

Stay In A Pub Supports English Tourism Week

STAY IN A PUB, the website promoting more than 1,500 pubs with rooms, is getting behind English Tourism Week with a menu of promotional ideas for its member pubs to make the most of the week, running from 5-13 March.

All pubs listed on the Stay In A Pub website are being urged to capitalise on the event. Suggestions include a 'book 2 nights, get a 3rd free' deal; holding an English food and drink showcase event with local suppliers and partnering with local attractions to drive bookings.

Stay In A Pub founder Paul Nunny said, "English Tourism Week is a great opportunity for pubs to promote themselves and benefit from the additional interest in tourism created by VisitEngland. It's not necessarily about pubs doing anything new, but using this week, which comes at the start of the 2016 holiday booking season, to shout about what they offer to potential guests. All activity that we're told about by our member pubs will be publicised on the Stay In A Pub and English Tourism Week websites, with links to their own websites to generate additional traffic."

"A visit to the great British pub is near the top of every tourist's 'must do' list when they holiday in the UK, which is a great basis for encouraging more of them to stay in a pub as well."

Stay In A Pub is also co-hosting an ALMR roundtable discussion on pub accommodation, held immediately after English Tourism Week, on 15 March, where VisitEngland will present early findings from the week and lead broader discussion among pub operators about accommodation.

Prospects for the pub accommodation sector are looking bright for 2016, according to a number of industry sources. VisitBritain predicts 36.7 million overseas tourists will visit the UK in 2016, spending up to £23 billion (both increases of around 4% on 2015). At the same time, analysts Morgan Stanley expect more UK consumers to 'staycation' rather than travel abroad this summer.

Specifically to the pub accommodation sector, the Scottish Licensed Trade Association has reported that 77% of outlets with accommodation either grew their room occupancy or remained stable over the Christmas and New Year period.

Brits Woeful Food Knowledge Revealed In New Survey

A SURPRISING number of Brits think an 'aperitif' is an after-dinner drink and 'al dente' refers to eating outside, according to a new survey by restaurant chain Chef & Brewer.

Almost one in five (17%) Brits failed to identify that 'al dente' actually means retaining bite and 14% thought an 'aperitif' is a pre-dinner tippie. The same number also believed a 'blue steak' meant comes with a blue cheese sauce rather than its true meaning – rare.

The survey of 1,500 Brits also uncovered that almost half (43%) have tried to impress their friends with their knowledge of food and wine, and a confident 91% consider themselves to be knowledgeable about food.

A further 69% also professed to appreciating food wines – and 79% said that good food and wine was 'an important part

of their life'. Despite this, fewer than half of Brits (49%) managed to identify Prosecco as a sparkling wine and 13% thought the Italian drink originated from Spain, whilst 8% said it was from England.

Caroline Gallimore, brand manager for pub restaurant chain Chef & Brewer, which commissioned the study, said: "Many of us pride ourselves on our knowledge of food and drink, but it seems we're not as clued up as we like to think we are!"

"We were particularly surprised to see that fewer than half of Brits knew Prosecco was a sparkling wine, given its huge surge in popularity in recent years."

Other shocking findings included 4% of Brits thinking the Yorkshire pudding originated in Scotland, rather than... Yorkshire. Whilst, 5% thought the Scottish institution haggis was an English dish, and 6% thought trendy veg Kale was actually an exotic fruit.

Sugar Tax Could Reduce Obesity Rates By 5% in UK By 2025

A NEW report from Cancer Research UK and the UK Health Forum has revealed that a 20% tax on sugary drinks could reduce obesity rates in the UK by 5% by 2025, which is equal to 3.7 million fewer obese people.

The study, entitled 'Short and sweet: why the Government should introduce a sugary drinks tax', also predicts that the tax could save the NHS about £10 million in healthcare and social care costs in 2025 alone.

Alison Cox, Cancer Research UK's director of cancer prevention, said: "There are a lot of things working against us when it comes to making healthier choices."

"We're all bombarded by junk food advertising of cheap foods packed with extra calories and it can be tough for parents to do what's best for their children."

"The Government has a chance to help reduce the amount of sugar consumed by adults and children and to give future

generations the best chance of a healthier life."

To help reduce the impact obesity has on society, Cancer Research UK is calling on the Government to act now and put a tax on sugary drinks, ban junk food adverts on TV before the 9pm watershed, and introduce targets for reducing the amount of fat and sugar in food as part of a comprehensive strategy.

Jane Landon, UK Health Forum's deputy chief executive, said: "Countries which have introduced a tax on sugary drinks have not only reduced consumption, they have raised much-needed revenues for public health measures."

"These figures indicate that even a modest tax at 20 per cent – as part of a society-wide response – could help to deliver the scale and pace of change needed to turn around the UK's crisis of obesity-related ill-health."

The report notes that 3.7 million is equivalent to the combined populations of Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Bristol and Leicester.

Don't Be Hospitable to Fraudsters

by Nigel Hyslop, President and Managing Director of Global Payments



CHANGING HABITS and technological innovation are having a profound impact on the way we pay, as consumers realise the benefits of alternative payment methods such as Contactless and mobile. As a result, firms operating in the catering and licensing industry need to consider how to accommodate shifting customer demands as more and more payment options become available.

For example mobile payments is an area that is primed for growth, with the increasing availability of technology in this area through smartphones. The swift adoption of mobile technology by generation Y (although we fully expect the demographic adoption to continue to widen in the future), could potentially present caterers and licensees with a customer base that is highly engaged and ready to adopt new technology when it comes to alternative payment methods.

As a result businesses should consider updating their card terminals in order to accept near-field communication technology which allows acceptance of Contactless and mobile payments.

However, any organisation that accepts card payments must be cognisant to the potential for fraud and related criminal behaviour. Card fraud and data theft are a growing problem as fraudsters become ever more sophisticated, and stories about criminals targeting both companies and individuals to obtain the sensitive information contained in credit and debit cards are becoming more frequent.

In 2014 it was estimated that the annual cost of all types of fraud in the UK was between £52 billion and £85 billion. However, fraud against plastic cards accounted for 30% of all frauds and they were the product most targeted by fraudsters in 2013 ⁽¹⁾.

So before deciding to accept card payments for the first time or expanding the range of ways that your customers can pay, it makes sense to do your homework about your business - how it operates, the staff you employ, the products and services you provide and the types of customers you serve. This intelligence will help you detect when something doesn't seem right.

It's also important to keep in mind that it's not just financial fraud that can be committed as a result of

accepting card payments. The data stored in cards can be extremely valuable to criminals – in the right hands, it can have more worth than cash - and so data theft is a growing problem.

Criminals continue to develop ever more sophisticated methods to gain access to cardholder details and other relevant data. It is therefore really important to stay up to date with card security to ensure that payment systems are safe, in order to protect cardholder data when processing card payments.

This is where the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard – or PCI DSS – steps in. PCI DSS is a set of globally agreed compliance standards for any retailer or service provider who processes, stores or transmits cardholder data. It is designed to provide a framework for minimising fraud and safeguarding your customer's data.

The principles of PCI DSS mean that small catering and licensing businesses are held to the same security standards as large organisations. This is important as it means that regardless of how a customer pays, their card information must be treated with the equivalent level of care, irrespective of the size of the establishment.

The positive news is that compliance is usually inexpensive, if undertaken correctly. However, if you fail to comply with PCI DSS requirements, you run the risk of being subject to a "breach" (a leak of data) resulting in large fines – starting at £10,000. Of even greater concern is the reputational damage and impact on the loyalty of customers that can result from cards being compromised.

Catering and licensing businesses need to be alert to the potential of fraudulent card use that can arise from criminals using stolen cards and data. Card processors can provide a checklist of steps to take if you are concerned about the authenticity of a card, such as calling them for additional authorisation, or requesting proof of address if you are particularly suspicious.

Accepting a stolen card can lead to the genuine cardholder 'disputing' the transaction with their card issuer. If you have undertaken the right steps in advance to verify the card, your card processor will help you defend this dispute. This is why carrying out security checks when suspicious is imperative. Keep in mind however, that if it's a Chip & PIN transaction, you will not be liable for fraudulent transactions.

At a time when consumers are looking to cut their use of cash, payment processors can offer the catering and licensing sector flexible and innovative solutions that can increase spend and drive loyalty. But the sector mustn't let heightened concerns about card fraud and data theft undermine this opportunity.

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What Happens To Your Business If The Till Stops Ringing?

Mark Rigby, MD of UK Powertech, specialists in industrial and commercial batteries, has been aware for some time that small businesses aren't adequately prepared for a power cut.

Larger organisations have contingency plans, but retail operations such as off-licenses, bars and small independent caterers would be severely hit financially by regular power outages.

Using their expertise UK Powertech set about developing BlackCurrent, a safe, easy to install emergency power unit which will provide power for a minimum of two hours to run essential electronic equipment needed to keep the lights on, the internet connected (essential for card readers) and tills operational.

BlackCurrent stores electricity from the mains till it detects a break in the power it then seamlessly goes into action taking over the power demands be it for lights, tills or computer. The unit itself can either be plugged into an ordinary electrical socket and equipment can be plugged directly into it, or it can be connected to the mains creating a separate emergency circuit to feed critical electronic equipment.

Further information and technical data can be found on www.blackcurrent.co.uk

Contact UK Powertech Ltd, Countess Street, Ashton-Under-Lyne, Lancs OL6 6UE
Tel: +44-(0)161-343-7606 for sizes, prices and shipping.