

# Bridge Theatre

- A 900-seat theatre with the flexibility to change its arrangement to proscenium, thrust or promenade arrangement depending on the performance needs.
- First wholly new theatre of scale to be added to London's commercial theatre sector in 80 years.



## 1 / THE CHALLENGE

### An open platform EPoS to power key integrations

The Bridge Theatre was having issues with incompatible software with their existing EPoS pre-Covid but when social distancing and customer ordering restrictions came into force during the pandemic, these incompatibilities became a significant issue. Box Office Manager and Systems Administrator, Rhea Heath explains,

“Pre-pandemic we were already offering a mobile ticketing and pre-ordering interval service with CrowdEngage for our customers, however, this didn't integrate with our existing EPoS system. We were having to print out lists of customer orders for fulfilment which was inefficient and slower consequently.”

Going into a pandemic, they needed a seamless pre-ordering system that spoke to their EPoS and the flexibility of mobile POS to respond to the

ever-changing Covid restrictions.

“We needed to be a lot more flexible operationally as the demands within front of house operations changed quite drastically,” explained Bar Manager, Brandon Plummer. “We were looking for something more substantial than our existing EPoS suppliers were able to provide from a stock control and transactional point of view. We needed something robust, reliable, and most of all flexible. The longer-term plan for the Bridge Theatre's owners, the London Theatre Company, is to expand into other venues so this was also a consideration at the procurement stage as we needed a system with proven multi-site functionality.”

## 2 / SOLUTION

### A flexible and future-proofed EPoS

#### EPoS ecosystem

Our fixed EPoS terminals were installed with integrated Dojo PDQs for fast, cashless payment.

Our cloud-based multi-department reporting was installed for convenient remote access on and off-site in addition to our enterprise-level stock control software.

### **CrowdEngage integration**

pointOne were able to work collaboratively with the team at CrowdEngage and the Bridge Theatre to build a brand-new integration that could crucially close the loop on the customer journey. Based on the Bridge Theatre's requirements for pre-ordering and fulfilment, our developers ensured that all tickets and pre-orders could now go through the EPoS in a two-way data transfer between pointOne and CrowdEngage. Rhea explains:

"A big reason why Brandon and the team decided to go with pointOne was that the CrowdEngage integration was discussed from the get-go as a key benefit and one that our existing EPoS supplier was unable to offer."

### **How it works**

The CrowdEngage integration offers the Bridge Theatre customers seamless customer service from sending pre-show reminders via text with a link to their e-tickets, directions to the venue, FAQs, and importantly, the opportunity to pre-

order drinks and merchandise. Customers can order and pay for their drinks online and receive a confirmation text with a location number that corresponds to a shelf number in the Bridge Theatre's foyer bar where they pick up their interval order.

"Use of pre-ordering rose dramatically during the pandemic because we were not allowed to serve drinks from the bar but even now all restrictions have been lifted, our uptake on pre-ordering is still 12% or more on average. Pre-ordering is something we actively encourage in all our pre-show marketing because operationally it helps our staff better manage the busy interval period by balancing pre-made drinks with the drinks on-demand at the bar. It's also great for retention because if the customer has a good experience, they are more likely to return and use the service again" says Rhea.

Brandon sees the advantage from a staff management angle too adding,

"We're able to be more in control and rather than it being 20 minutes of chaos making 100 plus interval orders on a busy Saturday night, our staff are in charge of the situation. Pre-orders are made and ready for collection and those customers wanting to order at the bar aren't facing any frustration with long waiting times."

The Bridge Theatre are also able to specify when pre-ordering closes before the performance starts. By closing the online interval menu two minutes before the show begins, they provide customers with the convenience of ordering their interval drinks while still sitting in the auditorium.

### **Stock control**

The Bridge Theatre's "dark weeks" when the shows are being turned around is a key time for Brandon to assess line performance and thanks to the numerous stock reporting options, he can make an informed decision about future ordering. Brandon explains,



“To be able to see item profitability and popularity pages in pointOne’s stock control is really helpful for me particularly as I can do it on a ‘show by show’ basis which, coupled with our understanding of the audience demographic, makes forecasting for stock on future shows much more accurate.”

### **Mobile POS**

Having several mobile POS tablets created huge flexibility for the Bridge Theatre’s operational set-up as Brandon outlines:

“Depending on our show demands, we can use them as concession points and for roaming merchandise sales pre-and post-show. Recently we created a bespoke bar in our lower foyer so instead of moving an entire EPoS terminal downstairs, we were able to use a tablet which is far more convenient but still captures all the stock and transaction data for reconciliation just like a fixed POS would. And because they work exactly the same way as a fixed POS, there is no further training required, it’s just on a smaller screen.”

Rhea adds, “It’s all about business need across all departments. It just gives us a bit more flexibility to go, ‘this is a really busy show so let’s set up an extra merchandise or concession point’ and it can happen quickly with the tablets. Equally from a back-office angle, finance appreciates that merchandise sales can go through the POS and not just via Spektrix as reconciliation is easier and there are fewer accounting queries.”

## **3 / RESULTS**

### **A joined-up system with flexibility for future growth**

Talking about the impact that changing their EPoS system to pointOne has had, Brandon says,

“Front-line operations have definitely improved. The pointOne system has helped us navigate this

period of disruption caused by the pandemic and I can foresee it helping us out of it and into a positive period of future growth. LTC does have plans to open a second venue later down the line and so pointOne’s multi-site functionality such as being able to set up multiple site and stock locations through the stock control software is vital.”

“Using pointOne stock control has made us much more cost-efficient because our forecasting is accurate and stock-taking is a much quicker process.”

**“Having a streamlined, efficient system like pointOne, with the CrowdEngage integration, means our customers have a great customer journey from the start. We have such a short amount of time during a customer’s visit to get things right so in that small window, we want to make a positive impact and a lasting impression. If they have a good ticketing-buying experience, a great F&B experience, a great show and they leave us happy and wanting to return then that’s the ultimate goal.”**

**RHEA HEATH, BOX OFFICE MANAGER**

Equally this frictionless experience is echoed in the staff’s use of the EPoS system as Brandon elaborates,

“Yes, it needs to be frictionless for customers but also for us. Thankfully the transition to using pointOne was pretty seamless and within a very short period all the team were up and running and finding it very easy to use”.

The flexibility the Bridge Theatre gained through pointOne's integration with CrowdEngage will be of continual benefit as their programme expands its offering into events outside their usual long-run singular shows. Brandon explains,

"We were changing day by day in a Covid world, and so it means outside of a Covid world we can still do that thanks to the flexibility that our new integrated EPoS affords us."

Rhea echos this sentiment, adding, "I think what I've enjoyed the most about the partnership between all three of us (Bridge Theatre, pointOne and CrowdEngage) is that if, for example, we wanted to introduce table service as part of our offering, we have the flexibility with the systems in place to make this happen quickly. It just gives us more options to expand and explore how we can make things better for our staff and our customers."

The fact that pointOne's EPoS is open-platform has given the Bridge Theatre a lot more opportunity to automate its systems and be flexible as Rhea explains,

"Just knowing we have a POS system that can be flexible enough to respond to our changing business needs rather than being restrained by a system's limitations is a huge benefit to us."

**"Very often EPoS systems are designed specifically for the bar and restaurant sector but the refreshing thing about pointOne is that they really understand the needs of a theatre. The system is customised to the extra demands that come from merch sales and ticketing as well as the F&B and all the back of house functionality that is needed to allow seamless integration of this data."**

**BRANDON PLUMMER, BAR MANAGER**

Reflecting on the experience, Rhea is most happy with how pointOne and CrowdEngage were able to work in such a flexible and collaborative way to achieve the best outcome for the Bridge Theatre's bespoke needs.

## 4 / EPOS TOOLS USED BY BRIDGE THEATRE



### Multi-department Reporting

Multi-department reporting provides owner managers or corporate head offices with the ability to view, consolidate, and manage each of their sites remotely, either singularly, or as a group – and all in real time, with no more overnight polling.



### Mobile Interval Ordering

Mobile Order & Pay interval ordering offers the convenience of pre-ordering for theatre patrons via their mobile for pick-up at a location of their choice. This both prevents queues at the bar and frees up staff time for dedicated customer service.



### Integrations

Our open-platform EPoS makes data sharing simple by integrating seamlessly with all industry-leading software tools to give you the bigger picture. We integrate with 100s of third-party software and continue to grow this list as per customer demand.



### Enterprise Stock Control

What you sell, buy, and waste has a big impact on your bottom line. We operate, real time, 'first in first out' stock control for 'actual' GP tracking and reporting, multi supply unit and price for single ingredients, multi department management and cost/revenue allocation.