



laCita

THIS WIRELESS P.O.S. IMPLEMENTATION BRINGS OUT THE LATIN DANCER IN ALL OF US

This place has to be one of the hippest venues in Sydney. On the edge of the CBD, overlooking Darling Harbour, La Cita is by day a location to enjoy a cool beer and fine South American food whilst casting an eye over the yachts and leisure craft coming and going. At night, it transforms into a full-blown Latin dance venue, complete with Salsa rhythms and the energy of Spanish/Mexican swing and dance movement.

You don't believe me? Go to www.lacita.com.au, and check it out!

We went one better, and sat down at La Cita over a delicious fish lunch, to savour the atmosphere.

"It's impossible to get in here on weekends without a booking", said Norman Birse, Manager at La Cita. "We have just celebrated our first birthday, and even without much promotion, we have become a major meeting point for the Latin community, as well as

aspiring Latin culture lovers."

This place is not just about quality food. The dance activity is supplemented by regular Salsa and Latin dance lessons during the week, which cater to all skill levels. "We are particularly popular as a hen's night venue", said Norman. "The girls can have a fun night out in a safe environment, and even get a spin around the dance floor with one of our Latin dance instructors."

La Cita is on two levels; downstairs there is a restaurant and bar, and upstairs is a bar and nightclub, with a state-of-the-art sound and light system playing Latin dance music.

"Our customers come for a full night out", said Norman. "They start downstairs with dinner, and then move upstairs for dancing and drinks. Most of them never leave the venue until they are ready to crawl home exhausted".

A place like this presents unique challenges to the P.O.S. systems supplier. John Spencer-Scarr from Food Manager explains: "La Cita is very dependent on having a reliable and accurate booking system. The business operations flow from that. Time and attendance, customer loyalty, replenishment ordering, even uniform management, are all managed electronically. In addition, the venue needs some flexibility in its floor configuration, so like most of our other sites, we implemented a wireless network."

"Not only have the owners saved on cabling costs, they have the freedom to move work stations around if required, without having to worry about data cabling. Contrary to the opinions of others, we have found wireless networks in restaurants to be reliable, robust and secure. The operators report no downtime, and even the tech-savvy business upstairs from us complains that they cannot penetrate the network.



We have learnt quite a bit about securing these networks, but once these lessons are applied, we find them to be trouble-free and far more convenient than wired networks.”

John also gives a thumbs-up to the touch screen terminals. They chose Obvios® Crossbow terminals for this site, due to the small footprint. The solid die-cast aluminium construction of the terminals is ideal for this environment, and there have been no problems from the inevitable spills that happen from the bar. The aluminium case acts as a heat sink, which further increases reliability. This is an important factor on weekends, as the team there processes over 4,000 separate orders in 12 hours, across 6 terminals. If one or more goes down, it could have a significant impact, but like a good Latin dancer, they just keep going and going.

John told us more about Food Manager. “It was first written about 15 years ago as a back-office management tool for restaurants, so it has strong business management functionality. Our users choose it for its solid stock control process, with sophisticated analysis and reporting, but it also has a high level of integration with all the main business processes.

As a result, La Cita can manage just about all of its activities electronically. This has made the operation very efficient and economical. For example, we are able to secure for the business significant discounts on its supplies, due to our accurate forecasting and ordering. Our company manages this for La Cita on a consultancy basis, passing on all savings to our client. We see this as the way of the future: technology partners working closely with clients

to deliver real cost and efficiency savings.”

We asked Norman to comment on the system from the perspective of a user. “It’s great”, he said. “The touch screen interface is fully configurable, so we were able to set it up to work the way we wanted. All our staff learnt it quickly, which is really important in the hospitality industry with its high level of casuals and part-time workers.”

So at the end of our superb meal, we sat down and surveyed the scenery across Darling Harbour. As we observed the expensive luxury boats, we contemplated whether to take up Latin dancing, but decided in the end that we should stick to what we do best – supply and implement all-singing, all-dancing retail management systems!

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