



CASE STUDY



The first TGI Fridays opened in New York in 1965 with the slogan 'In here, it's always Friday'. It is best known for its expert bartenders, American-inspired food and drink including quality steaks, famous burgers and ribs.

Globally, TGI Fridays operates almost 900 restaurants in 60 countries, including 85 Fridays UK outlets in England, Scotland, Wales and the Channel Islands, where more than 12 million guests are served each year. As the business has evolved, Fridays UK today offers a Click & Collect service, as well as deliveries through key deliver partners and a Fridays at Home range, which includes ready-made Cocktails and its popular Butcher's Box range.

With a changing operational model, moving away from 'walk-in' guests to more booking-led business, Fridays UK has created a virtual contact centre to support its store in managing the booking experience – here Erica Livermore, Chief Technology Officer for the company explains the challenges involved in this transition and how technology is supporting the payments process from both a customer experience and compliance perspective.

THE COMPLIANCE CHALLENGE

As a hospitality business, Fridays UK has traditionally been focused on providing its service to 'walk-in' guests, however in the last 24-months, Fridays UK has changed its operational model to provide a service that meets the needs of today's consumers, including offering the option to click & collect meals or have food and drinks delivered to their home.

Confirms Erica Livermore: "Prior to the pandemic, our business had begun moving away from just providing a service to guests that visit us to dine in, and instead we started to offer a greater number of booking-based services. As a result, we have created a virtual contact centre that is designed to support our 85 UK stores, to help reduce administrative burdens on instore staff so they can instead focus on the guest experience.

"A large part of this was to channel bookings from the website to the contact centre. Here, colleagues handle bookings for individual guests, and businesses, and the virtual team has the ability to take payments over the phone. Of course, by enabling this, there is the requirement to extend our PCI compliance to telephone-based payments, and so we needed to ensure our solution supported this need, while also ensuring our team could remain in verbal contact with guests."

A photograph of three people (two women and one man) sitting at a table in a restaurant, smiling and looking at each other. There is food and drinks on the table.

"The payment process is swift and, by maintaining an open dialogue, we can make the experience better, upsell offers or packages, and ultimately enrich the customer experience – and with confidence that the whole process is fully compliant."

Erica Livermore, CTO, Fridays UK

THE SOLUTION

In November 2020, Erica embarked on the process of sourcing a partner that would provide a payment security solution that could be integrated with Fridays' existing infrastructure, which includes a Stripe payment service provider.

"I had previously worked with PCI Pal when I worked with Virgin Active and had a really positive experience. I did some benchmarking to identify some additional suppliers to initiate a tender and as part of this process selected PCI Pal Agent Assist. We were impressed by the cloud-based implementation process and the fact integration is possible across our existing communications infrastructure. It was also a comfort having worked with them previously as I always had a really positive experience when support was needed, which was excellent."

PCI Pal Agent Assist was selected as the payment security solution of choice. It enables contact centre agents to capture guests' card information securely on live calls, yet maintain conversation with the customer at all times. The technology uses DTMF (Dual Tone Multi Frequency) masking technology, as well as Speech Recognition for guests who can't use their telephone keypad, and provides a secure way of handling payments without bringing an organisations' environment in scope of Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS).

By integrating with the call flow, PCI Pal Agent Assist intercepts keypad tones or speech at the point of payment. This means agents don't hear or see any personal payment card data, but just asterisks on the screen.

Confirms Erica "At Fridays UK we are very strict on security protocols and therefore PCI Pal had to go through onboarding on our side, which they passed with flying colours. We are PCI-certified and go through our accreditations every year."

THE RESULTS

From starting the original process in October, PCI Pal Agent Assist went live in November, fully prepared to handle Fridays' busy pre-Christmas business. Agrees Erica "Implementation was very quick and we were able to roll-out to our virtual contact centre team seamlessly. The fact this could be completed remotely, due to the cloud-based nature of the solution, was an added advantage given the various lockdowns we were all facing due to the pandemic. It's been a really good experience."

"The integrations were all very smooth; the PCI Pal team worked really closely with me and my solutions architect to bring everything together. In fact, the implementation manager from PCI Pal has been fantastic; Jenny Reveley made the whole process very easy for us and worked in a collaborative advisory role. She has been absolutely stellar!"

The virtual contact centre team now handles all inbound calls, however if for any reason it is not open or a call goes directly to a store, PCI Pal Agent Assist is also enabled there so there are no gaps in the process. Explains Erica "The whole process is very straightforward – both for our guests and our agents.



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Concludes Erica: "For any business operating in the hospitality sector that has a requirement to handle payments over the phone or digital channels, I would one hundred percent recommend the PCI Pal team."

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