

A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Master Restaurant Developers saves 25% of IT staff time, cuts printing costs by 50% and kicks up holiday revenues by 30% with Dell solution



SOLUTIONS

- BACKUP/RECOVERY/ARCHIVING
- DESKTOP/LAPTOP REFRESH
- GREEN COMPUTING
- MOBILITY



CUSTOMER PROFILE

COUNTRY: Miami, FL (USA)

INDUSTRY: Restaurant

FOUNDED: 2006

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 642

WEB ADDRESS:

www.mrdwwc.com

CHALLENGE

Master Restaurant Developers needed a flexible solution for its multi-unit, multi-brand and multi-function portfolio of restaurant franchises to support the company's growth with consistent quality and service.

SOLUTION

The company selected Dell™ OptiPlex™ point-of-sale and desktop solutions, Dell PowerEdge™ servers and Dell Latitude™ laptops as well as Dell PowerConnect™ switches, flat-panel screens and peripherals.

BENEFITS

GET IT FASTER

- 50% savings in time required to equip management teams with new laptops

RUN IT BETTER

- 25% savings in IT staff time with Dell sourcing solutions

GROW IT SMARTER

- 50% reduction in printing costs
- 70% reduction in IT service calls to kitchens
- 30% increase in sales during Cinco de Mayo celebration

DELL

Miami is all about the senses, and Chili's CocoWalk in Coconut Grove is no exception. The experience appeals to the eyes as well as the taste buds. Menu items such as the Presidente Margarita glow in brilliant colors from the 17-inch touch-screen POS workstations around the dining room and reach out to passersby from the 32-inch touch-screen menu at the restaurant's entrance.

“THE FACT THAT I DON'T HAVE TO DEAL WITH MULTIPLE VENDORS SAVES ME AND MY STAFF 25 PERCENT OF OUR TIME. THAT'S TIME WE NEED TO BE PROACTIVE AND PUT DELL TECHNOLOGY WHERE WE CAN USE IT TO INCREASE REVENUES.”

Joel Sierra, IT director, Master Restaurant Developers

This is the creation of Miami-based Master Restaurant Developers (MRD), franchise operators of Chili's, On the Border and other restaurant franchises in Miami and at Miami International Airport. To make the atmosphere visually stunning and to help turn customers' delight into revenue, MRD puts Dell technology to work wherever it can, helping to attract and process more business. From table-top touch-screens to monitors, projectors and wall-mounts, point-of-sale (POS) devices, screens in the paperless kitchen, desktops, printers, servers and switches—Dell works hard to make MRD look and taste good.

“Dell is our one-stop shop for computer hardware and peripherals,” says Joel Sierra, IT director for MRD. “Dell's willingness to source just about all the computer equipment we need helps make us an efficient, well-run business.”

SAVING 25% OF IT STAFF TIME

Dell takes the place of a “white box” vendor of POS hardware and a motley collection of systems that were in place when MRD began buying up restaurant franchises in Miami. To simplify and standardize the growing company's

hardware infrastructure, Sierra turned to Dell for a total solution that would make purchasing, maintaining and financing the IT equipment much easier. The first thing that appealed to him about Dell was its willingness to source and integrate devices from other manufacturers.

If a hardware solution can help open a restaurant faster or give a steak more sizzle, Dell is on it. For instance, MRD wants its staff to take orders on handheld computers to send orders electronically to the kitchen and communicate with the POS devices that seamlessly turn orders into payment processes at the end of the meal. Dell worked with Socket Mobile to source handhelds so that MRD can achieve this efficiency. The staff uses the SoMo 650-M Mobile Computer and CompactFlash Mag Stripe Reader Card 4E to take orders and payments and also carry Epson TM-P60 mobile thermal printers to print receipts.

In another recent development, Dell worked with the supplier of the restaurant's POS software package, Posera Software, to certify Dell hardware on that solution. “That has

HOW IT WORKS

HARDWARE

- Dell™ PowerEdge™ 2900 servers with Intel® Xeon® processors
- Dell OptiPlex™ 755 desktops
- Dell Latitude™ D820, D810, D630, D620, D610, D600, D531, D410 notebooks
- Dell PowerConnect™ 6224, 5424, 3524 switches
- Dell E157FPT touch screens
- Dell E178WFP & E177FP screens
- Dell MFP 1815dn, MFP 3115cn & 1720dn laser printers
- Dell PowerVault™ 124T tape library
- Socket Mobile SoMo 650-M Mobile Computers
- Socket CompactFlash Mag Stripe Reader Card 4E
- Epson™ TM-P60 mobile thermal printers
- Epson TM-88IV Thermal Receipt Printers
- Epson TM-U220 Impact Receipt Printers

SOFTWARE

- Microsoft® Windows Server® 2003
- Microsoft SQL Server™ 2005 Standard Edition
- Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 Standard Edition
- Microsoft Virtual Server 2005
- Microsoft Windows Storage Server 2003

SERVICES

- Dell Financial Services

“DELL OFFERS FLEXIBLE, RELIABLE LCD SCREENS AT A COMPETITIVE PRICE, WHICH ALLOWS US TO HAVE SIX TO EIGHT SCREENS IN EVERY KITCHEN. THIS ELIMINATES 70 PERCENT OF IT SERVICE CALLS TO KITCHENS.”

Joel Sierra, IT director, Master Restaurant Developers

given me enormous credibility with my software vendor,” says Sierra.

Dell also took steps to smooth interoperability between the Posera software and legacy third-party printers. “Dell just jumped in there and provided drivers, software and code to get our solution working,” Sierra notes.

“Dell is working for us, intuitively, to make things function well and to ensure that our needs are met. They solve problems before they get to my desk. The fact that I don’t have to deal with multiple vendors saves me and my staff 25 percent of our time. That’s the time we need to be proactive and put Dell technology where we can use it to increase revenues.”

BOOSTING HOLIDAY REVENUE BY 30%

Celebrations are very important to eating establishments, and Cinco de Mayo brings in a lot of business to MRD’s On the Border restaurant in Miami. However, for patrons sitting in the outside patio area, payment was cash only, which limited sales. To solve the problem, Sierra’s staff put flexible Dell OptiPlex technology to work.

MRD uses Dell OptiPlex 755 machines throughout its business in a number of configurations to serve as POS devices, desktops and even servers. In the case of On the Border, the company installed four Dell OptiPlex 755 ultra small form factor computers in the outdoor patio service area. Dell provided handhelds for staff to use in taking orders outside. “Using the Dell OptiPlex computers and the handhelds,

we were able to successfully take credit cards outside the restaurant,” says Sierra. “Credit card sales revenue on Cinco de Mayo was 30 percent higher than was budgeted.”

PARING AWAY 70% OF SERVICE CALLS

From inside or outside, customers’ orders must travel to the chefs in a steady workflow until serving staff take the finished product back to the dining area. In the past, MRD used printers connected to the Posera software to print out order slips for the chefs. But MRD wanted to cut down on the amount of paper used and the number of printers that would require maintenance. So the company chose to put Dell E177 FP flat-panel screens in its kitchens instead of printers.

MRD mounts the 17-inch Dell screens high in the kitchens to make them easily visible to cooking staff. “They stand up to the harsh environment quite well, are longer lasting than the competitors’ screens and come with a three-year guarantee,” says Sierra. “Plus they are easy to mount. Dell offers flexible, reliable LCD screens at a competitive price, which allows us to have six to eight screens in every kitchen. This eliminates 70 percent of IT service calls to kitchens.”

REDUCING PRINTING COSTS BY 50%

Reporting is a key component to running a successful business. In the past, managers viewed reports on paper until Sierra’s team began

providing the management team with Dell Latitude laptops. Now managers view reports on PDFs, enabling the company to eliminate 50 percent of its printers and save on paper, hardware and maintenance costs. In addition, decision makers have the information they need on the go.

“We have directors and managers who don’t have a fixed office,” says Sierra. “They rotate between restaurants and the corporate offices. The ability to dock their laptops into any one of our shared docking spots is invaluable.”

Staying within the Latitude family has made it easy to keep executives equipped with the mobile technology they need. “So many of the components are interchangeable that I’ve been able to quickly move the president of the company from a Dell Latitude D610 to a new D820,” says Sierra. “His Sprint Wireless card and his Bluetooth interface and the other add-ons he had were a perfect fit with the Dell Latitude D820. In outfitting an entire management team, this saves me a tremendous amount of time. Giving a manager a new laptop takes about half the time it used to before we began standardizing on Dell.”

COOKING WITH TWO SERVERS

The MRD corporate data center runs on two redundant 64-bit Dell PowerEdge 2900 servers which host 16 virtual servers deployed using Microsoft Virtual Server. Data is backed up to a Dell PowerEdge 2900 server with 1 TB hard drive storage running Microsoft

Storage Server 2003. "We run all our file and print, accounting, data reporting, SQL database, Exchange and Web applications from virtual servers that run on the two PowerEdge servers," says Sierra. "In fact, you could say we run a \$40 million business on two Dell PowerEdge servers—that's how much we trust them to provide reliable, available, fast performance for our applications."

A Dell PowerVault 124T tape library backs up data onto tape for archiving. Dell PowerConnect 6224, 5424 and 3524 switches provide high-speed connectivity to link the equipment together using industry standards.

TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

Dell serves as a key partner to MRD by helping to put the technology in place to grow the business and allow it to function smoothly.

"Our company is in a growth mode, and the ability to finance directly from Dell helps me put together my hardware solution that goes into each new restaurant, order it and know that leasing and financing terms remain the same," says Sierra. "And the fact that Dell readily subdivides from a master lease to individual subleases for each one of the restaurants is very helpful."

The Dell warranty is the final ingredient that brings the whole Dell solution together. "In my experience, the fact that I can buy non-Dell peripherals that are integral to the operation of my restaurants, such as cash drawers and bar-code scanners, and receive the same onsite next business day warranty program is unmatched," Sierra concludes. "The other vendors that I have used cannot touch that particular aspect of the Dell offering in any way, shape or form. Bringing the Dell brand together with Chili's and On the Border has been a phenomenal success that gives us tremendous momentum into the future."

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