



How Senior Living Point-of-Sale Systems Deliver Dining Excellence



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From a resident experience standpoint, many senior living providers model their dining venues to look and feel like a real restaurant. But there is one crucial area where providers would do well to differ from their consumer-facing counterparts: point-of-sale systems.

That's because unlike restaurants, senior living providers serve more or less the same residents each day, necessitating a way to keep track of their many dietary preferences and restrictions. Senior living restaurant customers also tend to pay without cash, meaning operators need a point-of-sale system which is flexible enough to track purchases, integrate into accounting and charge and bill residents without the physical exchange of money.

Lastly, a point-of-sale system built for senior living helps streamline the process for residents and their families, who can have questions about spending, meal plans and account balances.

Having a senior living point-of-sale system also comes in handy during the Covid-19 pandemic, even while residents are sheltering in place or temporarily barred from using their community's dining venues. By using point-of-sale software designed for senior living communities, providers can let residents check the day's menu or order a meal without ever leaving their rooms.

FullCount is a point-of-sale software system designed for the senior living industry, with over 30,000 users in their communities, supporting over 130,000 active residents. Since its launch in 2007 with a client it still serves today, FullCount has evolved to include a host of features unique to senior living operators.

This white paper will explore how FullCount's system helps providers bring excellence and efficiency to their dining programs, and show how in addition to handling dining services, it can enhance other service areas, such as a community's beauty shop, bistro, convenience store or gift shop.



Specialized for senior living

Learning what residents want, and what operators need

A restaurant point-of-sale system might help get patrons seated, track and bill orders, and send orders to the kitchen for preparation. But a senior living point-of-sale system has many more moving parts, such as the need to track residents and meals across different campuses or care levels, according to Mike Lang, president of FullCount.

“In senior living, we know who the customer is, and we can have information in the system on their likes, their dislikes, their allergies and we can print that on the kitchen ticket,” Lang says. “That’s a big advantage that using a senior living point-of-sale can provide.”

The benefits of FullCount’s system: versatility for the industry’s complexity

Senior living operators might offer restaurant-style dining, but senior living dining has a complexity that goes well beyond any restaurant. That means the point-of-sale system for senior living must have capabilities addressing that complexity, too, including:

- Resident dietary restrictions
- Meal plan payment models
- Meal plan cycles
- Tax rules
- Payment options

FullCount’s system gives operators several tools to manage this complexity. Operators can set rules within the system that automates it to the needs of a given community, thus freeing the wait staff to focus on the resident experience rather than the technology. The system streamlines the billing process, and can handle cash, checks, credit cards or meal points, integrating payments into a pre-existing resident account.

Orders are entered using touchscreen technology, with hardware options ranging from an all-in-one point-of-sale station with a cash drawer and printer, to a mobile tablet that can be used for tableside ordering. Once an order is received, the system sends it to the kitchen for preparation.

FullCount also includes a “back-office” application that can be used on any computer with internet access. The function includes reporting capabilities, with the ability to generate custom reports as needed, such as items purchased. Residents and families can also use FullCount’s online portal to check their account balance or charges made throughout the community.

It is this senior living-centric technology and single-purpose design that creates one of FullCount’s greatest benefits for operators, Lang notes: long-term partnerships that last not months or years, but decades.

Business impact

Reducing inaccuracies and maximizing revenue

For senior living providers, using a specialized point-of-sale system such as FullCount's carries many benefits.

Senior living operator HumanGood currently uses FullCount in 16 of its 21 communities, with the intention of implementing the system in the remaining five in the third quarter of 2020. FullCount has worked closely with Pleasanton, California-based HumanGood to train its employees on how to use the system. So far, the training process has been "easy and effective" despite restrictions about meeting face-to-face during the Covid-19 pandemic, says Lisa Holland, HumanGood's vice president of operations.

"They've been very adaptable and have worked closely with our project team to make changes, particularly as we've had to face travel restrictions with Covid-19, and have gone to a more online training format," Holland says.

Since adopting the system, Holland has also noticed that order accuracy and general efficiency has improved in the dining rooms where it's used.

"The complaints about the inaccurate orders, and the wait times, were reduced significantly," she says.

Using a point-of-sale system designed for senior living also helps improve accuracy of reporting, as everything is tracked digitally and not in physical records. Though this doesn't necessarily impact costs at the end of the day, it has improved HumanGood's dining and revenue-management efficiency.

"What happens without the point-of-sale system is we don't capture everything, and we don't capture all the revenue that is due to us," Holland said. "It just helps us better ensure that we don't lose things out the back door."



FullCount's new executive-level reporting feature

FullCount's newest feature, executive-level reporting, is designed for management companies that want to keep tabs on their communities' programs from the C-suite. The service can track which meal items were most popular, among many other functions, and provides a top-down view of a senior living dining program.

Adjusting to Covid-19

To-go meals and reservations

FullCount's first implementation was in April 2007 at the Heritage at Brentwood, a senior living community managed by Life Care Services in Brentwood, Tennessee. Over the years, having a senior living point-of-sale system has helped the community's dining program stay nimble and accurate.

So when Covid-19 hit in mid-March and residents locked down in their rooms as part of infection control protocols, the community relied on its system to handle a sudden influx of to-go orders, says executive director Jon Tagatz.

"When you're doing 300 to-go meals when you're used to doing 40, it helps having the ordering system, the call-in system," Tagatz says. "It's been very beneficial."

In addition to facilitating online training, FullCount has also helped HumanGood set up its own in-house grocery service. Using the point-of-sale system helped the provider keep track of what its residents were buying the most, thus enabling the operator to better cater to resident preferences, Holland says.

FullCount has also benefited HumanGood's point system during Covid-19 — the way by which residents can pay for meals or other food items. Using FullCount, HumanGood was easily able to customize the value of its point system, or make other changes on the community level.

"This allows for community-specific customization, which is really crucial because we want to have overall consistency in our method, but (acknowledge that) one size really doesn't fit all," Holland says. "We need to have that flexibility."

Like The Heritage at Brentwood, many HumanGood communities saw their to-go meals skyrocket during the pandemic. Holland believes that online ordering and reservations — two FullCount functions — will play an important role in senior living dining even when the pandemic ends.

"The reservations are going to be very important in the post-Covid world because we have to ensure adequate physical distancing," Holland said.



Online orders and reservations on the rise

Online ordering and reservations have become even more important in the age of Covid-19. Using FullCount, residents can do much more than just place a food order. They can also specify when they want it available, whether they want it sent to their room or choose a window of time to pick it up.

To learn more about what FullCount's point-of-sale system can do for your communities, or to view a 5-minute demo, visit fullcount.net/demo-form.

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