



Within a year PSL has assisted The Aviator Hotel to reduce FCOS by 2.5%; save 24 man hours per month and are on target to achieve savings of £100k

Best known for its famous airshow week, The Aviator Hotel, Farnborough, is nearing the end of their first year of working with PSL. During this time they have seen an increase in both monetary and time savings, plus a sustainable reduction in their Food Cost of Sales percentage.

Madhu Murtala, Financial Controller of The Aviator said, “PSL provide us with great flexibility which is particularly favourable with our Chefs. At the outset we had discussions to determine precisely what kind of product we wanted as well as specifying the quality; PSL were able to advise which suppliers would meet our requirements and arranged for samples so that we could test them fully. The communication was superb, enabling us to ensure that product was quality checked and delivery timescales were right, so that by the time we moved to PSL’s suppliers there was no impact on our guests as everything met our high standards from the outset.”

Madhu continued, “Initially we just had a purchasing agreement with PSL but we soon realised after 4 months that we could gain even more benefits through Operational support from them too. PSL were very accommodating and we drew up a new agreement – the transition was very quick whilst being smooth and well-orchestrated. We wish we’d started the Operational support earlier in order to gain the benefits of this even sooner. The biggest impact we have seen is how our Food Cost of Sales has reduced – over 2.5% points and we are on track to achieve our target of £100k savings in our first year.”

Tighter controls

Through operational support PSL has been able to review and advise The Aviator on some of their working practices. One key change was to discontinue their monthly stocktakes which achieved nothing except to determine the value of stock at one point in time. These have now been replaced by weekly focus meetings, affording the opportunity to easily cross check every invoice against delivery statements, saving The Aviator 24 hours of time per month! Madhu explained, “These meetings highlight actions required which can then be acted on immediately. As a result, our processes are more robust and much more tightly controlled.”

Passion and motivation

“PSL have shared their knowledge with our chefs and through working well together we have made a very smooth transition. PSL provided several training sessions earlier this year which really inspired our chefs and developed their knowledge even further.” Madhu continued.

“A key element of our working relationship has been the passion of PSL and their willingness to share their knowledge. As a result, our Chefs are more motivated and there is a great chemistry between our Chefs and PSL’s Key Account Manager, who has the right skill set to work with people.”

Managing costs and tracking allergen data

What's in My Dish? (WiMD) – PSL's recipe management system has been just as important to The Aviator as food costs. Madhu said, "It is an invaluable tool for our chefs and is a free benefit as part of working with PSL. Our Head Chef and Sous Chef are fully trained and are now training others on using the system. It enables us to manage our recipes, monitor and manage food costs within our recipes, and track allergen data."

As for the future, Madhu explained, "We are always looking at 2-3 months ahead so that we can improve progressively. We have many ideas planned for the future. We are taking things at a steady pace, getting things right, introducing new ideas/systems and embedding them properly – it's key to keeping smooth, sustainable progress. We are about to have our first airshow week since commencing with PSL – we know they will help us through this, our busiest period, and we feel more confident as a result."

Daniel Wilson, Managing Director of PSL concluded, "We were delighted to be invited to work with such an eminent hotel and assist them in making savings whilst maintaining the 4* quality their clients expect. Working with them has been strengthened by their enthusiasm to progress as they are not afraid to introduce change; this has greatly assisted their success."