

ORDERING KIOSKS

StoreKit looks at how ordering is set to change.

star

Revel
SYSTEMS

goodtill

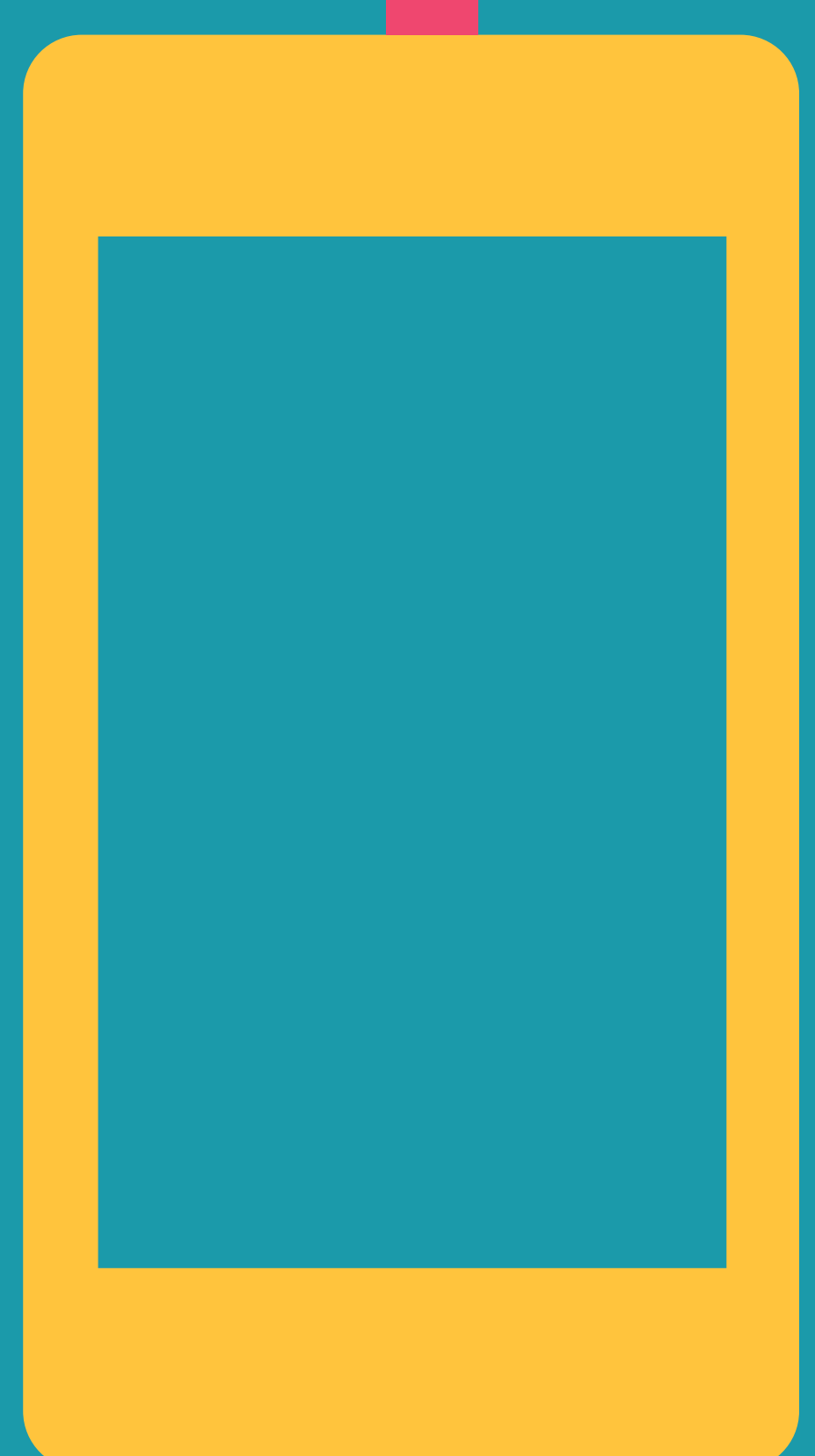
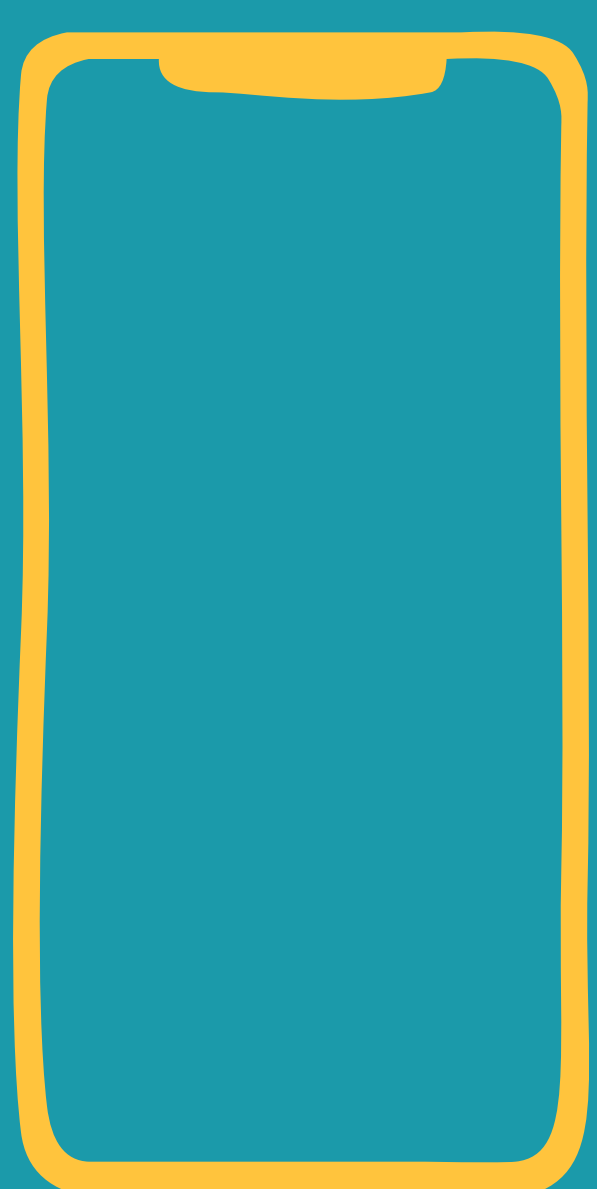
QikServe

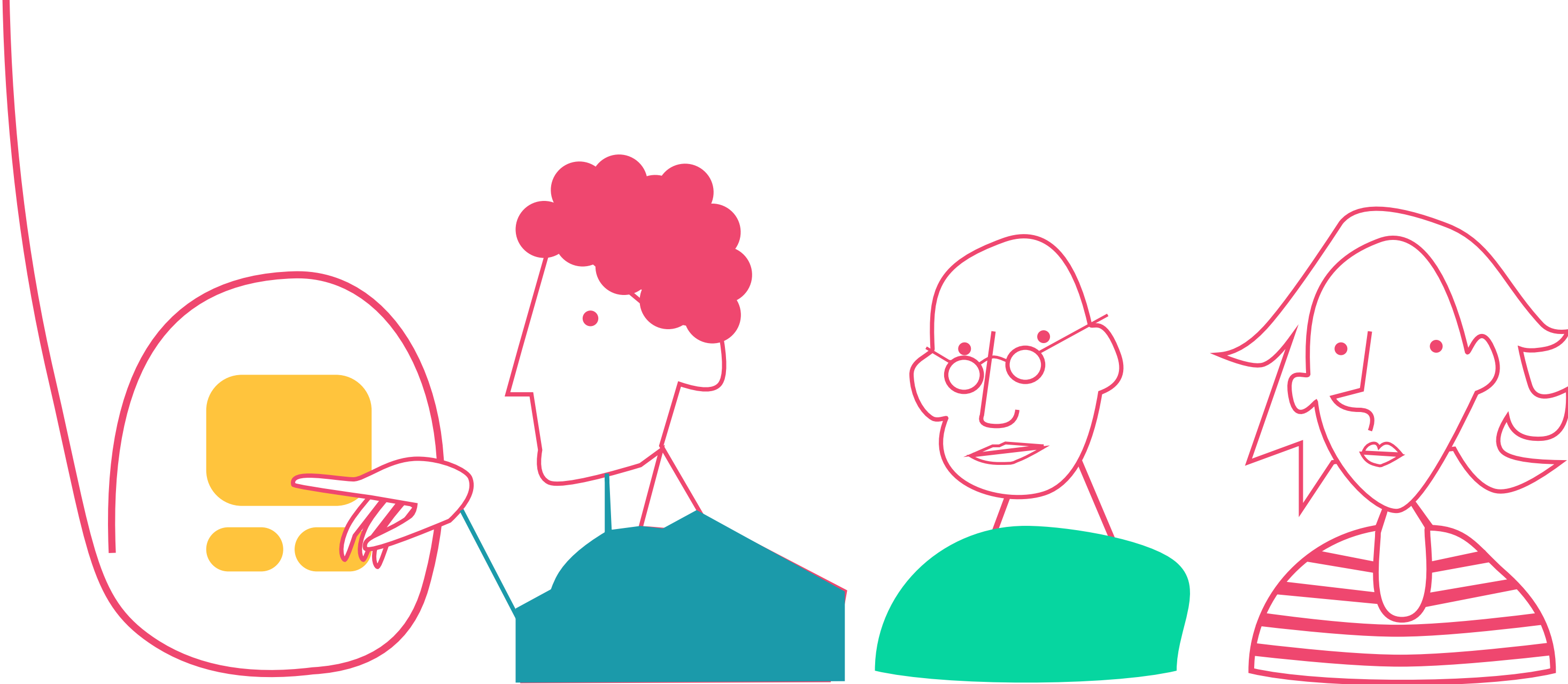
PerfectGym

intui**face**

bouncepad

image**HOLDERS**





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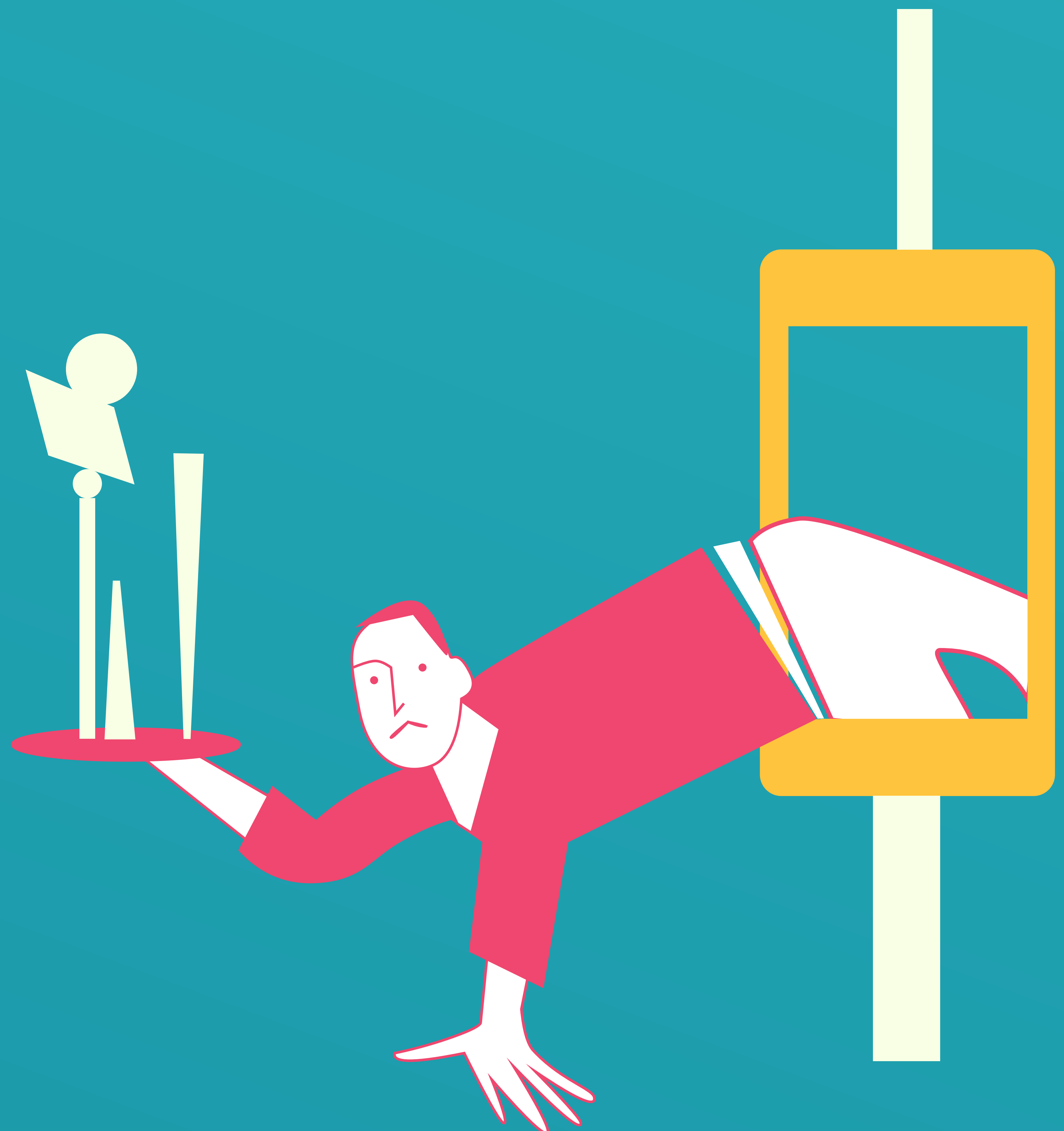
About this Guide

Kiosks: what and why?

Kiosks are touchscreen devices that can show menus, take payments or display information, such as inventory availability or product details.

Until recently, self service kiosks have been accessible only by large companies able to pay the price of a supermarket self-checkout – around \$31k (£22k). However, software has now arrived to the market targeted at independent merchants, which also brings down hardware costs as kiosks can be run out of an iPad. That means it's now possible to get started for just **hundreds of pounds**.

At StoreKit, we're writing this guide in response to the explosion of kiosk options for smaller merchants. We'll ask whether they're worth the money, and what steps a merchant would need to take to get set up.



The Kiosk Market in 2020

Kiosks are becoming more common, and the coming decade may see an explosion in kiosk use.

By 2024, the global kiosk market is expected to reach **\$30.8 billion**, according to Tillster. In 2019, Tillster reported that 25% of restaurant customers have used a self-ordering kiosk at a restaurant within the past three months — up 7% year-over-year. Further, more than **65% of the 2000 QSR customers** interviewed said they would visit a restaurant more often if self-service kiosks were offered.

In an industry with slim margins and tough failure rates, self-service kiosks can reduce the need for high staffing costs by automating tasks, including ordering, and minimising wait times.

Additionally, they can increase spending. According to the Harvard Business Review, the average spend in McDonald's is **30% higher** with kiosks. 20% of customers who didn't initially order a drink would buy one when it was offered on their screen.

The results from McDonald's confirmed what the fast food chain's R&D team predicted — that **kiosks have a high return on investment**.

The answers are frustratingly mixed and case-specific. Kiosks reduce face-to-face contact and therefore airborne transmission risk. A staff member is less likely to become a spreader of the virus — which is the most serious way in which your restaurant could become a coronavirus vector.

The risk of kiosks as a vector for surface-based spread depends on their context: a table-based kiosk can easily be wiped down after every use. We've included tips from one expert later in this guide for safe kiosk practice.

More Information on Page 17

Harvard Business Review, 2015: <https://hbr.org/2015/03/how-self-service-kiosks-are-changing-customer-behavior>

Tillster, 2019: <https://www.tillster.com/thank-you-kiosk-index-q3-2019>

Coronavirus and kiosks

Coronavirus poses a series of critical questions about kiosks:

Do kiosks reduce or increase risk of virus spread? What are the perceptions of customers and how will this affect their behaviour? What actions can we take to sanitise kiosks? How long will the social changes brought about by coronavirus last?

Hospitality Use Cases

Order & Pay

Table Ordering Kiosk



Some restaurants have tables equipped with iPads. Patrons order their food at the table, which is brought to them by a waiter.

Typically such kiosks consist of a screen or tablet on a customer table, and the guest can add items, pay, or call the attention of a waiter. Payment is usually at the end of an order once the customer has put all of their desired products through the system.

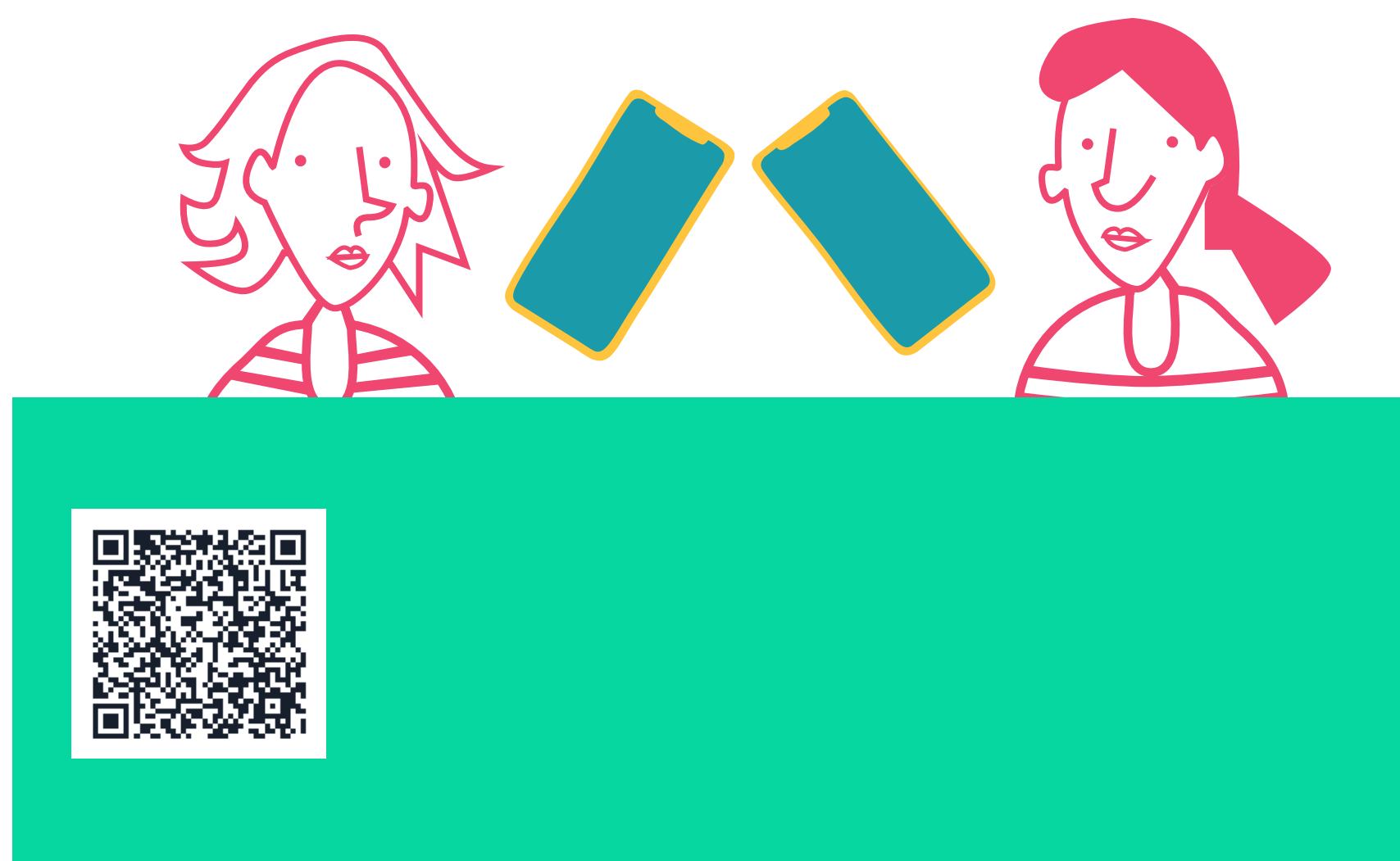
Standing Order Kiosk



Standing Order kiosks have the additional benefit of cutting queue times – without having to employ extra staff, multiple customers can have their orders taken at once.

Head to Los Angeles and you can stop by Ono Blends, a smoothie kitchen on wheels. Customers order by approaching one of the two ordering kiosks on the side of the truck, place an order, paying with credit cards, Apple Pay / Android Pay / Google Pay.

Order & Pay phone system



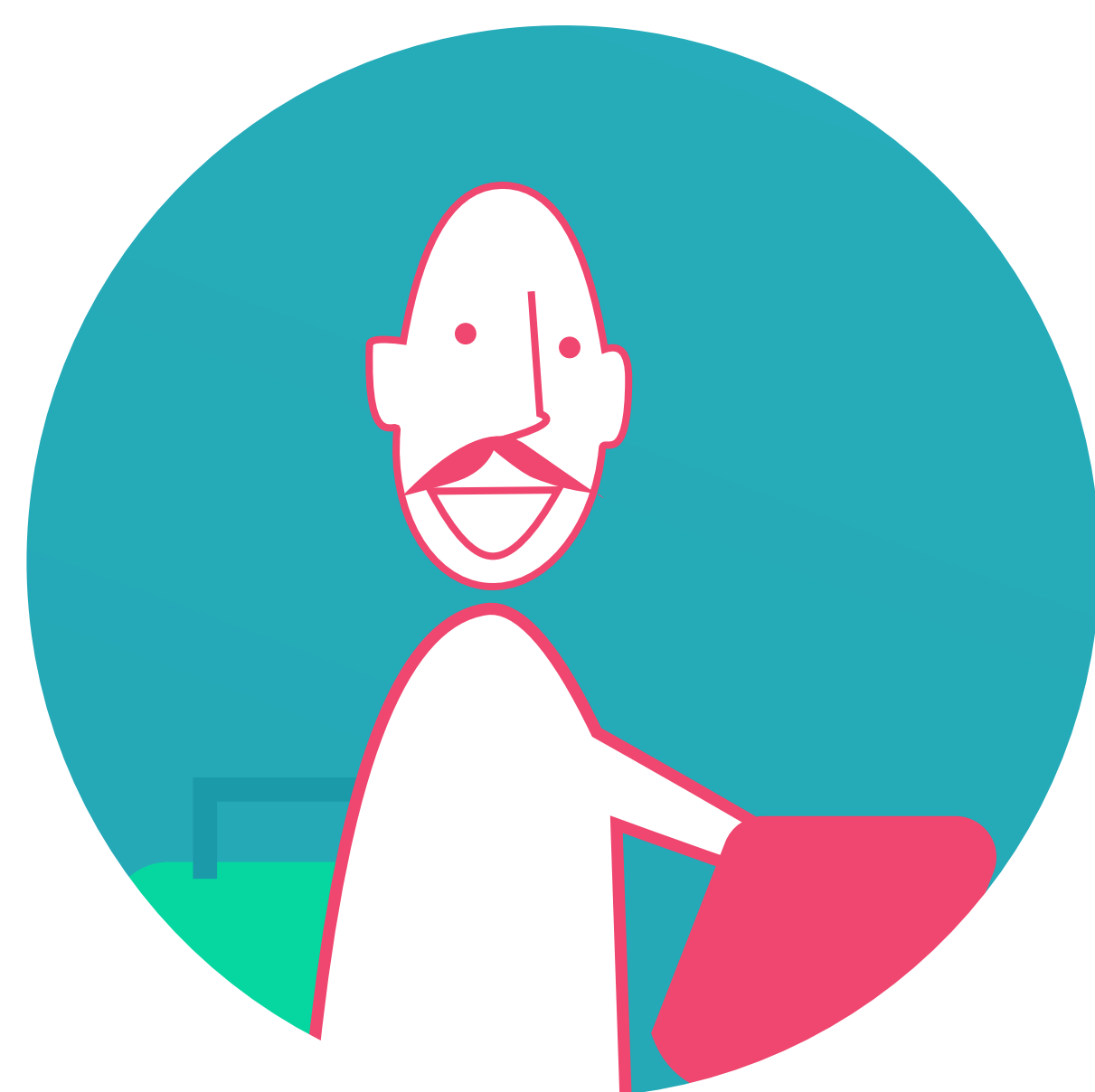
Mobile ordering systems are the only touchscreen option which require zero investment and which do not involve shared touchscreen surfaces.

Here, a user would navigate to a website or app, usually via a QR code, select their table number, and pay there in the app.

A host of new software vendors have sprung up to fill the demand for these created by COVID-19.

More Information on Page 20

Checking In



Self-service check-in kiosks are becoming more and more popular in hotels, as a way of speeding up check-in times and reducing queues.

They also enable a 24 hour check-in time. Leisure establishments install them to attend to accessibility needs, as tablet kiosks can be installed at any height and some are ergonomically adjustable too.

In the hotel and travel industry, the ability to offer different language interfaces is an added advantage. In GPs and healthcare services, kiosks can let patients check-in easily and order prescriptions.



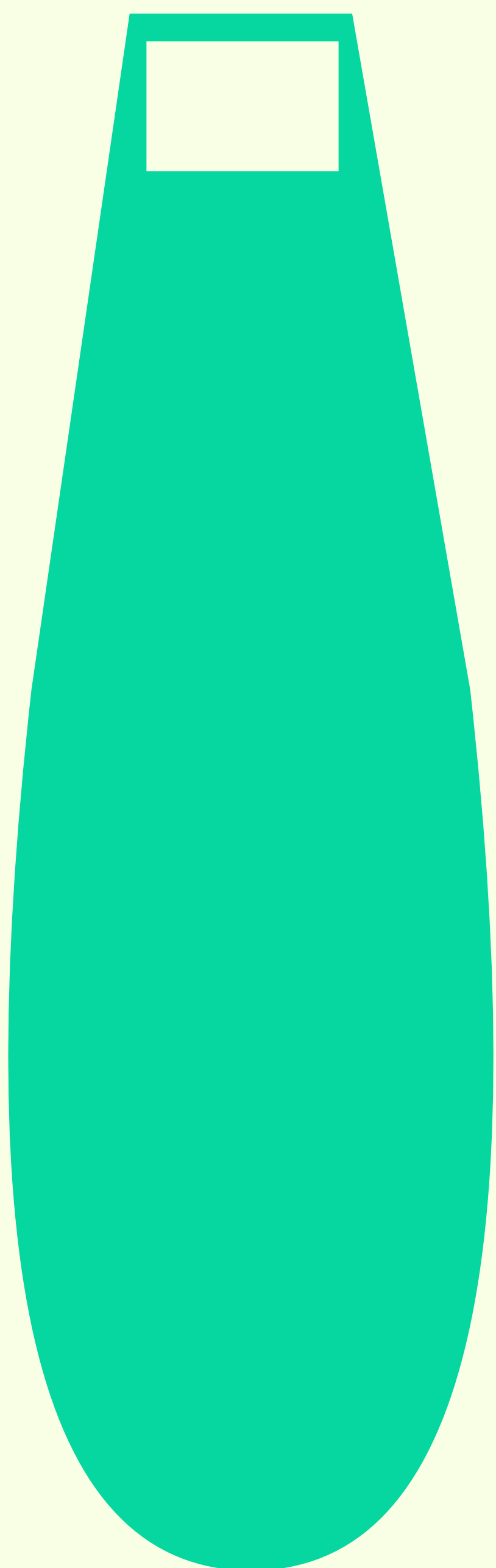
MEWS make PMS software for Hotels.

“Over the last few months we’ve seen a real appetite among guests and hoteliers to embrace a contact-free experience. One of the most important parts of the guest journey is self-check-in, which can easily be transformed to a contact-free process with our Mews Kiosks and Mews web app.

When a guest arrives, they can skip any reception queues or person-to-person contact by heading straight to the kiosk. All they need to do is enter their reservation number and surname and their booking appears, allowing guests to check themselves in. The kiosk supports bookings from all sources (direct, OTAs etc.) and works with all major key cutters, meaning guests can pick up their own key.

It’s great for guests because it cuts needless admin and helps them get to their room faster. And it’s great for properties because it’s free and easy to set up and allows for upselling products and services to increase revenue.

Kiosks are just one element of the contact-free guest experience that Mews provides, helping to improve safety and efficiency. It’s perfect for the modern guest.”



Membership Access

“The right technology can make a big impact on reducing contact within your premises, and can also serve as a strong reminder to both customers and staff that you take their safety seriously. Our customers within the fitness and wellness industry use a range of Mindbody’s tools to limit the need for contact. Our self check-in app allows customers to enrol themselves for classes and register their own attendance, reducing the need to have contact with reception staff, or wait in queues. Similarly, our Branded Mobile App allows clients to check in for classes automatically based on their phone location.

“So a client can choose to be automatically signed in for their booked spin class as soon as they’re within 100m of the studio - no need for queuing, crowded reception areas or the need to handle tickets. The other advantage of this technology is that it frees up more staff time to spend on revenue-generating tasks like sales and client retention, instead of admin.”

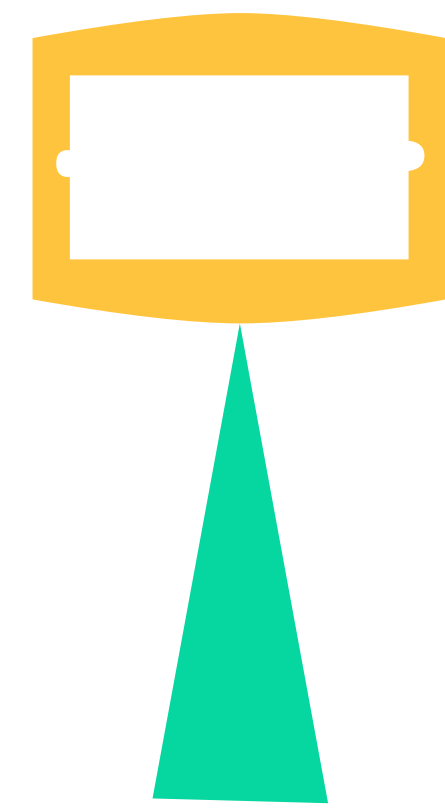
Phil Coxon

Managing Director, Mindbody EMEA



Kiosks in Retail

Sales Assistant

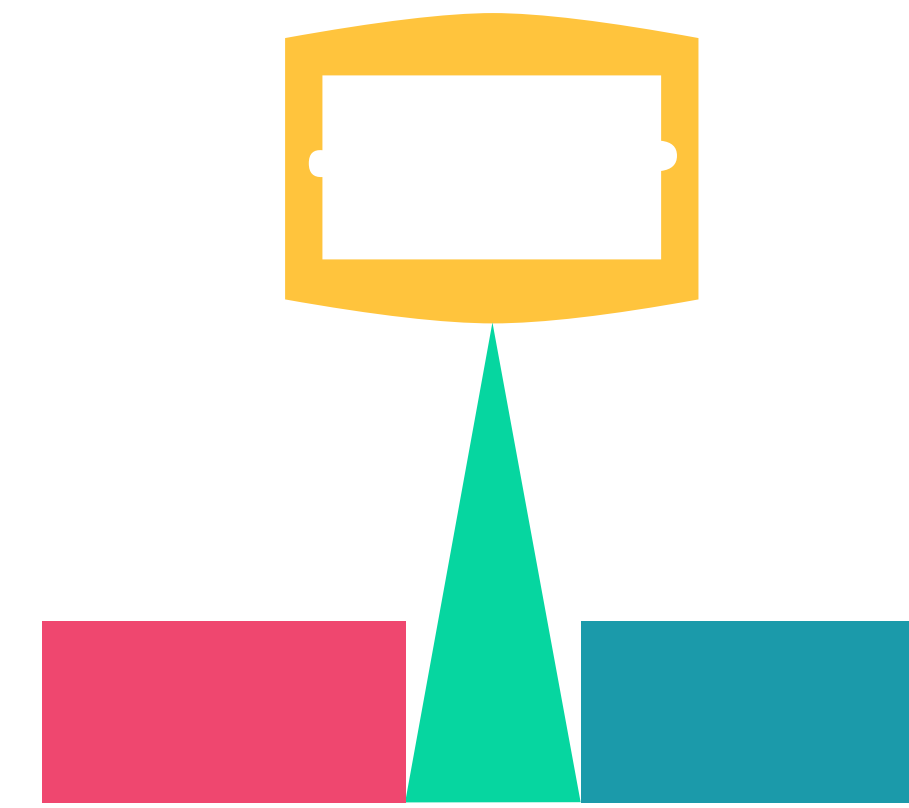


Kiosks are more common in retail than hospitality. Partly, this is because the hospitality market has many small operators, whereas retail has fewer, larger operators – an easier market for tech companies to serve.

In retail, kiosks can be used in stages of the customer journey beyond the checkout. For example, M&S put iPads into some of their bigger stores to help their sales assistants give a better service. The iPads have helped enormously – as part of the overall journey, helping a customer find exactly what they want, tracking down particular sizes or trouser lengths, and then closing the sale.

The original pioneer of such tills – Argos – treats kiosks as digital catalogues, where customers can browse your selection of goods in store.

Self-Service Checkout



The self-service checkout is perhaps the most ubiquitous example of a payment kiosk in operation in the UK. These provide the big supermarkets with an additional competitive advantage over smaller stores – no queueing required, and you don't even have to talk to someone.

Such tills give users the feelings of greater privacy and control; and queues which split between cashier and self-checkouts encourage impulse purchases as users are less likely to have to queue.

There's two big challenges with such tills. The first is security: the mechanism that supermarkets rely on to prevent theft is a weight-based system which is buggy, and would not deter an intelligent thief. It also incurs such an annoying user experience in places ("please return item to bagging area...") that some retailers, such as Waitrose, have chosen to forgo the scales altogether and swallow the cost of the theft.



Revel systems is a kiosk and POS software supplier available through StoreKit.

"Revel began deploying self-service kiosks in 2013, but these were largely considered optional additions, functioning as line-busters or a nice-to-have convenience for customers. With the recent squeeze on hiring, training, and retaining labor, paired with increased interest in self-service options, merchants started pivoting to a majority or entirely kiosk-based models.

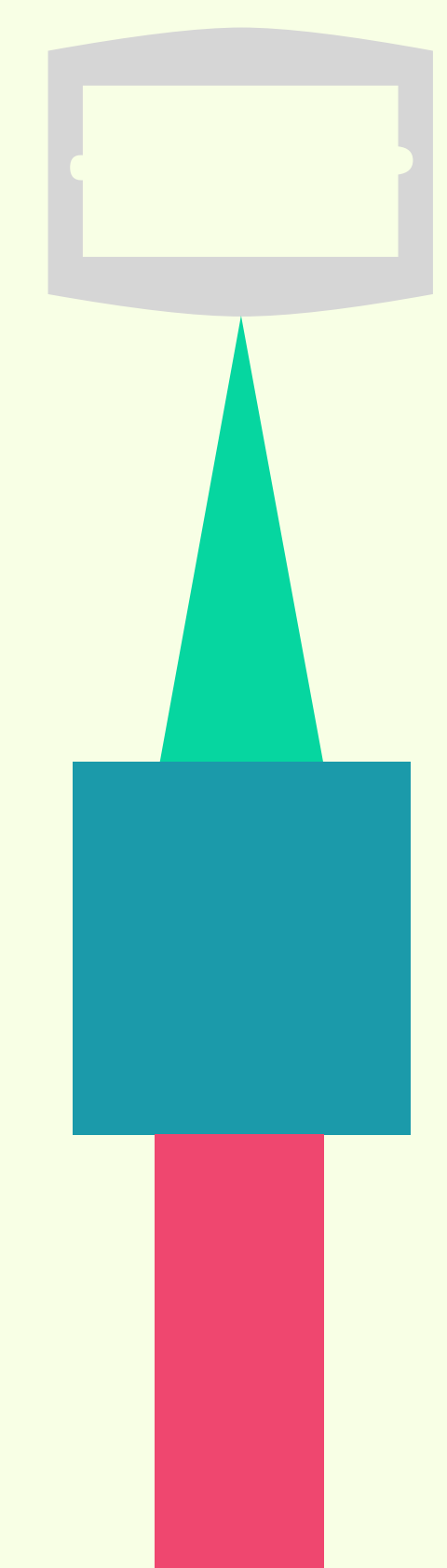
In light of this industry shift toward widespread kiosk offerings, merchants should look for kiosk applications that are easily brandable with clean, highly visual designs. The applications should also include a compelling user experience with clear and efficient workflows for selecting and customization of products. Most consumers will demand speed, but this should be balanced with clarity and guidance for less tech-savvy users who are new to a kiosk checkout experience.

The checkout process should be intuitive and tie into a number of different fulfillment models: pay-at-the-kiosk, [kiosks which] redirect payment to a register, [and kiosks designed for] fulfillment by call name, order number, table stand number or buzzer.

Housings and stands that organize and hide the complexity of the hardware is a must to complete the user experience and protect the equipment."

Mark Harris

Director of Product Management, Revel Systems



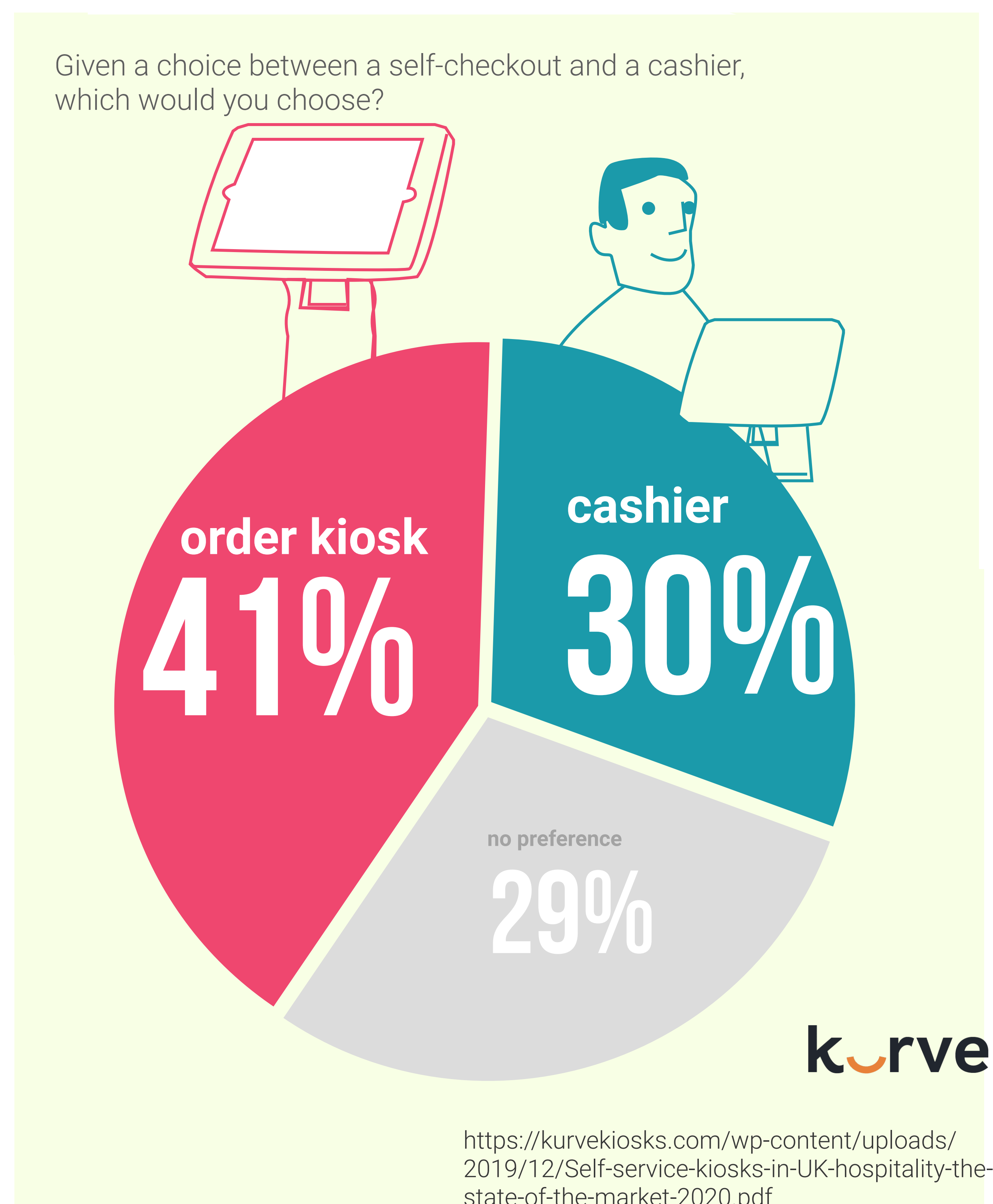
Boosters & backers

Self-service kiosks have been around for some time. But recently they have been gaining momentum; in airport terminals, tourist information offices, and in restaurants and shops.

Within the next twelve months, kiosks will be mainstream in the UK quick service and casual dining market, according to the first UK research into consumer opinion and hospitality sector plans.

Bristol-based kiosk specialists Kurve Kiosk commissioned a report this year into the state of self-service for UK hospitality. The study included a consumer poll of 2,000 UK residents, with 41% stating that given a choice, they would use a self-serve kiosk over a cashier. It gives the customers more control. Consumers are drawn to the privacy and control of kiosk self-ordering, along with convenience, order customisation, accuracy and queue avoidance.

The research showed Brits are happier to use kiosks than most operators realise. 13% of operators think less than 10% of their customers are willing to use self-serve compared to 2% of all UK consumers. 56% of operators believe over half of their customers are willing to use self-serve compared to 66% of all UK consumers.



3.4 BILLION

The amount of money lost to UK retailers per year from people walking out of queues.



<https://www.qudini.com/queues-service-retail-stores-cost-uk-economy-3-4-billion/>

Nowadays, restaurant operators have many different order and payment technologies available to them. From off-premise click & collect/delivery to on-premise kiosk, tablet and mobile ordering and payment - they all give customers more choice and convenience as well as greater control over their dining experience. Previously, operators have chosen solutions that fit their operations. However, given the current climate under social distancing measures, brands have had to pivot from dine-in to takeout almost overnight.

Digital ordering for collection and delivery is proving to be a crucial lifeline for businesses struggling to maintain a revenue stream. Unlike third party delivery platforms such as Deliveroo or Just Eat, there are more affordable solutions out there that also give brands control over their own customer data. These digital ordering technologies play a crucial role for restaurants and communities now, but we predict they'll be a permanent fixture even after lockdown ends. Consumer behaviour will have changed for the long-term and restaurants must be prepared to meet their needs."

Daniel Rodgers

President & Founder, QikServe



The advantages of kiosks

Statistics

Harvard Business Review, 2015: <https://hbr.org/2015/03/how-self-service-kiosks-are-changing-customer-behavior>

QSR Media, 2017: <https://qsrmedia.co.uk/food-services/in-focus/exclusive-how-tossed-proving-cashless-king>

Kurve Kiosks, 2019: <https://kurvekiosks.com/2019/10/15/why-over-half-of-uk-hospitality-operators-will-have-self-order-tech-by-2020/>

1. Reduce Operational Costs

Menus

One big advantage of putting your menu onto a digital interface is that the menu is totally adjustable. It can cost thousands of pounds to reprint menus across multiple locations if you use a high-end printing service; kiosk software enables you to change your menus simply and flexibly – with no overheads.

Labour

Set against the cost of salaries, kiosks justify their price very quickly. With the time saved from taking orders, staff can allocate their time to food prep and marketing. Over time, merchants will have a lower total need for service labour and will need to hire fewer waiters or cashiers.

2. Increase Customer Spending

Do people spend more at kiosks?

McDonald's reported that people spend 30% more on kiosk transactions, and where data is available, this seems to match evidence from other hospitality chains too.

Taco Bell said that orders via their digital app are 20% higher than face-to-face orders. The US chain Chili's claimed that dessert spending was much higher with their kiosk solutions.

Not only do people spend more at kiosks; but they spend more in a predictable way. While customers will choose the same main via a kiosk as via a waiter or cashier, they have longer to peruse the modifiers, sides, and extras – and they are therefore more likely to spend more.

The “YO! Sushi” Effect

YO! Sushi is a popular sushi chain founded by British entrepreneur Simon Woodroffe. Like many sushi restaurants from the 1990s, the food circles patrons on a conveyer belt for them to select sushi dishes as they pass.

Part of the idea behind this is that the passing food will “tempt” customers, and the casual style will prompt customers to pay more. The broader principle – that customers will spend more when ordering is frictionless – is also true of pay-at-the-table kiosks.

It's easier to select from a table menu than to summon a waiter; removing “friction” between your customers and the decision to buy something is an important way to improve your business.

Case Study



The lunch-to-go chain Tossed started to roll out a kiosk solution in 2016 in response to limited capacity and surging demand during the prime lunch hour.

Rather than implementing just a few kiosks per store, Tossed opted to get rid of manned tills entirely. One major benefit of this switch to kiosk-run stores is that 90% of staff are now free to help directly with order preparation instead of manning tills, helping alleviate a huge bottleneck at peak times. This frees up restaurant staff to focus on profit-driving activities; in this case, the added preparation manpower facilitates the brand's unique build-your-own product.

Q. What makes an effective interface for kiosks?

“Effective interfaces for Kiosks are dependent on an extremely simple UX and the relationship between client expectations and hardware capabilities. For example, with Kiosks for gyms, everything you can do online can also be completed on the Kiosk, with the added benefits of dispensing cards or wristbands, taking payments in multiple ways, and even collecting signatures. The digital interface is paralleled with the online experience, while the additional hardware pieces are what make it an exceptional tool for clubs as kiosks combine the online capabilities with the front-desk tasks for a unified experience that can't be done via any other medium.”

Adam Coombs



Director of Marketing, Perfect Gym

Perfect Gym supplies kiosk software targeted at gyms.



3. Accuracy & Accessibility

Digital ordering takes as much human error out of the process as possible. It eliminates struggles with accents and dialects; and it ensures nothing is misheard.

More broadly, kiosks are great because they often include a feature inviting the user to select a language. Kiosks offer a clear advantage in environments which welcome a large number of foreign customers, by serving a wider range of audiences.

4. Queue-busting

A study from customer service management platform Qudini shows that British retailers lose out on £3.4 billion yearly because of customers walking out of a store queue.

Because kiosks are cheaper and take up less space than a human cashier, it makes sense to have more of them. That means that, while the number of customers seen by a single kiosk probably lags behind a single cashier, they are in aggregate a more effective way of tackling queues.

There’s also a secondary queue effect, which is that queues can self-sort by the nature of the enquiry. One cannot argue with a kiosk, and, while lots of softwares do a great job of wrapping the checkout process to any possible demand or inquiry, kiosks are not intelligent and cannot answer everything. Customers with unusual order requirements, questions, or issues, will route themselves to cashiers or waiters; whereas customers who are likely to be faster don’t have to wait.

5. The appeal of technology

According to Kurve’s report, 61% of Brits aged 18 to 24 and 57% aged 25 to 35 years said they prefer self-serve kiosks and are not prepared to queue.

This begs a question, which is whether somebody would actually choose to go to a shop or restaurant because of its technology. And, although technology can seem distant from the first reason people go to a shop or restaurant, we believe that technology can drive new customers.

Banks are an example of an industry which did not believe that technology could be a driver of adoption, focussing instead on the bread and butter of banking – mortgage and interest rates, and cash offers to switch accounts. But tech-first banks such as Monzo have now entered the market, and older banks are instead realising that technology and usability are actually key drivers of what account people choose; and scrambling to make personal banking apps late in the day.

Perhaps the same story will be true in merchant technology, closer to home. One easy case to imagine is convenience shops. Milk is a homogenous product, meaning it’s the same wherever it’s bought. If somebody is not price sensitive, or does not care to remember the price of milk, in a straight competition between a shop with a self-checkout and a shop without, they may choose the self-checkout, simply because they do not wish to speak to a person that day. Whereas older customers say they prefer humans, a majority of people under 35 say they prefer machines – those preferences will continue as this cohort of adults grows later into adulthood.

That’s before we add the ways in which technology actively improves a business. A pub which is always understaffed at which customers wait for an age at a bar, versus one which has table ordering; or a restaurant on holiday in which you struggle to make yourself understood, versus one in which you can select language. It’s easy to see how kiosks could be a direct pull for customers, rather than merely a way of cutting costs.

Statistics

<https://www.qudini.com/queues-service-retail-stores-cost-uk-economy-3-4-billion/>

We interviewed Dr Warren Goodsir, head of the Hospitality department at Auckland University of Technology, who has produced an in-depth report on self-service. We asked him to summarise some of his findings.

“Our research into the use of kiosks in fast-food restaurants found that self-service kiosks can provide benefits to both restaurants and customers.

While restaurants may be able to reduce labour costs, the customers can also benefit from

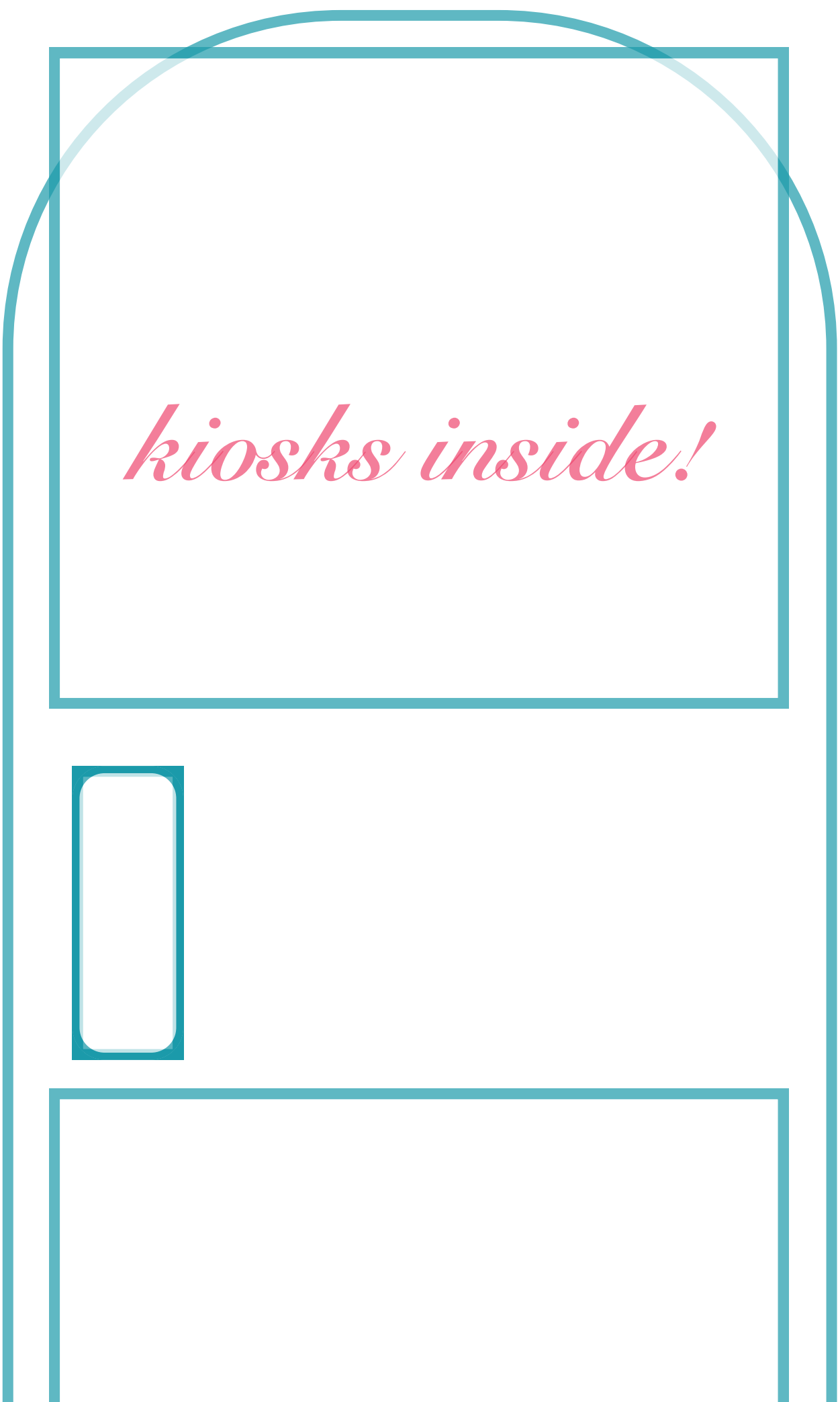
- Reduced queuing times
- More detailed and clearer information about menu items, ingredients and promotions
- Greater feelings of control and privacy compared with completing transactions in public with customer service employees.

Improved customer convenience results from the kiosk’s ease of use including clear food categories with pictures, simple language and the ability to select other languages. Customers also felt less pressure to make quick decisions in front of staff, leaving space for discussion of food choices among friends and a judgment-free environment away from other customers and busy employees.

Nevertheless, the benefits of kiosks are somewhat determined by the lack of alternative service options. The issue is not whether kiosks are able to do a better job than humans, but rather whether customer service employees are resourced (capability and capacity) to provide both efficient and caring service interactions. Replacing caring human interaction with a kiosk reduces the ability for connecting with customers, replacing hospitality with the faceless retail of products.”

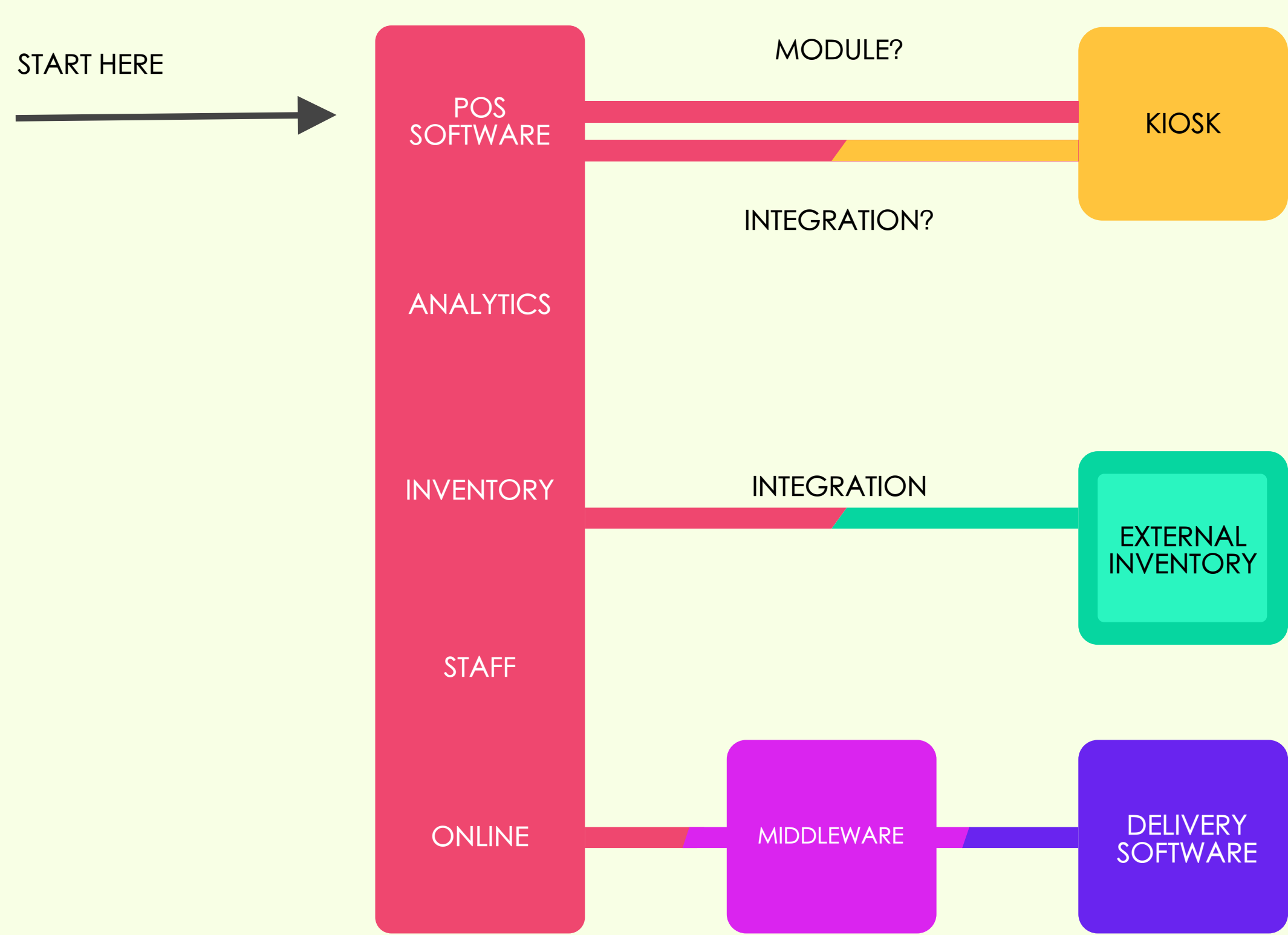
Dr Warren Goodsir
Head of Hospitality Department

Auckland University of Technology



Looking for the right kiosk software

I. Stacks



Stacks? Integrations? What?

A software “stack” refers to a number of different softwares, “stacked” on top of each other. What this means specifically is that softwares talk and transfer data, so that, for example, when you enter an order into your point-of-sale software, your inventory software updates.

This sounds like an aside, but it should actually be the cornerstone of your decision process. Some restaurants end up having to employ someone full time to reenter their delivery orders into their point-of-sale system just to align the data. In other instances, it’s less important – if you sell merchandise you might not be interested in combining the analytics of your shop and restaurant, and your two point-of-sales can function as discrete units.

It’s tempting, faced with this complexity, to look for “one software that does everything.” There are software brands which try to do exactly that; but we find that they often lack coherence, that they’re clunky to use, or that they end up being extremely expensive. It’s better, and often cheaper, to find the best integrated software in every vertical: what’s called a “best of breed” approach.

Software designed to be integrated as part of a stack comes with something called an “open API”. To use the “softwares talking” metaphor, this means they have built an ear for their software which developers can build a mouth to talk into. And *anybody* can build that mouth – that’s why integrations are either “official” or “unofficial”. Official integrations have been endorsed (and sometimes built) by the original software brand. Unofficial integrations have not.

Where to start

Therefore, when you select software, it’s important to get into a mindset: stop thinking on the level of the individual software, and think instead about the stack. StoreKit has been building software stacks for restaurants for seven years, and if you’re lost, we’re available to call.

For the time being, kiosk software brands are overshadowed by their older sister; point-of-sale solutions. While there is an encouraging and growing number of kiosk-only software brands, there is a solid number of point-of-sale brands which include kiosk modules.

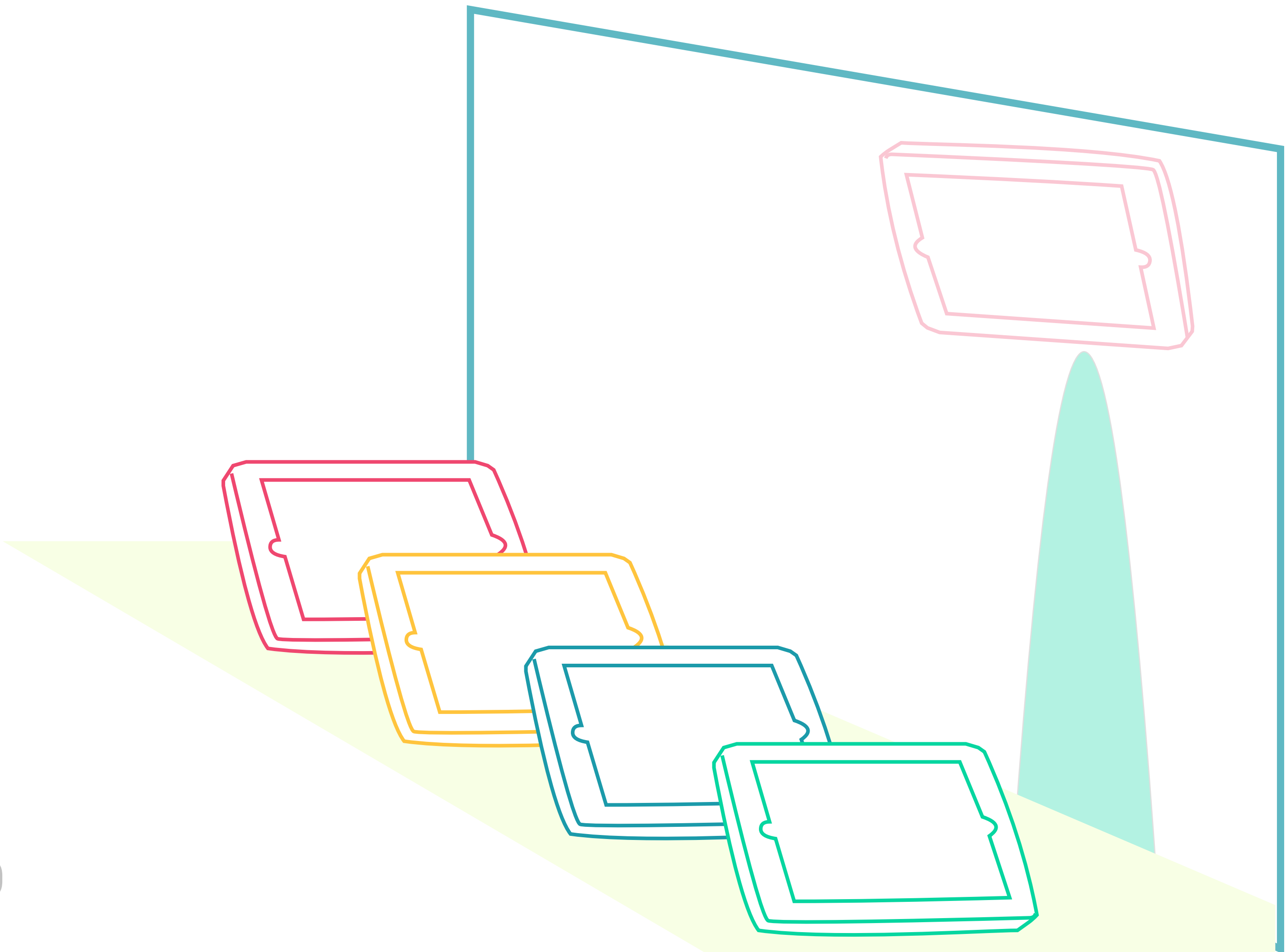
So, if you’re planning a whole stack, we generally recommend starting with your point-of-sale software and working your way out from there. Point-of-sale solutions which include a self-service module include (but are not limited to) Revel Systems, Lightspeed, Touchbistro, Square POS, and the Goodtill. Then, if it’s prudent for your business, you can look at the integrations your chosen POS software lists in, for example, payment processing, delivery, and inventory management.

For retailers, Vend also has a self checkout module available but it does require some third party involvement. It could be possible to use the kiosk function of one point-of-sale and main parts of the point-of-sale of another, if you feel strongly about the best in both instances.

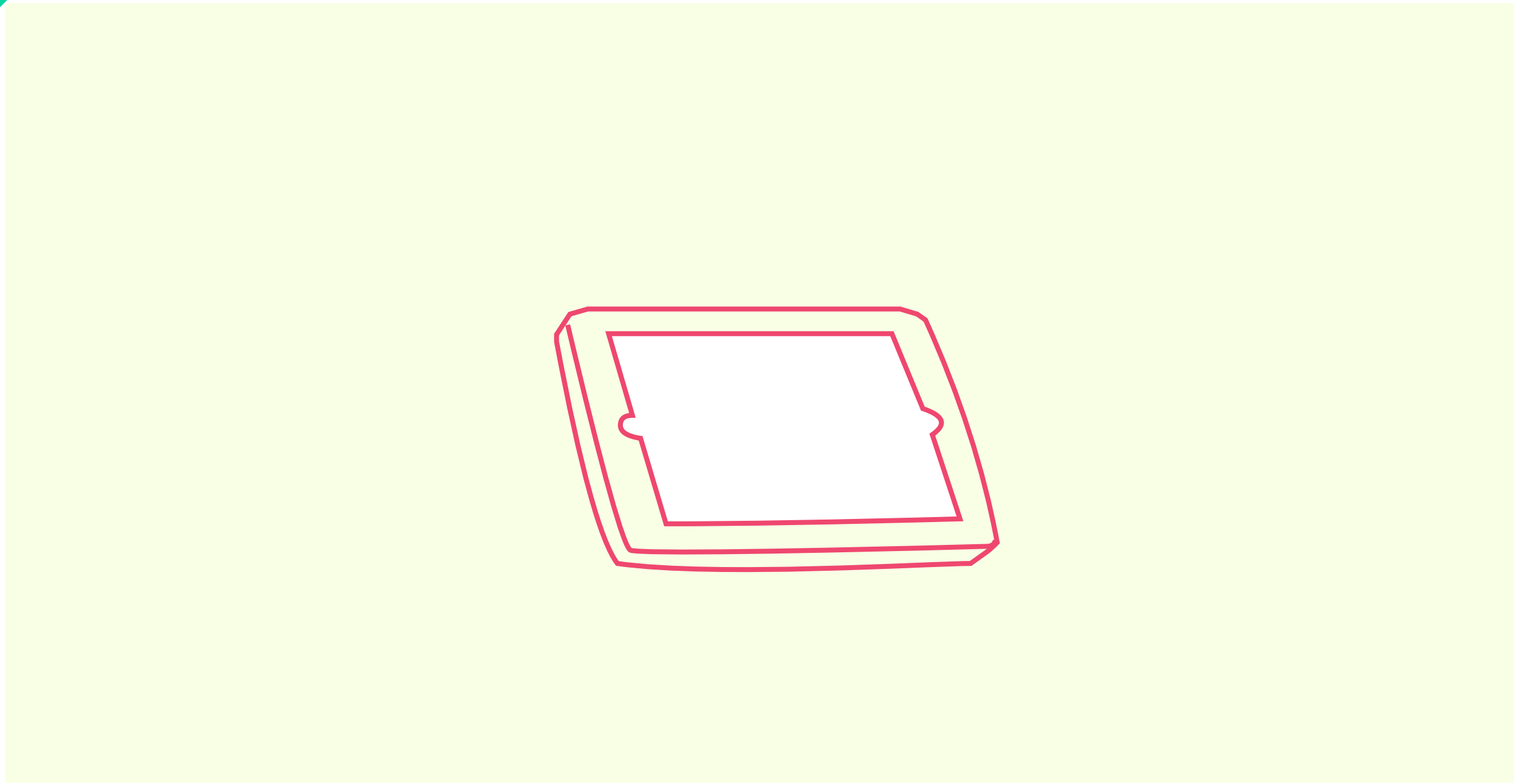
What comes next?

We would recommend shortlisting two or three of the software brands for your point-of-sale and kiosk – preferably via StoreKit, where we can advise on which might be the perfect ones for you, and which are missing key modules you’re looking for.

You can do this based on features, listed on the next page.



Kiosk Front-End Features



Beautiful and Usable

Is your kiosk software beautiful, and is it usable? Would a beginner software user be able to navigate the options? Does it tempt you to buy more? Are there too many clicks (“friction”) between starting your journey and paying for your items? Your digital menu must be pleasing to the eye and align with the vision you have of your customer experience.



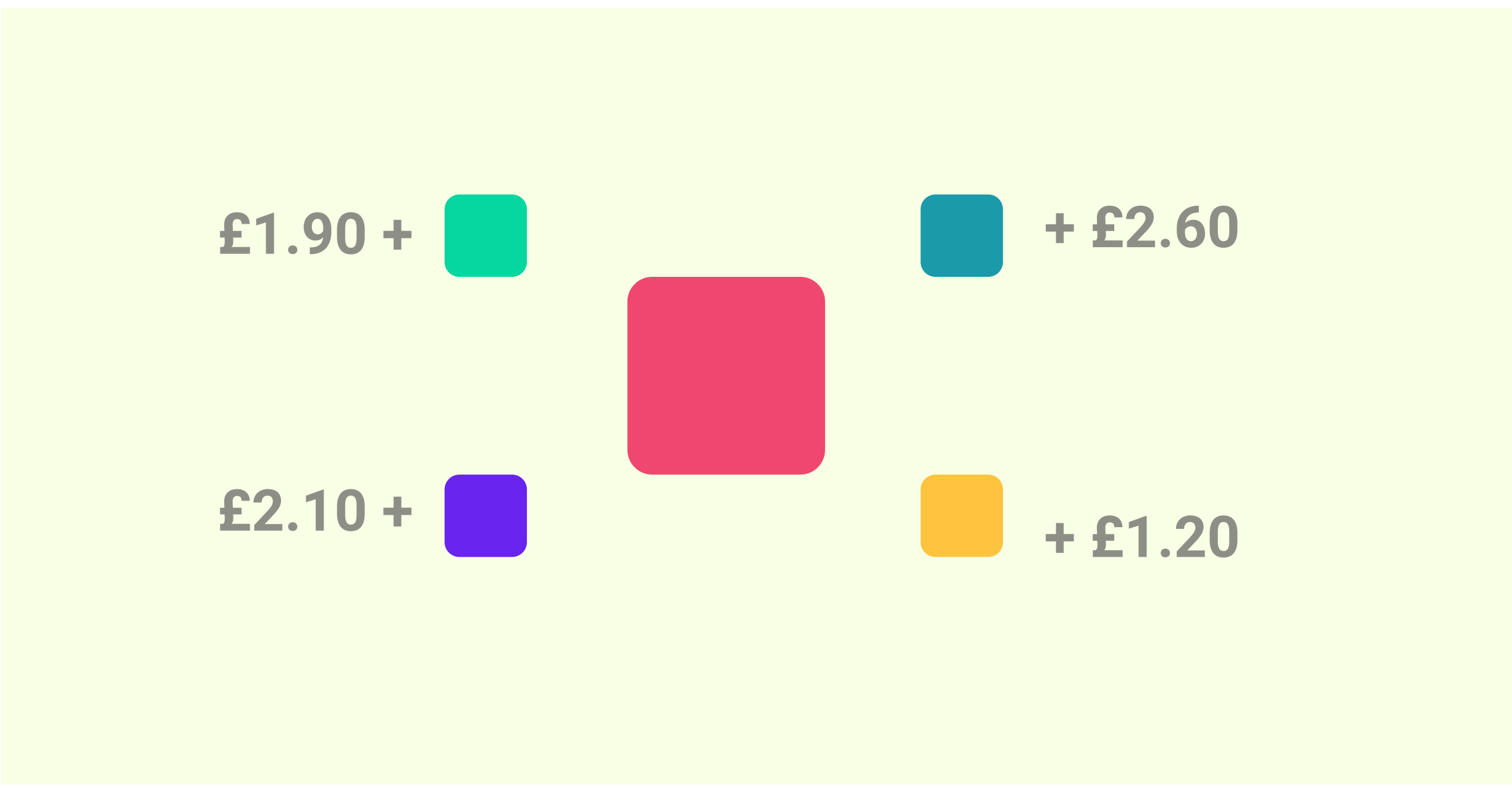
Payment Integration

A payment integration is absolutely essential if you are using kiosk software – it won’t work properly without it. If you have a payment provider already, check first that it’s capable of integrating with your software brand or email our payments team and ask for a list of suppliers (payments@storekit.com).



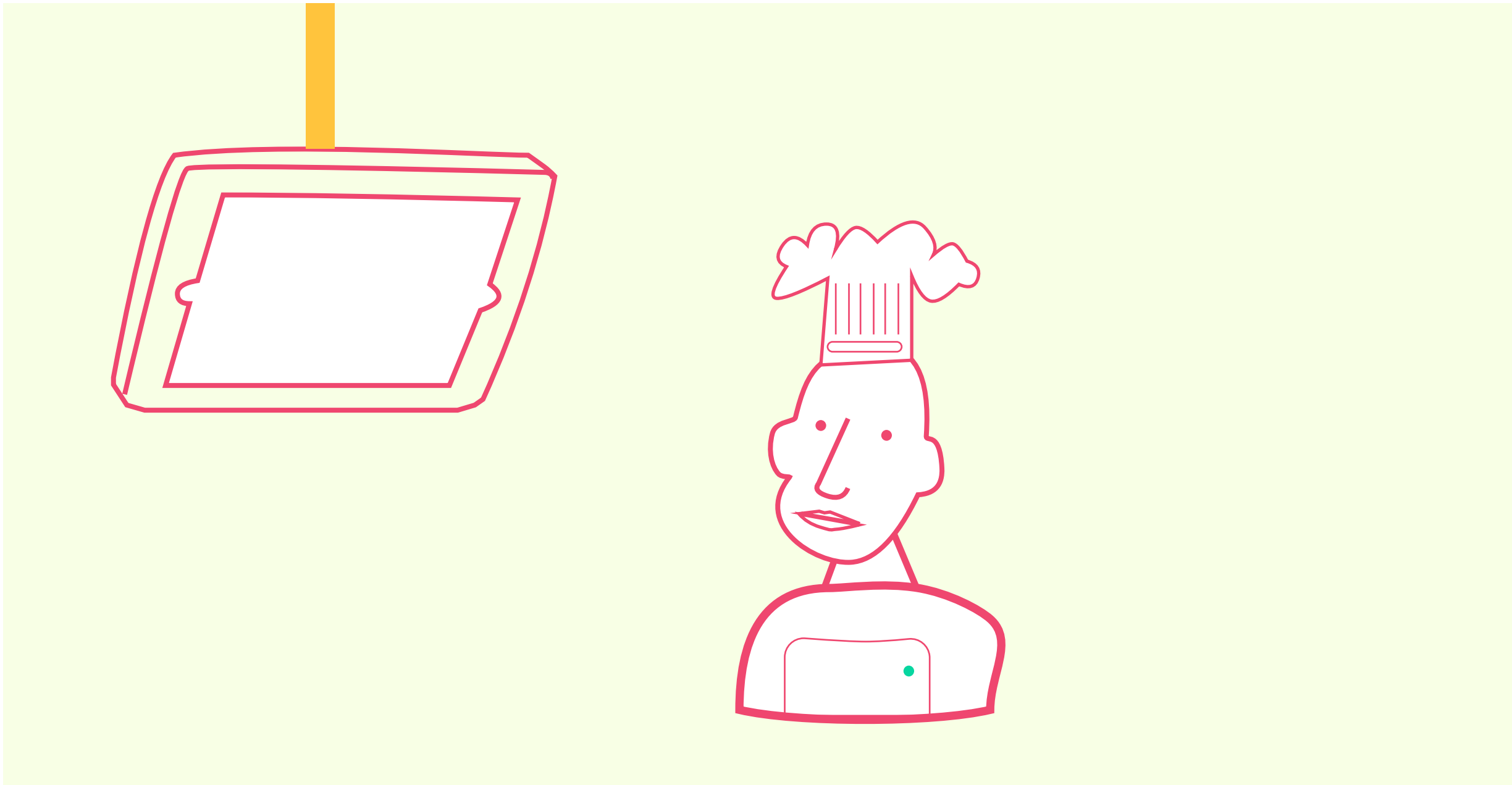
Gift Cards

A post-Covid world has accelerated the adoption of a variety of technologies that provide customers with a contactless service. Your kiosk experience for customers will benefit from more payment options. This includes Google wallet, Apple Pay, gift cards...does your kiosk have the flexibility to take multiple payment methods?



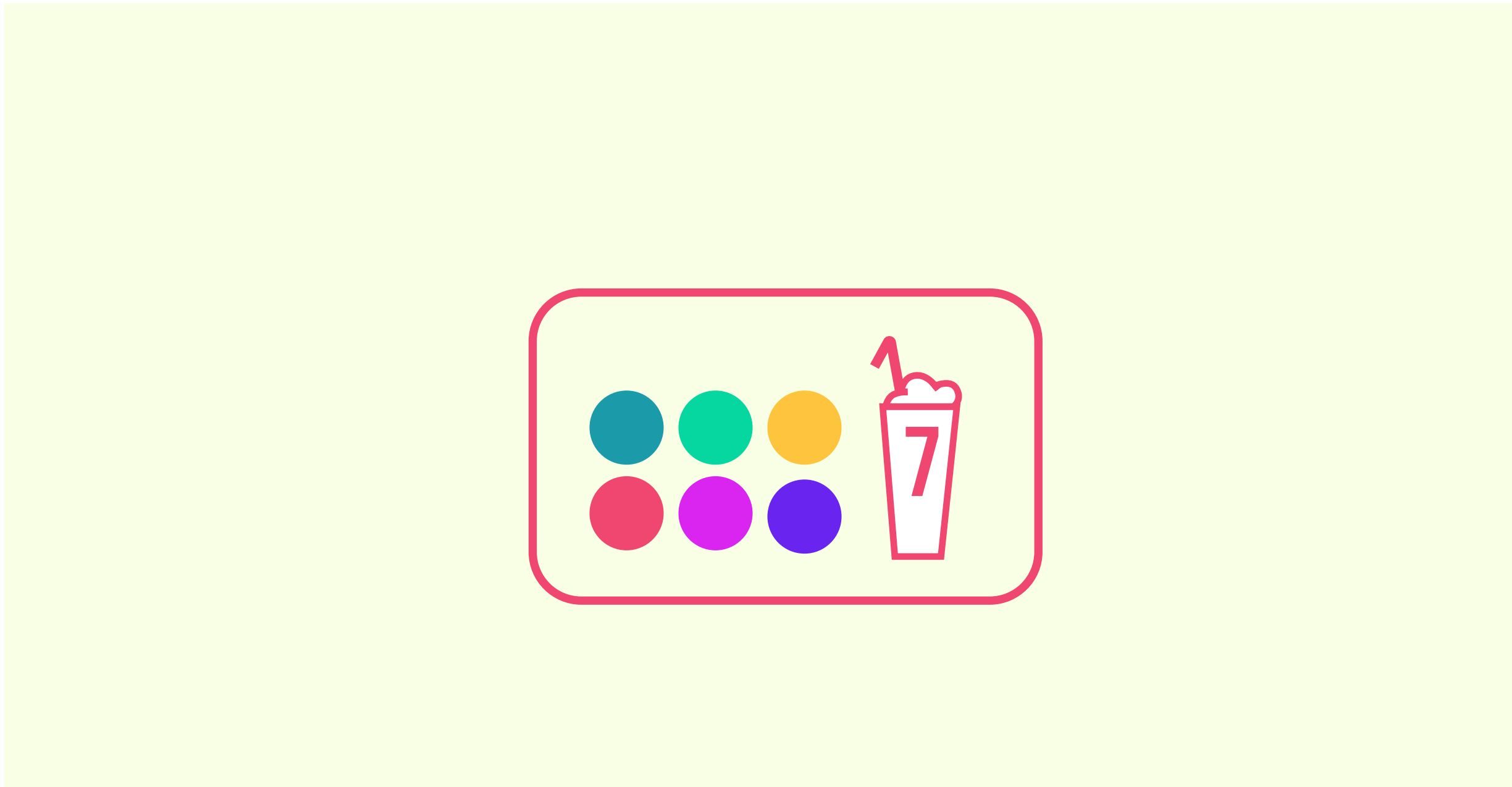
Modifiers

One big advantage of using kiosks is that you are able to “upsell” to patrons. Check how the modifiers work on your menu; is the process of upselling items as smooth as it could be? Usually this can be routed around by selling items as different products, but this is less attractive for patrons.



KDS integration

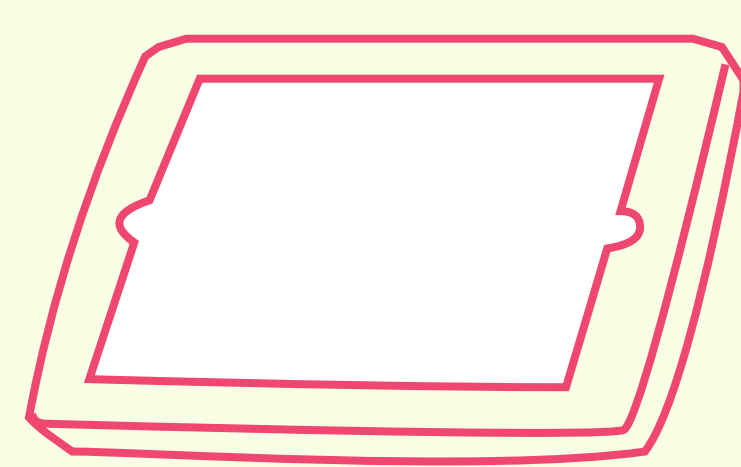
KDS, or “kitchen display system” is the alternative to printing dockets. This is essentially a display system (a television) which shows chefs which meals need cooking next. Proponents argue that this solution is cleaner as it does not involve paper dockets, which can get lost. But it requires software which supports it.



Loyalty

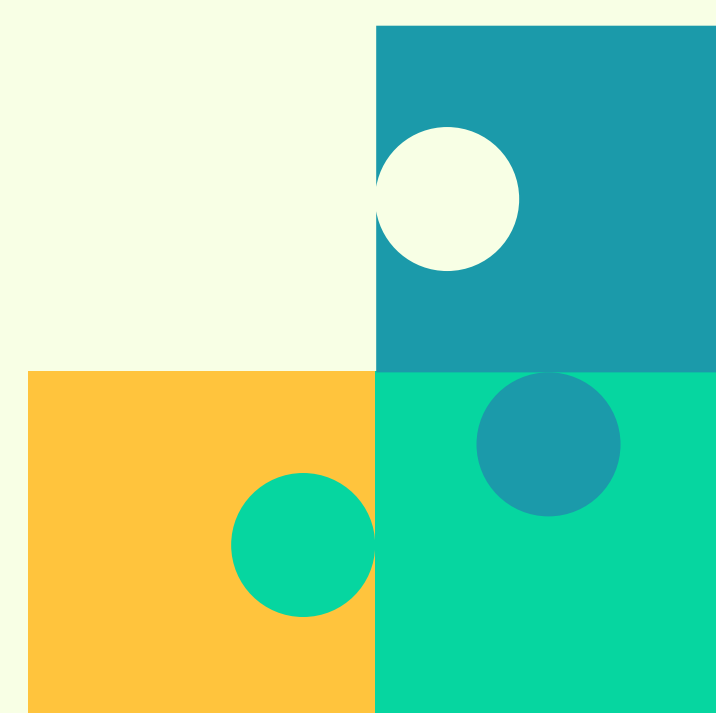
Customers can be a little reluctant to linger around at the checkout or to spell out their email address. Self-service kiosks give customers autonomy and relieve the pressure of another human tasking them with entering their personal details. Is it possible to add loyalty schemes into the front-end of a kiosk?

EPOS Back-End Features



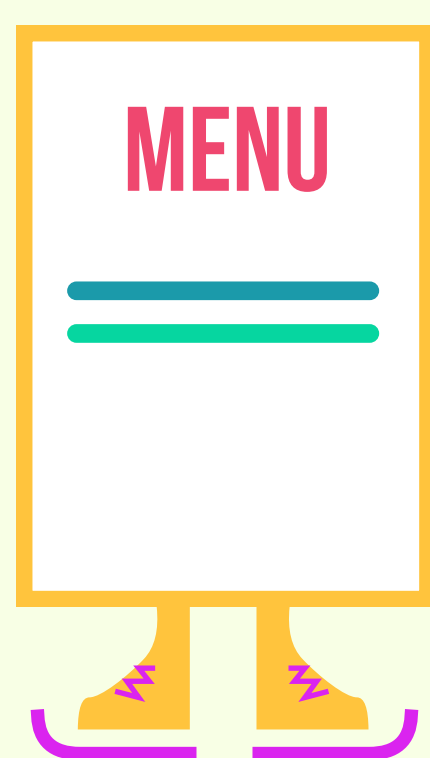
Intuitive and easy for staff to use

Just as your software should be usable for your customers; it also needs to be usable for your staff. A better experience for staff creates higher productivity and minimises mistakes in the software.



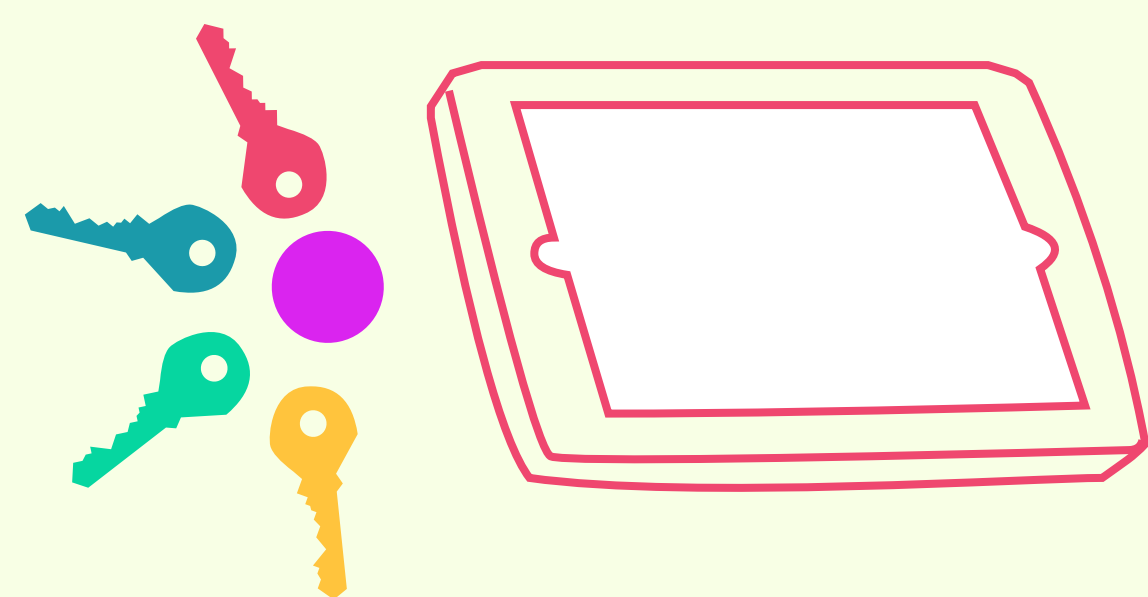
Integrations

Integrations are likely to be a cornerstone of your decision process, so make sure you check the integrations available. Important integrations include accounting, inventory software, payment processing, staff management software, and e-commerce.



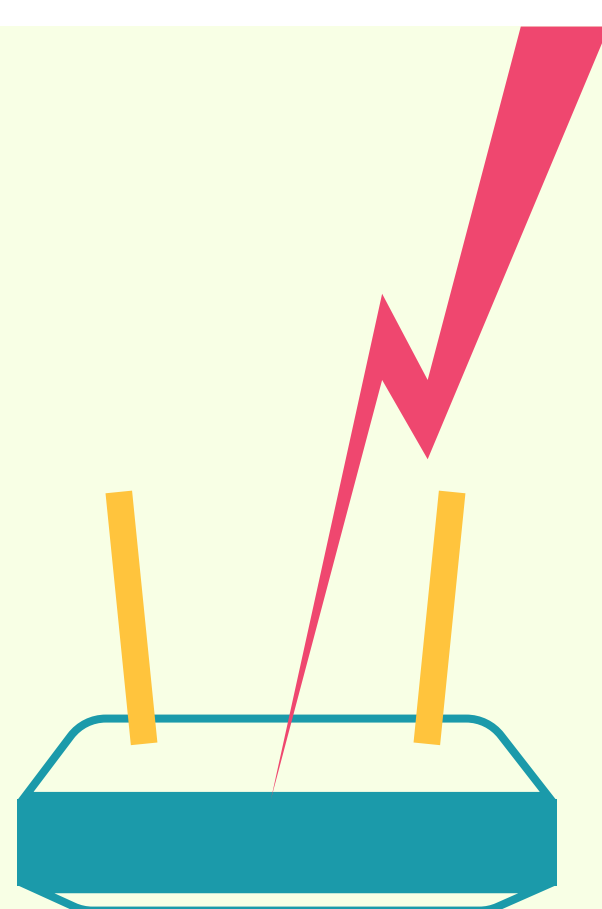
Menu Flexibility

The bigger your business, the more complex your menu writing process is likely to be. Perhaps you have a breakfast, lunch, and evening menu – and perhaps they’re tailored to each venue. By “menu flexibility” we mean the ability to edit multiple menus at once, and make alterations on the fly.



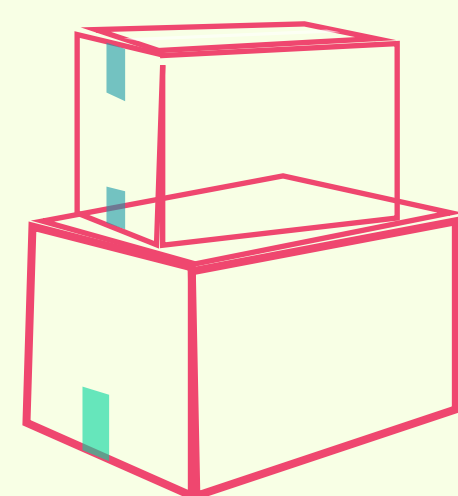
Permissions

As POS systems begin to get more complex, they acquire more complex structures. One thing which is more complex in more expensive software is the permissions structure – with different levels of access for you, and different members of your team.



Offline Mode

Get peace of mind and end the tyranny of your WiFi with **offline mode**. Different softwares will have different levels of functionality offline, so it’s worth investigating exactly what this entails.



Inventory Management

Look out for an inventory integration, or check out the inventory module which comes with your selected POS. Inventory should help you manage relationships with suppliers and do stock takes.

Final Thoughts on Choosing

We spoke to kiosk pioneers, Kuyrve, on the must-have features for kiosks. What do merchants typically look for when buying a kiosk?

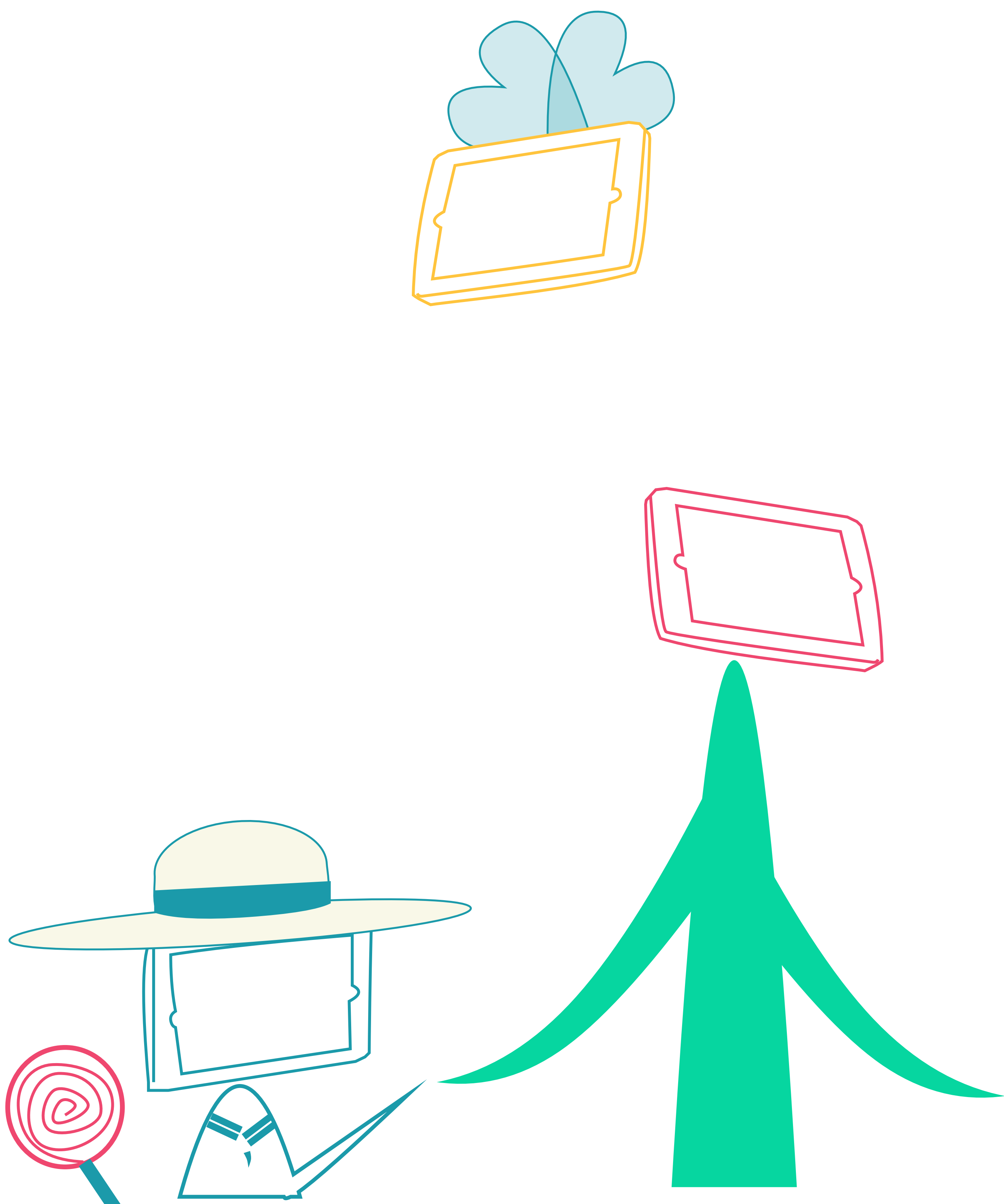
“As self serve tech rapidly becomes the new norm for hospitality operators, having a single self serve PoS platform to pull and push data across channels and operational points for easy management, operational efficiency and revenue generation is critical but often overlooked. It is not just about bolting on digital ordering for a quick win in the battle to fight Covid compliance and serve customers safely.

With self serve technology now proven and tested, it is now possible to get up and running with a fully-fledged self serve PoS platform with all the bells and whistles in a matter of days. It is no longer expensive, complex or slow to deploy. A ready-to-go Self-serve PoS platform can give you everything you need for multi-channel ordering across self serve kiosks, at table ordering and mobile ordering.

Must-have features include upselling and customisation tools; loyalty tools and Click and Collect; through to comprehensive operational management features to help reduce cost and time such as KDS, payroll and inventory. Other useful features include QR pay at till slips and order ready notification systems such as buzzers and order status screens. Another often overlooked critical point is the need for your self-serve PoS to be flexible to easily integrate any third party applications you may need now or in the future. It’s all about accommodating the “New Norm” today and tomorrow.”

Stefan Rolfe

CEO, Kurve Kiosks



Goodtill's perspective

Goodtill is a kiosk and POS software supplier available through StoreKit. We asked them what they thought made a good kiosk.

What capabilities can self-ordering software provide, which merchants often overlook or don't take advantage of?

A self service POS station can be a great way to offer customers a self checkout option without hassle of joining the queue for small items. This is especially useful when eateries already provide a cold counter or fridge for breakfast and lunch menu so that the customers can just quickly pick up the items and checkout with ease. With Goodtill self checkout mode, setting this up is very simple with a cost effective solution while achieving great efficiency for F&B operation.

How do they ensure that it integrates with their existing EPOS software and technology (and why is this important?)

Goodtill's self service till is in the wide range of its capabilities and it is already integrated. It works seamlessly with the entire setup from product management, pricing, promotions to stock management and reports. This is extremely powerful over any standalone technology as the whole business operation can be streamlined out of the box using Goodtill.

Animesh Chowdhury

Founder and Technical Director, Goodtill



Challenges with kiosks

Retail self-checkouts do encourage theft

According to statistics produced by researchers at Queensland University of Technology, the risk of theft increases with self-checkouts.

This research analysed the use of self-service kiosks, concluding that “there is reason to believe that rates of theft are higher on self-service machines than at regular checkouts.”

A study of 1 million transactions in the UK found losses incurred through self-service technology payment systems totalled 3.97% of stock, compared with just 1.47% otherwise. A similar study, conducted by VoucherCodesPro.co.uk, polled 2000 Brits and found that almost one in four people admitted to stealing at least one item without paying at the kiosk. Research suggests that everyday customers – those who would not normally steal by any other means – disproportionately steal at self-checkouts.

Consumer deviance stems from how prevalent the behaviour is (“everyone else is doing it”), the risk associated with doing it (“I won’t get caught”), what the outcomes will be (“no one is getting hurt”), and if they think it is fair (“the organisation isn’t giving me what I want, they’re making me do this”). Consumers use justifications to let them perform deviant behaviours, without feeling guilty about it. Behavioural economist Dan Ariely calls that the “fudge factor”, in his research on irrational behaviour. With a human presence, however, the customer is less likely to steal because they are more likely to feel bad about it.

For this reason, retailers have deployed employees in the self-checkout area to monitor customers, in a bid to increase the perceived risk of being caught and reduce “consumer deviance”. Obviously, this offsets the savings involved in kiosk operation.

To combat increased customer deviance, researchers at Queensland University of Technology are trying to use till design to combat deviance. One hypothesis being tested is that extreme personalisation of service could reduce anonymity and therefore theft. By introducing a personalised voice that recognises shoppers (“Hi Paula, welcome to Coles”), the kiosk can retain a semblance of customer identity and even trigger human empathy.

Unfair comparison?

Here’s 30% – the additional food McDonald’s said they sold – on the same scale

Statistics

The Conversation, 2017: <https://theconversation.com/the-economics-of-self-service-checkouts-78593>

Vocovo, 2019: <https://www.vocovo.com/blog/post/a-question-of-service-the-future-evolution-of-retail-checkouts/>

Voucher Codes Pro, via The Atlantic (2018) <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/03/stealing-from-self-checkout/550940/>

1.47% stock lost through human checkouts

3.97% stock lost through self-checkouts



A new cultural norm in your restaurant

Kiosks are a new cultural frontier, and just as young people might prefer them, some patrons will reject them and wish they were talking to a person instead. For this reason, kiosks may well be better suited to casual dining outlets than destination restaurants, where patrons are more likely to expect the formal auspices to which they are used.

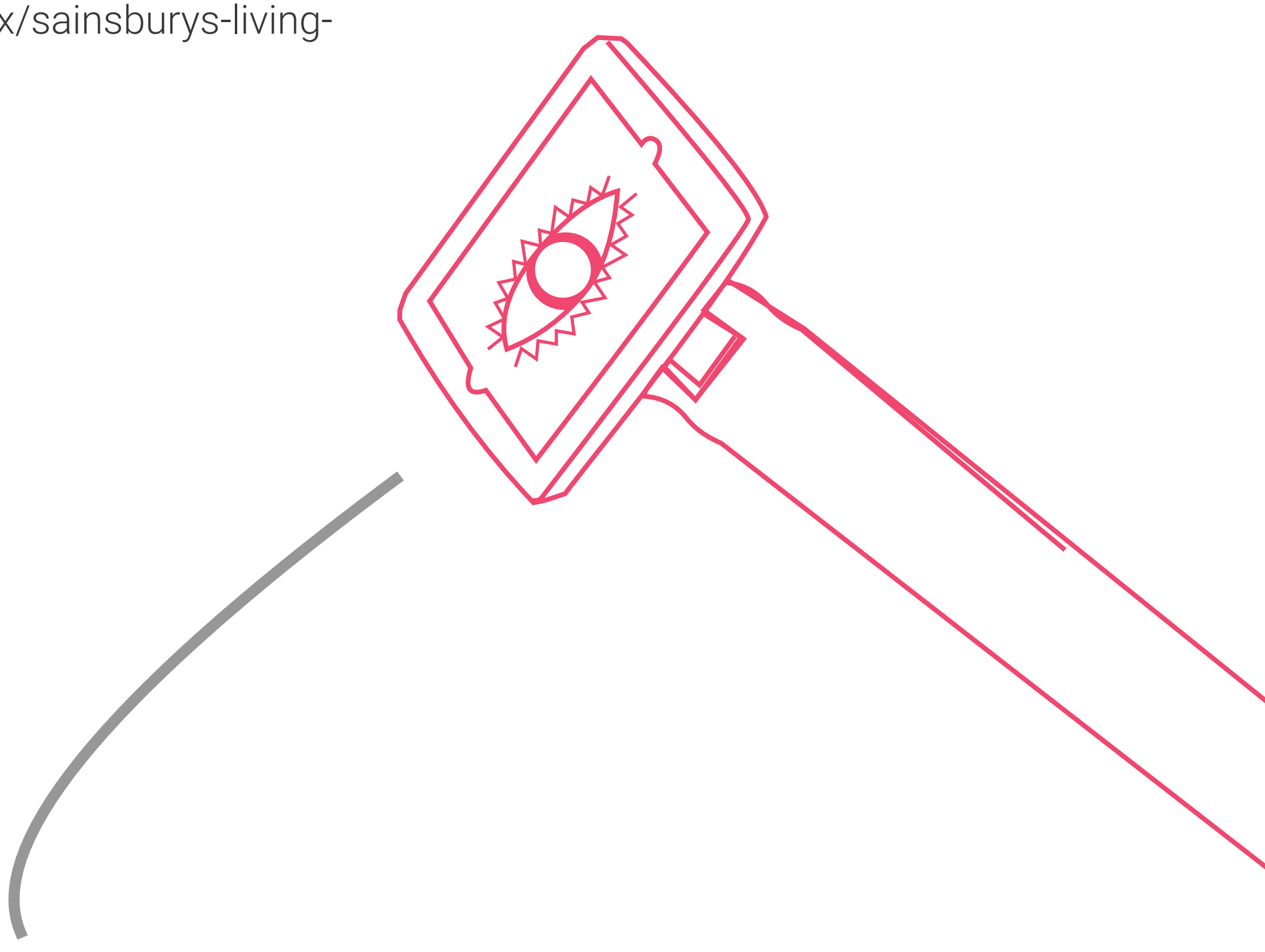
Rachel Cooke, Guardian journalist, is one example of a kiosk detractor. She wrote that ordering by a touchscreen made the act of eating more solitary, with extensive reference to a Wellbeing Index statistic that a third of British adults now eat alone “most or all the time”.

“My eggs were delivered by a human being, but everything else had to be communicated electronically. You want hot milk? There’s a key for that. You want a receipt? There’s a key for that, too (and don’t expect paper). I hated this, though not as much as I hated the fact that the iPad could not be moved, or even switched off. I had no companion, but had someone been sitting opposite me, I would not have been able even to see them without straining my neck; it would have been like talking over a garden fence. Next to me, a woman tried to interest her daughter in a book, but to no avail. The child wanted only to keep stabbing away at the iPad.”

This isn’t a great review – although there are plenty of instances in which a kiosk would be less annoying or less intrusive than a waiter, the “permanent blinking eye” of technology could become intrusive and it’s true that kids might want to play with the iPads.

Statistics

Sainsbury's, 2018: <https://www.about.sainsburys.co.uk/~media/Files/S/Sainsburys/living-well-index/sainsburys-living-well-index-sep-2018.pdf>



**Hey! I’m your dinner date.
Do I look like my pictures?**

I’ll just put this through as watermelon.



Installation

Physically Installing your Kiosk

After establishing that self-service solutions can boost your customer experience and bottom line, you’re now looking to install a kiosk in your store.

But understanding the environment in which the self-service kiosk will operate is crucial to its success. The kiosk will remain unattended for the most part of its operational cycle and attending to it for technical issues will be costly, so it’s important to make sure the kiosk has been set up robustly.

Receipt Printers

If you’re building a kiosk out of generic hardware items, then perhaps the easiest thing to get wrong is your receipt printer. StoreKit’s Head of Hardware, May Le, explains:

“Specific printers need to be programmed to work with specific point-of-sale or kiosk softwares, and we do sometimes get merchants ordering the wrong printer. That means, after you’ve chosen your software, you need to look at which printers are compatible with it. There’s a really easy way to do this – use StoreKit’s kit builder tool and it will automatically filter by compatibility.”

“Additionally, you need to think carefully about connection type. Generally, we sell bluetooth, ethernet, and USB or iOS USB printers. But, if you want to simultaneously print a customer receipt at the location of the kiosk and a docket behind the counter, you need printers capable of **many:many** connection. That means, any number of iPads can connect to a single printer; or that one iPad can connect to multiple printers.

“That requires an **ethernet connection** to at least one of the two printers that your kiosk is using. The ethernet cable is a wire which connects your printer to your WiFi router, which then enables your iPad and prtiner to econnect over the internet. Bluetooth and USB printers are both **one:one**, although you can pursue a mixed set up in some conditions.

“One final note is that receipt printers are **thermal printers which require thermal paper**. Thermal printers are great because they don’t require expensive ink, but they can break in very hot environments. For that reason, if you are putting a printer in a kitchen, you should choose a traditional dot matrix or impact (ink) printer.”

The Internet

Cloud-based kiosk software has a lot of upsides, and one big downside: it requires the internet in order to work. Merchants, especially merchants new to using cloud-based software, are often extremely worried about the internet cutting out.

1. Offline Mode

Most POS software brands tout some kind of offline mode, but it’s worth investigating exactly which functions that includes and excludes. Some functions will not work regardless – for example, payment processing requires the internet in order to work, with the exception of some specialist systems.

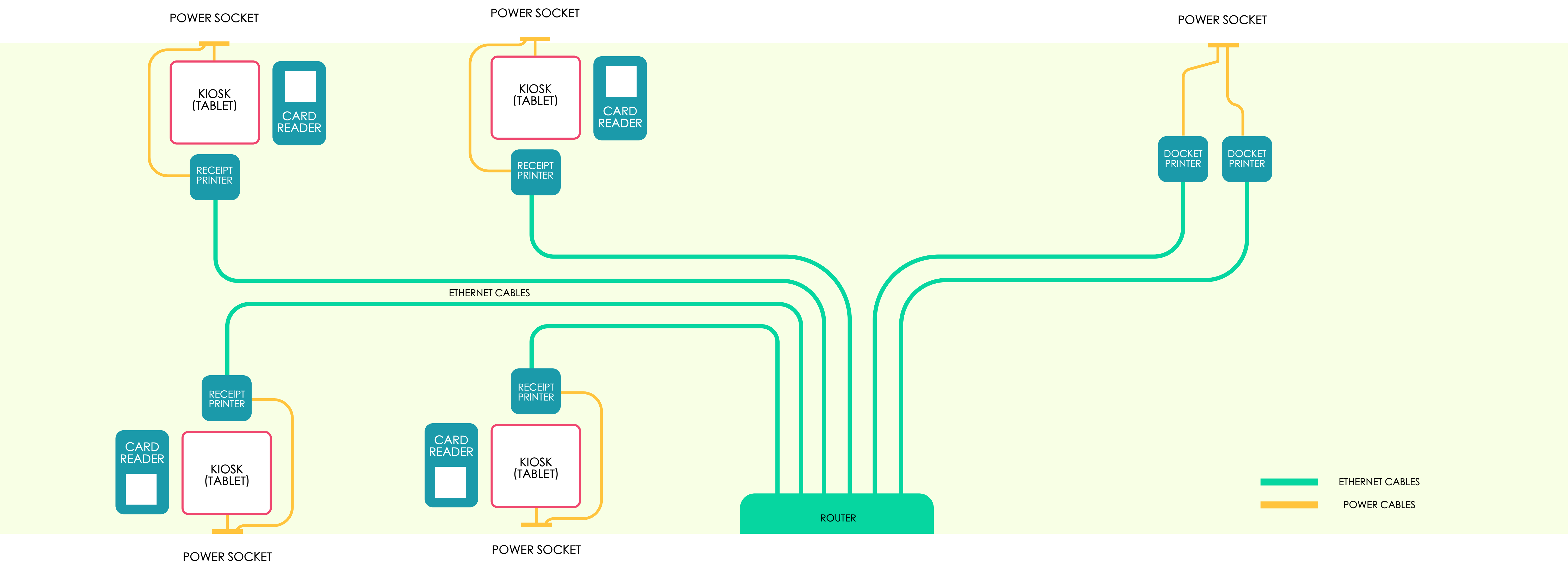
2. Lines of Defence

Another solution is to ensure that you have multiple different internet options available, so that if your WiFi connection goes down, you’re still able to connect to the internet. It’s generally possible to connect to multiple cellular data types.

SIM cards can be inserted into some iPads, and you can buy a contract which gives you some mobile data, like you would with a mobile.

A **5G router** is not like a WiFi router. Whereas WiFi relies on wires (“fibreoptic cables”) which go underground, 5G is totally wireless and will remain up even if the WiFi goes down for the whole block.

Example Set Up



Star Micronics manufactures many of the printers available on the StoreKit website, so we reached out to their Technical Director David Pearce to find out about the best printers for kiosks.

Will the merchant need a specific tablet or kiosk to integrate a Star printer?

With printers simplifying kiosk design, Star actively aids new generation, compact tablet terminals with a wide range of modular open frame printers as well as packaged printing solutions offering connectivity at every level as well as support for iOS, Android, Windows and Linux mini PCs, or tablets. The wide variety of kiosk printers available today make installing a Star printer into any size or type of kiosk that much simpler, whether a slim tablet terminal or a larger more robust kiosk with large paper roll support, designed for outdoor use.

How do they choose a Star Kiosk printer?

The choice of printer will largely depend on the type of kiosk and the application. As printing solutions adapt to provide printer mechanisms small enough to fit into the current trend of sleek, space-saving kiosks, whilst still maintaining a reasonable paper roll size, Star's modular open frame printers (TUP500 and TUP900 series) offer a proven cost-effective, high performance solution while its super-compact Sanei open frame printers are ideal for limited space enclosures. Alternatively, the packaged printer with a range of connectivity options can be the ideal solution for internet connected services. Star's robust packaged printers offer ease of installation, a variety of interface options WebPRNT™ and CloudPRNT™ compatible. Providing a lower cost solution than modular open frame printers, compact packaged printers are easier to install and maintain, with familiar paper loading, especially with front-loading printers such as the cube shaped mC-Print3™ from Star.

David Pearce, Technical Director
Star Micronics EMEA



User Interface Design

Intuiface is a store technology platform, and they know a thing or two about user interface design. We asked them what makes an intuitive interface.

"Effective user interface design for kiosk-based self-ordering systems is dependent on a breadth knowledge that far exceeds considerations for websites and mobile apps. Retail and hospitality providers need to account for four perspectives each individual shopper brings to the screen:

- 1) their level of experience and competency with technology,
- 2) their level of concern about privacy and information security,
- 3) their level of wariness about cleanliness and safety in the COVID era, and
- 4) their level of physical ability and need for accessibility.

A touch-first approach, though seemingly under threat because of viral sensitivity, will continue to be the preferred route for users because it's familiar, intuitive, immediate, and directly expressive. Hand sanitizer stations and highly visible cleaning regimens should allay most



concerns. However, touch alternatives, such as voice commands, touch-simulating hand gestures, and QR code-initiated use of personal mobile devices to remotely control a screen, are good supplements for most use cases. Initiatives like Microsoft Accessibility - a treasure-trove of guidance for how best to present information and enable interaction for people with disabilities - is equally applicable to the new normal of the health-sensitive shopper.

Meanwhile, privacy-related standards like Europe's GDPR are an excellent model for creating interfaces that communicate and implement a respect for personal information and data collection. These can be supplemented with the use of ISO 27001 (or equivalent) certified platforms as they build in information security. Collectively, by accounting for these four perspectives, retail and hospitality providers can guarantee the deployment of universally engaging and effective self-ordering systems."

Geoffrey Bessin, Platform Evangelist, Intuiface



Intuitiface is at www.intuiface.com

What’s the best way to install a kiosk?

What’s the best way to install a kiosk?

StoreKit spoke to Peter Thompson, from the kiosk maufacturer and knowledge-base ImageHolders, to find out.

“We’ve seen a huge demand for self-service...one of the key advantages is cutting staff costs. It allows you to redeploy staff to increase the speed of service.

When it comes to successful kiosk implementation, the device needs to be intuitive. You should consider how to cater to disabled users like blind or partially-sighted people.

In order to be accessible for blind or partially-sighted people, the kiosk content must still use a screen reader to share the content on the screen. There must also be clear, audible information about the location of the kiosk user within the journey and details about what is selected on the page must be communicated audibly.

The crucial element, says Peter, is ensuring that the kiosk matches the customer’s pathway and is clearly visible.

“Placing a touchscreen kiosk in the corner is unlikely to work. It’s a human journey – make sure they check-in at the kiosk required.

“We’ve also seen a poor implementation of digital touchpoints, such as when the kiosk was placed on a reception desk. It therefore fails to fulfil its purpose, as the kiosk needs to replace the function of the reception desk. This would also increase the build-up of a queue at the desk.

“Think of a kiosk like a piece of furniture that you’d be proud to put in a prominent place.”

There is an added investment: securing the kiosk...

“When you put expensive equipment in the public domain, it’s advised to secure it to a fixed point. We’ve put tablets in prisons and secured them with three inches of steel.

Make sure all cables, parts and buttons are concealed as required to prevent unauthorised access.

What are the average startup costs?

“At a very basic level, you’ll want a tablet secured on a wall or a counter; £200 for the tablet plus £200 for the enclosure (plus the monthly cost of a software POS, or third-party integrators if you wish to integrate with an existing POS system).

“The self-service market is rapidly developing across virtually every sector and industry...ImageHolders has developed a wide suite of solutions which allows us to be versatile. Every customer undergoes a consultative process, so we can take account of the environment and the software. It’s advised to get customer feedback.”

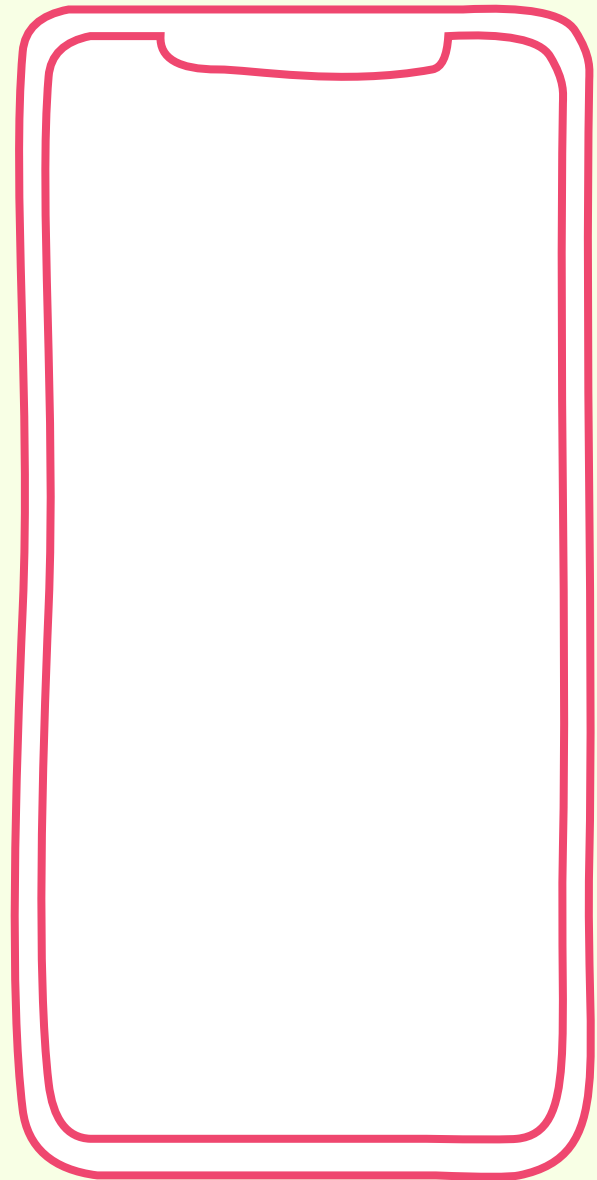
“Make your kiosk future proof; you can upgrade your existing kiosk with new hardware features later down the line, for when you’re in a position to do so. “A lot of customers say we don’t need that now, but we’ll need it in six months. One of the main challenges is that technology is moving so quickly, and tablets are being upgraded as often as every six months.”

Peter Thompson

Account Director, ImageHolders



“MAKE YOUR KIOSK
FUTURE
PROOF”



Safety & Security

Reducing iPad theft risk

Installing iPads brings with it a small but real risk of theft. we spoke to Bouncepad, a world-leader in secure iPad cases, to find out the best way to reduce theft risk.

We asked the stand manufacturer Bouncepad how merchants can best minimise the risk of theft.

“When installing a kiosk in a high-traffic environment, it’s essential your tablet is secure. Quality tablet enclosures are often overlooked in lieu of a cheaper substitute, but these quickly need replacements and it ends up being more costly. When it comes to tablet enclosures, an investment in a product you trust is worthwhile. We’ve created a checklist of considerations to help you make the right choice; functionality, security and design are crucial.

“Functionality covers the key features. You’ll need to consider the installation process, range of stalks, mounts and movements to ensure it will be secure in your chosen environment. Bouncepad enclosures are built with a ‘fit-for-purpose’ approach meaning every angle, measurement and detail is carefully calculated to provide the best possible product for its intended use case.

“There are different levels of security when it comes to tablet kiosks. Mounting the kiosk onto the surface would be the most secure option, a freestanding base would be less secure but is better for temporary solutions. It’s important for peace of mind that your enclosure protects your iPad from snatch-and-grabs. Consider the locking system, how the tablet sits/locks inside the enclosure and the available mounting options.

“Design is a critical element to consider. The kiosk needs to look professional and appealing to encourage customers to engage with it. It should boast an ergonomic design and should present the tablet at the right angle for a great user experience. Every Bouncepad is made with premium materials, chosen for their visual appeal and industry-leading strength.

“Tablet kiosks offer multiple advantages for businesses during the pandemic. Using kiosks for click and collect, self-checkout or visitor management means minimal staff are needed. This facilitates social distancing and reduces the risk of transmissions. Kiosks are easy to keep clean – simply provide anti-bacterial wipes and include signage encouraging people to wipe down the kiosks after each use.”



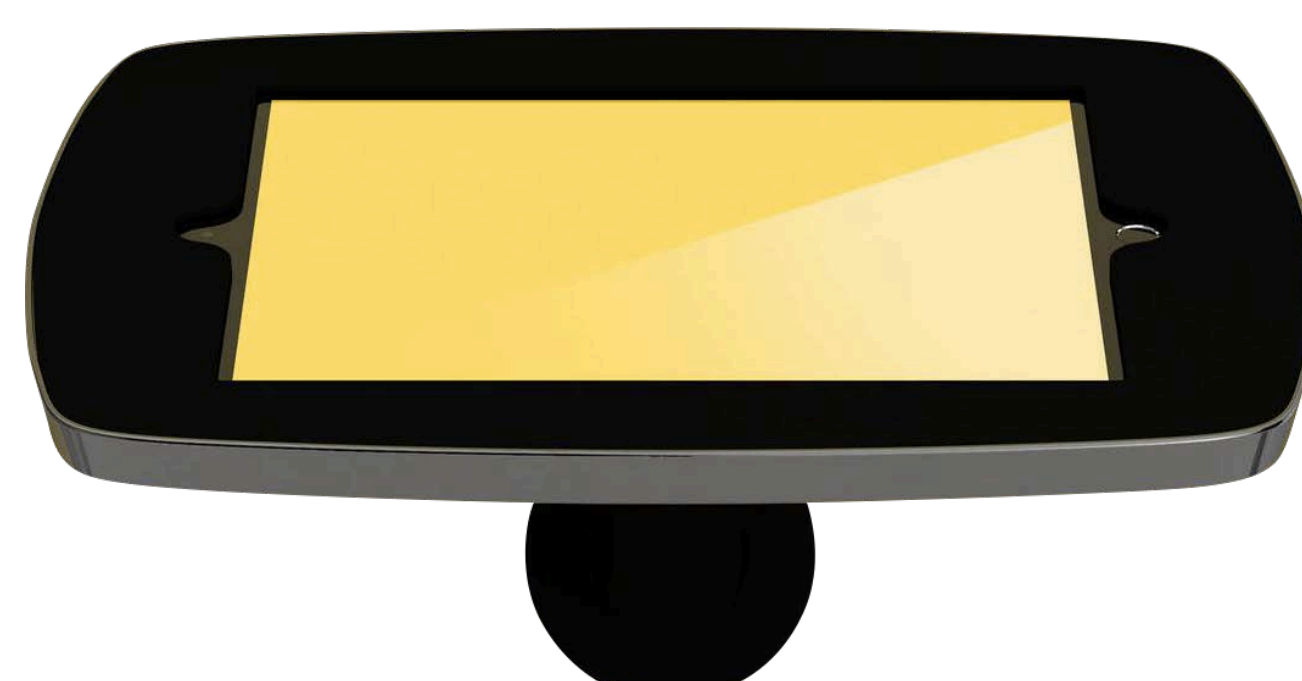
Charlotte Hodson

Communications Manager, Bouncepad

bouncepad®



Counter Flex



Branch



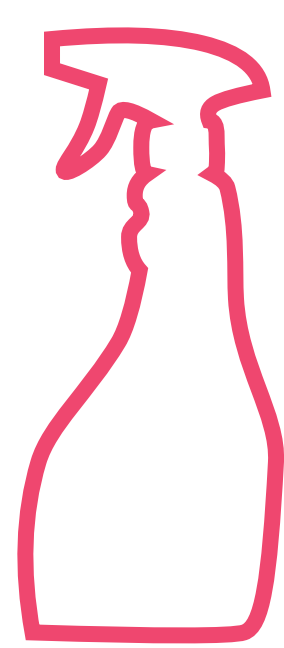
Flip

Discover the whole bouncepad range, available at storekit.com/stands/ipads/

COVID-19 and kiosks

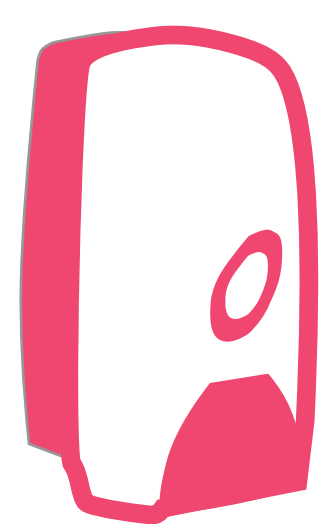
A kiosk can be touched by hundreds or thousands of hands a day. It is absolutely vital that kiosks are thoroughly cleaned and sanitised regularly to ensure a high level of hygiene and to prevent the spread of bacteria and germs.

Some actions you can take you closer to being covid-secure.



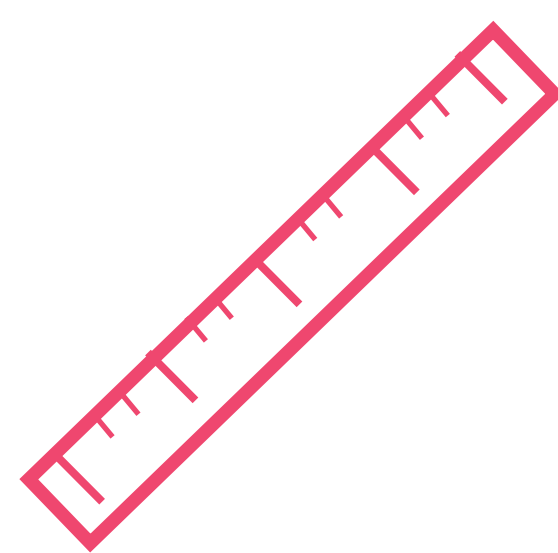
Wipe it down

As frequently as possible. If it's a table kiosk, wipe it down after every use.



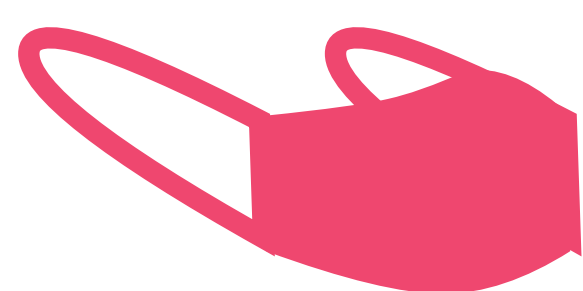
Hand Sanitiser

Placing a hand sanitiser booth in the queue for the kiosk will encourage patrons to wash their hands before and after.



Social Distancing

The queues for kiosks, or kiosks placed close together, can be a social distancing hazard.



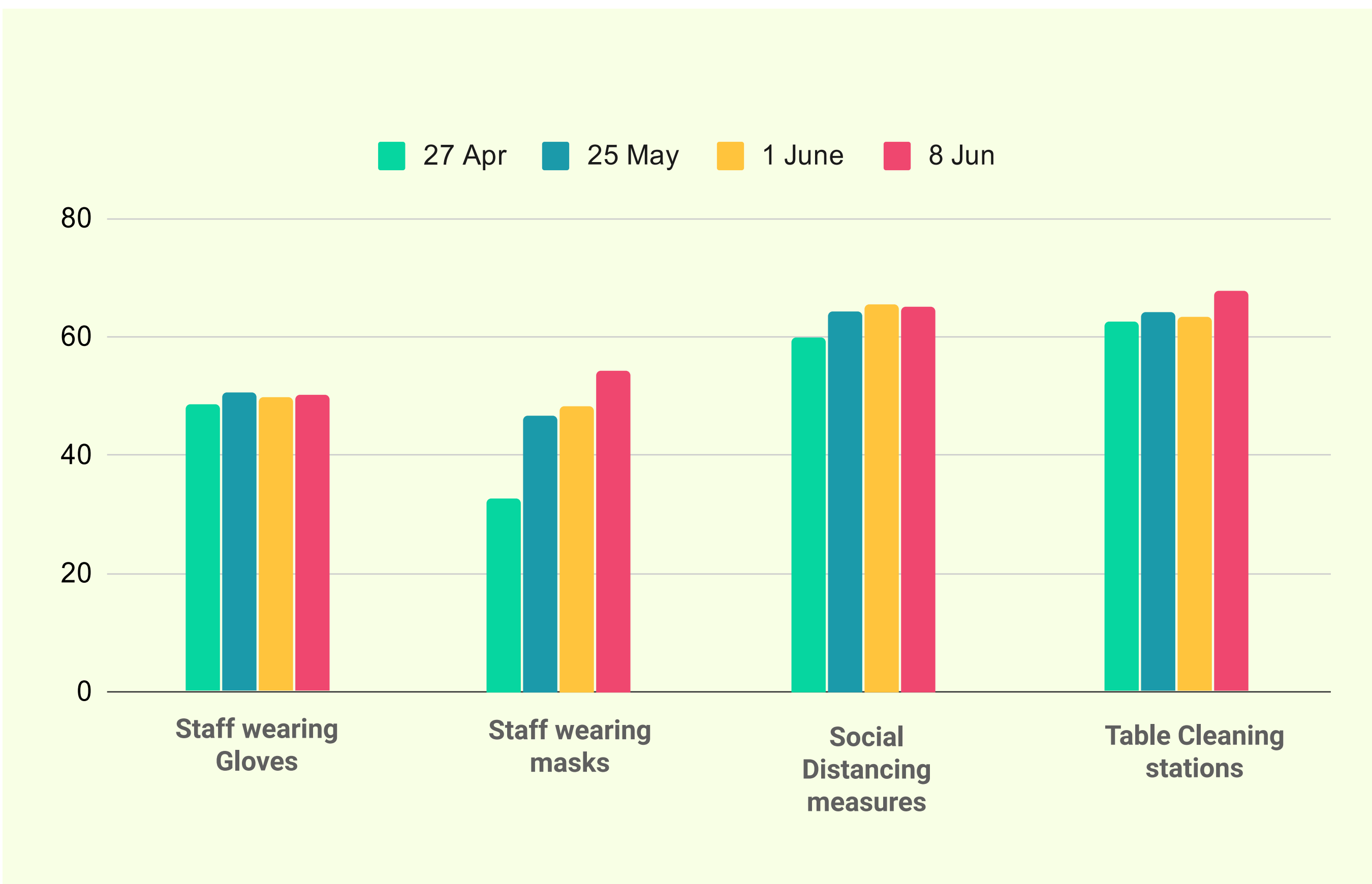
Make Face Masks Available

It's against the law to enter a shop without a face mask – but we're all likely to forget at some point. Make face masks available to buy or provide them for free in your store.

Stats

VYPR, 2020: <https://www.tuco.ac.uk/insight/news-opinion/covid-19-consumer-impact-tracker-shows-effect-coronavirus-consumer-lifestyle>

<https://www.ergonomic.solutions/blog/2019/04/11/the-rise-and-rise-of-self-service-kiosks/>



VYPR has been conducting weekly coronavirus surveys to try to track the evolution of attitudes in real time. Although many of the expectations that customers have of restaurants have remained stable, you can see the uptick in the expectations around masks between April and June as we have come to better understand their effectiveness.



“Retailers have been using kiosks for some time, but hospitality has taken longer to catch on. They may not feel very ‘hospitable’, but customer expectations around human interaction continue to evolve, particularly in light of covid-19. Many operators will see kiosks as a great way to reduce contact and dwell time as part of their social distancing measures. If so, they must give consideration to how touch screens will be sanitised. They should also consider how distancing will be maintained once customers have placed their order, by walking the course and showing customers how to queue and where to wait for their order. Finally, operators should include the capture of contact details in case track-and-trace is required.”

Rob Kidd

Director, Rubikon Consulting

Rob Kidd is the Director for Rubikon Consulting Ltd and has previously worked on projects for Pret A Manger and GAIL'S Bakery.

Mobile & Digital Ordering

This year (2020), a rival to self-service kiosks has emerged. Mobile ordering has been the surprise market entrant as software brands have rushed to fill the demand created by the coronavirus crisis.

Mobile ordering enjoys two significant advantages over kiosks. The first advantage is that mobile ordering requires zero hardware investment. The second is that they are totally covid-secure, and as such, the government has encouraged establishments with bar areas towards this option during the pandemic.

Often, mobile ordering for tables will be a module as part of a broader mobile ordering offer – including takeaway orders, for example.

FlipDish and StoreKit's own Order & Pay solution are examples of software which can do both.

What features should I look for?

1. Mobile Ambiance

Make your software look good and feel easy to use. This is important – not only because your software is an extension of your restaurant, and you've worked so hard to create the perfect ambiance for your customers – but also because this makes a huge difference in terms of how much people end up spending.

2. Easy Navigation

How do your users find your solution, and then how do they order it? As you try different solutions, we'd recommend you try taking an order and do two things: count the number of clicks, and count the time it takes you to make your first order,

3. POS integration

A point-of-sale system should be the "sun" of your software solar system. If you want to retain all your reporting or inventory features, you should continue to use it – and attach your mobile ordering system by integration, perhaps via middleware.

It doesn't need to be an app

Some phone order systems are annoying for customers – especially if they're an app.

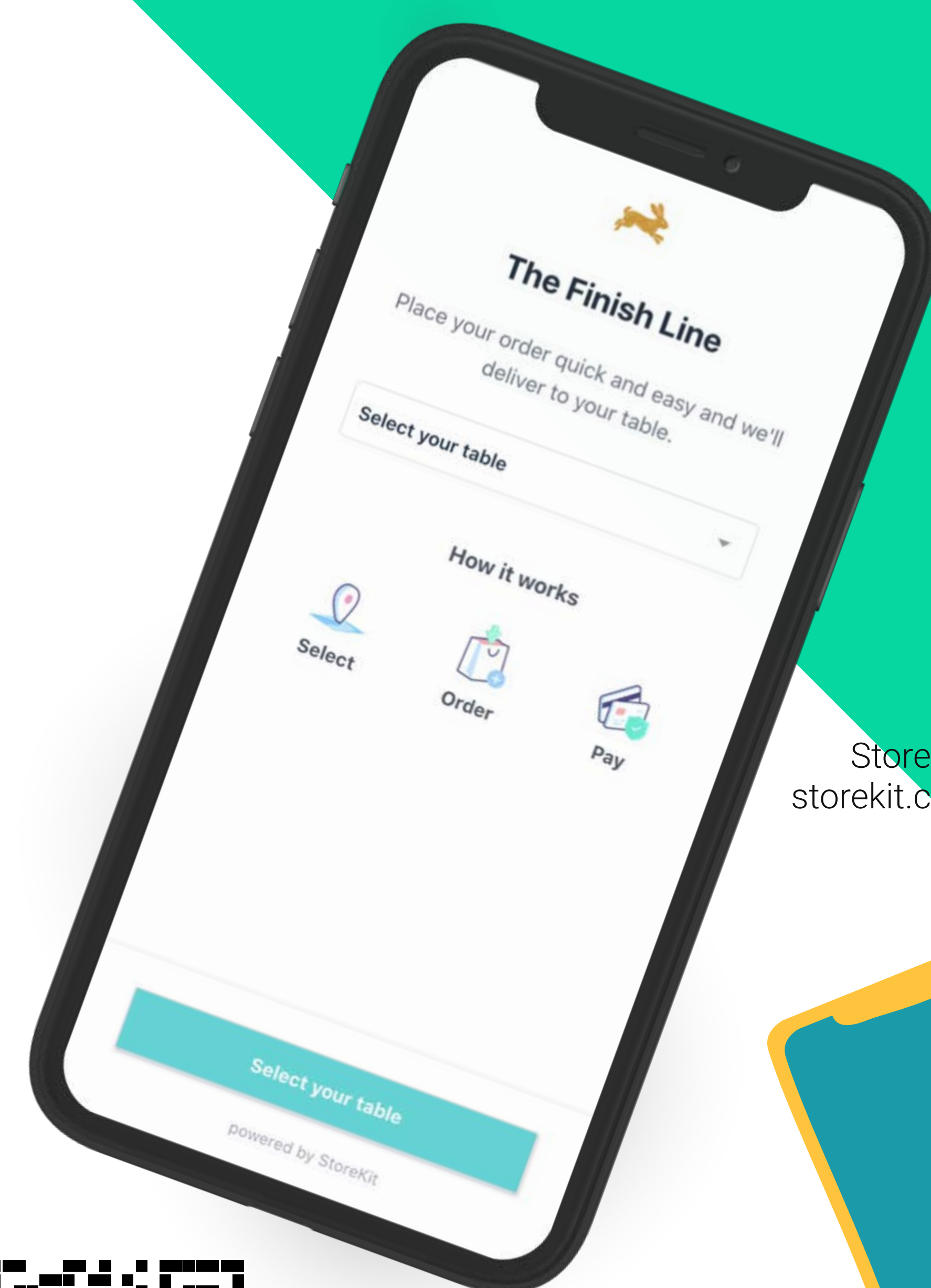
StoreKit's Chief Technical Officer, Ben Larcey, explains – "all the evidence that we have suggests that people don't really like downloading apps they haven't actively sought out."

"Your phone screen is like your bedroom. If it gets cluttered with things you don't really want there, that's really annoying. And that's the relationship between users and unfamiliar apps."

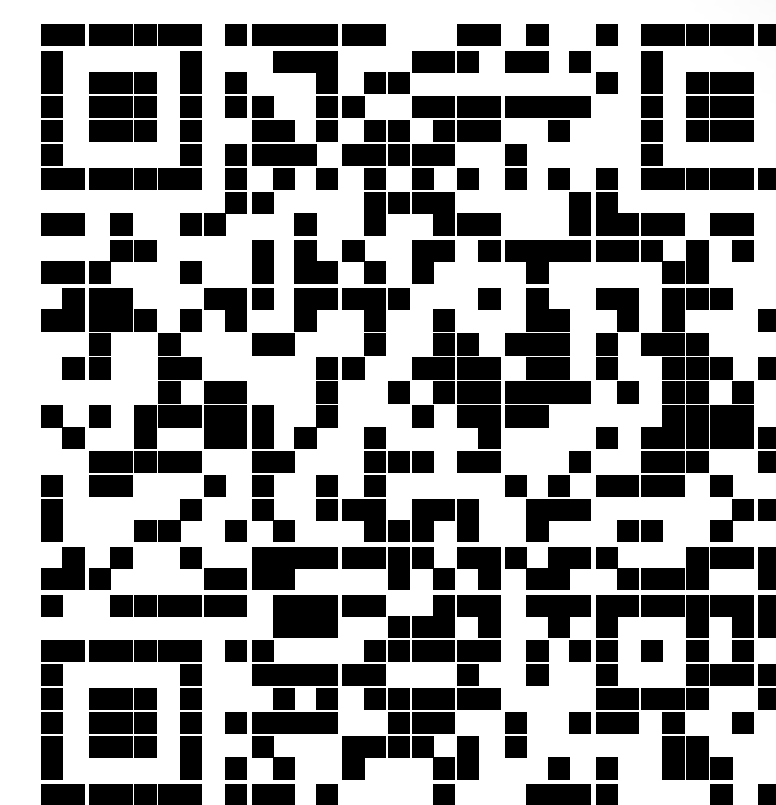
"A **progressive web app** is one solution. It retains some advantages of apps, such as push notifications to tell you your food is nearly ready. But you can navigate to it without having to download anything."

Ben led StoreKit's software team to develop Order & Pay, a progressive web app solution designed to accept table orders. StoreKit is a payment processor, so the app is paid for by the payment processing rate of 1.59% + 15p.

BEN LARCEY
CTO
StoreKit



to find out about
StoreKit Order & Pay, visit
storekit.com/order/takeaway



Open your phone camera
and hold it over this QR code
to try the system out!



How much should I pay?

Software

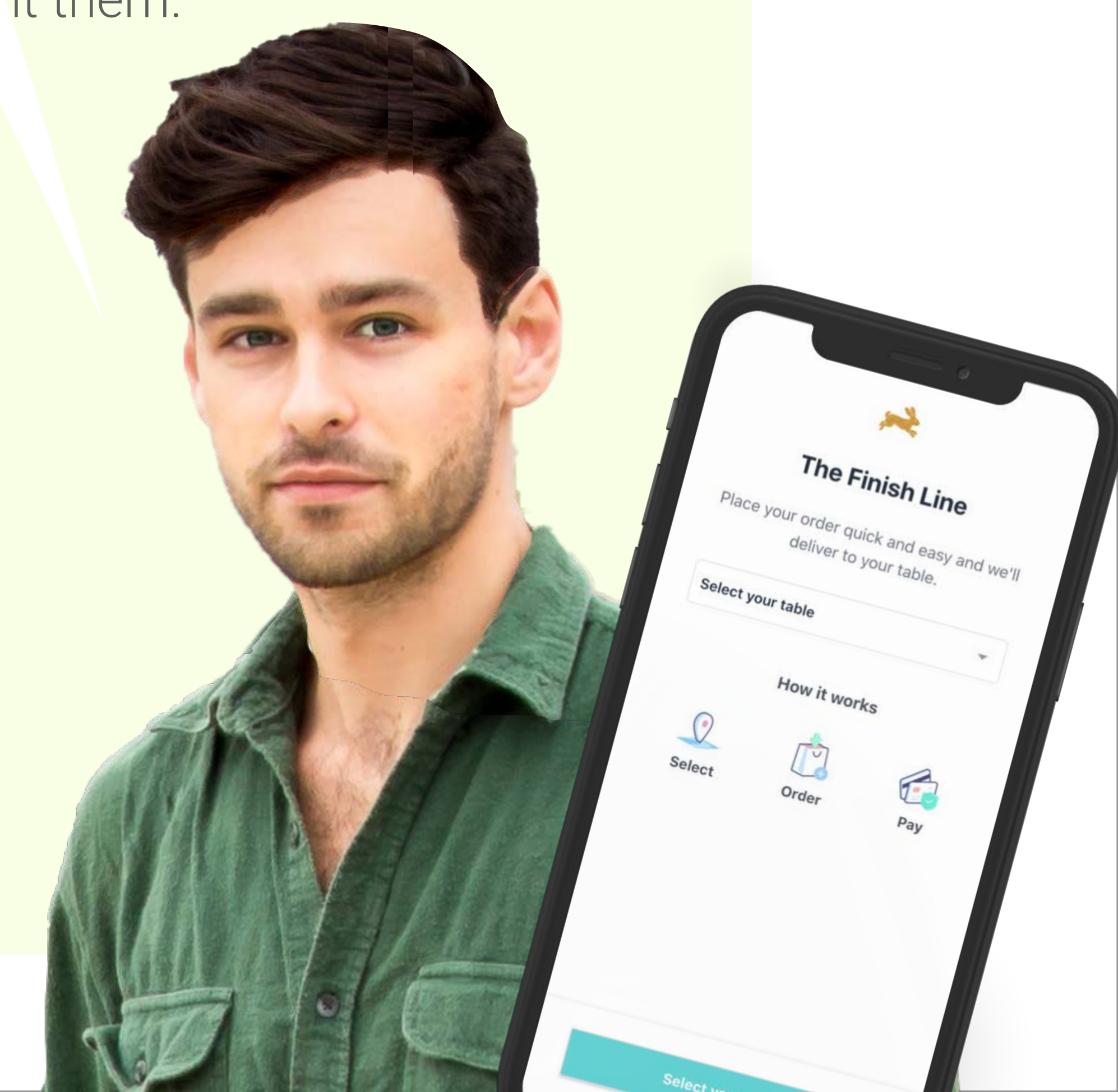
Softwares which charge by monthly fee are likely to be cheaper than those that charge by commission.

The cheapest solutions are by payment processors, who will only charge you for payment processing. Be careful – lots of software providers won't cite payments rates in their price list where they don't fulfil the processing themselves.

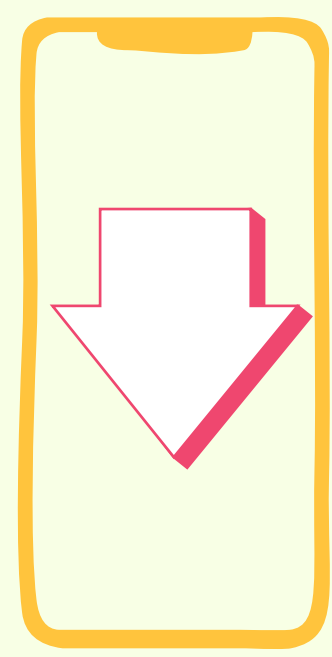
Payment Processing

1.59% + 15p is the rate for StoreKit Order & Pay, and that's the only fee. Our advice: don't pay more than 2%. This is a **card not present** transaction so processing is a little higher than via a card reader because of higher risk of fraud.

"Our focus was to make the software easy and accessible for users of all kinds. Pubs and restaurants shouldn't frustrate customers with technology – they should delight them."



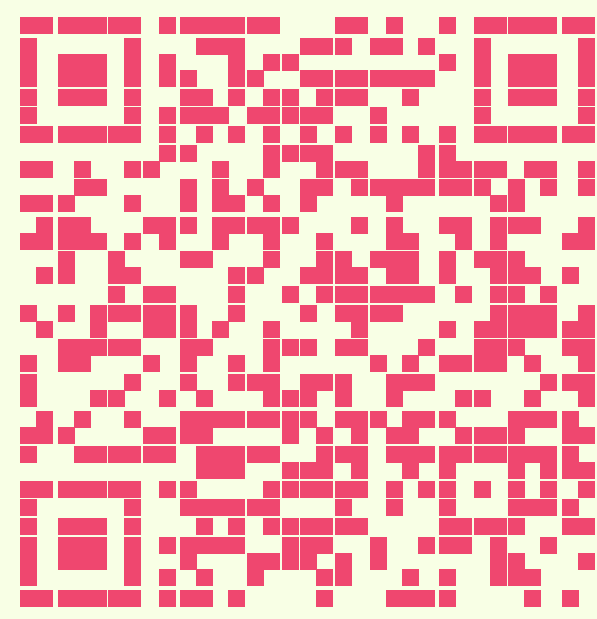
Online Ordering Features



No download required

Downloading an app is the single biggest “pain point” on a customer journey. It’s a hassle, it takes ages, and it might be considered an intrusion – it’s your phone, and somebody is making you download an app.

But this software can be run out of the internet – is this true of your software?



Navigation options

One of the most fiddly parts of the user experience is navigating to the menu. Options include setting your site as your WiFi “home” page, using “NFC” tags, or printing a QR code from the software. Which option is best for our customers?



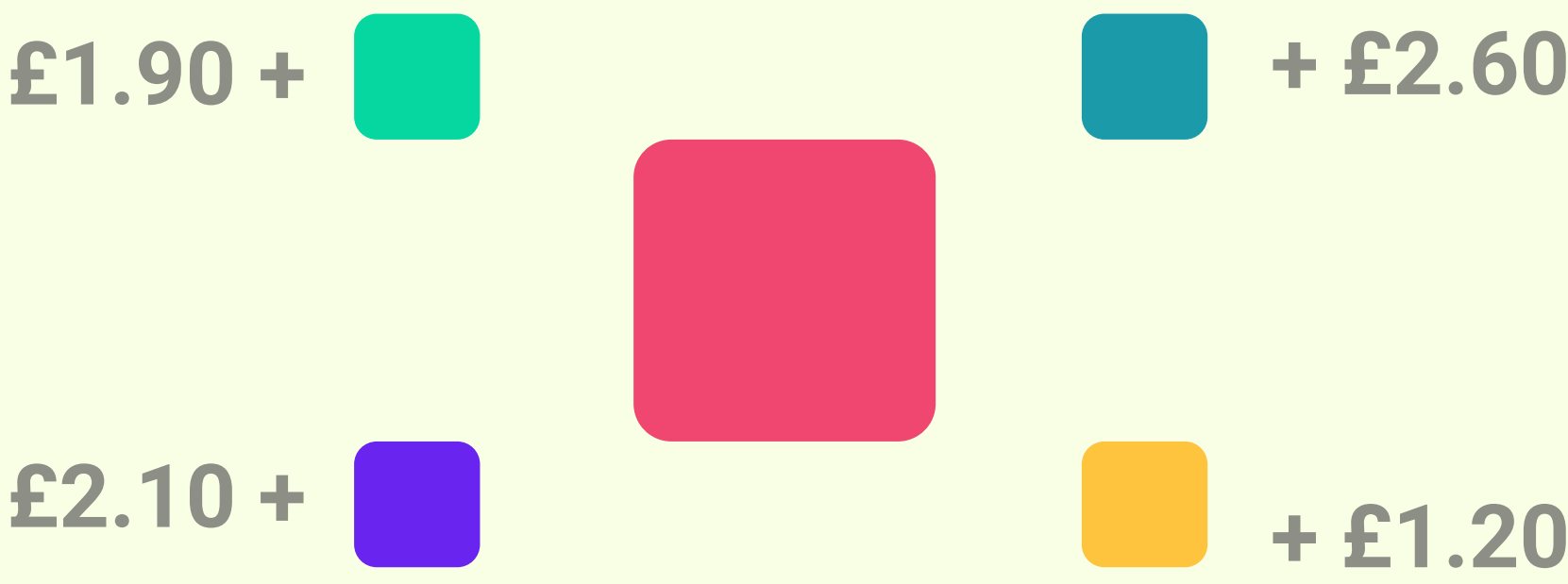
Payment Processing

Mobile ordering is a “card not present” transaction and therefore is likely to be a little pricier than using a card reader. This is due to an increased risk of fraud.



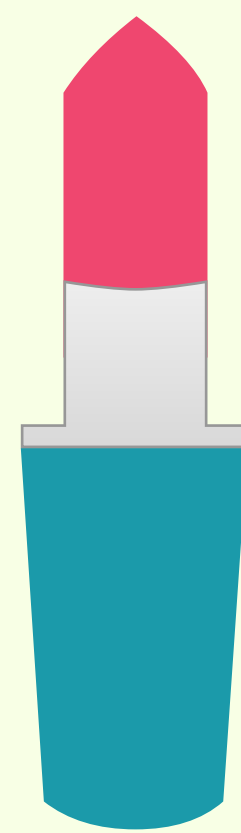
Allergens

In the UK, the law requires that you’re able to classify your food into the following ways – “may contain”, “contains”, and “does not contain”. Software companies from abroad and start ups can sometimes miss this quirk of the law – is your software compliant?



Modifiers

Take advantage of upselling opportunities by inserting modifiers into your customer’s journey. Even just stipulating a 50p charge for extra cheese on your burger dish can impact your cheque size..



Customised? Or beautiful?

There’s an extremely fine balance between **branded, customised, and usable.**

On one hand, it’s great to get highly customisable software because you can make it your own. On the other, software brands have often hired world-class designers, and it would be great if your menu looked excellent with little effort on your part.



Nick Popovici is the CEO of Vita Mojo

Shifting to digital

Vita Mojo is one provider of merchant software and we asked them what they thought about the growing prevalence of digital ordering.

“Here at Vita Mojo, we try to avoid jargon but **omni-channel** is one term really worth getting your head around. Literally ‘multi’ channel, it simply means providing seamless ordering experiences no matter where or how your customers order: mobile or desktop, click & collect or delivery, on kiosks or order & pay at table. Giving customers ease and consistency of ordering across all your channels should be a target for any ambitious hospitality brand.

“Digital ordering is a clear win for operators – equipping customers to order for themselves reduces the labour you need to run (and therefore your expenses) while also removing operational bottlenecks such as waiting for the bill, or queueing at a till, allowing you to serve more customers. Offering a variety of ordering channels reduces friction for your customers, and increases the likelihood that they are both able and willing to order.

“Many brands have started offering delivery, to serve customers who aren't able to physically get to their restaurants. The popularity of delivery-only restaurants is growing too, which avoid many expenses by basing their operations in less expensive areas which can then be transported into cities for home delivery. Click and collect is an ideal option for restaurants in accessible locations as it avoids the hassle and cost of last-mile delivery but still cuts time spent in-store drastically, benefitting operators and customers alike. Self-service kiosks are a convenient in-store solution to increase throughput, reduce queueing and provide a frictionless order experience for your customers. Consider carefully what channels could work for your business.

“It’s key to get digital ordering systems which give you visibility and ownership of your data. Transparency of customer habits, menu performance, footfall trends and operational timeframes is essential for spotting leaks in your operational pipeline, targeting your investment and making decisions which will transform your business. If your data is fragmented and hard to gather then you will struggle to find the time to properly review it, let alone take actions from it. However, when collected holistically across your restaurant system, data can transform your business. That’s why we built our end-to-end solution which makes this not only possible, but easy, for operators. Combined with an effective CRM partner, such as our partners Airship, data turbo-charges your customer relationships. Targeted marketing messages and personalised ordering experiences keep customers coming back for more, increasing their lifetime value drastically.

Nick Popovici
CEO Vita Mojo



The Future of Contact-Free Ordering: What's Next for Kiosks?

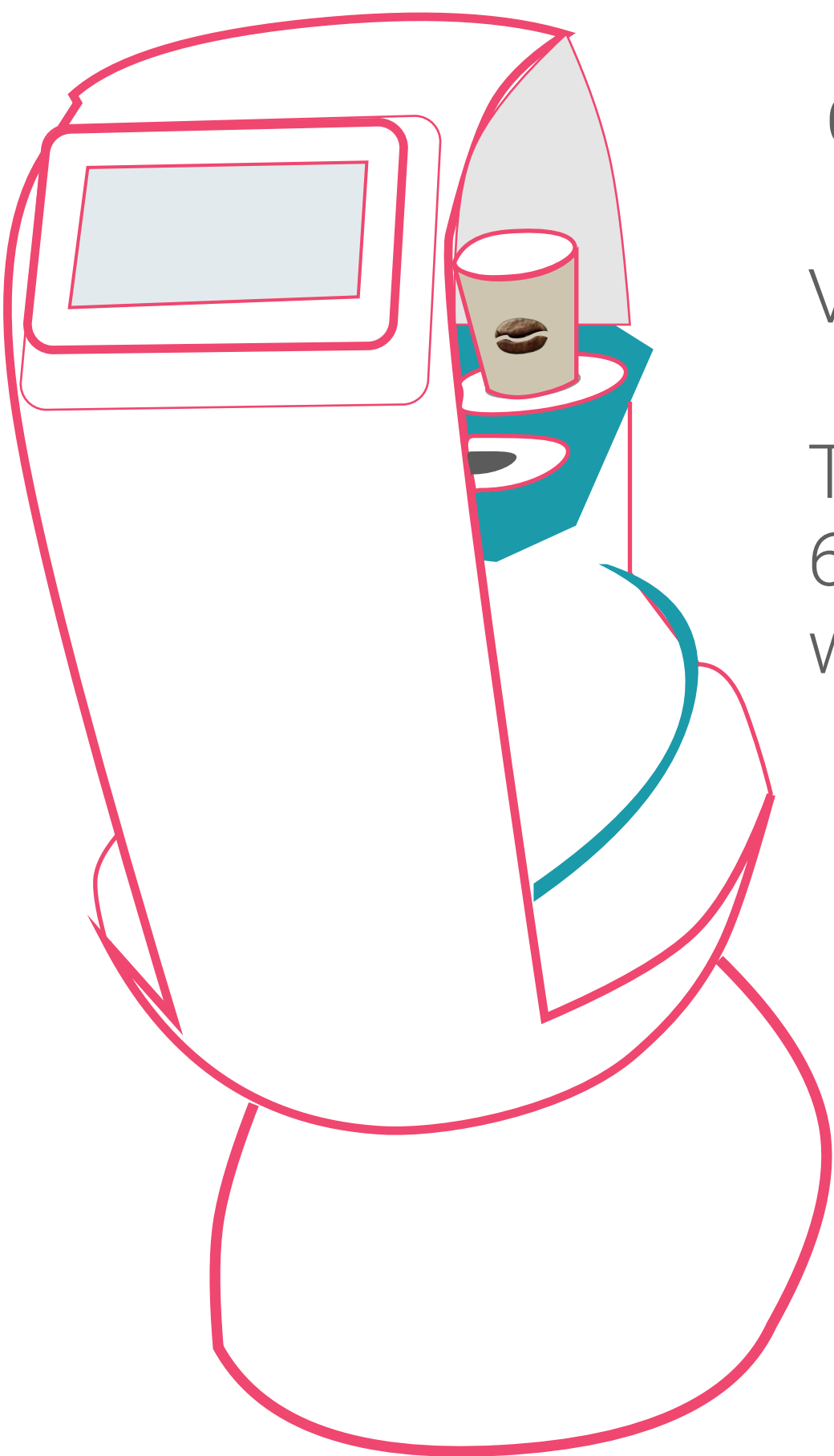
All over the world, the self-service concept has leveraged cutting edge technology to create value and experience in various ways. In South Korea, a self-driving barista robot is bringing customers their coffee order in the cafe. It can make and deliver 60 different types of coffee, which customers order by using a standing touchscreen kiosk.

Other hospitality chains have experimented with display. For example, Starbucks has teamed up with Chinese tech giant Alibaba to create an augmented reality experience. Visitors to the Starbucks in Shanghai can QR-scan different parts of the store to enjoy fun visuals, information about products, roasting process, map of the store and more. The Roastery app includes a digital menu and can also integrate their VR scans with selfies to be shared on social media.

A roaming robotic video display kiosk can invite diners to check out the menu. The kiosk rolls around a prescribed area in the eatery and delivers messages on a 55-inch digital content display screen. Videos are uploaded in real time on the cloud via a CMS. This display is not for self-ordering, but rather it has a marketing purpose; enticing passers-by with images of pizza. There are plans to introduce new features so that it can dispense gloves and face masks too.

Fired Up technologies are adapting to the market needs caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. This kiosk manufacturer has installed a thermal imaging camera system: "This system incorporates a thermal imaging camera, computer and monitor all packaged together in a robust rack. The thermal imaging camera picks up the temperature of anything that passes, the image capture will then be processed by the computer and displayed on the monitor for operators to view." This system helps them identify potential carriers of the virus and minimise transmission risk. Similarly, the display kiosk combines a touchscreen display with an interactive hand sanitiser dispenser, which detects a hand using built-in sensors.

As we've seen, ordering kiosks don't suit every establishment and demographic. For example, those visiting a very traditional restaurant may value the service and personal touches of a waiter more than the speed of a self-ordering kiosk. For now, at least, there is room for both types of experience in the hospitality industry.



Coffee Barista

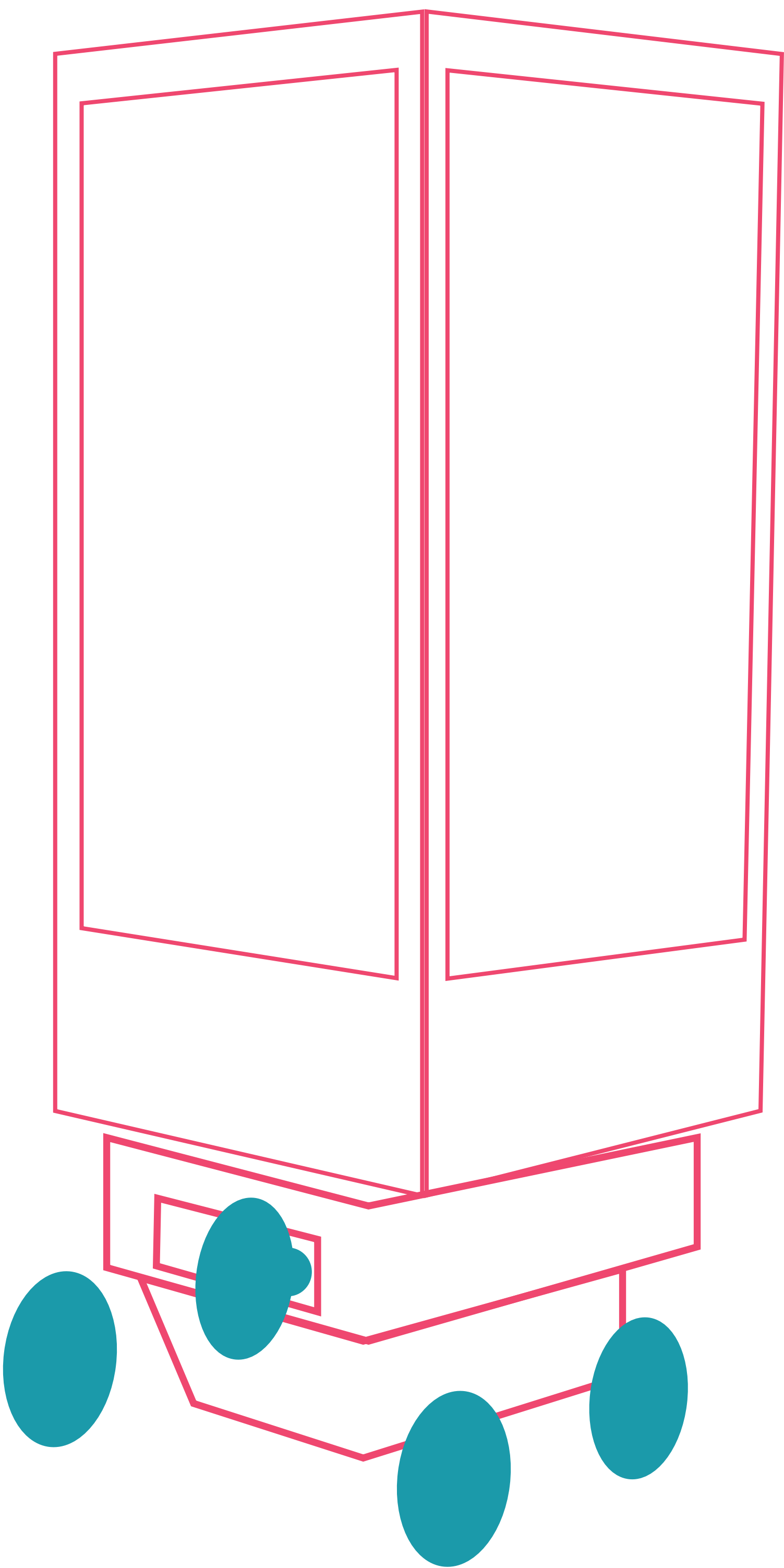
Vision Semicon

This moving robot can bring over 60 different types of coffee to you wherever you are.

Roaming Display

RoboAds.

This display moves, so that it can tempt patrons to a pizza wherever they are.

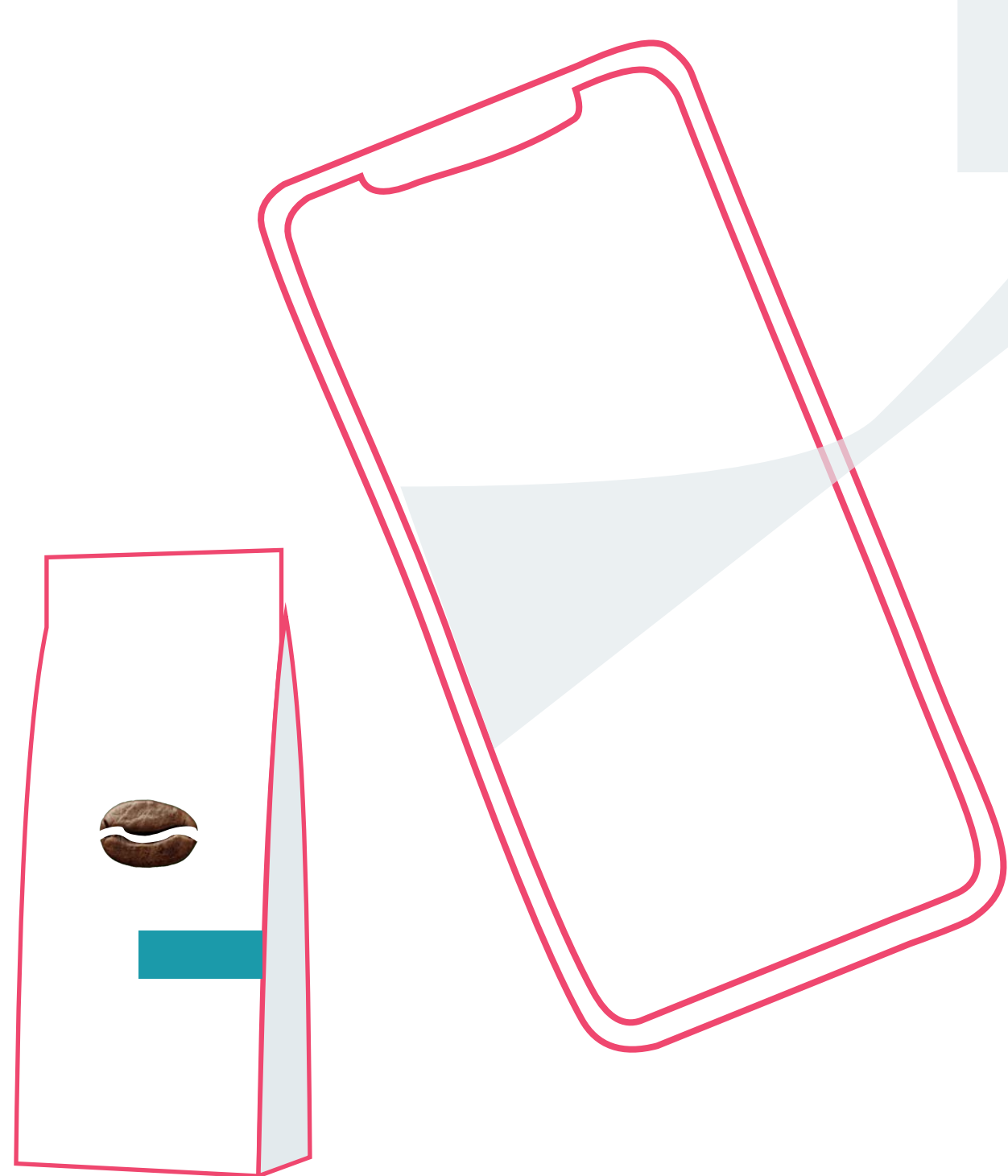




Covid-sensor cameras

Fired up technologies

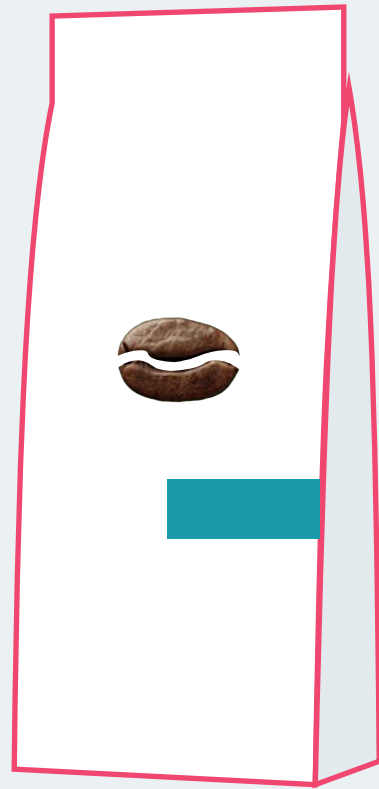
This hthermal imaging camera can detect whether somebody has a raised temperature, possibly due to covid-19.



Augmented Reality

Starbucks & Alibaba

An AR display can add digital information into the physical world.



We asked Revel Systems what they thought the future brought for kiosks.

The future for self-service kiosks will see a greater emphasis on loyalty integrations, more personalized recommendations for upsells and cross-sells, faster no-touch payment options, and improved tools for troubleshooting customer issues by merchants. There are opportunities to use the built-in cameras from tablet solutions for everything from scanning QR/barcodes, to facial recognition applications, to gesture/motion interpretation for no-touch kiosk experiences. The jury is out on voice/natural language ordering through in-store kiosks, although there may be some opportunity there as well.



Kiosks in Context

What’s the context?

There are probably two contexts which inform the adoption of self-order kiosks.

The first is a long term seminal change, which is the adoption of technology. What we think of as “technology” is about newness. To the caveman, a flint axe is technology. Nothing in this guide is, in that narrow sense, “high” technology – although there’s software and hardware, and a fair amount of jargon, nothing in this guide was built wearing a white coat. Very few of the start-ups in merchant technology were spun out of University labs, and no Hadron Colliders were harmed in the making of an ePos system.

in the more commonly used sense, “technology” is about newness on the consumer side – what are we doing now that would have felt abnormal and unnatural five years ago? It is through that lens, that the palpably un-technological rental listings site “Airbnb” gets described as technology. They require some developers, but the concept isn’t

about tech. They’re selling rooms. You could do it with pen and paper.

“Technology” is what we think of as new – and that’s why the kiosks which, in 2020, seem rather self-conscious in their status as “technology”; whereas the WiFi (1998) is only arguably technology. The lighting (1878) is no longer technology. The oven (1826) is defiitely not technology, and you can forget about the soup spoon (1700s).

There’s a point to this, which is that some of the restaurateurs and shopkeepers reading this will be concerned that ordering kiosks are a gimmick. It’s not that it doesn’t make sense – structured in a logical way, there’s a clear case for kiosks. They raise spending, they cut costs, and they eliminate queues. They’re not prohibitively expensive and there’s a growing variety of software choices.

But some people feel instinctively that a kiosk couldn’t, wouldn’t, fit the ambiance of a restaurant – because it feels so unnatural. When you order by kiosk, it’s about the kiosk. It should be about the food.

Kiosks are here. They are not new; they were invented in 1967. They have been rolled out to

every supermarket in the UK, and they are the firm favourite of users under 35 – they’ve been asked.

In fact, there will be people shopping today who do not remember a time when there was not kiosks in their local supermarkets. For that audience, that makes them no less natural than WiFi. Their sense of “normal” will be centred in a world where kiosks are very common, and they will find kiosk in restaurants significantly more “natural” than their parents.

The other context

The other context is the covid-19 pandemic which has swept the world. This could have two lasting effects: one, an enduring set of principles around hygiene (where the evidence for and against kiosks is currently mixed).

The second is the further naturalisation of digital ordering systems. It is something that everyone – not just the “early adopters” – has had to try to get used to.

The view here in StoreKit is that people will get used to kiosks very quickly indeed.



Hello, we're StoreKit.

StoreKit is about technology for stores. We sell hardware. We're also a payment processor. We have an "online ordering solution." But our biggest and longest service has been to guide independent merchants towards the best store technology set-up for them, which we do for free.

It's a rewarding line of work, because we believe in the high street. And we believe technology has the power to help the high street succeed.

Our customers are more than just businesses – they're what places are made of.

Call us on +44 (0) 20 3874 1470 for a free consultation.