

PAR Helps Miller's Ale House Efficiently Manage Restaurant Operations and Data Across the 54-Unit Chain

The recipe for success at Miller's Ale House, a 54-unit casual dining chain with locations in Florida, Georgia, New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois, is the way it balances consistent, centralized management with restaurant-level creativity and customization. Centralized control allows all Miller's Ale Houses to offer the chain's popular proprietary items, including Zingers® (boneless chicken wings coated in a choice of sauces) and a homemade ice cream dessert known as Captain Jack's®. Yet each restaurant also features its own "specials" menu, so every Ale House can cater to local tastes. Achieving this balance means that for its guests who travel from city to city where its units are located, Miller's Ale Houses can offer both the familiarity of favorite items and the chance to try a wide range of appetizers and entrees.

Challenge: Centralized control with decentralized flexibility

For its information technology needs, Miller's Ale House needs a similar combination: strong centralized administration balanced with flexibility and unit-level customization capabilities. In addition, any solution Miller's uses must be able to handle its high-volume operations.

Prior to seeking a new POS solution, the company used a software solution that had a lot of legacy code and features that included a lot of moving parts that were baggage. The previous POS application didn't have above-store reporting or centralized management integrated into it, and when we were looking at PCI compliance it would have forced us to do another upgrade to accommodate the necessary changes. At that point the company decided to look for alternatives, and EverServ TSR made the short list of possible solutions.



Solution: PAR EverServ® TSR and 6000

EverServ TSR is a simple yet powerful POS solution built on next-generation Internet technologies that provide chain operators with an integrated approach to every aspect of guest service.

The Miller's Ale House transition to EverServ TSR was smoothed by the solution's easy-to-use interface for restaurant-level employees. "It's very intuitive for the employees and it is easy to customize the screens," says Glenn Brown, Information Technology Director, Miller's Ale House. "EverServ TSR makes it easy for employees to do the main functions we need from a POS, as well as things like split checks and discounts."

In addition to meeting the needs of restaurant-level employees, the EverServ TSR solution also offered benefits for Miller's above-store executives and its IT staff. According to Brown, the first point in EverServ TSR's favor was its ability to provide Miller's with access to its own data via a SQL database. Another was the solution's architecture, a single server stack that would allow the company to use the same software from the store level up through the entire enterprise.

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“We also liked that it was all written in Java and was therefore platform-independent,” says Brown. “For example, if some day we decided to push hard on using Linux, we would not be locked in terms of either hardware or software. EverServ TSR is flexible.”

Another benefit from EverServ TSR’s use of Java was improved memory management. “We had had issues of ‘memory leaks’ with other POS systems, where some small part of the code was using up a lot of memory,” Brown explains. “If the system wasn’t rebooted over X number of days and we didn’t do a restart of the entire system, it would crash. But because EverServ TSR is written in Java, that takes care of our memory management issues.”

About a year and a half ago, Miller’s Ale House began upgrading the POS hardware in its stores to PAR EverServ 6000 terminals and all new locations are now installed with EverServ 6000 terminals running EverServ TSR software. “We like the design of EverServ 6000 and we have been very pleased with the reliability of the terminals,” noted Brown.

Results: Improved Centralized Management and Reporting

For the IT department specifically, “The biggest plus has been the solution’s centralized management,” says Brown. “EverServ TSR gave us the ability to standardize and re-use menu items and rules across the enterprise. Also, we can now put all of the chain’s employees, from all our locations, into one single set. The ability to program centrally and then push things down to the unit level has been a big win for us.”

With TSR’s open architecture it is easy to integrate other technologies and features. Miller’s integrated the EverServ TSR solution with its accounting system and above-store food costing programs, and in the past year worked with PAR to be the first site to integrate EverServ TSR with QSR Automations kitchen video system.

EverServ TSR has also improved the company’s ability to move information up the corporate chain of command and to make it available to those who need it. “The ability to see reports through a Web interface is good for us,” says Brown. “More visibility into store-level reporting by our regional managers and the corporate offices has been a big help.”

The reports themselves can be quite granular, thanks to customization work that Brown did in conjunction with PAR. “I can get per-employee information on things as specific as the cost of discounts or the menu mix,” says Brown. EverServ TSR’s ability to be customized also makes the store managers’ jobs easier. “The store-level managers only see the tabs and functions that they need for their role,” says Brown. “That simplifies the interface and the business process for them.”

While Brown and his staff are experienced enough to do the vast majority of IT work themselves, he does appreciate the interactions he has with PAR’s people. “They’ve been responsive in terms of creating a partnership going forward,” added Brown.

Solution Overview

- ✓ **POS Software:** PAR EverServ® TSR
- ✓ **POS Hardware:** PAR EverServ® 6000
- ✓ **Kitchen Video:** QSR Automations
- ✓ **Services:** PAR EverServ® System Maintenance Services

Powering Better Guest Experiences



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