

Fresh Pizza & Fresh Financials

“The way to make great pizza is to use fresh ingredients and to serve it fresh from the oven. The same goes for business financials. If you are using old figures to make decisions then it may be too late. Considering the margins in the restaurant business, the result may be game over!” says Arne Larsen Okland, CEO of Dolly Dimple’s.

Today, the former football player and national team hero is CEO of Dolly Dimple’s, one of Norway’s largest restaurant chains, employing a total of 1,600 people in 84 restaurants all over the country. Over the last three months, the chain has been using ProfitBase to retrieve important control data from its restaurants. Mr. Okland describes a new world of fresh information after the implementation of the new system. With ProfitBase, management now has quick and easy access to the vital figures they depend on to improve restaurant operations.

Reports – Exceeding Expectations

“This was not the case before we deployed ProfitBase”, Okland recalls. Retrieving data from the old system was a time-consuming operation. The old system was unstable and was heavily customized. This led to frequent and expensive follow-up visits from the supplier. But it was the lack of trust in the figures that presented the greatest disadvantage.

“If you don’t have complete trust in the figures, you end up abandoning the system. We also felt that our supplier lacked retail business knowledge, and therefore did not understand our needs”, notes Okland.

Okland found their solution in ProfitBase, a company located right across the street from Dolly Dimple’s headquarters in Sandnes, Norway. With a customer list including many retail chains, ProfitBase was familiar with the requirements of the restaurant chain.

“Instead of asking Dolly Dimple’s what they wanted, like most software suppliers would do, we simply said “this may be a good starting-point for you”. So, they started off with a solution that included proven retail logic and several control reports as well as key figures which based on our experience we knew they would probably want,” comments Rune Vatnamot, Vice President of Marketing for ProfitBase.

Today, the ProfitBase solution is integrated with Microsoft Dynamics NAV (formerly Navision), the company’s accounting system. The retail logic, which is an integral part of the ProfitBase retail solution, makes it easy for management to retrieve the reports they need, do detailed analysis and benchmarking between the restaurants. The ProfitBase retail experience enabled Dolly Dimple’s to get control information that exceeded their expectations in both quantity and quality, enabling them to gain new insights into their business.

Huge Amounts of Data to Comprehend!

There is no doubt that a nation-wide restaurant chain has great challenges in how to collect, analyze and effective use this new information to improve operations. The 84 restaurants are connected through a large network of almost 40 independent companies, which all have several departments. Dolly Dimple’s owns several of the pizza restaurants, but most are franchised to independent companies. Regardless of ownership, turnover, article sales, product costs, rental costs, personnel costs and much more must be



Dolly Dimple’s is one of Norway’s largest restaurant chains, comprising a total of 84 restaurants all over the country. The chain was established by the Cypriot Andreas Hatjoulis in Sandnes in 1986, which is the location of the company headquarters. The chain employs a total of 1,600 people and had a 2006 turnover of 80 million US\$. The holding company PAM AS is responsible for chain administration, including product development, marketing, accounting and operations. The Dolly Dimple’s chain is currently owned by Norgesgruppen Servering, Andreas Hatjoulis and CEO Arne Larsen Okland.

retrieved. The compiled data must then be formatted to enable drill down into hourly, daily and weekly figures and ratios. All numbers must then be aggregated along legal and operational structures.

Key figures are stored in Navision, but in order to retrieve them, Okland earlier had to enter the application for each company and then make the reports, which was a time-consuming process. Today, the reports are ready to go and are generated with near real-time figures with a click of a button. As this is managed by a small number of people at the headquarters, the administrative savings are considerable.

"In reality, your imagination is the only thing that limits what you can accomplish, but accurate financial reports are crucial to make money in the restaurant business", says Okland.

The system has only been operational for three months, but so far, Okland is very satisfied with the existing reports. The company is now looking to expand their reports and analysis capabilities. "We have a certain "wait and see attitude", but it is indeed relevant for us to continue to look into ways to improve control of personnel costs, which is one of our largest expenses. If we manage to plan our staffing better in relation to demand in the restaurants, we can save considerable amounts of money, which in turn will benefit the customers", says Okland.

"The Battle" Takes Place in the Restaurant

Okland is complementary of the ProfitBase system which he feels is well designed. He explains how the company was recently visited by a large British company, and how they were impressed by the solution, both in terms of its user interface and functionality.

"Globally, Norway is a front-runner when it comes to chain operation, and this retail solution is no exception. I am convinced that ProfitBase has large potential outside Norwegian borders", notes Okland.

To ensure improvement of the solution, he hopes that more chains, including his competitors, will invest in ProfitBase. The most important thing for Okland is that ProfitBase continues to enhance their solution, which will benefit everyone. The best way to go about this is to ensure a beneficial collaboration between the retailers and ProfitBase.

"ProfitBase has significant competence in retail. If this is supplemented by our competence as well as the competence of other retail chains, the final results are bound to be good! In the end, the most important battles take place out in the restaurants, through high-quality products and excellent service, not through administrative work in the headquarters", he says.

As we are about to leave Dolly Dimple's, we feel the urge to ask the former football professional which element of the system pleases him the most. "It works, and it works every time", he says smiling.

Being one of the country's largest restaurant chains, there is a huge demand for all type of performance reports at Dolly Dimple's. "A good system is a prerequisite, but it is equally important that ProfitBase is familiar with our trade", says Arne Larsen Okland, CEO of Dolly Dimple's.



Arne Larsen Okland
CEO, Dolly Dimple's

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