

“Simplicity is Key”

Lesley Locke, Catering Services Manager, CSA Ashdown, Hastings

The business based catering service at CSA Ashdown House is tasked with catering for a broad range of customers. A large proportion of the staff is on a temporary contract so gaining loyal custom to the restaurant and café is a challenge, but one that Lesley Locke, Catering Services Manager has a strategy for.

Lesley says “Simplicity is key. My customers need to come in, see what’s on offer, see it at good value, buy it then eat or drink it. The offer needs to be clear and have stand out.”

Lesley and her team cover a footfall of around 400 people a day in the restaurant between the hours of 7 - 5.30pm, and around 200 customers visit the café and the shop which sell both tea and coffee.

The unique challenge that the team are faced with is that a large proportion of the staff are restricted to their working areas, if they leave they have to clock out. This means that when they do leave to grab a coffee or tea, it needs to be worth their while.

In late 2009 Lesley was introduced to PG2GO and began stocking the cups. But in October 2010 she agreed to trial the PG2GO machine in her restaurant together with the green tidy units and new point of sale (POS) materials; these were also placed in the café and shop. Prior to the trial, coffee was outselling tea by fifteen to one, tea was just not performing.

The PG2GO machine was given pride of place in the restaurant during the trial and was accompanied by an impactful free standing banner and show boards throughout the restaurant; all of which created a really strong brand presence.

Brand Visibility

“The monkey was great in grabbing attention, everyone knows and loves monkey. Having the machine and merchandising in prime position really made an impact and was noticed before people even reached the coffee station. As a personal rule I am nervous about having logos everywhere; I think it creates too much noise for the customer, but the POS that we were given for PG tips gets the balance right” comments Lesley.

The Results

The average number of cups of tea purchased per person per week has risen by 70% - a direct increase in volume. “There has been a definite rise in popularity for tea since the trial started” says Lesley.

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Where there has been a fall in the number of people on site, there has been a direct decline in the total volume of hot beverage sales. However, the increase in popularity for tea following the trial has slowed down the total volume decline, which is a great result for this catering facility.

It is also true to say that where as the revenue is declining per cup, driven by coffee as consumers choose the downgrade - the reverse is true for tea as consumers upgrade to PG2GO.

The Cups & Machine

“We currently use Flavia machines for both our tea and coffee, it does a mediocre cup of tea, but the machine itself is so complicated to use we often see customers stumble on how to use it. The PG2Go machine and branded cups are a much better solution. They look good, they are practical and they help keep the area tidy” says Lesley Locke.

Throughout the catering facilities, it is the client contract that has specified the required entry price for tea and coffee. Offering PG2GO alongside this base priced tea means the customers get a choice for a larger more premium tea to go, from a brand they know and love in and out of home.

Lesley concludes “PG2GO is a great way to increase revenue and profit from tea sales and we will continue to sell throughout our facilities in order to regain strength for our total hot drinks sales”

Brand VisibilityTip from Lesley Locke, Catering Services Manager, CSA Ashdown

“The positioning of your tea area is crucial to sales”

Throughout the trial the PG2GO machine was displayed in a prime position as you entered the serving area, however when moved beside the coffee machines, second in line, the sales did dramatically drop off.

“They key is that as well as putting up all of the POS and merchandising, you need to make sure the boiler or branded machine is visible, it really helps put tea front of mind and encourages them to opt for a high margin drink option” suggests Lesley.

“The positioning of your tea area is crucial to sales”