



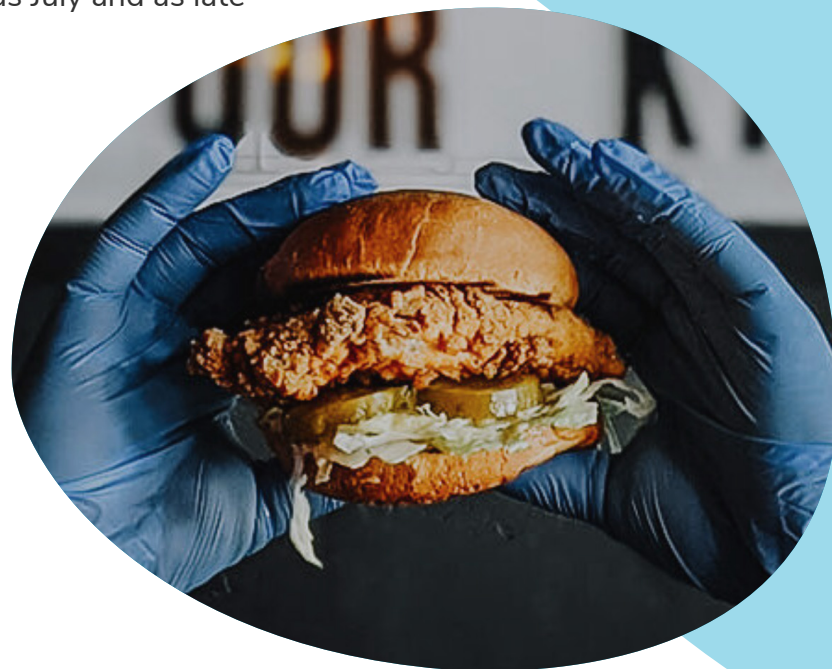
Okay, Cool Hospitality Recommends xtraCHEF for Every Restaurant in the Country

[Okay, Cool Hospitality \(OKC\)](#) aims to “create unique, impactful, and quality hospitality experiences” at each of their restaurants. Found across Bozeman and Big Sky, Montana, OKC currently operates three different concepts: Copper, a whiskey bar with two locations; El Camino, a retro-inspired, “fresh and funky” chicken and burger joint; and Kitty Warren Social Club, a speakeasy nestled underneath the bustling streets of downtown Bozeman.

OKC's ethos has resonated with customers: the group has 4 new locations due to open in winter 2020/2021, including 3 new concepts and a reimagining of El Camino for Big Sky clientele. Despite their success and plans for expansion, OKC was forced to close all of its locations in March due to COVID-19, with concepts gradually reopening at reduced capacity as early as July and as late as October.

The group was not set up for takeout or delivery when the pandemic hit, and they only just started rolling out partnerships with DoorDash and Grubhub recently. Instead of pivoting to off-premise, like many restaurant operators did, OKC decided to focus on getting their house in order instead.

That's where Brian Keefe stepped in. Keefe was an accountant for a tech company and a finance business partner doing analysis in Boston before his interest in forestry called him west for a change in career. He would



up settling in Bozeman in March, taking a job as Finance Manager with OKC to help improve business operations and implement new systems while all of the restaurants were shut down.

Quick implementation makes xtraCHEF a clear choice

When Keefe joined the team, he was brought into weekly reporting meetings with the rest of the OKC team to measure company performance. But Keefe quickly realized that the meetings, while good in theory, were focusing on the wrong information.

“They were monitoring numbers with the information they had, but it was evident looking at it that the info was wrong,” said Keefe. “The weekly meetings would look at the prior week’s restaurant performance, but for food cost, they’d add the total cost of invoices and calculate totals.”

Even being new to the restaurant industry, Keefe knew that this was an issue. “[The manual accounts payable] process is so prone to error and inaccuracy that you might as well not even have the meeting!” He immediately started to look for a solution that would give him—and the rest of the OKC team—the accurate data they needed to make better business decisions.

Keefe started looking into restaurant accounting-specific software solutions, but was quickly disheartened when he spoke to their users. He realized after several conversations with his peers in the industry that the platforms he wanted to explore would be too time-consuming to set up; he spoke to restaurant operators who still weren’t up and running with the software, even 6 months after implementation began. Unsure of when all of OKC’s units would reopen, Keefe knew he was running on borrowed time.

Luckily, his peers had an alternative option: xtraCHEF! Although it’s a [restaurant AP](#) solution at its core, xtraCHEF also has stronger [restaurant accounting](#) features than most of the other industry-specific software on the market. The peers Keefe spoke to had a lot of success in setting up xtraCHEF quickly, so he decided to give it a go.

“[xtraCHEF] has been working extremely well,” says Keefe. “Even if it did nothing but AP automation, I’d recommend it to every restaurant in the country.”

Automating accounts payable makes invoice processing faster than ever

Keefe was able to jump right into xtraCHEF and get value from the software immediately—a pleasant surprise for someone so new to the industry. Anything that was unclear to him went directly to [Dave Slater](#), Customer Success Specialist at xtraCHEF. “He’s the greatest,” Keefe says about Slater. “I love working with him, and he loves xtraCHEF. He’s super helpful with all my super-complicated questions.”

Thanks to xtraCHEF’s ease of use and responsive customer success team, Keefe could quickly collaborate with kitchen managers to implement xtraCHEF across the board. First up was getting them running with xtraCHEF’s [AP Management](#) so they would no longer have to manually process huge incoming invoices from US Foods.



OKC uses xtraCHEF's mobile app to upload incoming invoices so managers don't have to carve out a space for themselves in the back office. All they do is open the mail or intercept invoice deliveries, then scan each page using the phone's camera. "I think that's the coolest part [of xtraCHEF]," says Keefe. "I'm always surprised at how the system performs [on mobile]."

Once scanning is complete, xtraCHEF automatically digitizes and applies [General Ledger codes](#) to each invoice. Once a week, Keefe reviews xtraCHEF's product verification queue and exports the data gathered to be seamlessly uploaded into OKC's accounting system.

Across OKC's units, Keefe estimates that it only takes a half hour for invoices to be uploaded, and another half hour for him to clear the verification queue and prepare data from xtraCHEF to be exported. That's only one hour of work between two people each week!

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Proper plate costing and food cost control creates surprising revenue results

Once everyone was comfortable with new invoice management processes, Keefe was able to work with OKC's kitchen managers to upload recipes into xtraCHEF's [cloud based Recipe Management](#) feature to determine [plate cost](#) and corresponding [menu pricing](#). In less than 3 weeks, he was able to build out a food cost model based on data from xtraCHEF's automatic calculations.

It was exciting not only for Keefe, who was in desperate need of accurate data, but also for the managers who had been crunching incorrect numbers and trying to make sense of them. With the power of xtraCHEF's automation and food cost data, he could truly manage the entire process.

"[xtraCHEF] takes such a large volume of information and digests it with very little user input," says Keefe. "[The software] turned our weekly profitability meeting on its head because we were able to look at real-time data."

Due to OKC's shutdown through most of the year and its subsequent reopening at reduced capacity, Keefe shares that the business was bringing in about 50% less revenue compared to the same period in 2019. But thanks in part to bringing in the food cost controls provided by xtraCHEF, he realized that OKC is just as profitable now as it was last year!

It's a huge testament to how much of an effect food cost controls can have on a restaurant business' success. "At this time last year, we were so bad at controlling costs," says Keefe. "So it was really powerful to see that data" and discover how much OKC had improved.

Okay, Cool Hospitality maintained their 2019 profitability with 50% less revenue in 2020 thanks to xtraCHEF

Another business successfully set up for expansion with xtraCHEF

With new AP and recipe management procedures in place, Keefe feels confident that the OKC team can move forward with opening their 4 new units over the next several months. “The teams can do everything right the first time with xtraCHEF in place,” he explains.

No one has to dig through boxes of old papers to find the original price of a pantry item that’s been sitting around for months. For locations that are opening a new unit, like El Camino, all of that information is already stored and ready for use.

Now that OKC has seen the value that xtraCHEF provides their business, they’re planning to implement additional tech solutions to help streamline operations. Next up is migrating their Point of Sale (POS) to [Toast](#), a key partner to xtraCHEF.

“With the way [the integration](#) is set up, the entire food costing report I set up in Excel will be fully automated through xtraCHEF,” Keefe shares. Toast has a lot of cool features that are already widely available with more to come in the pipeline, so he has “high hopes” it will be yet another great addition to the OKC tech stack.

By adding Keefe to the team and taking the time to standardize processes for accurate data and increased efficiency across locations, Okay, Cool Hospitality has given themselves the information they need to maintain profits and prepare for more growth in the future.

“A lot of restaurants are operating in a lot of unknowns, doing what works,” Keefe says, “But fundamentally, they don’t have a good idea on numbers or profitability.”

Don’t make that mistake! [Request a demo](#) today to learn how xtraCHEF can help support your restaurant’s profitability while operating with reduced revenue.