

that requires a specialised approach with highly trained staff and well-equipped vehicles. We pride ourselves on taking away the day-to-day operational logistics from our clients, allowing them to operate more efficiently and cost-effectively."

One client that knows the benefits of working with a specialist distribution company to handle its meals to 40 sites across Wandsworth, Harrow and Lambeth is Harrison Catering, the independent contact caterers.

"We have been working with Gate Ventures for seven years and think it's important that every schoolchild should have access to a hot lunch, whether their school facilities allow this or not. Working together we make sure this aim is achieved.

"Our partnership approach has made this affordable, meaning that more of the money paid for the meal ends up on the plate," said Gareth Harrison, director client services, Harrison Catering.

Gate Ventures' experience and established infrastructure is central to its commitment to helping clients place more of every pound into the mouths of the children they feed.



The business only succeeds while it can provide a speedy, efficient service to schools

“ It is important that the routes run like clockwork to meet target times at each school. Even a few minutes late has the potential to significantly impact on the school day compromising pupils’ routine ”

With a dedicated workforce of nearly 100 CRB approved staff and a fleet of 70 Tracker equipped vehicles in its meal transportation division, Gate is able to absorb costs by creating finely timed, efficient multi-drops instead of numerous individual deliveries.

Typically by mapping out the routes, the company is able to reduce the number of vehicles and staff required to service a contract by up to half. As well as a financial saving, there is a significant reduction in the environmental impact,

being further supported by the current project to convert vehicles to LPG.

At the start of any contract, sites and

timings are mapped out by using bespoke software. The routes are then regimentally road-tested in real time to identify potential issues. After a series of test-runs, improvements are made and a final route is agreed serving up to three drops from one vehicle in a 45 minute window.

This level of precision-mapping is a meticulous task that is taken seriously with company investing heavily in its Tracker monitoring system for all vehicles. With the ability to monitor progress and estimated arrival time, potential issues or

delays can be identified and a recovery strategy put in place within minutes.

Transport manager Neil Robbins said: "It is important that the routes run like clockwork to meet target times at each school. Even a few minutes late has the potential to significantly impact on the school day, compromising pupils' routine. Financially the implications can also be considerable - it isn't unheard of for catering contractors to be fined by local authorities for repetitive lateness."

Tobun says: "It's time that the industry considered the safe and hygienic delivery of school meals in the same way that we now view the content of the plate. How it arrives is an equally important part of the process and we are committed to setting a new quality-standard across the industry that is also competitive on price."

Gate Ventures' food transportation division is just one part of the company's facilities management offering. Other services provide kitchen deep cleaning and building maintenance operations.

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