requirements.



PLASTIC PACKAGING PURGE

Molson Coors has announced that it will remove plastic from its Carling and Coors Light packaging by 2021. To implement the changes, the brewer is investing around £7.5m over the next two years. Molson Coors has brought in science-based targets to lower absolute carbon emissions by 50% within its own operations, and by 20% across its value chain.

7.5m



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★ RISING STARS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In this regular interview, we speak to the under-30s who represent the future of foodservice

REBECCA ARMSTRONG

Operations manager for The Genuine Dining Company and winner of the ACE Robyns Award 2019



REBECCA ARMSTRONG

What is your current role and what does it entail?

I am an operations manager for The Genuine Dining Company and look after sites across London. I work closely with my managers to develop their skills and their teams, working with them to achieve targets in their sites, increasing cash sales, sharing new ideas and creating a fun work environment.

Why did you want to work in foodservice?

While I was at university I worked in restaurants and hotels and really enjoyed it. My university tutor was from a foodservice background and suggested that I meet with some alumni who were in that field. I spent one day shadowing, moving around sites and meeting people and instantly saw how diverse the industry was.

What education, training and competitions have you undertaken to get this far?

I studied an international hospitality management BSc at Oxford Brookes University for four years, where I did a placement year on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, working in food and beverage. After university I completed a nine-month graduate programme at BaxterStorey where I worked within a contract learning from on the job training and management courses provided. At The Genuine Dining Company, I have undertaken training to increase my knowledge on human resources, allergens, food safety and finance.

How could B&I businesses attract more rising stars into the sector?

Awareness is key. Businesses are using social media more than ever to promote the industry, and I think that shouting about all of the opportunities there are will only help attract people. Promoting the industry, explaining what foodservice is, and highlighting the wide range of roles available to younger people as they are making decisions about their futures is important too.

What do you enjoy about the industry?

No two days are ever the same! I enjoy working with so many different people in different business environments, meeting clients and spending time with the teams on site. There is so much to get involved with, whether it is spending a day with the sales team working on a new piece of business, opening new contracts, tasting food from a hospitality menu, doing charity work, training managers on a system, or hosting events.



How do you think the industry could improve?

The industry needs to be at the forefront of creating ways to encourage more recycling and understanding waste streams better, so we can reduce non-recyclable waste from contracts. It's our responsibility to educate our customers on how we can be reusing and recycling, and our teams on the impact that they can have on our day-to-day business. Similarly, we play an important role in food wastage and how we can reduce this and pass this message on to our customers.

What trends do you predict for the future?

I believe that sustainability will be an important question for the foodservice industry in the future. How food is produced, transported and consumed will have an impact on how businesses will be run.

What is your biggest ambition?

My biggest ambition for the future is to continue to grow my career within the foodservice industry and make a positive impact. I want to spend time developing my skills with regard to coaching and mentoring employees, and allowing them to reach their full potential.

“
No two days are ever the same!
”

The bean scene

The coffee market continues to evolve to make it one of the true success stories of modern times



The UK coffee shop market has experienced 20 years of consecutive growth

It may have been a tough decade or so for the UK economically, with the credit crunch giving way to austerity and then Brexit uncertainty, but our café culture has been one sector that has ridden out each and every storm. Bucking the doom and gloom trend, the coffee market still retains quite a buzz. “The UK coffee shop market has experienced 20 years of consecutive growth with an annual sales increase of 7.9% in 2018,” says Phil Smith, head of category and insight for UCC Coffee UK and Ireland. “It continues to grow, standing at 25,483 sites and was valued at an estimated £10.1bn as of December 2018.

“UCC’s latest research into coffee drinking habits on the high street has revealed milk-based coffees are a top choice for consumers. For out of home drinking, lattes – 51% – were the most popular, closely followed by cappuccinos – 50% – and americanos – 34%.”

THE BIG THREE

Steve Morris, sales director for Jestic Foodservice Equipment, echoes these findings, adding: “Perhaps unsurprisingly, the three most popular coffee drinks in UK coffee shops in 2018 were lattes, cappuccinos and americanos, with flat whites also growing in popularity. With customer demand for coffee drinks still high, opera-

tors would be well advised to offer a range of hot and cold coffee drinks on their menus, or risk losing out on sales.”

When it comes to brands, Bestway reports having seen a strong performance from Costa Coffee’s ready-to-drink cold products, which launched in the Bestway range in August. “More established brands such as Starbucks and Emmi have also performed well, no doubt due to their extensive range of serves and flavours,” says Haleem Sadiq, trading controller – impulse for Bestway Wholesale.

Looking ahead, George Thomas, coffee brand manager for Aimia Foods, says: “From mochas to macchiatos and americanos to affogatos, the possibilities with coffee are limitless. However, out of the multitude of coffee styles now available, Café Nueva predicts that the on-trend flat white will continue to increase in popularity, particularly as we move into the colder, autumn months.”

MADE TO MEASURE

There is, of course, no one-size-fits all answer to replicating the high street in B&I and David Rees, marketing manager for Taylor UK, believes it is essential to do your homework on the size of your operation. “If you have a large customer

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The cold coffee category is now worth £106m

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base, then make sure that you buy a coffee machine that is able to cater to that,” he reasons. “Automatic and semi-automatic models are essential for operators who don’t have the scale of business to employ expert baristas but still want to produce consistently superior results. Quality of product, in terms of both the appliance and the beverages that it is able to produce, is vital.”

Personalisation is another huge trend in the coffee market. Consumers know exactly what they want from their cup of coffee, so the ability to customise a drink to their exact taste is a novel idea. “TopBrewer is the only bean-to-cup coffee machine in the world to truly put the consumer in control of their coffee experience,” asserts Simon

Bracken, co-founder and managing director of Scanomat UK and Ireland. “We believe that consumers should be able to choose how they want

their coffee. Personalising your coffee is quick and easy with the free TopBrewer app. Customers can use the sliders to adjust their coffee strength, drink size and milk foam to create the perfect drink, just the way they like it.”

Going green is also vitally important, with sustainability having become the norm within foodservice. “The public is aware of the massive recycling challenges with conventional single-use foodservice packaging, where those made from oil-based plastics – once stained with food and drink residue – can’t be easily recycled,” says a spokesperson for Vegware. “This has resulted in consumers’ increased demand for eco alternatives in foodservice for items like disposables.

“Even with a major shift to re-usables, some disposables will be needed. The Earth has finite resources and disposables are used for such a short time, it makes sense to switch to renewable materials.”

In recent years, sustainable coffee machine developments really have come on leaps and bounds, and, according to Anders Bäckström, field marketing manager for Crem UK and Ireland, this is largely thanks to operators demanding a better class of energy efficient units. “For a leading coffee machine brand like us, however, sustainability has always been of key focus,” he says. “It is a focus that has led to the launch of some incredibly efficient coffee machines, such as the Spengler CL22, Expobar Carat ECO and Diamant Pro.”





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COLD COMFORT

With 60% of consumers now choosing to drink coffee as an indulgent summer treat, iced and cold coffee options are now among the fastest-growing beverage products in UK coffee shops. Because of this, the cold coffee category is now worth £106m and is growing +38% versus last year out of home. “This has been particularly driven by popularity among an emerging demographic of quality conscious millennial consumers, with under-30s prepared to pay well above average on a single premium quality cup of coffee,” says Charlea Samuel, category marketing manager premium coffee for Jacobs Douwe Egberts. “Personalisation, along with quality and convenience, are key drivers for choice.

“So when 81% of consumers say taste and flavour influence the quality of coffee, it's of the utmost importance that operators meet the growing trend for cold beverage options with a quality offering that provides more than just a simple cold frappuccino.”

“We are seeing a strong increase in consumers opting for dairy drinks and iced coffees,” echoes Adam Hacking, head of beverages for Arla Foods. “The dairy drinks category has grown in value by 15.9% and iced coffees have contributed to this with a growth of 38.3%. This growth is being driven by the breadth of innovation, increas-

ing category awareness by consumers and improved availability of products.”

Mike Hardman, marketing manager for Alliance Online, agrees that cold coffees are hot property, adding: “The category is seeing a surge in sales during 2019 with it being up 36% year over year. In addition to cold variants, their cooler cousins the iced coffee are also seeing a popularity spike. When we enter the warmer parts of the year and we see the temperature increase, iced coffees sell particularly well with the 18- to 34-year olds.”

Looking to the future, Smith of UCC Coffee UK and Ireland concludes that the out of home coffee experience is changing, with automation being at the forefront of this new customer service. “Customers expect consistency, precision and quality in their coffee and new automated technologies are evolving to meet this need. With automated technology handling the preparation process, baristas can focus on expert service and the drinking environment. As a result, the future barista's role will likely evolve to be more service-led.”

HEATED DEBATE

Lee Stones, global product marketing manager – water heating, showers and ventilation for Burco, on the importance of getting the correct hot water boiler

“With the almost endless range of hot beverages available, it is important that caterers consider how their hot beverage equipment is going to impact on the quality of the finished product. With many businesses choosing to use coffee and espresso machines to produce their full menu, the end product can often suffer as this type of machine often fails to produce water hot enough to be able to make the perfect beverage for all blends.

“This is where a dedicated hot water boiler comes into its own. Although this may seem like a minor implication when running a successful business, as the cost of commodities such as coffee continue to increase and with customers willing to pay more for their hot beverage, ensuring it is of the highest standard is essential to maintaining trade.

“Designed to provide water at higher temperatures than traditional coffee and espresso machines, yet still able to effectively make delicious coffee-based drinks, operators will be surprised at just how much of a difference a dedicated hot water boiler can make to hot drink sales.”





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Marketing strategy

Co-founder Simon Anderson tells Henry Norman how Market Halls' innovative approach is allowing for rapid expansion into the West End and beyond. Just don't call it a street food business...



"It's going to be big and brilliant!" enthuses co-founder Simon Anderson as we sit down to discuss Market Halls' latest development. In the capital, the street food scene has often found itself pushed somewhat to the margins, with much of the activity centred around the east of the city and in the sort of city-based and urban areas that rival Street Feast favours.

This is all about to change, though, with Kerb opening in Seven Dials and Market Halls poised to unveil what Simon reveals, with 35,000sq ft of trading space, will be "the biggest food market in the UK" near Oxford Circus. "It will have 800 to 1,000 covers, numerous kitchens and bars, and various other dynamic spaces," he elaborates. "The first floor will be the size of two Victoria Market Halls with plenty of food on offer, and upstairs we'll have a large bar area with a roof terrace and separate event spaces. It's a really exciting venture as only 0.5% of the total square footage of Oxford Street is food and beverage."

Simon is keen, though, not to be directly compared to the likes of the aforementioned Street Feast and Kerb. "I wouldn't call us a street food business," he says, "we look at existing restaurants and people who want to build their brand, not just street food traders, and bring them together under one roof."

"Street food markets tend to be open air, whereas we set up home in permanent, bricks and mortar sites. Markets tend to operate over a few days and are often mobile, whereas we are a seven-days-a-week operation, and we take on long property leases and invest in them."

The inspiration for this particular market model came when the company's co-founder and now CEO, Andy Lewis-Pratt, returned to London after spending some time in Portugal. He'd seen first-hand what was going on there, as well as across the US, and couldn't figure out why the concept of communal dining halls hadn't really taken off in the UK. "We were

"
We wanted to provide something different to what temporary street food markets offer
"

introduced because of my background and knowledge of the casual dining scene in London, having run one of London's earliest food trucks and an award-winning gastro-pub in Islington," explains Simon. "Together we visited food markets and halls across the globe before reinventing the concept for a London audience. We wanted to provide something different to what temporary street food markets offer and fill the gap between fast-food chains and table service restaurants."

One of the most important points of difference, Simon believes, is that his egalitarian eateries can help to alleviate some of the major problems – such as unrealistic rents, immobile councils and high business rates – that are currently affecting the sector. "A business like ours allows for smaller, independent businesses to get a foot in the door without the headache of financial barriers," he says. "Traders are able to build their brands in a space that is assuredly busy, come rain or shine, while diners can enjoy a variety of options all under one roof. We are the missing link for both traders and diners between al fresco markets and bricks and mortar restaurants."

The business has grown to the extent that Market Halls now offers diners fast-casual food from 24 kitchens

across its sites in Fulham and Victoria, as well as the upcoming flagship in the West End, and Simon's team puts a lot of research into exactly where to open next. "We want each Market Hall to have its own unique vibe, so we seek out interesting sites that stand out architecturally. Our first site in Fulham is housed in a former underground station; Market Hall Victoria was an Edwardian shopping arcade, an ornate restaurant, and more recently the super-club Pacha; and our West End site is opening in what used to be British Home Stores in Oxford Circus. We take unused and unloved sites and renovate them into dining hubs that work for the community, bringing them back to life and their full potential."

Simon continues that the company is "pretty data-driven" and takes the time to scrutinise each area individually to

weigh up whether there is a gap in the market for local diners. "If we opened in the East End, we would automatically have 100 other restaurants as competitors, so we chose Fulham where there is both footfall and demand. With an area like Victoria, we knew there had been massive investment and wanted to come in on the tail end of all that as we knew that the numbers were there. Market Hall Victoria now surpasses 25,000 customers a week."

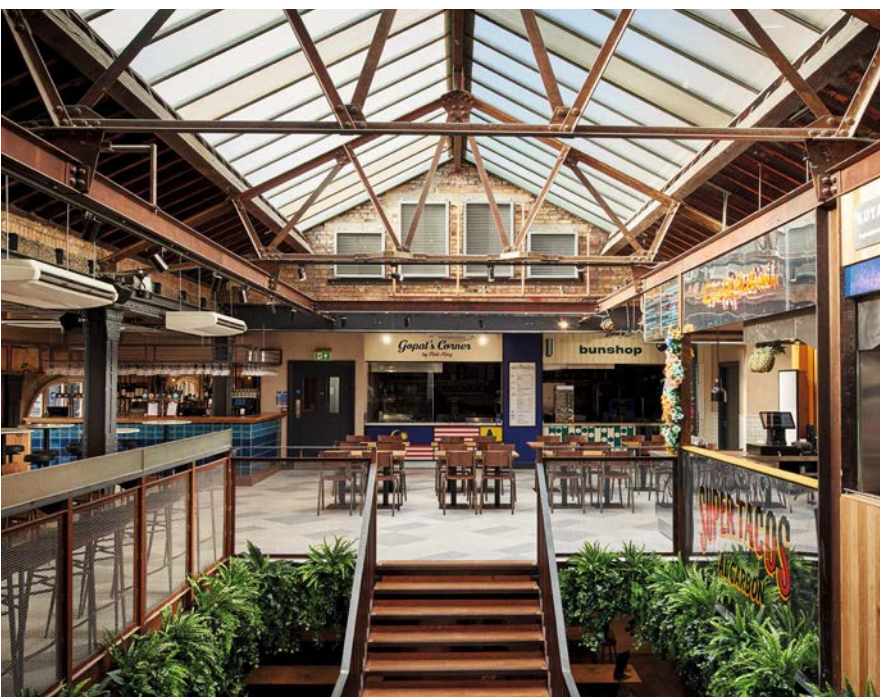
The approach to finding vendors of a suitable quality is equally exhaustive, as Simon explains: "We break the London restaurant scene into workable chunks and look at curating an offering that covers as many different bases as possible. We look at the make-up of the local area, consider what they need in terms of breakfast, lunch and dinner, and then approach operators that we really admire, such as Roti King, Monty's Deli and Baozinn. We always look at young, independent, chef-driven businesses, while also ensuring there is something for everyone – from pizza and poké to dosas and dumplings."

Looking to the future, Simon says he would like to see even more independents and younger people coming into the industry, which he believes will help it to evolve and remain relevant. "The chains will continue to be challenged and it's good to see that great pubs are having a renaissance. Food and drink play such an important role in the fabric of business, culture and society; it helps us grow with things like business rates and, with Brexit being imminent, this is a very interesting time."

If our apparently imminent exit from the European Union is slowing some businesses down, it doesn't appear to be affecting Market Halls, which Simon reveals is "looking to open at least two or three more markets in London, including one in Canary Wharf" next year.

Notable progress indeed for a business that only opened its first site in 2018, so what is the secret of Simon's success? "You must find the gap and fill it well," he reveals. "Each of our sites is different: different buildings, different histories, different traders – we create a drive and excitement specific to each location. There is no one-size-fits-all for us."

It is this unique approach that has helped Simon's business achieve a sizable market-share – and, even more impressively, all in less than two years.



SIMON ANDERSON



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WINTER WARMERS

Modify your menu in time for winter with a comforting selection of sandwiches and soups

POLARBRÖD

As summer fades away, desire increases among consumers for comfort foods such as soups and sandwiches. This year is no different, and it is time for B&I operators to reduce the number of light options they have available and focus on creating a hearty winter menu. While soup is the perfect option at lunchtime, research released by Kantar Worldpanel has shown that sandwiches are fast becoming popular at breakfast and teatime, giving operators a fantastic opportunity to satisfy employees throughout the whole day. What's more, both products can be eaten in or on the move, giving them double the appeal.

"With the life of the modern consumer becoming busier by the year, the demand for quick and easy on-the-move food continues to grow," says Alison Smith, product developer for Mars Global Food. "Whether it be a quick grab-and-go sandwich, perfect for a busy commuter, a steaming bowl of soup on a leisurely lunch break, or a street-food-style sandwich to snack on, soups and sandwiches are firm favourites set to stay for the long haul."

TAKE A BITE

There is no doubt that the sandwich has evolved considerably over the last few decades. Last year, Warburtons surveyed 2,000 Britons to discover the most popular sandwich fillings from each decade, leading to rather interesting results. Back in the 1970s, the favourites included ham salad, ham and cheese, cheese and onion and egg mayonnaise.

During the noughties, consumers revealed an appetite for more adventurous fillings, such as smoked salmon and cream cheese and brie and cranberry. Since then, exotic flavours have grown in popularity and the five most popular fillings at present are hummus and falafel, BBQ pulled pork, avocado, chicken and avocado, and brie and grape.

However, it isn't just sandwich fillings that have evolved over the years. As the interest in health has increased, so too has the demand for healthier types of bread. For example, sourdough bread has enjoyed a revival in popularity because it is more nutritious, has a longer shelf life

and is easier for the body to digest than standard loaves. Furthermore, the World Health Organization shone a positive light on wholegrain bread when it declared that it can help to prevent numerous diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular problems and cancer.

Consequently, consumers are placing greater emphasis on their sandwich carrier than ever before. "Our recent consumer survey, Prove It: The Great British Bakery report, found that consumers place freshness – 48% – and type of bread – 44% – as the most important factors when buying a sandwich," reveals Stéphanie Brillouet, marketing director – Northern Europe and North America for Délifrance. "This has been evident for us in the unprecedented demand for affordable, rustic breads that we've seen."

Despite having been around for a number of decades, multiple studies have shown that the sandwich is still extremely popular with the British public. For example, PR and research company Ginger Comms found that 56% consume a sandwich every

11.5bn

Brits consume 11.5bn sandwiches every year
(Source: British Sandwich Association, supplied by Theo's)

5.6bn

The UK sandwich industry is now worth £5.6bn a year
(Source: Kantar Worldpanel 2019, supplied by Theo's)



day. To make the most of the category, B&I caterers should aim to have a wide variety of fillings and carriers available, including wraps. "Filled wraps, as an alternative to traditional sandwiches, teamed with a tasty soup, make the perfect lunchtime combination," comments Gordon Lauder, MD of frozen food distributor Central Foods. "Healthy eating is a big driver for many consumers, so offering vegetable-flavoured wraps that provide a source of fibre, look attractive and taste great should encourage take-up."

ESCAPE THE COLD

The ideal winter warmer, soup, is great for adding to your new season menu and cutting the risk of customer fatigue. To create chunky soups, Smith recommends adding a filling carbohydrate, such as rice or pasta, to the mix. A soup selection can be elevated further with the offer of multiple bread types, giving customers the opportunity to enjoy a warm bowl of goodness with their preferred choice of bread.

"Try teaming soup with naan breads or flatbreads, or using naan breads or flatbreads as croutons, for example," recommends a spokesperson for Butt Foods. "Replacing traditional sandwich breads with something like a naan or sourdough flatbread brings true innovation to a sandwich and soup menu. It not only alters the taste, but it brings a different look and texture to dishes too."

To encourage employees to part with their cash, think about creating soup and sandwich deals that represent good value for money. "Sandwiches and soup go hand-in-hand together, so it's the perfect opportunity to offer deals and encourage lunchtime trade," says Joel Carr, development chef for Young's Foodservice. "They're filling and substantial, yet still convenient for busy consumers to order quickly whether they are eating in or taking lunch back to their desks."

11.5bn

Brits consume 11.5bn sandwiches every year
(Source: British Sandwich Association, supplied by Theo's)

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The demand for quick and easy on-the-move food continues to grow
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Of course, you must think carefully about what flavours will work best together in order to create popular combinations. Stating that 'balance is key', Smith recommends pairing a leek and potato soup with a simple ham sandwich, for example, and a cheese toastie with a spicy arrabbiata soup to create the perfect 'dunking' opportunity.

With winter fast approaching, it is important that B&I caterers recognise the popularity of sandwiches and soups and look to create a well-developed range. Both products are highly appealing to consumers and a wide selection of sandwich carriers, fillings and soup flavours is likely to deter employees from taking their custom to the high street.

DREAM TEAM

Lee Sharpe, head of sales and marketing for Theo's, discusses the importance of working with a supportive supplier

"Customer fatigue is a real threat if you're selling the same old sandwiches day in, day out – and that's exactly where your suppliers should be adding value by working in partnership to enable creativity and flexibility across your offering."

"At Theo's, we believe a partnership is much more than order taking and delivery of product. As a supplier, we have a responsibility to support menu development, to provide POS, to offer creative input and to enable flexibility."

"Ask your supplier what they can offer in terms of tailored activity and menu creation, because enhanced support from your supplier could be the difference between success and failure."





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Arctic Soft Thinbread, 60g, 26 x 18.5cm. Image shows serving suggestion.



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EVERY MONTH, OUR PANEL
OF EXPERTS DISCUSS THE
BIGGEST ISSUES IN B&I.
THIS ISSUE WE ASK THEM...

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING INDEPENDENT?



TREVOR ANNON

*Founder and chairman,
Mount Charles*

“
Agility is at the heart of our company's DNA
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Agility is at the heart of our company's DNA. At Mount Charles we promote innovation and creativity, which gives us the edge in the fast-paced and dynamic facilities management market. We have a simple leadership structure that allows us to be adaptable and flexible in making decisions very quickly and effectively, and we can correct our course should an issue arise. Our autonomy gives us the freedom to think outside the box, to develop products and services that are much more advanced and aligned with market trends.

It is this diversification of our services that has been paramount to our success. The contract catering company that I established over 30 years ago has expanded into cleaning, vending, security and facilities management for business, industry, retail, education, government and healthcare organisations across Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Great Britain (GB).

In 2016 we created a new talent division in response to high demand for personnel across our contracts and the requirement to mobilise people quickly for these new contracts. It made sense to create a recruitment arm rather than to

rely on outside sources to supply people. In a further expansion, our events division continues to grow. This focuses on developing business in the outside space, both in terms of bar services and event catering.

At Mount Charles, we focus on our clients' individual needs; we are free to create bespoke solutions for each of our customers, rather than follow rigid processes and procedures. We see ourselves as a partner, rather than a business providing a service to clients. When we approach a company we want to do business with, we offer as many services as we can so that our clients can get all that they need from one service provider. We're a one-stop-shop.

Our strong client relationships, as well as our professional reputation and credibility, have enabled us to push beyond our remit and rapidly respond to the needs of the market we operate in. We have made it our business to put the right people in the right place at the right time. We have sought out some of the best talent in the industry and our highly experienced, dynamic team is what helps drive our strategic vision.

Employee engagement is fundamental to our achievements to date, and having the right team with the right skills and the right attitude is essential to the success of our business. Passionate, engaged and empowered employees are imperative to our sustained success and are undeniably Mount Charles' biggest asset. We have 2,500 team members that work with us, each one an ambassador for the company and instrumental to our growth.

Mount Charles currently services over 400 clients across the UK and Ireland and a major element of our growth will be further expansion into the ROI and GB. Over the last three years we have been successful in entering the multinational supplier-dominated GB and ROI marketplace, winning significant contracts in both territories. We are constantly reviewing our output, driving our standards upwards and striving to upscale our efforts.

Ultimately, the key to winning new business is demonstrating passion and pride in everything we do. We take the time to identify the partners we want to work with; the diversification opportunities we think will add value to our offering and crucially; the talent we believe will reinforce our outstanding team.



ANTHONY BENNETT

*Owner and director,
Bennett Hay*

As a company, operating independently means we can deliver a completely bespoke service that truly reflects the client brand and culture that we represent, which ensures we continue to stay true to our mission. Our workplace guests are at the heart of everything we do, and we are constantly evolving to provide the most innovative, personalised and dynamic services across our main areas of business. These include concierge services, hosting and welcome experiences, and bespoke food and beverage services.

A generational shift is transforming the workplace – all-day eating experiences in particular – and we recognise that our workplace guests are ever-more conscious of the authenticity, sustainability and provenance of the food they purchase and consume. As a bespoke service provider, this is one of the many advantages we enjoy from being independent: we are very quick to respond, adapt and tailor our offers with flexibility in the catering we provide, allowing us to create an ever-changing and exciting calendar of pop-ups, activations and menus.

Remaining independent allows us to be extremely agile in our decision-making

Our customers want the option of making their own informed choices and, with rapidly changing high street and global food trends, our culinary research team are continually challenging and developing the menu offerings delivered within our clients' office spaces. In a busy working environment where the pressure can build, it is vital to us as a service provider to constantly innovate our food and service offering to ensure our clients have variety, choice and flexibility in what they eat, and when they eat it.

Remaining independent also allows us to be extremely agile in our decision-making – each of our clients is very different and, as such, we tailor our offers to suit their individual cultures and the unique collection of customers within their buildings. Staying close to our customers to test out new plant-based menus, new self-check-out payment technology or new menu alternatives, such as the maca plant to replace coffee, are all critical as part of our deeper synergy with our clients' cultures and people.

Being independent also means that we exist for our clients and customers and not for a large internally focused corporate entity; it is not about us, it is about each and every guest we serve each day. Our priority will always be how we can make a difference to their day; how do we ensure that our cafés and restaurants are as good if not better than the latest artisan outlets on the high street? Making sure that each and every senior manager or director is choosing to eat in their in-house dining room, rooftop or bar, using their on-site chef and butler team rather than stepping out to a restaurant, is crucial.

The pursuit of excellence is a continuum for an independent and one that you strive to keep intact as you continue to grow. We are maintaining this by developing our own talent through our leadership academy and by offering our high performers equity in Bennett Hay. This ensures that they share in our success and grow with us, while also guaranteeing to our clients and customers that we maintain our independent ethos and differential within a very competitive marketplace.



ANDREW WILSON

*Co-founder,
Wilson Vale*

All of our area managers are craft-trained chefs

One of the benefits of being independent is that we can provide a bespoke service that's tailored to each client, from menu creation and choice of suppliers right through to choosing the personalities who will work with a client and the staff training they will receive. This bespoke approach impacts hugely on the quality of our offer and on our relationships. There is no doubt that it has led to enhanced client retention and to our organic growth to date. In a business that thrives on its reputation and ethos, the partnerships we make are with like-minded organisations that share our interests.

Another big difference is that we are not financially driven by the expectations of shareholders or external investors. We continue, some would say in an old-fashioned, conservative model, to have no debt or bank facilities. This gives

us flexibility and financial autonomy, ensuring that we maintain control at all times. Having complete freedom of financial expression means that the path we want to tread is more about pushing our culture and inspiring our teams to be the very best at what they do, rather than fixating on the bottom line.

As an operationally-led rather than a sales-driven business, the real difference we make in a B&I environment is enhanced support. For example, for 95 clients, we have an operations team of four general managers and 12 area managers, which we believe is a class-leading ratio in our industry. A unique aspect of our business is that all of our area managers are craft-trained chefs, so this also impacts massively on our food standards.

Being independent also means that we can invest where we wish, such as in staff training,

craft skills and talent – all of which raises food and service standards. With almost £2m having been spent on training since 2016 – equating to 200,000 hours – this underpins everything we do.

As an independent operator, it is easier to give people more creative and purchasing freedom. Take our supply chain, as an example: we now have over 450 individual suppliers, many of whom are artisan, independent producers and growers.

Independence gives us the freedom to control the pace of our growth, to partner with like-minded clients and, above all, to retain our values and standards. Our steady growth to date of just eight to 10 additional contracts each year is in polar opposite to many of our larger competitors who view fast growth as being a measure of success.



Brand aid

Offer your customers the full package with the latest branded food concepts

In today's crowded marketplace, you have to go the extra mile to make your products stand out. And this is why we have seen a great rise in the popularity of branded food concepts in recent years, with their ability to catch the eye of the consumer through a variety of means.

"Today's savvy consumers expect more than merely a place to sit down and eat," says Lee Sharpe, head of sales and marketing for Theo's. "Yes, they are hungry for their meal, but they are also hungry for the experience the product or service provides. The right offer, location, time and price is vital to win impulse and incremental sales."

"Branded concepts provide the unique opportunity for operators to experiment with menus and ideas," continues Jessica Davies, communications manager for Ajinomoto Foods Europe, producers of Japan's number one Gyoza. "With 54% of consumers visiting experiential concepts equally for the entertainment and the food and drinks, a branded concept within your venue can bring in diners who would usually spend lunch off site by offering an exciting and immersive experience."

They are also flexible and allow you to change your offer quickly and efficiently, as Gareth Newton, MD of BGL Rieber, says: "Most workplace caterers create their own branded food concepts simply because they can change these daily to create a more interesting and varied food offer."

"The key advantage is that changing the signage and style from burger to balti is quick and simple. Using flexible, mobile cooking, serving and presentation equipment also means you can place the offer as close to the consumer as possible."

GETTING CREATIVE

The fact is that it's one thing having a great product, but quite another delivering a full experience for the customer. "Creating the right brand with a point of difference can help you stand out from competitors, add value to your offer and allow you to engage with your target audience," explains Sharpe.

"Ultimately, using a branded concept such as Theo's alleviates the stress of analysing trends and perpetually having to create exciting menus that resonate. Caterers can get creative without compromising on cost or convenience and, importantly, give customers the chance to really customise. All they need to do is pick and mix products to suit their customer base."

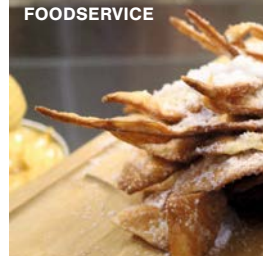
So what products are best for enticing the customer? Tugo Food Systems operates three highly successful brands: NEO pizza, 4ork ('a world of flavours in a pot') and Burrito Cantina, all of which are supported by high quality food products, point-of-sale (POS) materials, marketing and an experienced field team delivering on-site training and ongoing business support. "We are seeing brands becoming more and more important to consumers," says development director Ian Lancaster. "A strong brand with a good offer encourages loyalty, influences purchasing decisions and aids retention."

"Of course, some operators will want to promote their own brands with a personalised offer. This is why we have developed a system whereby caterers can develop their own identities, incorporate their ideas into the offer and, by working with Tugo's marketing team, develop innovative and eye-catching POS to promote it all."

Pizza remains a highly popular choice for branded concepts, working across a range of dayparts from lunches to on-the-go, making it the perfect option for busy lifestyles. "Made with a unique rising dough base that's not pre-cooked, our Chicago Town 'takeaway' pizzas deliver that great, fresh baked taste, as well as consistent results," says Richard Cooper, senior brand manager for Dr. Oetker Professional. "With a holding time of 45 minutes, the pizzas can be pre-prepared for service and work well sold whole or by the slice. The fact there are no special skills or equipment needed means that caterers can rest easy when it comes to quality."

Branded concepts provide the unique opportunity for operators to experiment with menus and ideas

FUNNYBONES FOODSERVICE





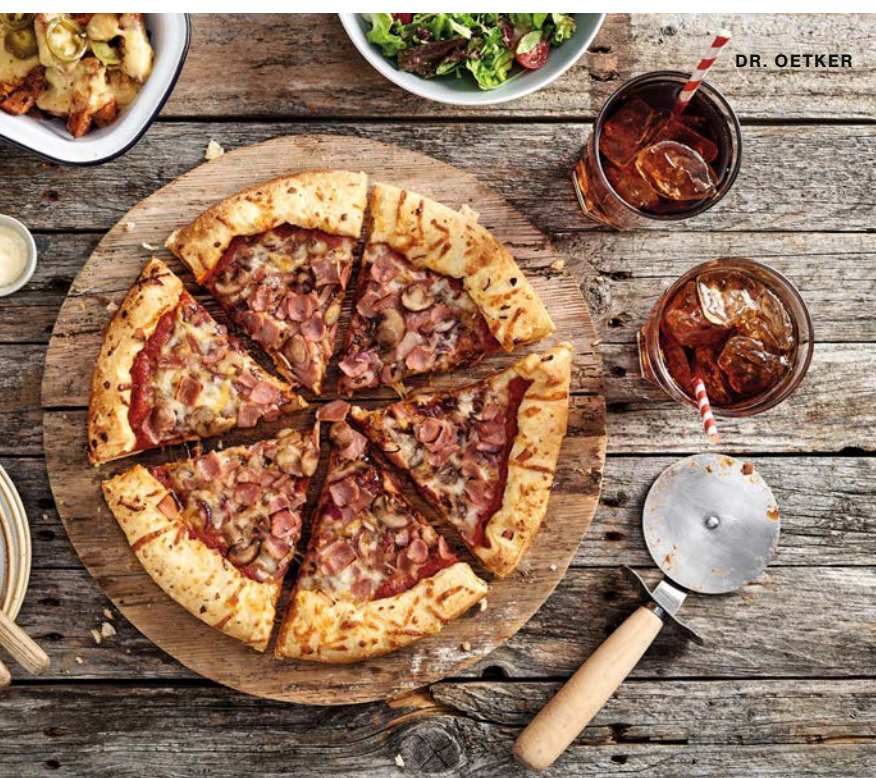
FUNNYBONES FOODSERVICE



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Every aspect of the stall needs to deliver an authentic experience

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DR. OETKER



THEO'S

Tom Styman-Heighton, development chef for Funnybones Foodservice, meanwhile, reinforces that Mex is best, saying: “A concept really does need to do what it says on the branding. The idea itself might be very simple – our La Mexicana Nacheria and Taqueria concepts, for example – but every aspect of the stall needs to deliver an authentic experience.”

La Mexicana Nacheria offers nachos with cheese and meat toppings and authentic sides such as tostones, and there’s even a sweet nacho offering. “The La Mexicana Taqueria concept is just that, tacos with all the trimmings,” continues Styman-Heighton. “Easy to understand, instantly recognisable and perfect casual food.”

POP-UP STARS

Remember, you don’t need to be too rigid though; the beauty of branded food concepts is that they afford you the flexibility to regularly rotate your offer. “Running monthly pop-ups to introduce a new cuisine enables operators to gauge the popularity of new concepts,” says Davies. “Allowing operators to become more creative with their food offering gives customers something to look forward to, while also encouraging them to stay on site to eat with the promise of something new and exciting on the menu.”

And it’s not just your food that can flourish, as the concept fits in perfectly with the current push for greener beverage carriers. “The trend for reusable cups is huge right now, as a result of the adverse publicity surrounding plastic disposables and the degree of uncertainty around the recycling of other disposable materials like paper,” explains Chris Penn, managing director of 4 Aces. “Given that reusable cups have such longevity it makes sense to brand these items, as it magnifies any promotional opportunity, getting the brand out there over a period of time and making it stick in people’s minds.”

The overriding message when it comes to branded food concepts, though, is to keep things as simple as possible, as Styman-Heighton concludes: “Make sure that the name and design of the branding instantly communicates what the concept is all about. Every aspect – name, colours, menu, serving style and so on – should reinforce the strong identity of your brand in a clear and unambiguous fashion.”

“It is not just the food that will attract customers. The whole ethos needs to be attractive and creative to bring diners to the stand.”



Fooditude tackles food waste – head-on

Fooditude has struck up a number of new partnerships that have helped it to go green in 2019



Research by WRAP, and estimates compiled by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, state that approximately a third of all food produced in the world is lost or wasted. This is a staggering statistic. It's not only bad for the environment, but organisations need to realise that this also impacts their bottom line. Managing food waste has always been a monumental challenge for contract caterers and it is daunting on several different fronts.

First, contract caterers work with large volumes of food and this leads to a large amount of prep waste. Second, running a delivery service from a remote kitchen means that quantity control is limited once catering numbers have been agreed. Sometimes this leads to over-production, as operators don't want to risk running out of food and jeopardising their service.

This year, Fooditude (formerly Just Hospitality) has decided to tackle the food waste challenge on three fronts: reducing prep waste, redistribution of cooked food waste and safe disposal

of unavoidable food waste. This approach has allowed it to make progress and it has partnered with several organisations to achieve its goals.

On the food waste issue, director of food Matt Byne says: "As a chef, I take issue with food waste on so many levels – it's a waste of a carefully grown ingredient, a waste of a chef's effort and time, and such a monumental waste of money. We had to make food waste reduction a priority and had to find some creative solutions."

CHANGING KITCHEN HABITS

Fooditude worked with Foodcycle to learn more about the problem of food waste and raise awareness about the issue among its employees and clients. It runs community projects across the country, serving tasty hot meals made with surplus produce donated by supermarkets for people in need of a hot meal and friendship.

An important lesson from its association with Foodcycle is that the key to reducing waste is education and behaviour change. It has now taken

part in three of FoodCycle's Food Invention Challenges where a group of staff and/or clients cook meals from surplus produce for a local charity. This has not only been a great team activity, but it has also inspired its chefs with creative ideas that translate into its daily changing menus.

There is certainly a positive shift in attitudes towards working with surplus produce and a renewed focus on finding ways of reducing waste in existing production cycles. For example, it has just started using broccoli trimmings in soups instead of binning them. This may seem like a miniscule example, but it makes a difference when prep waste from broccoli on a menu for 1,500 people is repurposed instead of being binned.

In fact, starting in October, its chefs will be using a few lines from surplus/rescued vegetable suppliers Waste Knot. Having daily changing menus allows Fooditude the flexibility of being able to incorporate produce from a different supply chain.

Sometimes food waste is unavoidable. Well cooked, healthy food could risk ending up in the bin at the end of lunch service if there is no mechanism for redistributing it. To this effect, Fooditude partnered with OLIO to redistribute any surplus edible food at three of its client sites.

OLIO is a free app that connects neighbours with each other and volunteers with local businesses so surplus food can be shared, not thrown away. OLIO volunteers pick up the food from client sites, post it to the OLIO app and co-ordinate distribution to those in the local community who want the food. From December to August, Fooditude has donated 1,908 portions of food, contributing to 908 meals, saving 382kg of food going to waste. This means a CO2 saving of nearly 1,641 kgs. Over 94% of the food collected has been redistributed – which must mean the food is really tasty!

SAFE DISPOSAL SOLUTION

Cooked food and prep waste has been traditionally sent to landfill, incinerated or turned into fuel via anaerobic digestion. Fooditude is the first contract caterer in London to think differently and install an ORCA (no it's not a real whale!) by iugis in its new production kitchen.

An ORCA is a 100% recycling solution to disposing of unavoidable food waste. The technology simply mimics a natural digestion process



and food waste is converted into an environmentally safe liquid that is disposed of using the existing waste water infrastructure. This process diverts food waste from landfill and eliminates transportation which through the iugis portal can be quantified by the reduction of the harmful emissions produced with heavy vehicles on the road. Both these are in line with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs targets for zero food waste to landfill by 2030 and net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Since their partnership with Fooditude started they have worked together to understand and reduce food waste. iugis and Fooditude strive to promote the principles of the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse and recycle) and the ORCA technology allows them to view accurate real time food waste data, so together they can identify any potential areas for improvement.

On this relationship, Matt Golding from iugis says: "The engagement and feedback from the team at all levels has been great and we are

seeing positive changes happening. These include adapting the menu to gain a better yield from broccoli, stalks and all; an overall change in attitudes towards food waste; and, as previously mentioned, partnering with companies such as Olío to redistribute edible food that would have otherwise ended up in the ORCA. We see our partnership thriving and being a part of achieving a net reduction in food waste and greenhouse gas emissions."

Fooditude has been trying to figure out how to tackle the food waste issue in the business for a long time and in the past six months has gained some real momentum and positive changes. There is still a long way to go. A recent food waste audit in the production kitchen and at client units has helped identify several areas for improvement, starting with a review of best practices in the kitchen and getting portion sizes right. Involvement with FoodCycle, Waste Knot, OLIO and ORCA has been a great motivator for staff and will help the team stay positive during the long journey ahead.



BACK TO THE BLACK

Most catering businesses will have spikes in turnover and with any cyclical business the peaks need to generate sufficient profits to get through the troughs. Many food businesses will now be back into the black after prospering from a warm summer and the Cricket World Cup, but as the saying goes 'the time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining'. So, before the dreary days of autumn start to take hold, now is the time to look at the finances and mend any leaking rooves before the downpour of winter, advises Tom Bourne, senior associate with Cripps Pemberton Greenish



TOM BOURNE

An accurate cash flow forecast is key to help ensure there is enough in the bank to manage any downturn. This can be a difficult balancing act, but where the directors of the business feel there is a risk of insolvency, seeking professional advice early can help avoid the need for a formal insolvency process (e.g. administration/liquidation) and mitigate any potential personal liability of the directors.

INVESTMENT/RE-FINANCE

Some businesses fail because of a lack of working capital. In catering businesses this is typically because the business has grown quickly and left the business starved of cash, so re-financing or re-investment may be needed. There are specialist investors and/or lenders who will provide finance to at-risk businesses; but high risk almost certainly means high premiums, so if additional finance is needed then it is better to secure this early when the balance sheet is healthy.

VOLUNTARY ARRANGEMENTS

One of the first things to consider when a food business is experiencing financial difficulties is whether there are any agreements that can be renegotiated or payment terms extended to help manage cashflow. This is known as a voluntary arrangement because there is no obligation on a creditor to agree to any proposals, but this can be a flexible short-term solution. For example, if stock is needed for a busy December, you may be able to negotiate extended payment terms.

COMPANY VOLUNTARY ARRANGEMENT

A Company Voluntary Arrangement (CVA) is a formal offer made by the

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Some businesses fail because of a lack of working capital
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company to its creditors to avoid a formal insolvency process. The proposal is governed by statute and will typically be put together with the assistance of an insolvency practitioner who will act as a nominee to supervise the implementation of the proposals. The proposal is voluntary but will bind all creditors if enough vote in favour of the proposal (typically 75% of unsecured creditors by value).

This process has become increasingly popular, although it is sometimes controversial, in the retail and food and drink sectors, with CVAs having been agreed for Jamie's Italian (before it went into administration), Byron Burger and Prezzo. Proposals are typically successful where there are a small number of large creditors (e.g. owners/investors) and can be used as part of a larger restructuring deal and/or to renegotiate rents.

BACK TO THE BLACK

Managing the finances of any food business is a tricky exercise, but where there is not enough to keep the vultures at bay it is important to seek advice early. This can help avoid a formal insolvency process and potential personal liability for the directors.

For further information, contact Tom Bourne on 01892 506 099 or tom.bourne@crippspg.co.uk, or visit www.crippspg.co.uk

Reader offers /



WIN NEW LONG CLAWSON BLUE STILTON SLICES!

Stilton is the perfect way to bring a rich, luxurious indulgence to dishes with its full, creamy, bold flavour and fine English heritage adding something special to menus. And there's none finer than award-winning Long Clawson Stilton. Made in the heart of the Vale of Belvoir by master cheesemakers who began crafting cheese over 100 years ago, each stilton is individually graded and hand-selected to ensure the finest quality.

Now Long Clawson has launched a range of stilton products for foodservice, including Blue Stilton Slices. A dream for chefs, Long Clawson Blue Stilton Slices are simple and convenient to use, ensuring portion consistency. Slices also mean there's less waste, so it's cheaper than buying in wedges, and with a shelf life of 60 days, the small 4 x 25g pack size results in less waste as you only use what you need. Simply use Long Clawson Blue Stilton Slices in any number of dishes to add a deep, tangy stilton flavour to steaks, burgers, pastries, pizzas and so much more.

All you need to do to apply to try Long Clawson Blue Stilton Slices for yourself is e-mail offers@talkingfood.co.uk with your name, company name and address, and daytime phone number – quoting 'Stilton King of Cheeses' in the subject line – before 31st October 2019. The first 10 lucky readers to apply will receive a case (6 x 100g). This offer is open to bone fide caterers only. For more information on Clawson, visit www.clawson.co.uk, call 01664 822 332 or e-mail enquiries@clawson.co.uk.

BRAND NEW INVERTER MICROWAVE TECHNOLOGY FOR JUST £549 + VAT!

The new and unique Sharp R7500M Extra Heavy Duty Professional Inverter Microwave enhances the UK's favourite microwave range, offering the ultimate in durability, efficiency and reliability. Inverter technology provides constant (rather than pulsed) power for incredibly uniform results, time after time.

As well as ultra-fast regeneration times, the R7500M ensures the operator has precision control, making it perfect for defrosting and heating delicate foods too. Get yours at the special launch price of just £549 + VAT. Hurry, this is a limited offer! Order yours now from readeroffer@h2opublishing.co.uk.

SHARP



New products /

SPICE UP YOUR LIFE

Country Range is turning up the heat with its latest launch after boosting its ambient range with the addition of five new curry pastes: Tandoori, Korma, Tikka, Tikka Masala and Madras. The new arrivals, which all come in 1.2kg jars in packs of three for convenience and ease of use, are not only bursting with flavour but are highly versatile and can be used in a number of different dishes and occasions too. They are also school compliant and allergen-free, making them suitable for all sectors of foodservice.

To support the launch, Country Range has produced a recipe book for operators featuring a collection of 15 curry-inspired recipes.

The dishes include tandoori egg bhurji, salmon korma mini quiches and slow cooked lamb masala.

Country Range group brand manager Vasita Jantabutara said: "Indian food is one of the UK's most loved and go-to cuisines, whether eating out or cooking at home. Therefore, operators serving curry dishes on their menu must ensure they stand out from the crowd with the most flavoursome sauces and pastes."





CHOC AWAY!

Ferrero Foodservice has launched Thorntons Luxury Hot Chocolate Powder, which it believes will raise the standard for powdered hot chocolate out of home. Made using Thorntons chocolate recipe and already containing milk powder, operators simply need to add water to instantly create a luxurious hot chocolate.

Zareen Deboo, foodservice channel operators manager for Ferrero UK and Ireland, said: "It will streamline consumer experiences and upgrade the quality of hot chocolate across in-room, vending and the onboard market."



FINEST FRIES

Farm Frites has launched its thinnest fries yet, giving food operators even more choice for the final weeks of al fresco dining and autumn menus. At only 5mm thick, the Finest Super Fine Fries are made from high quality potatoes, taste delicious and have a crunchy, crispy texture.

With the street food trend still booming, operators can serve Finest Super Fine Fries loaded with a topping; alongside a burger or other barbecued meat; as part of a sharing platter; or simply with a range of tasty sauces or dips.



ORGANIC OILS

Avlaki Olive Oils has begun its journey into foodservice by launching its organic extra virgin olive oils for the professional kitchen. From the Greek island of Lesvos, they are unfiltered and are made from hand-picked olives gently turning from green to pink for the December harvest.

The company has two single terrain, gourmet, organic, extra virgin finishing oils, from the Avlaki Groves and Agatheri Groves; and an excellent blend organic extra virgin olive oil from Lesvos Groves, for more general use.



CRACKING CHRISTMAS CHOICE

Country Choice is all set for some festive fun with a selection of new lines for Christmas 2019, backed up by some old favourites. Joining the party are Christmas Jammy Shortbreads, which are individually wrapped jam-filled biscuits decorated with either a Christmas bell or a Christmas tree. They are available in mixed cases of 2 x 8.

New individual Chocolate Yule Cakes and bite-sized Chocolate Orange Funtime Donuts are also on the festive menu, alongside a Crumble Topped Mince Pie.



JACK YOUR PASTY

Continuing to innovate and bring new products to the Phat Pasty Co Vegan range, two Jackfruit additions have been added. The first is a replacement to the ever-popular BBQ Pulled Pork Slice, moving it to a meat-free, vegan-friendly option as a BBQ Pulled Jackfruit Slice as part of the Phat Hot To Go range.

Following the success of the Kerala-inspired Cauliflower, Chickpea and Onion Bhaji Pasty, and the more traditional Butternut Squash, Spinach and Vegan Feta Pasty, the company is also launching a hand-crimped Bobotie Jackfruit Pasty.



THE BADGER

GETTING YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED

This month, The Badger considers how to encourage young talent in the industry

It's interesting to watch how the youth of the world are getting a lot of press coverage these days. In the world of sports, we are seeing Premiership teams like Chelsea put forward ever-younger teams. The world of cycling had a shock recently when Denmark's 23-year-old Mads Pedersen won the world title in the Road World Championship. And outside sports, there can be few people now who haven't heard of or seen 16-year-old Swedish schoolgirl Greta Thunberg speak out very forcibly on the environmental catastrophe facing the world.

It got me thinking about our industry and whether we push forward younger people and give them responsibility early enough. It ultimately comes down to ability as well as age, but do young people today have more or less opportunity to build their experience and take on more responsibility now, or was it better in the past?

One thing that has changed is that people at the tail end of their careers are retiring later so there are fewer opportunities in some ways. The glory days of retiring early on great final salary pensions are long gone and people generally have to work until they are much closer to their official retiring age now. This means there is often less change at the top so there are fewer upward promotions, but this doesn't mean that there are limited opportunities for young people.

I was really fortunate at the start of my career. I was given increasing responsibility

in our foodservice sector at a young age. I was a manager a year after I left college, a general manager two years later and an operations manager three years later. I was also lucky because I worked for people who challenged me and gave me opportunities to get involved in new projects, to manage new technology and to help develop new team members. I also got involved in industry organisations and met people in other companies. It set the tone for the rest of my career.

Today, looking at the foodservice companies I work with closely, or have worked with, it's still possible to make strides in your career at a young age. Chefs can shoot up the ladder from apprentice level to senior roles in just a few years. Students can become catering managers and operations managers at a young age, and there are also more opportunities in a whole host of support services like human resources, accounts, marketing and so on.

One industry organisation that is doing more than most to push younger people forward is the Association of Catering Excellence (ACE), and within their annual calendar of events they have been running two events to provide opportunities to younger people. The first one is the Annual ACE Robyns Awards. Aimed at finding exceptional young people under the age of 30, it has given profile to some very talented young people in our industry.

Another ACE event that pushes young people forward is its annual Ready Steady

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It's still possible to make strides in your career at a young age

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Cook event, which has been going for many years now. It has changed recently to ensure that one of the two chefs in each team is 26 or younger, thereby giving new talent an opportunity to shine and show off their skills.

ACE is also about to run a new series of events under the watchful eye of its new chair Sue Thompson aimed at networking for young people. Featuring a number of interesting speakers such as Ruth Hansom and Emily Roux, the events will help younger managers get out there and meet new colleagues from our industry.

Arena, the key industry networking organisation, is also keen to attract younger managers to their events and I would encourage companies to open up these opportunities to them. I had those opportunities and they really helped me, and it also gave me a network of people of all ages, which has been hugely rewarding.

I don't actually believe it's all about providing networking opportunities for younger people to meet older, more experienced industry colleagues. I think the reverse is just as true. Neither younger nor older professionals have all the answers, but a combination of younger and older can forge new ideas and directions by combining enthusiasm and energy with experience and potentially broader life skills. So my question for all generations out there is: how many good contacts outside your age group do you have and what could you do to engage with more?

bartlett mitchell first caterer to receive Planet Mark

🔵 bartlett mitchell has achieved certification to The Planet Mark sustainability programme, becoming the first caterer to achieve the accolade following a rigorous measurement and reporting process. Certification to The Planet Mark further strengthens the company's position on sustainability by measuring and reducing its carbon footprint and engaging its stakeholders.

First year certification to The Planet Mark is based on the commitment to continuous improvement in sustainability in its business operations by measuring and reducing its carbon footprint and engaging its stakeholders. The Planet Mark is a sustainability certification that recognises outstanding achievements, encourages action and builds an empowered community of like-minded individuals.

Steve Malkin, CEO and founder of The Planet Mark, said: "We are thrilled that bartlett mitchell has achieved its first year's certification to The Planet Mark and, in doing so, committed to operating in such a way as to reduce its carbon emissions. It has made remarkable progress and is clearly excited about the future and what it can do next."



FSM Awards update

🔵 Greg Mace, MD of Rapport, was named Senior Executive of the Year at last year's FSM Awards and, while it is a great honour to be recognised, he said that his real pride comes from the significance the win represents for the corporate front-of-house sector. "It's always wonderful to be acknowledged for your hard work, but winning this award means so much more because it signifies the headway that has been made in increasing the prominence of the corporate front of house sector," he reflected.

In Mace's quest to shine a light on corporate front-of-house, he has been the driving force behind two industry-wide initiatives that are already well-respected and established. International Receptionists' Day, which is held on the second Wednesday in May each year, was first launched in 1991 in the US to celebrate the role of professional receptionists. It is a day to appreciate receptionists, who create that all important first impression and are integral to the guest experience.

Launched earlier this year, Corporate Receptionist of the Year is the only award that recognises and celebrates the exceptional front-of-house staff working in the corporate sector. It aims to mirror the prestigious Hotel Receptionist of the Year competition that has been running for many years.

Mace concluded: "I've spent the last 15 years passionately championing the benefits of the industry, from the better work/life balance to the opportunity to build a rewarding career in some fantastic client organisations."



GREG MACE (LEFT)



You can follow us @bandicatering



BaxterStorey @BaxterStorey

We love a food market and @OxfordSBS do too! A brilliant afternoon showcasing the best of BaxterStorey with our talented teams doing what they do best #BaxterStoreypeople #welovethisbusiness

Bidfood UK @BidfoodUK

Some amazing stories today of #ThomasCook team members still delivering #ServiceExcellence. If your career, or that of someone you know, is affected by the sad news of yesterday, please feel free to send a CV and cover note to recruitment@bidfood.co.uk to see if we can help.

We Love Cake @welovecakeuk

Congratulations to Lords Cricket Ground on winning @SLCMag Caterer of the Year award!

Steve Lovegrove @slovegrove

Great to see our Barista Academy partners at @WCMilk achieving their SCA Introduction to Coffee qualification – well done guys! @compassgroupuk

Take time out to 'pause' for coffee

Diamond Impresso Double Wall Hot Cups

Huhtamaki

Our recyclable 'pause' stock design is available on our brand new Diamond emboss in a mixed sleeve of four colours. Recyclable via a growing infrastructure.



up to
25%
less material*



Manufactured
in the UK



Fibre
based



Recyclable



Enhanced
insulation

Features and benefits

- New 'pause' Diamond embossed stock design with 4 designs mixed in a sleeve
- Available in three sizes 8oz, 12oz and 16oz
- Made from sustainable 100% PEFC certified paperboards with a PE coating
- Made in the UK - good for the environment, good for the economy, good for you
- Recyclable via appropriate facilities
- *As with all of our Impresso hot cups they use up to 25% less material versus competitor smooth, triple wall and other ripple cups on the market!
- Alternatively have your own custom design printed and choose your emboss style - Diamond, Bubble or 'S' wave
- Mixed sleeve printing available which creates impact and variation with no extra SKUs

in focus

Iconography
and QR code on
the cup linked to
recycling messaging



As with all Huhtamaki UK paper products, new 'pause' Impresso double wall hot cups are made with 100% PEFC certified paperboard and are recyclable



For more information on 'pause' Diamond embossed Impresso hot cups or any other Huhtamaki products please contact your local distributor or our Customer Services team on **+44 (0) 23 9251 2434**. Or alternatively why not visit our website www.foodservice.huhtamaki.co.uk