

PSL ASSISTS 3* HOTEL GROUP, FORESTDALE, ACHIEVE CONSISTENTLY HIGH QUALITY FOOD WHILST INCREASING SAVINGS YEAR ON YEAR

Background

Having acquired 18 UK hotels from Yorkshire to Devon, Somerset to Hertfordshire over the last 40 years, Forestdale's success in the hotel industry has earned it a reputation for good food and customer satisfaction.

However, Martin Jenkin, Group Purchasing Director, said "It is very easy to become complacent when enjoying such success but at Forestdale we are continually looking for ways to improve and develop the business.

We approached several companies to tender for our business, of which PSL was one. A colleague had worked with PSL at a previous establishment and knew what could be achieved; but as



Burley Manor Hotel, New Forest

Forestdale's strategy was very different, people were reticent about whether PSL really could boost standards as well as cost control. In 2003 we took the decision to work with PSL on procurement and operational basis as their proposal was self-financing and without risk within a short time the improvements PSL has brought to our business were clear to everyone.

£300k savings

Prior to working with PSL, Forestdale's food costs as a percentage of sales was 34%. PSL therefore agreed a plan with Forestdale which included better purchasing of food produce, ensuring quality standards and improved pricing are consistently achieved; plus the introduction of many new management systems into the kitchens, resulting in more profitable menus, reduced wastage, and greater staff efficiency.

Michael explained, "PSL have managed the processes in a controlled, achievable manner, enabling us to adapt and maintain the changes. In our first year with them we achieved savings of £130,000. This has increased each year and the latest figures show that we reached savings of £300,000 per year with PSL.

Thanks to PSL we now have far greater knowledge of what is happening in the marketplace. This is critical because if you don't keep up then there's the risk of stagnating and never progressing.

Through the inspiration of PSL we introduced a new restaurant concept, an up-market steak house named 'Buccleuch Grill' which we tested at our Swindon hotel. This was highly successful and was quickly developed across the Group. Originally we sourced the meat from Scotland but through PSL's help we can now source it locally at no extra cost whilst actually improving quality. Our customers also prefer the opportunity to eat locally sourced beef"

Improving standards

Through smarter purchasing and more efficient work practices Forestdale have been able to enhance quality and service levels, applying 4* standards to their 3* properties, increasing guest perception and satisfaction.

Michael continued, "The key to our success has been the relationship between PSL's Operations Managers and Forestdale's Head Chefs. If they are on the same wavelength they work in partnership with each other to achieve the same goals. Defining clear parameters at the outset was also a huge benefit. That way we all understand the expectations and can work together with clear objectives. We already had a good reputation for food prior to working with PSL but now we have consistently good quality and far greater cost control. One area which has become much more profitable is breakfasts. What is more we have done this without affecting guest perception which is critical as breakfast is often their last meal with us before they depart."

Group parallels

With the success of achieving substantial savings across the group, Michael added, "Despite all the improvements we have already made since working with PSL there are still many areas ripe for enhancement providing us with good scope for the future. During 2007 we carried out a lot of project work including the production of a Group Christmas Menu Pack which has helped ease customer choice. We also introduced a banqueting pack which clearly sets good Group standards across all establishments.



Stratton House Hotel, Cirencester

Also by reducing the number of suppliers across the Group, PSL have been able to agree even better pricing as those suppliers selected have the opportunity to increase their business across our business".

"Ensuring good profitability whilst not affecting client perception is key. PSL have been preparing a vegetable and salad selector to assist us with this". The selectors act as a seasonal vegetable/salad guides so that our chefs can easily select the products they should buy at specific times of the year, so to ensure each menu selection maintains its profit levels.

"We simply would not have the time to focus on these things ourselves and PSL have the knowledge and expertise to introduce and drive these incentives forward"

PSL are now working with Forestdale on the production of a guest bar menu. Through continual procurement and operational support, PSL will assist Forestdale to further improve their savings, whilst Forestdale remain focused on providing the high standards of quality food and service their customers have come to expect.

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