

Case Study

Mitchells & Butlers

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“Cobweb provided us with a totally flexible and scalable solution in a timely manner.”

Mitchells & Butlers is the leading operator of restaurants and pubs in the UK, providing the largest choice of eating out experiences through their successful brands and delivering great service, quality and value for money to their customers. With so many establishments it was identified that a guest email system was needed in order for customers to contact their relevant establishment.

1 Customer Profile

Industry : Licensed Retail
Business Start Date : 1898
Number of Premises : Around 1,600
Number of Employees : 40,000
Services with Cobweb : Hosted Exchange.

Mitchells & Butlers runs many of the UK's leading restaurant and pub brands including Vintage Inns, Toby Carvery, Crown Carveries, Harvester, Sizzling Pub Co., O'Neill's, All Bar One and Premium Country Dining Group, as well as some of the most famous individual pubs in Britain including the White Horse in Parson's Green, London and Deacon Brodie's Tavern in Edinburgh.

The company has always been pioneers in the pub industry and grew gradually until it was running 7,000 pubs in the 1980s. The landmark Beer Orders in 1989 changed everything, but since then they have evolved rapidly with innovative brands like All Bar One, Browns and O'Neill's responding to the mood of the times. Back in the 1980s beer was by far Mitchells & Butlers' biggest seller, but nowadays, 47% of sales come from food. In fact, the company now serves around 125 million meals a year, as well as some 435 million drinks.

From timeless London pubs to cutting edge city centre brasseries, from Liverpool's grand Philharmonic Dining Rooms to the Horseshoe Bar in Glasgow, Mitchells & Butlers owns and operates a rich array of restaurants and pubs that reflect all the diversity and history you'd expect from a company well into its second century.

1898

Two Midlands brewing and pub empires merge to form Mitchells & Butlers.

1960s

The company merges with Bass, Ratcliff and Gretton Ltd then Charrington United, before becoming Bass PLC.

1980s

Bass runs 7,000 pubs all over the UK, with beer by far its biggest seller. The business splits into separate brewing and retailing divisions called Bass Brewers and Bass Taverns.

1990s

As tastes change, food becomes central to the company's sales. The first O'Neill's opens in Aberdeen and the first All Bar One in Surrey. The Company acquires Harvester, Browns and 550 pubs from Punch, as Mitchells & Butlers grows dramatically.

2000s

Bass PLC becomes Six Continents PLC. Three years later, the pub division lists separately to become Mitchells & Butlers once again. It pursues a strategy of operating large, food-led businesses, acquiring 239 pub restaurants from Whitbread PLC and exchanging 44 pub restaurants for 21 Express by Holiday Inn lodges.

2010

The disposal of 333 Town and Community pubs to Stonegate Pub Company is announced. This is quickly followed by the purchase of 22 Ha Ha Bar & Grill businesses, which paves the way for more conversions to the hugely successful All Bar One and Browns brands. Mitchells & Butlers is now the leading restaurant and pub company in the UK.

“We needed an email system which would work across all of our brands” said Martyn Eddins, IT Services Manager at Mitchells & Butlers.

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2 The Challenge

Mitchells & Butlers identified a requirement to provide all of their businesses with a guest email system, so that their customers had an easy way of getting in contact with the relevant establishment to book tables and enquire about opening times for example.

There were a number of bespoke requirements that had to be met, such as changing the user's interface and limiting access only to certain locations, as well as a short timeframe of 20 days in which to get the project completed and delivered.

Due to the complexity of upgrading their current email system and to have the guest email solution quickly available, Mitchells & Butlers IT department were given the go-ahead to select a third party outsourced email provider.

“We considered a number of global leading hosted email brands, including Cobweb’s Hosted Exchange. Ultimately it was our feeling that Cobweb was the preferred provider who could deliver against our technical requirements” said Martyn Eddins, IT Services Manager at Mitchells & Butlers.

3 The Solution

Mitchells & Butlers looked at a number of options with market leading cloud based email hosting companies.

After engaging with the options available to them it was felt that most did not have the flexibility that was needed to deliver on Mitchells & Butlers customised requirements.

Cobweb Solutions were chosen as the preferred Cloud Services Provider as we offered more flexibility and customisation, allowing us to match Mitchells & Butlers specific security and interface configuration requirements.

“Cobweb provided us with a totally flexible and scalable solution in a timely manner” said Martyn Eddins, IT Services Manager at Mitchells & Butlers.

Mitchells & Butlers have subscribed to a customised delivery of Cobweb's Hosted Exchange service, which fits their individual business needs perfectly. The service includes MessageLabs Anti-Spam and Anti-Virus protection, 24/7 UK based support and all future upgrades included free of charge.

Adopting Cobweb's Hosted Exchange service allows Mitchells & Butlers to quickly roll out a reliable and secure guest email service to all of its future restaurant and pubs, regardless of location.



“The Cobweb approach has allowed us to deliver a cost-effective, yet tailored email service to all outlets without any large upfront expenditure” said Martyn Eddins, IT Services Manager at Mitchells & Butlers.

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