



Restaurant IT Support: Transforming User Experience

Client Profile

Our hospitality client is a leading developer of global, multi-channel foodservice brands, delivering 100+ products and \$1B+ in annual retail sales. Founded in 2004, the private equity-backed corporation franchises and operates 6,400+ restaurants, cafes, ice cream shops, and bakeries in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and 55+ foreign countries.

Business Challenge

Wanted: An IT Managed Services Partner for 4,000+ stores

Effective IT support for internal resources is crucial for the success of any business today. The IT service desk plays a strategic role in aligning IT and business processes, ensuring all IT infrastructure runs smoothly. This becomes even more critical for businesses operating in the challenging and dynamic food service industry, where the smooth and seamless functioning of back-office technology as well as customer-facing interfaces is integral to providing consistent guest experiences across all destinations.

Our hospitality client was seeking a new partner to provide restaurant IT support and Point-of-Sale (POS) Administration capabilities for all their 4000+ locations in the U.S. via multiple channels. The client had run into challenges with their existing managed services provider, who did not meet their business requirements and did not provide the client experience they expected for their brands.

Their requirements and challenges included:

- > Improved IT support for their franchise store locations, including more empathetic agents possessing soft skills and better English.
- > Reducing the number of support tickets over time. Also, their existing IT support partner was not focused on providing analysis on trends or setting up true problem management processes to address repetitive issues and eliminate them.
- > First Contact Resolution was too low due to lack of knowledge and troubleshooting skills. For the same reasons, most of the tickets were assigned to the client's internal support team instead of being resolved by the provider.



- > Their ticket handling process was manual, with no automation or implementation of self-service portal, chatbots or any other initiatives that would modernize the existing support structure.
- > The provider's documented processes were not accurate, developed, or maintained properly.
- > There was no dedicated training program in place for bringing new IT Agents or POS Administrators into production.
- > The provider did not offer POS Administration support services, which the client needed, to complement the IT Service Desk.
- > End user support for IT service desk was only available in English which was a pain point for Spanish-speaking restaurant franchisees.
- > The client was also incurring a higher cost of operations due to the need to keep internal resources involved in processes such as ticket resolution.

The client had already been working with Auxis for improving their franchised store support. We created a **pioneering digital audit and coaching program** for the client's franchisees across their 6,600+ locations, which transformed their store audits and created significant savings and efficiencies. Following the impressive results from that engagement and the client's positive experience working with us, they decided to extend the partnership with Auxis to provide IT support for their U.S. locations.



Solution & Approach

Building a Comprehensive IT Support Solution

Auxis put together a team of skilled IT support agents for different levels, POS administration analysts, and a management team to oversee and manage the operations. We took a multi-pronged approach to create a comprehensive IT support solution for the client.

Nearshore Support Team

We leveraged our highly skilled nearshore resources in Costa Rica and Colombia to build a strong restaurant IT support team for improving user experience. Auxis' nearshore team provided the following advantages:

- > Strong cultural affinity with the US and availability in the same time zone.
- > Superior English skills, with the most neutral accent in the region. We also added Spanish language support to the program, which was not provided by the client's previous service partner.
- > Strong customer service skills, which allowed agents to handle client issues with empathy and efficiency.
- > Lower cost of operations due to labor arbitrage.

Continuous Improvement Program

Auxis' Center of Excellence (CoE) played a key role in supporting and improving operations through Quality Assurance (QA), Customer Satisfaction (CSAT), Knowledge Management (Process documentation), Training, and Workforce Management processes.

We put in place a Continuous Improvement initiative using structured QA and CSAT programs to understand how agents are doing, what customers sentiment is, and use this information to re-train or coach agents, educate customers, and improve processes in general.

Performance Management Program

We also implemented Performance Management monitoring and reporting from Auxis Business Intelligence tools, to ensure all incidents are addressed as needed, agents are performing at the desired levels, and recurring trends are tracked and analyzed over time.

Automation Initiatives

Automation today is key to making IT support teams more effective, managing their workloads more efficiently, resolving tickets faster, and providing better customer support. Automation is an integral part of Auxis' IT support solution, and we identified and are in the process of implementing a number of automation initiatives to reduce the client's ticket resolution times and improve accuracy.

Some of these include:

> Automatic Ticket Creation Bot

The bot answers calls, asks for relevant information, and creates tickets and passes them to the agents, accelerating the ticket creation process. The bot is also capable of offering a call back to users and scheduling it automatically with Amazon Connect, Auxis' contact center platform.



> **Implementation of Chatbots for all channels**

Implementing chatbots for all channels to enable agents to manage multiple interactions at the same time, thus saving time and creating efficiencies. This would also contribute to higher client satisfaction – when a restaurant employee has an issue, they can use the chat support instead of having to call in, allowing them to multitask.

> **Introduction of Virtual Agents**

Creation and deployment of virtual agents to assist our Service Desk agents. The virtual agents evaluate the information being logged in the tickets and suggest corrections, via Artificial Intelligence (AI) so the tickets have all the correct and relevant information, resulting in time savings for the Service Desk agent.

> **Automated Ticket Resolution**

Auxis has also identified a few ticket categories across channels (self service, phone, and chat) that can be executed by the bot through an API.

Modern Contact Center Technology

We leveraged Amazon Connect, part of Auxis' contact center technology, which enables smart routing of calls, scheduled call backs, survey at the end of a call, integration with the ITSM (IT service management) system for automatic ticket creation, and multiple other features which improve and upgrade legacy telephony systems.

Proactive Business Communications

We also initiated proactive communications to the business when there were major situations affecting multiple stores. Prior to this, the client's leadership had been learning about issues from the franchisees instead of from their provider's support staff.

Learning Management System

During the transition period, Auxis reviewed and updated all the client's existing SOPs and Knowledge Base articles and developed over 300 more. This has built a strong foundation for the client's processes and Auxis has used this to establish a strong training program, making all the documents available on a Learning Management System (LMS) platform, creating a valuable resource for agent onboarding.



Results

Faster Resolution, Fewer Escalations, and Better User Experience

The results achieved by Auxis have been nothing short of transformational. Along with improved first contact resolution and better user experience, Auxis has introduced structured processes, documentation as well as a strong performance management structure.



Our skilled IT support team and revamped processes have led to the reduction of incident resolution time, thus improving user satisfaction. In a very short period, a 96% SLA was achieved for all seven of the client's brands, with an Average Handle Time (AHT) of 20 minutes.



It is estimated that shifting IT support to Auxis' nearshore team also helped bring down the client's cost of operations by over 30%.



Reduction of escalations to client's support team in US from about 80% with the previous provider to less than 10% with the Auxis team. With an efficient Auxis customer support team taking care of day-to-day operations, the client's internal IT team has more time to work on strategic initiatives.



Based on the Continuous Improvement Program, we developed an initial CSAT benchmark, attaining a 3.8 score. Three months after go-live, the score improved to 4.1, confirming the positive impact on customer experience during the initial support stage. The QA score has been kept above 86%.



Addition of Spanish language support, along with the empathetic and knowledgeable agents, were a big advantage for resolving issues at restaurant locations where the majority of staff are non-English speakers.



Through our proactive communications initiative, the client now receives notifications from IT support regarding in-store IT issues, instead of the stores reporting them.



The performance management monitoring and reporting give the client complete transparency and peace of mind on the health of operations.

