

Make every campus visit count ▼

How technology can help create easier, more rewarding hospitality experiences.

University and college hospitality teams operate in a demanding environments.

Customers expect quick, convenient service. Costs remain under pressure. Teams may be managing cafés, restaurants, bars, shops, events, conferencing and accommodation across multiple locations – often using different systems and processes.

Technology can help, but only when it makes the operation simpler.

This guide explores how connected hospitality technology can improve the customer experience, provide a clearer view of performance and help teams make better-informed decisions.



1. Make it easier for customers to order and pay

A good hospitality experience often begins with something very simple: **making it easy for customers to buy.**

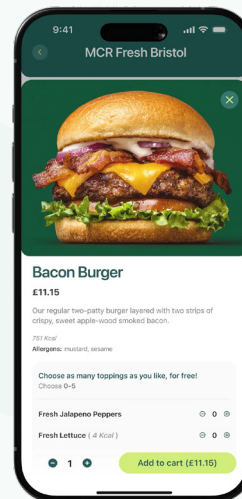
Long queues, limited payment options or confusing ordering processes can quickly affect customer satisfaction. They can also put pressure on frontline teams during busy periods.

Different campus environments will require different approaches. A high-volume food court may benefit from **self-service kiosks, mobile ordering, vending or even grab and go pick up lockers**, while a smaller café may need a **fast and straightforward EPOS system**. Conference venues may need additional meeting room booking and room order services.

The right mix of technology can help you:

- ▶ reduce queues at busy times
- ▶ give customers more choice in how they order
- ▶ process payments quickly and securely
- ▶ improve order accuracy
- ▶ manage demand across different outlets
- ▶ create a more consistent experience across campus

The aim is not to introduce technology for its own sake. It is to choose solutions that suit the environment, the customer and the way each outlet operates.



2. Connect operations and data ▼

Every hospitality transaction creates useful information.

Your data can support stock management, purchasing, menu planning, staffing, financial reporting and even measure customer satisfaction. However, that information is much less valuable when it sits across separate systems or has to be brought together manually.

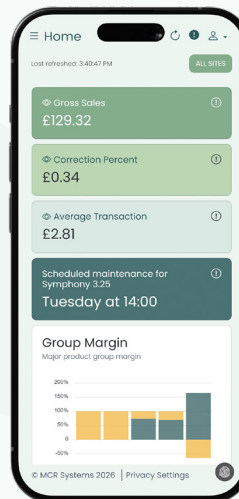
Connecting EPOS, payments, stock management, ordering and kitchen operations can give teams a clearer picture of what is happening across the business.

It can help answer practical questions such as:

- ▶ What is selling at each outlet?
- ▶ When are particular products most popular?
- ▶ Are stock levels reflecting actual demand?
- ▶ Where are availability or waste issues occurring?
- ▶ Are promotions delivering the expected results?
- ▶ How does performance vary by outlet, day or time?
- ▶ How happy are your customers?

Better integration can also reduce duplicated work and the time spent checking or reconciling information.

The goal should not be to generate more reports. It should be to make the right information easier to find, understand and act upon.



"MCR took the time to understand our operation and helped us create a solution that works across our different outlets."

Imago Venues

3. Build stronger customer relationships ▼

University and college hospitality teams often serve the same customers repeatedly.

Students and employees may visit the same outlets several times a week, creating an opportunity to build an ongoing relationship rather than treating every purchase as an isolated transaction.

Loyalty technology can help encourage repeat visits and give customers another reason to choose an on-campus outlet.

This might include:

- ▶ reward points
- ▶ digital vouchers
- ▶ personalised offers
- ▶ promotions during quieter periods
- ▶ incentives linked to particular outlets or products
- ▶ communications based on customer preferences

The strongest loyalty programmes are simple and worthwhile.

Customers need to understand what they will receive and be able to access the benefit without unnecessary effort. The activity should also provide the hospitality team with useful insight, rather than becoming another disconnected system to manage.

When loyalty information is connected with sales and transaction data, teams can develop a better understanding of customer behaviour and which activity is genuinely making a difference.



4. Understand the customer experience in real time ▼

Sales data can show what customers purchased, but it cannot always explain how they felt about the experience.

A change in performance could be linked to price, availability, queues, service, cleanliness or something else entirely.

Traditional customer surveys can provide valuable insight, but they are often completed after the event. By the time the results are available, the opportunity to respond quickly may have passed.

Real-time feedback gives teams another layer of information.

MCR's Encore platform allows customers to share feedback during or immediately after their visit. Hospitality teams can see how individual outlets are performing, identify patterns and respond to emerging issues more quickly.

This can help teams understand:

- ▶ whether customers are happy with the speed of service
- ▶ whether particular outlets are performing more strongly than others
- ▶ whether a problem is isolated or appearing across several locations
- ▶ how customers have responded to a recent change
- ▶ whether the customer experience matches the picture shown by sales data

Looking at feedback alongside operational and sales information can provide a more complete view of performance.

It helps teams move beyond understanding what happened and begin to understand why.

The logo for eNcore, featuring the word 'eNcore' in a sans-serif font. The 'N' is stylized with a blue line graphic that forms the letter and extends upwards.

Five questions to ask about your current hospitality technology ▼

You may not need to replace every system or undertake a major technology project.

A useful starting point is to look at what is working well, where teams are experiencing friction and where better connections could make a difference.

1. Is it easy for customers to order and pay?

Consider queues, transaction times, payment choice and whether the process works effectively across different types of outlet.

2. Can you see what is happening across the whole operation?

Look at whether information is available centrally or has to be gathered from several systems, reports and spreadsheets.

3. Are teams still completing repetitive tasks manually?

Manual processes can create additional work, delay access to information and increase the risk of errors.

4. Can your reporting answer practical business questions?

Your data should help teams make decisions about products, pricing, stock, staffing, opening hours and future investment.

5. Do you understand both operational performance and customer experience?

Sales and transaction data provide one part of the picture. Customer feedback can help explain the reasons behind the numbers.

Look for connections, not just individual products ▼

Technology decisions are often prompted by one immediate need.

You may be replacing an EPoS system, introducing mobile ordering, reviewing payment services, putting in a room booking and meeting room order system or looking for better customer insight.

However, each decision can affect the wider operation.

Before investing, it is worth considering:

- ▶ how the solution will work with existing systems
- ▶ whether information can move between systems easily
- ▶ whether it can support different outlet formats
- ▶ how simple it will be for frontline teams to use
- ▶ whether it can adapt as requirements change
- ▶ what support will be available during and after implementation
- ▶ whether it solves the underlying problem or simply adds another platform



How MCR can help ▼

For almost 50 years, MCR has helped universities, colleges and hospitality operators use technology to make everyday service simpler.

Our solutions support:

- ▶ EPOS and payments
- ▶ mobile and self-service ordering
- ▶ stock and operational management
- ▶ kitchen and order management
- ▶ loyalty and customer engagement
- ▶ reporting and business insight
- ▶ meeting room booking and ordering
- ▶ real-time customer feedback

We take the time to understand how each organisation operates before recommending a solution.

That could mean supporting a full technology transformation, connecting existing systems or helping a team improve one specific part of the customer journey.

The objective is always the same: technology that works for customers, frontline teams and the people responsible for managing the wider operation.



Take a closer look at your hospitality technology ▼

You may be planning a wider review, looking to improve one part of your operation or simply exploring what could be possible.

The MCR team can help you assess where your current systems are working well, where there may be gaps and how greater integration could support your customers and teams.

Contact our team on 0116 299 7000
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