



Pictured: Jabbar Khan with Steve Orriss of the National B2B Centre.



Mobile menu adds spice to Birmingham restaurant

Lasan restaurant and take-away was launched in Birmingham 2002 offering fresh, high-quality Indian food with first-class service.

The establishment, run by director Jabbar Khan, has, over the years, gained a reputation as a fine dining experience. As well as attracting a wealth of regular customers, the outlet has also picked up a string of awards and a series of positive reviews from the local and national media.

"All of our staff are trained professionals and are committed to customer service," said Jabbar.

"I believe our success has been based on offering the very best Indian food – made from the freshest ingredients – that has set us apart from others in the region.

"But the fact that you are successful does not mean you can stand still. We realised that it was vitally important to use new technology to ensure that our customers get the best service and that the business continues to move forward."

Jabbar recognised the potential for using mobile phones and text messaging and wanted to somehow incorporate that into his business.

He got in touch with the National B2B Centre – the e-business centre of excellence for the West Midlands – and adviser Rayhan Abdulmughnee went out to the restaurant to meet him.

"I had several ideas about the way I wanted to use the technology and Rayhan basically helped me put those into practice," said Jabbar.

"Like many other restaurants, we'd got our menu on our website – www.lasan.co.uk - and could take bookings but we wanted to take that much further – that's where Rayhan and the B2B Centre came in."

Mobile Technology

Lasan Restaurant launched, what Jabbar believes to be, the first SMS ordering service for either deliveries or take aways.

A customer simply texts 'lasan' to 80800 and, almost instantly, gets a response offering a link to the restaurants menu.

The hungry texter can then scroll through the menu and add as many meals and side-dishes as they like before sending their order direct to the restaurant.

They will then receive a message back to say that their order will be delivered or can be picked up in a certain amount of time.

"It's just so much more efficient for the customer and almost everyone has their mobile phone with them at all times," said Jabbar.

"Yes, we all use emails – but not as many people are looking at them constantly in the same way that they are with text messages."

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Results

The system is relatively inexpensive to operate but brings a whole new world of potential customers who are all registered with the restaurant once they have ordered through the system.

"Lots of customers are already using it and the feedback is excellent," said Jabbar.

"They are saying to us that they find it a very convenient way of ordering food and we have seen a rise in take away and delivery orders because of it.

"What it has also done is attracted awareness in the restaurant because people are hearing about the new technology because of the media interest.

"It is definitely something we want to expand as a service to customers," said Jabbar. "It is certainly good for them and exciting for the business."

The future

The potential for SMS is huge for Lasan. Now staff are taking orders from customers via mobile phones but it will increasingly become a major marketing tool.

Whenever the menu is updated or they want to run an offer, they can send a text to their existing database.

Rayhan Abdulmughnee, of the National B2B Centre, said: "Lasan has really latched onto this idea before many of their competitors and peers up and down the country.

"It works in many ways. It brings in business on a day-to-day level in the form of those customers ordering via their mobile phones.

"But the technology also acts as a great way of attracting customers back because they feel they are getting a first class, efficient service – as well as great food!"

Further Information

Do you want to send promotions and product information directly to your customer? Do you have offers for local customers?

If you would like advice on mobile marketing then contact the National B2B Centre using the details below.

Is mobile marketing for you?

- Mobile marketing enables businesses to communicate with their customer, wherever they are and describes when a company sends promotions about their products, services, competitions, or offers, directly to recipients mobile phones
- To send mobile marketing messages via SMS (text message) the recipient must opt-in, either by agreeing to receive text messages or by providing your organisation with their mobile phone number
- To send mobile marketing messages to recipients who have not opted-in you can use bluetooth, a wireless protocol using short-range communications technology, a facility available on modern mobile phones
- Bluetooth marketing is also known as 'local proximity marketing' because it enables the sender to send messages to people within a certain radius, via their mobile phones (recipients must accept before viewing), for example, retailers can use bluetooth to entice passers-by to visit their shop
- Another way of using mobile marketing is to place a text number on advertising messages, inviting customers to text your business for more product information or to make a purchase
- When a recipient texts your business you can collect their data for future mobile marketing campaigns.



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The National B2B Centre

Helping growing businesses make smart e-business decisions

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