

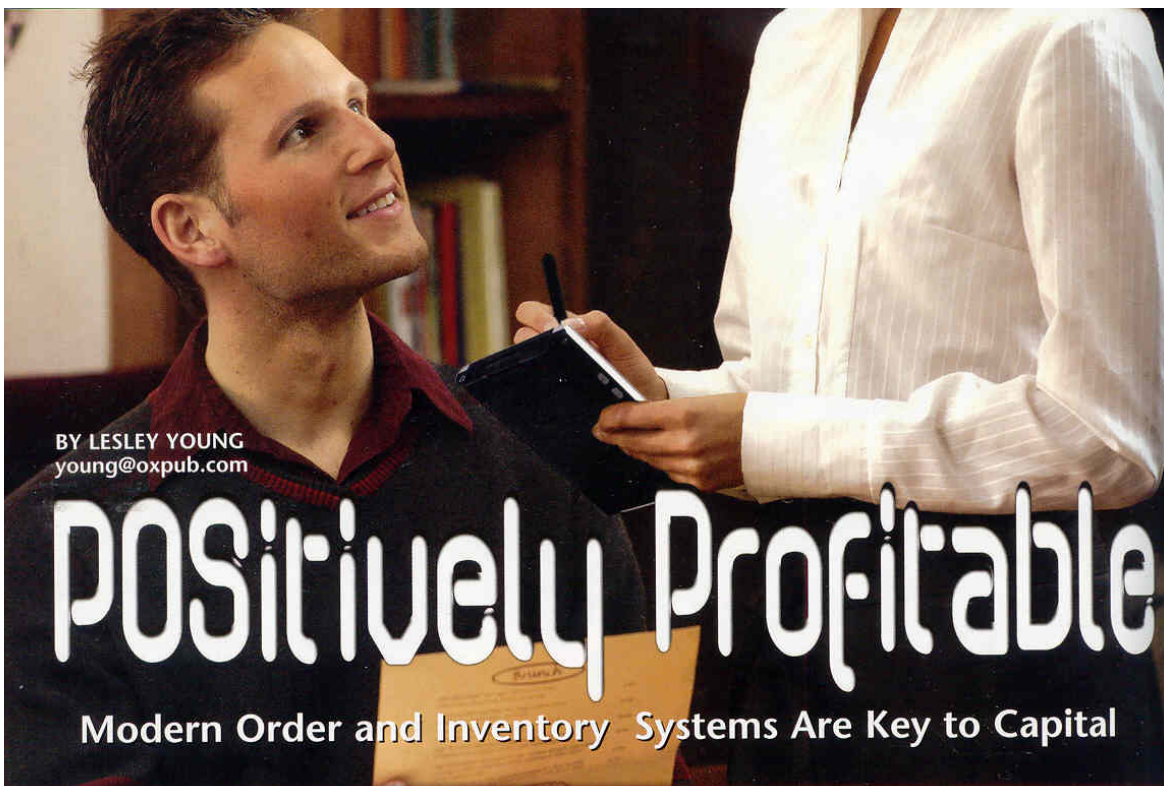
For the On-Premise Innovator

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POSITively Profitable

Modern Order and Inventory Systems Are Key to Capital

It's a busy night,

and the bar is packed. The server must get her orders to the bar, but continually she has a crowd of people to wade through.

A bartender's friends are sitting at the bar having a few rounds on him. Another bartender is new and doesn't know the recipes for all of the specialty drinks.

These all are scenarios that can affect your business and — most importantly — your bank statement. However, with advancements in modern POS systems, you have the opportunity not only to prevent such scenarios from happening, but also to increase profits dramatically.

The Newer, Wireless Way

One key technological advancement in the POS industry is the handheld wireless terminal, which brings the terminal to the customer's table.

These little wireless wizards reduce the chance of error in taking a customer's order, reduce the amount of

labor involved in running the order and reduce the time it takes to fulfill a customer's order, all giving you the opportunity to improve numbers in revenue.

"It's amazing how much you can increase revenue just by changing the pattern of the cocktailer," says Andre Nataf, accounts manager for Digital Dining. "Instead of wasting all that time running drinks, the cocktailer can take care of the customer. They never even have to leave the customer's side."

These little devices take the customer's order and send them to the bar via a wireless connection. Many

systems come with a few bells and whistles, such as handwriting recognition; card readers, allowing the server to take the customer's payment right there at the customer's side; and full menus that allow the server to look up any drink recipe, pinpoint which liquor brand, and even upsell the customer to a top-shelf liquor.

"This technology is really groundbreaking," Chris Wright, director of marketing for ASI, says.

Increasing Efficiency

Gary Cocolin, owner of Wild Cards Sports Grille & Bar in Erie, Pa., can attest to the benefits of installing a wireless

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— Gary Cocolin, owner,
Wild Cards Sports Grille and Bar, Erie, Pa.

handheld system. He installed 17 handhelds last March and had immediate success with his system, he says.

"The order goes in immediately as you take the drink orders. It just makes it a lot easier on your kitchen, your servers — everything is just much more efficient," Cocolin says. "It frees up the time of the server to really take care of your guest."

These advanced systems are linked to the back office and can help you keep track of your inventory, another key to ensuring your profits are at their max.

"If you're not controlling your inventory and keeping track of it, you're not making as much money as you could," says Dave Grimm, communications director for Accubar.

With a computerized system, labor savings, staff accountability and the opportunity for perpetual inventory makes you wonder where you've been without it.

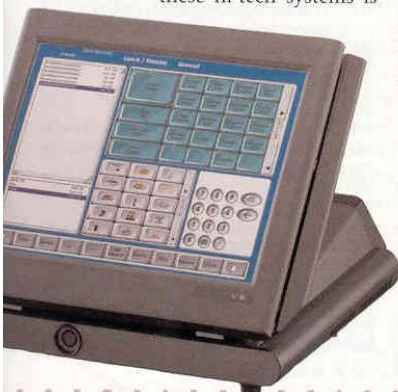
Inventory control now can be as easy as an employee scanning a bottle, prompting a picture to pop up on the scanner's screen so the employee can touch to indicate the level of the amount of liquor left in the bottle.

With such a snappy system, the amount of time it takes to do weekly inventory is reduced dramatically, freeing up the employees to focus their energies on other things, and freeing up your pocketbook to spend on other things rather than labor costs.

This also eliminates the mistakes that go with manual entry of inventory. Such accuracy also keeps track of any overpouring by your bartenders.

"It's all about staff accountability. It puts checks and balances on that," Grimm says.

One example of the effectiveness of these hi-tech systems is



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Three Headed Productions, a Chicago-based parent company of six national bars. Its POS additions aim to get rid of stale inventory and make money on product that was just taking up space.

"It helped highlight how much product had just been sitting there for a long time, and we were able to special it out," says employee Kim Bosse. "We were able to streamline our inventory."

Choose Wisely

In the same vein as keeping your finger on your bartenders, other POS software companies have come up with real-time alert systems that can be connected directly to your cell phone or e-mail and alert you when an employee has surpassed the allowed amount of voided transactions or discounts.

These same systems allow you to pull up any report necessary, at any time, and from anywhere in the world via the Internet.

Many programs come with additional accessories that include loyalty programs, gift cards, the option to attach a customer's name to his bill and automatic price changes for promotions such as Happy Hour.

Lunar Rogue Pub Owner Frank Scott installed a system by POSERA that tracks his inventory and includes a customer loyalty program and a payroll system that allows him to track labor costs put against sales.

"It's a very powerful tool," Scott says. To him, it's all about fostering repeat business. "You're always looking for people to come back." **NCB**