

The Modern Operations Execution Handbook

A new standard of excellence in multi-unit
restaurants and foodservice operations

The Old Way → Operations Execution

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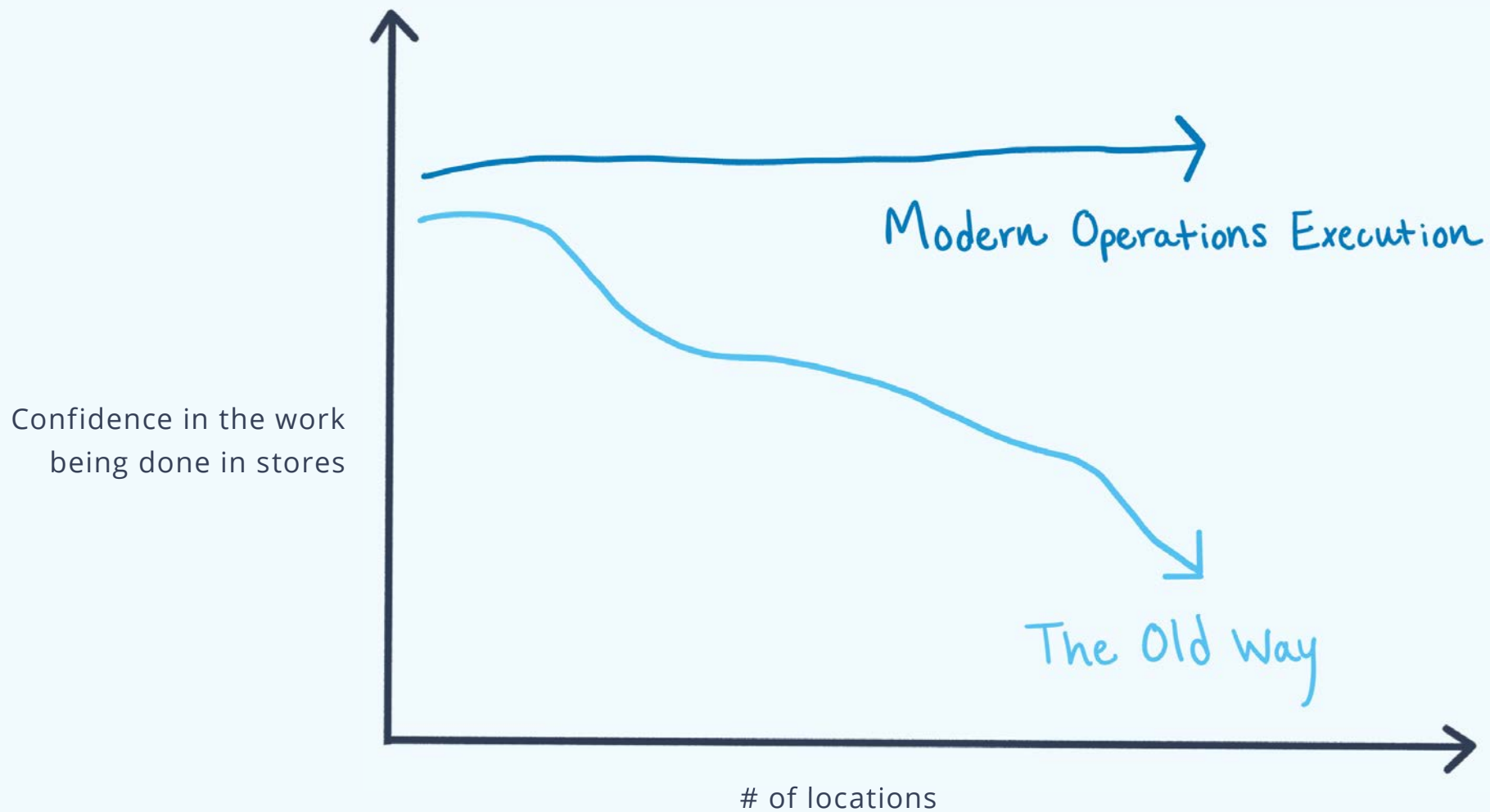
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A new standard for operational excellence

Introduction

Why Is Work Being Done the Same Way it Was 20+ Years Ago?

It's time to take a good, hard look at how work is completed today—the time lost, forgotten work, wasted materials, and missed communication, versus the potential of how it could be. This handbook will help operations leaders explore what's possible, and make it crystal clear why the time for change is long overdue.



?!

For many years this was (and in many cases, still is) the reality in multi-unit operations, and many operators held the “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” mentality. With no visibility into the quality of work being done in stores and a lack of consistent communication, it’s almost hard to believe that this was standard for so long—and that it still is today for many operators.

WAIT, IT’S *STILL* BEING DONE THIS WAY?

- Stacks of paperwork, piles of binders, and too few pens
- Field managers driving back and forth to stores to identify and rectify issues
- Pencil-whipped checklists and hours spent on mundane tasks
- Missing documentation, lack of compliance, and make-shift processes
- Unseen emails (and faxes!?), and games of telephone between stores and HQ



THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY HAS CHANGED

Over the last decade, we've seen a lot of aggressive growth, consolidation, and acquisition across the board. Customer expectations are higher than they've ever been. Field teams are being asked to do more than ever before while managing more locations.

The last few years have forced many operators to more regularly rethink how work gets done, while continuing to adapt faster than the previous 30 years combined.

In the current landscape, you and your teams face a mountain of adverse challenges, like labor shortages, rising wages, supply chain disruptions, and higher food costs. While we can't predict the future of these challenges, we do know that the only constant is change—restaurants need to be set up to adapt quickly to how new challenges will likely emerge.

MODERN OPERATIONS EXECUTION: THE WAY WORK GETS DONE IN MULTI-UNIT OPERATIONS HAS EVOLVED

Traditional tools and techniques, like laminated checklists,

coffee-stained documents, and back-office binders, simply no longer cut it. So why do many operators still accept “the way it's always been done” as a way to work?

Let's put it this way, while some operators continue to do it how “it's always been done,” their:

- competitors opened 10 new stores
- customers got tired of waiting
- staff applied elsewhere

Imagine if you saw someone in today's world using a beeper or an 8-track player. That would be ridiculous, right? This is the same impression you give when you use old tools to complete modern work. **The digital era has arrived for multi-unit operations, and the sooner you embrace it, the better for more efficient and consistent work.**

WHAT IS MODERN OPERATIONS EXECUTION?

Operations execution refers to the work that is actually happening in stores, and how ops leaders make sure it's done really well. While this includes task execution, it also encompasses other practices like optimizing how you communicate operational priorities, teaching employees to adhere to brand standards, and taking a look at *how task execution is done* (i.e. can it be more efficient or productive?).

Through technology, modern operations execution helps drive employee productivity in the field and in stores, and improves the consistency of work happening throughout the business. This is particularly difficult to achieve for multi-unit foodservice chains that operate across dozens, hundreds, or thousands of locations, especially as they open new stores and try to hire (and retain) more staff.

The first big step on your journey toward modern operations execution is to understand what's already happening today. To get to a better place with stronger operational outcomes, you have to be able to visualize what's possible. We'll break down five key areas to give you a clear view of what modern operations execution looks like and how some of today's top operators are leading the way. In the pages that follow, if you find yourself resonating more with what's listed as "the old way," let this be a wake-up call.

Operators have
modernized how
work gets done
in five key areas

1 Productivity

2 Quality

3 Food Safety

4 Communication

5 Visibility

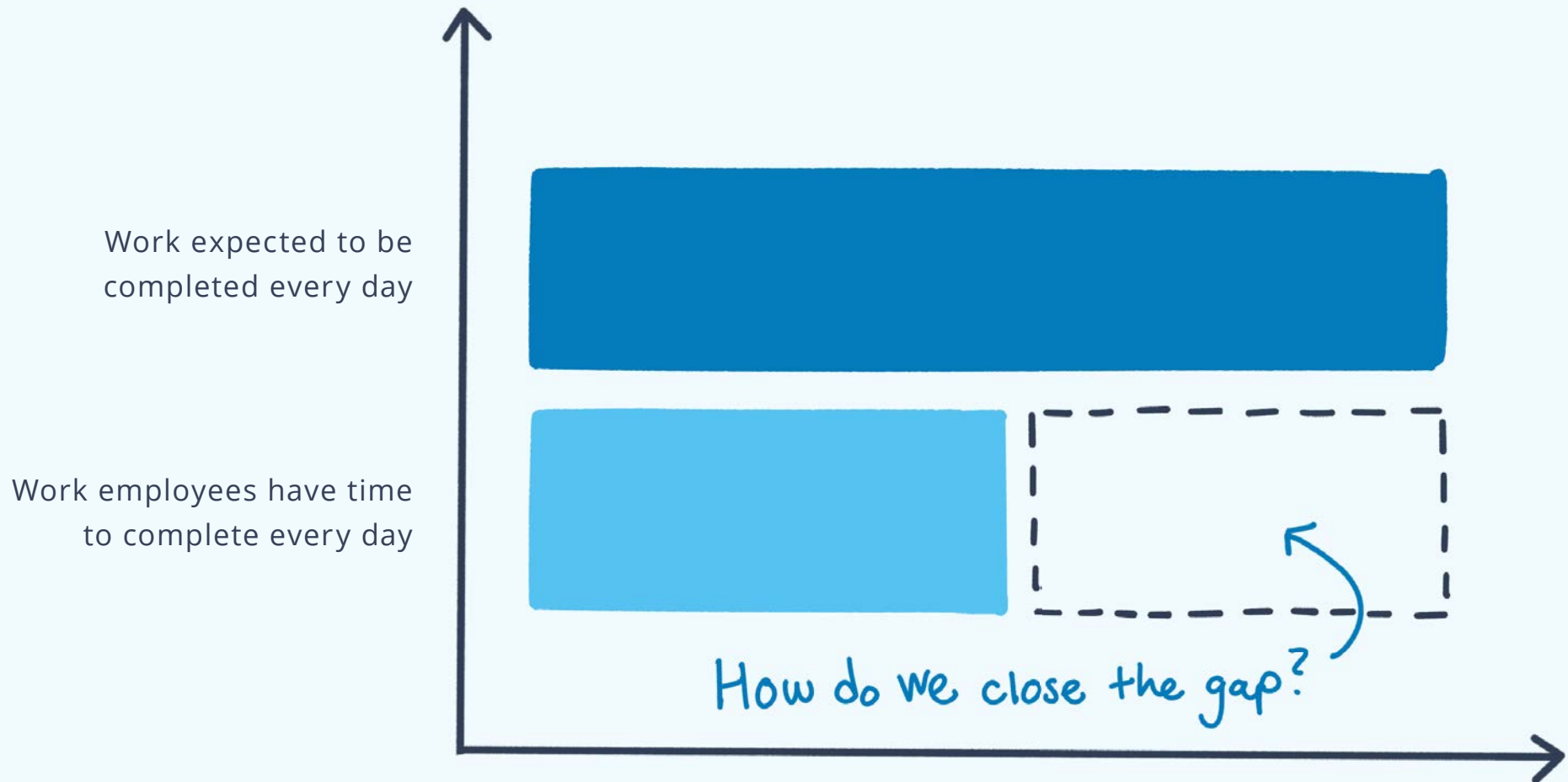


Chapter 01

Productivity

Automate manual work to optimize employee time

Store teams have long lists of work to complete each day, yet struggle with the time, staffing, and resources to complete it. Modern operators have prioritized employee productivity and automation to close the gap.

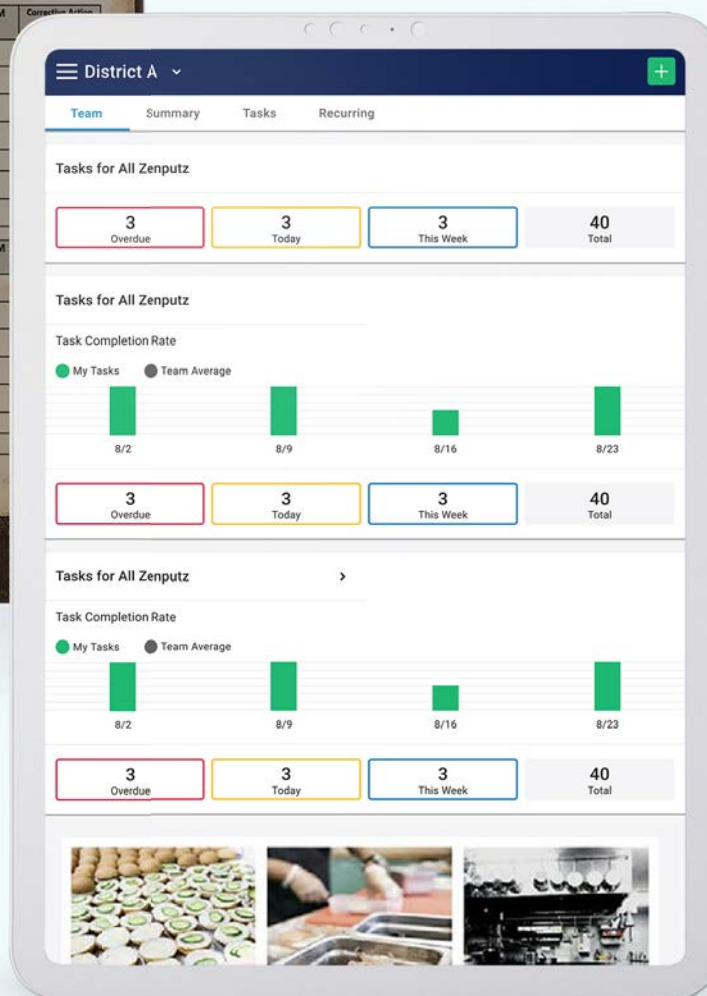


The Old Way →

Restaurant Ops Checklist

| Section: Dining Area | AM | PM | Completion & Status |
|---|----|----|---------------------|
| Floors swept and mopped thoroughly; floor is clear of debris | | | |
| Tables and chairs are in good condition, cleaned | | | |
| Chairs tucked into correct position, adequately organized and sturdy | | | |
| Tables are at least 6 feet apart, appropriate PPE set up | | | |
| All shared areas are swept and thoroughly sanitized | | | |
| Other COVID-19 protocols or suggestions issued by state/province are enforced | | | |
| Hand sanitizer is readily available at various locations throughout the dining area | | | |
| Section: FOH | | | |
| Wipe down ordering area, sanitize thoroughly | | | |
| Front counter is clean, cleared as much as possible | | | |
| Glass/plastic PPE clean, working to protect employees | | | |
| Gloves, masks, other disposable PPE in stock for employees | | | |
| Drink station is clean, all disposable cups/lids are organized, neat | | | |
| Sanitizer is readily available for ordering customers | | | |
| Condiment area sanitized, clean & orderly | | | |

Operations Execution



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WORKLOAD PRIORITIZATION

Store employees decide what work they'll do with no accountability if important work isn't completed.

Store managers and teams have digital task lists to help prioritize their time each day, with guidance on when to do it and how to do it correctly.

TASK OPTIMIZATION

Having teams continue to work on tedious, time-consuming tasks that could be done better or faster—and some that they don't need to be doing at all.

Streamlining manual tasks or eliminating them altogether to make everyone's job easier while accomplishing more with fewer people and less effort.

KEEPING TEAMS UP-TO-DATE

Still shuffling papers back and forth between store locations, field leaders, and HQ, and no one seems to know what's going on, what to do, or when to do it.

No more copying, scanning, printing, mailing, shipping, or faxing—everyone in the organization, from HQ down to the stores, always knows the status of the work being done.

ROLLING OUT UPDATES AND INITIATIVES

Sharing important news or making a simple update to a standard operating procedure take weeks or months to implement.

Quickly and easily roll out new initiatives or updates throughout the entire organization with timely announcements and notifications.

Modern Operations Execution in Action: KFC Goes Paperless to Save Time and Achieve More

KFC operates 20,000 locations in more than 100 countries.

Then



Paper checklists to complete audits



Uniform tracking and execution of critical tasks across the organization

Sifting through documents to manually analyze data (6+ hours/week to complete)



Once burdensome 6-hour tasks **now take only minutes to complete**

No assurance on corrective actions without having to physically visit stores weeks later



Shifted focus to the **customer experience and final product**



“ We’d spend hours and hours sifting through the paper. Now, it’s almost instant—I have all the information I need to track the work at the stores. ”

Wayne Hill, People Capability Manager, KFC

Chapter 02

Quality

Improve the quality of work

The quality of work completed in stores every day ultimately drives success in other areas of the business and makes customers happier. Modern technologies and processes equip store teams to execute their work more consistently and at a higher level.



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ACCOUNTABILITY

Difficult to hold each store accountable for completing important procedures accurately and on time, like audits and corrective actions.

Photos and in-app tips to remind employees what a successfully completed task looks like so they know exactly what they need to do, how to do it, and when it needs to be completed.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Taking a week or more to complete corrective actions after a store audit and lacking confidence that action items are addressed promptly or correctly.

Follow-up tasks are instantly assigned to store managers to prevent issues from slipping through the cracks, and field managers receive alerts for critical issues and get notified after issues are resolved.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Service and/or food quality varies with each customer visit at each location, leading to negative reviews or customer service complaints.

Using processes and tools that can keep up with consumer demands to deliver a predictable experience at every location—one that consistently delights and keeps people coming back.

CONSISTENCY

Inconsistent participation in brand-wide promotions and limited-time offers (LTOs), causes stores to lose out on valuable sales. Best practices are just pages in a binder tucked away in the back office.

Improving the consistency of LTOs and promotions with clear expectations, compliance tracking, and confirmation of each store's on-time participation.

Modern OpsX in Action: CAVA Drives Consistency During Rapid Growth

Mediterranean-inspired restaurant brand CAVA forecasts 500 locations by 2025. CAVA topped the list of Yelp's Fastest Growing Brands in 2024. According to Yelp data, the brand saw a 54% increase in consumer interest nationwide from 2023 compared to 2022.

Then



Cumbersome paper-based processes



Reduced costs by eliminating paper

Operational differences among brands



Standardized processes that save employees time to **focus on guests**

Limited visibility into store performance



Improved **compliance and accountability**



“ With different brands, it was difficult to have everyone focus on what was important at the time and balance varying standards. Now we have one system to accomplish the same goal for all brands together. ”

VP Operations Services, CAVA

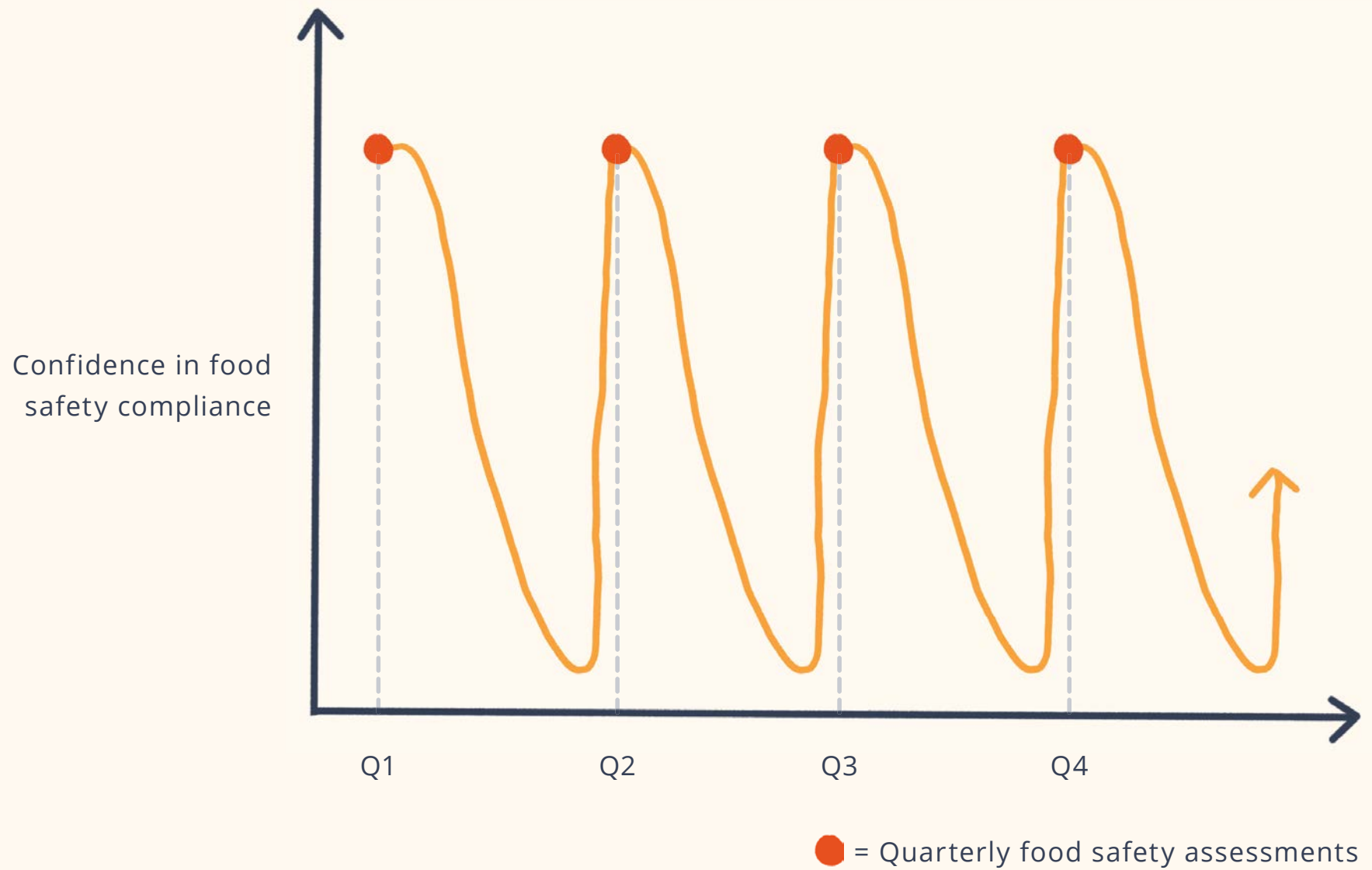
Chapter 03

Food Safety

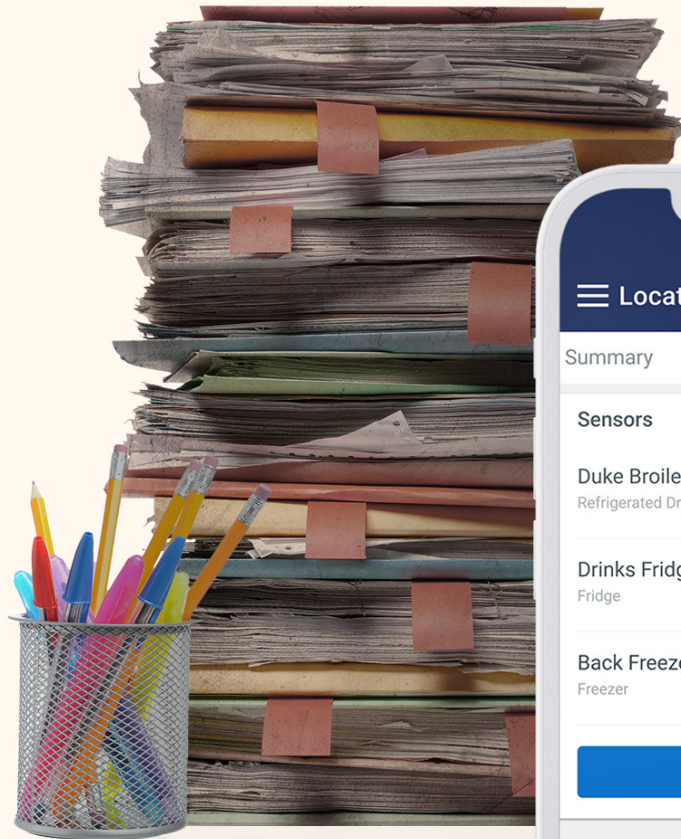
Empower teams and protect customers

According to the 2023 Restaurant Operations Report, only 43% of operators strongly agree they can quickly address food safety concerns.

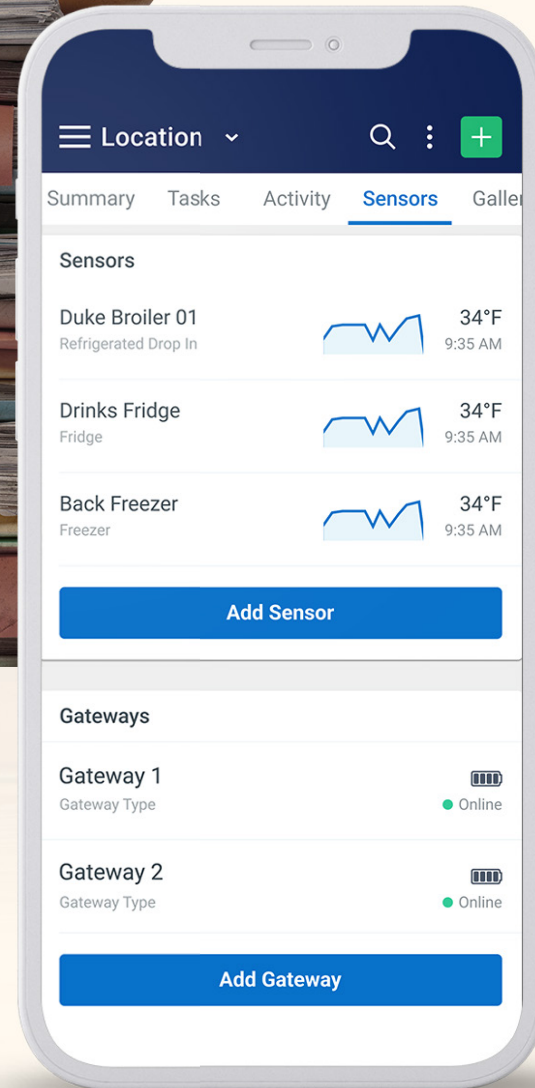
While traditional operations processes leave ops leaders uncertain about food safety compliance in each store, modern operators use automation and digital tools to ensure food safety every day.



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AUTOMATION

Employees spend hours every day in every store manually conducting handwritten food safety procedures.

Procedures are tracked digitally from anywhere to ensure accuracy, free up employee time, and take human error out of the equation.

MISSION-CRITICAL PROCEDURES

When workers get busy or distracted, regular cleaning or sanitizing to prevent foodborne illness is easily overlooked.

Effective tools implemented to ensure critical food safety and sanitization procedures never fall through the cracks.

SAFE TEMPERATURES

Manually checking equipment, like coolers, freezers, and makelines, puts staff in the back of the store instead of up in the front with customers.

Receive automated alerts on your mobile device when equipment temperatures go out of range so you can take action instantly.

FOOD PREP LABELING

Costly, dangerous downstream mistakes like misread products and incorrect expiration dates occur when food prep labeling is done manually.

With cloud-based ingredient lists, expiration dates are automatically calculated, and hundreds of accurate labels are printed in minutes.

Modern Operations Execution in Action: Hutch's Oil Automates Food Safety Procedures

Hutch's Oil is a convenience store operator with fresh food offerings in each location.

Then



Employees manually checked temperatures with thermometers every 2-4 hours



All refrigerator, cooler, and prep station temperatures **remotely monitored 24/7**

Temperature issues discovered too late, products already spoiled



Automatic notifications sent to management and maintenance if temperatures go out of range

No historical temperature data for audits



Issues addressed and resolved early to **minimize product loss**



“ Our coolers are colder, our food is safer, and our employees are more efficient with their time. ”

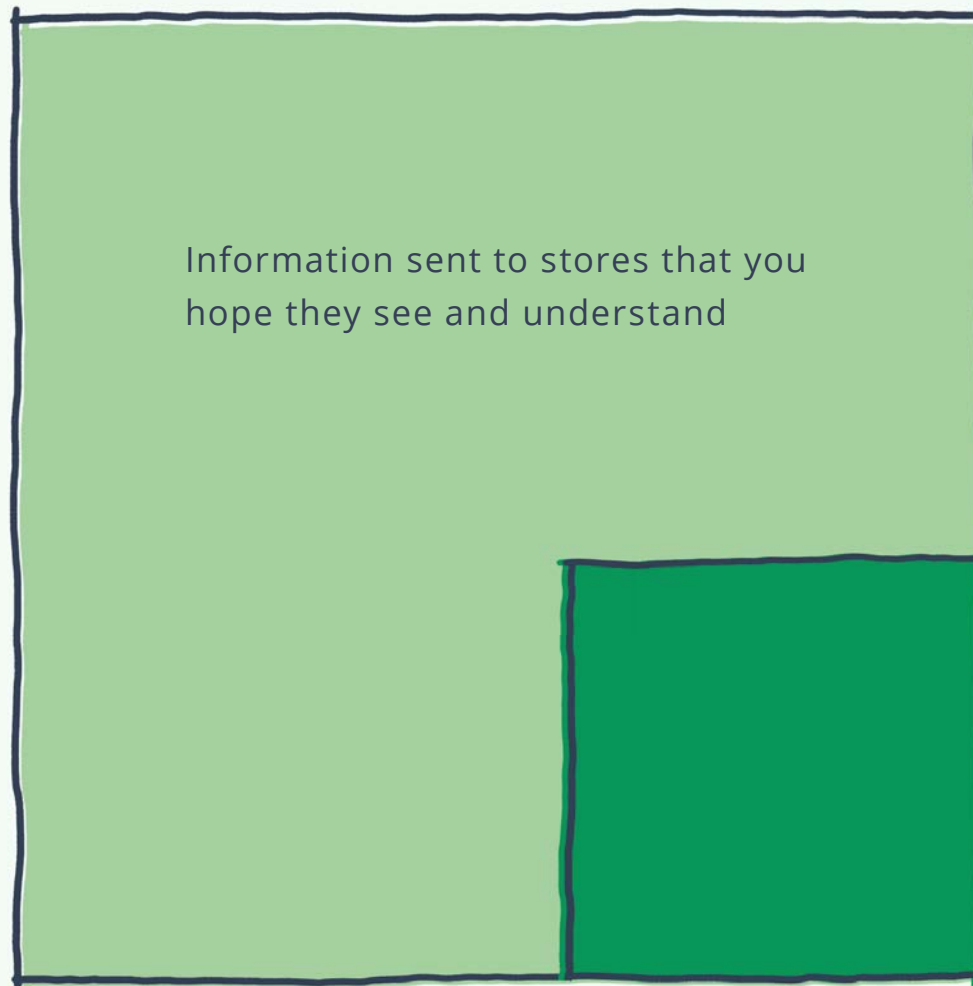
Zeb Palmer, Director of Maintenance, Hutch's Oil

Chapter 04

Communication

Enable quick and effective communication

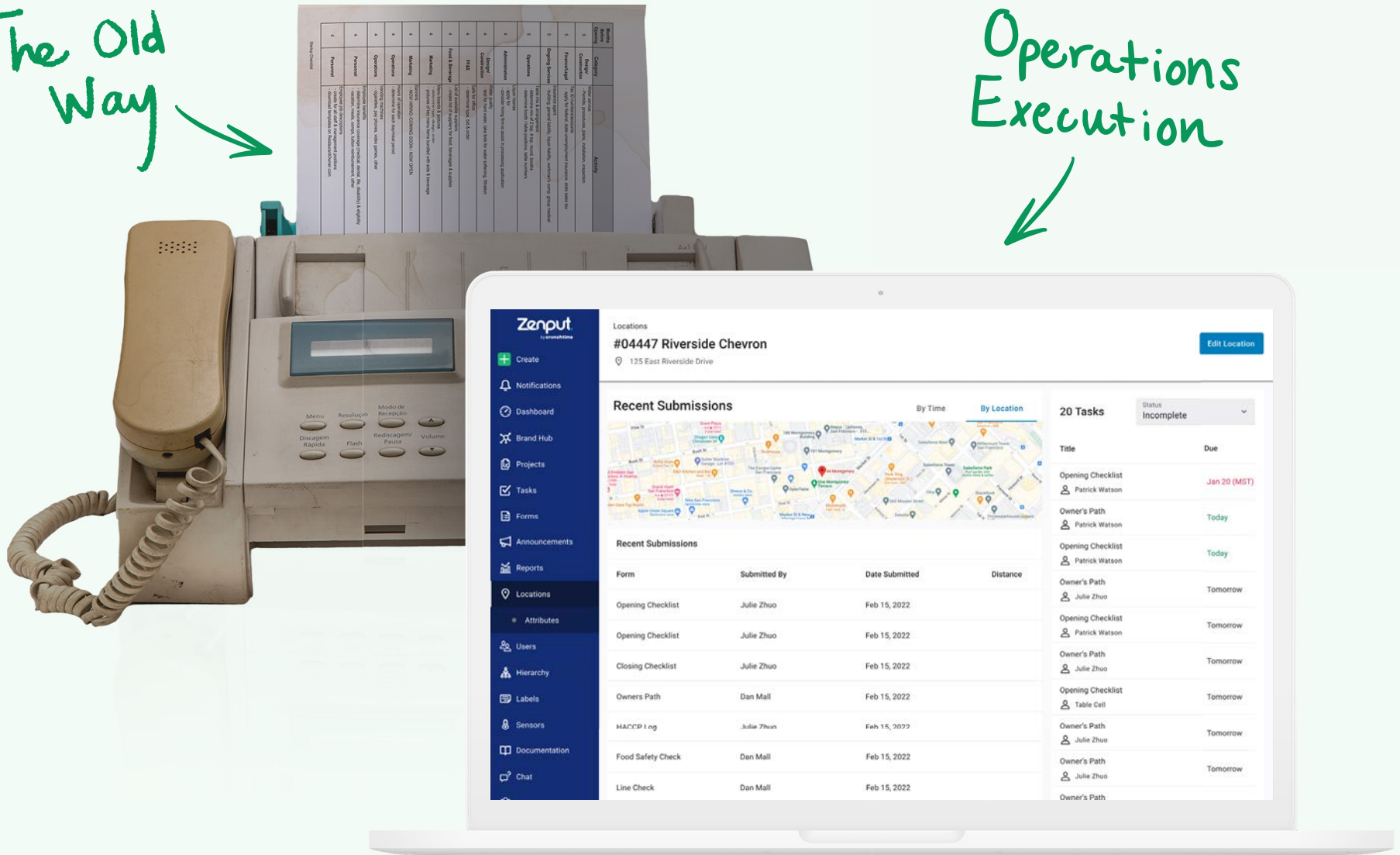
Today's complicated operating environment leaves no room for miscommunication. Operators need confirmation that information has been received and understood and that stores are taking action on it.



←
Info that stores
actually see and
understand

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Operations Execution



| The Old Way | | Modern Operations Execution |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| SHARING INFORMATION | Operators are unsure that critical news, updates, and other communications are seen and understood by employees in every store. | Operators quickly share updates and information with every location with confidence that teams are acting on it. |
| COMMUNICATION METHODS | Day-to-day internal conversations are happening via disjointed tools like emails, phone calls, and text messages, away from where the work is actually being done. | Operators distinguish important announcements to every store (or select teams), and send out push notifications within the platform where employees already complete and track work every day. |
| MESSAGE VALIDATION | Management sends messages, but they are not received by the right teams, with no easy way for them to respond. | Store and field teams comment on work in real-time, ask clarifying questions, provide praise, and loop-in leadership, with receipts to confirm messages have been received. |
| TIMED ALERTS | A potentially easily-resolvable issue slips through the cracks because an email was left unread and a voice mailbox was full. | Alerting the right people at the right time switches everyone's focus from reactive to proactive—from putting out proverbial fires to preventing them altogether. |

Modern Operations Execution in Action: Timewise Keeps Hundreds of Stores Operating on the Same Page

Timewise is a leading wholesale petroleum distributor with 200+ convenience store locations.

Then

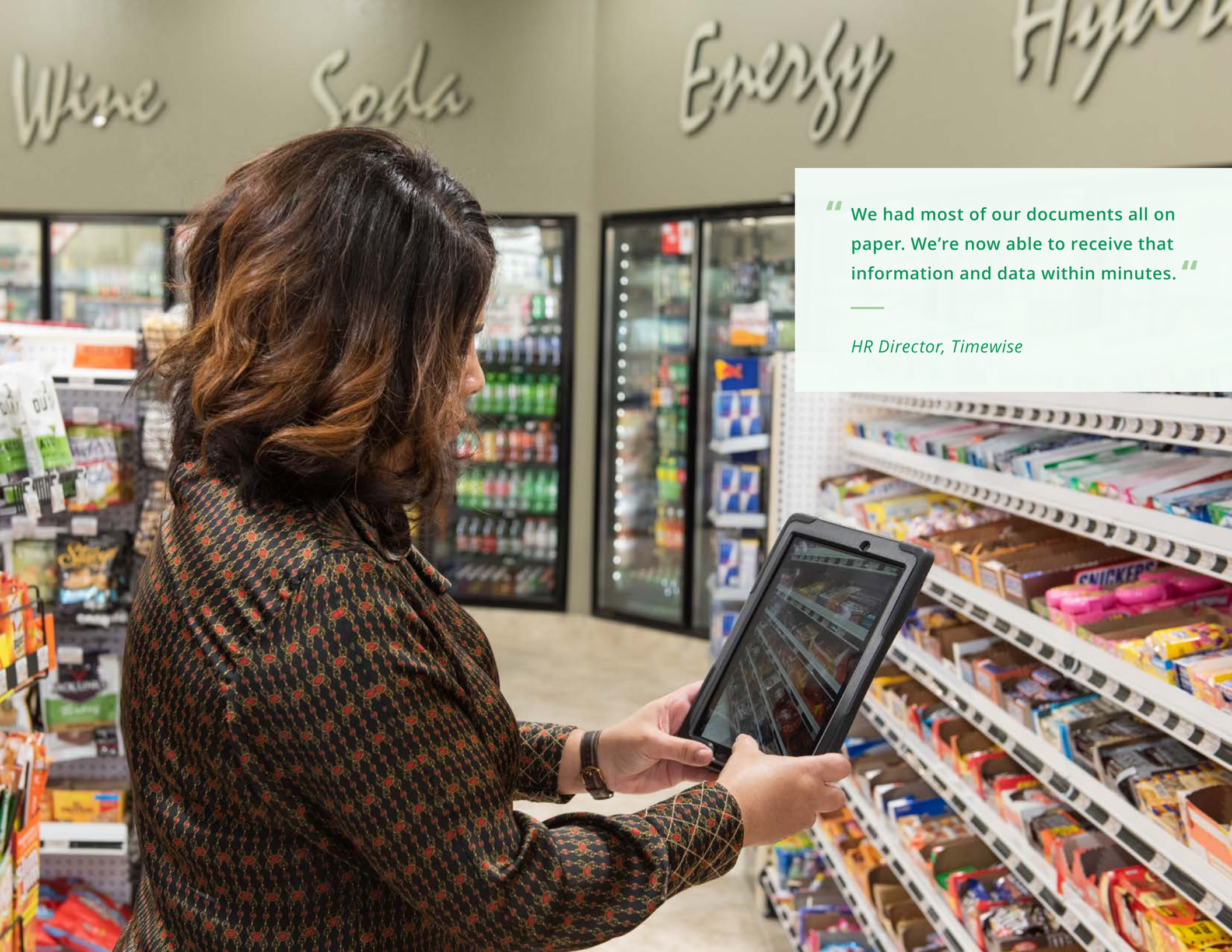
Management relied on emails, phone calls, and text messages to check in on how cashiers were performing

No quick or effective way of communicating urgent price changes to all stores, and no confirmation of timely completion



When a broken light is discovered on a routine audit, maintenance and managers are **instantly notified** on their mobile devices

Easy to send scheduled and time-sensitive tasks with **automated follow-up actions and alerts**, and managers get **real-time confirmation**



“ We had most of our documents all on paper. We’re now able to receive that information and data within minutes. ”

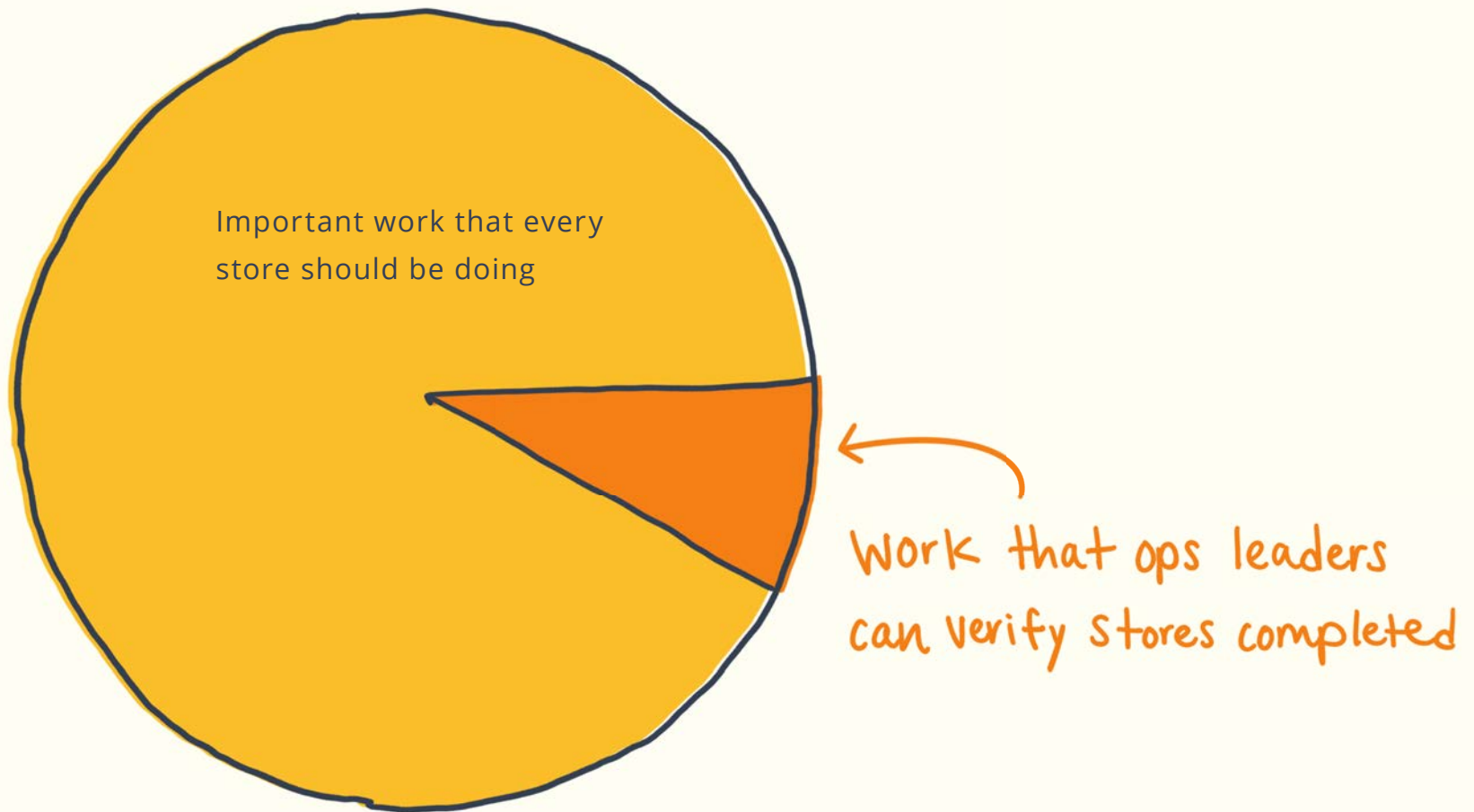
HR Director, Timewise

Chapter 05

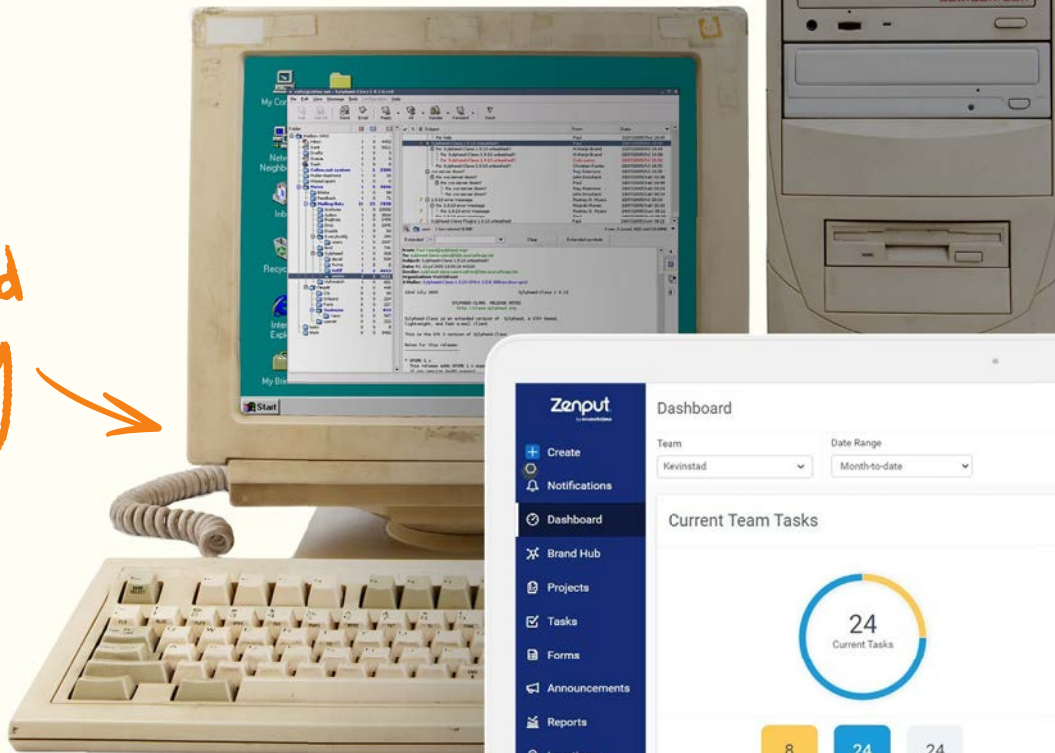
Visibility

Address issues earlier and unlock growth opportunities

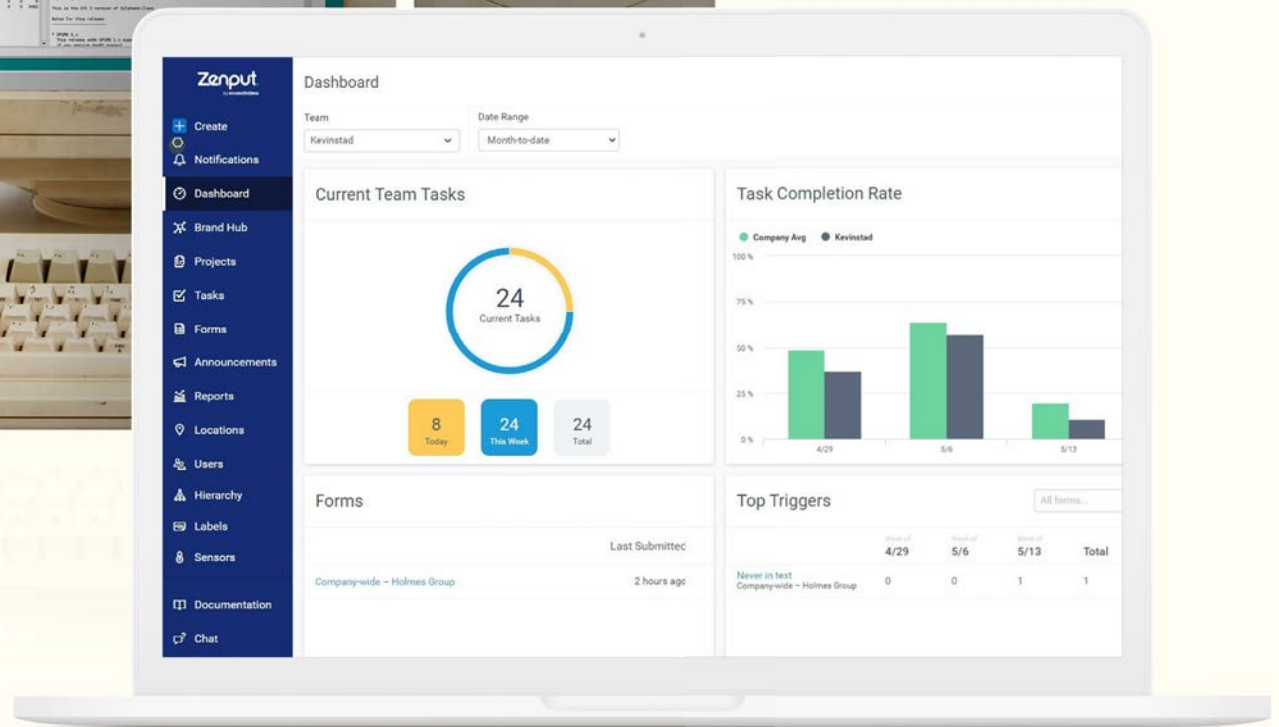
Field teams are being asked to do more than ever before while managing more locations, but can't be in two places at once. Modern operators monitor stores anytime from anywhere, and spend more time coaching their teams on priority issues.



The Old Way



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REPORTING

Leadership struggles to ensure that work is being done correctly at every store, every day, with no way of foreseeing or intercepting potential issues before they impact the business.

From their smartphones, ops leaders access reports, monitor task completion, and receive automated alerts when tasks are not completed or are done incorrectly.

PERFORMANCE TRENDS

Ops leaders can't physically be in every store at once, so it's a guessing game trying to figure out how to effectively oversee and support multiple locations without being present, leaving too much to chance.

Without even stepping foot into a store, field teams and district managers have a clear picture of store performance 24/7 from anywhere, giving them time back to spend on coaching and training.

RED FLAGS

Management feels further and further away from the day-to-day of each store, and with more locations, it becomes even harder to understand how work is being done, and if it's up to par.

With visibility into granular details, management can follow up with corrective actions when procedures that should take six minutes to complete are pencil-whipped in 30 seconds, or if makeline checklists are submitted from 10 miles away according to GPS.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Because it's difficult to have a system-wide view of performance and operational trends, ops leaders make guesses about what to prioritize that will have the most impact and help the business grow.

Ops leaders use data about top issues, strong performers, and key indicators to make informed decisions that will help the business grow.

Modern Operations Execution in Action:

P.F. Chang's Easily Verifies Critical Work in Each Restaurant

P.F. Chang's operates 300+ locations in 25 different countries around the world. Renowned for its fusion cuisine and impeccable service, P.F. Chang's has demonstrated an unparalleled ability to manage complex operations while maintaining a consistently exceptional guest experience. Using Crunchtime and Zenput solutions, P.F. Chang's has seen a 50% decrease in time counting and reviewing inventory and improvement in 3rd party audit scores.

Then

Above-restaurant leaders had no visibility into the actual work being completed throughout the day in each restaurant



Needed the ability to identify and address issues earlier to ensure that product quality and guest experience didn't suffer



Leaders focus attention where it's needed, and leadership can **track the progress of corrective actions in real-time**

A clear view of daily operations gives leadership full insight into what every restaurant is doing every day



“ We’ve been given a window into day-to-day operations. I can just log on and get a snapshot of what every restaurant is doing. ”

Christina Serino, Senior Director of Quality Assurance & Food Safety, P.F. Chang's

Conclusion

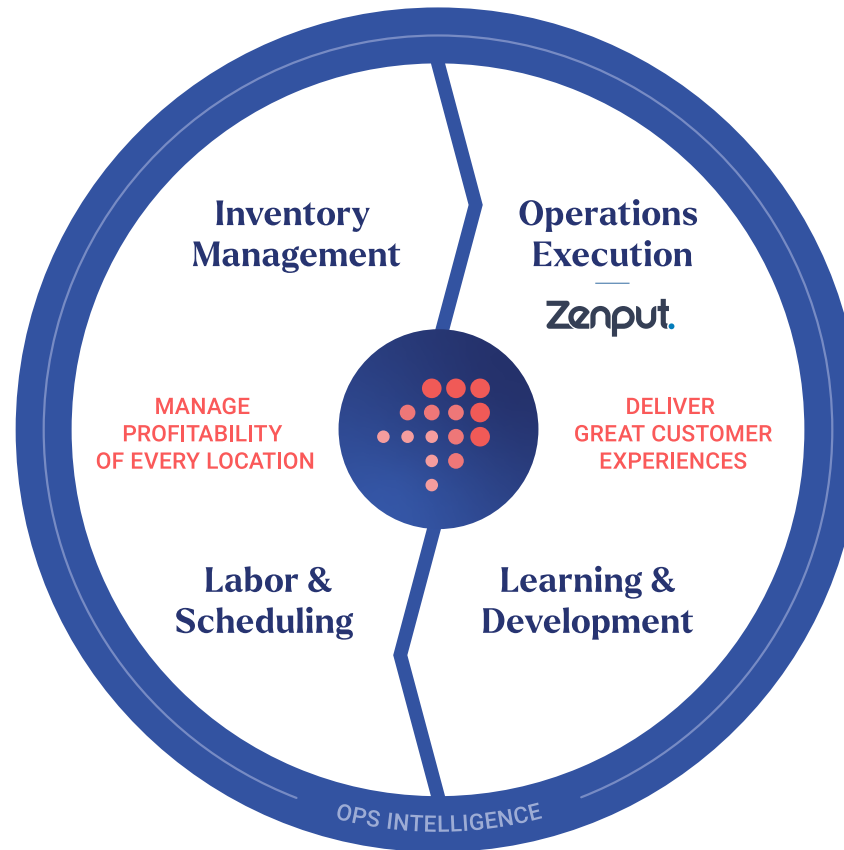
A New Standard for Operational Excellence

If your organization continues to struggle with the same old-school issues over and over again, you risk continuing to fall further behind as competitors, and the broader industry, keep moving forward. Modern-minded ops leaders look at every aspect of critical work that makes operations successful, like food quality, sanitization, audits, and more, and wonder how each one, big or small, can be done better or faster.

Manual systems and antiquated processes will never be able to provide you with the visibility you need to gain valuable insights to increase confidence across locations. Having the processes and infrastructure needed to quickly roll out new safety procedures and strategic initiatives can play a major role in scaling your business and running a more agile and successful operation.

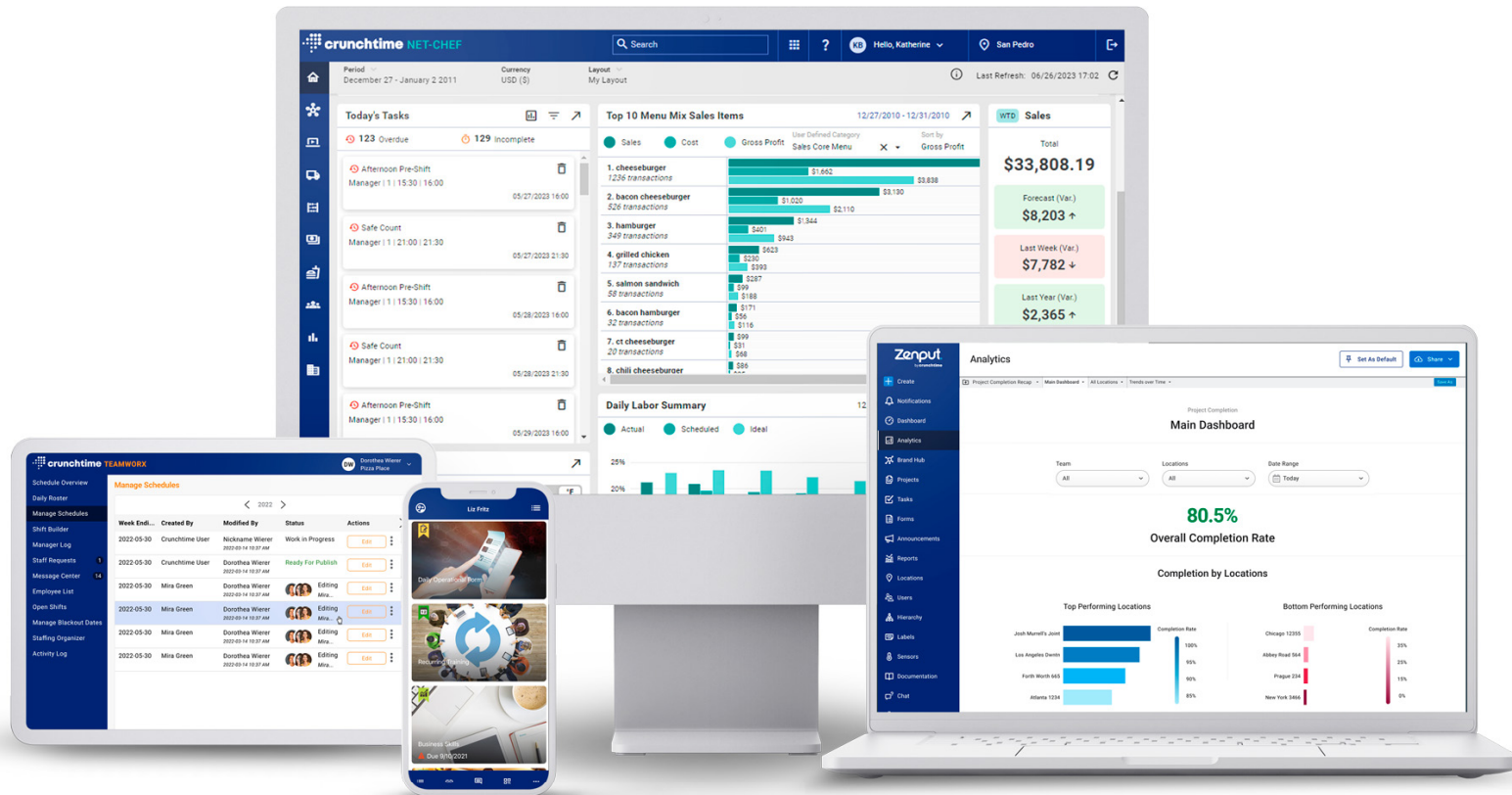






About Crunchtime

Crunchtime is how the world's top restaurant brands achieve ops excellence in every location. Our software products, including Zenput, are used in over 125,000 locations in 100+ countries to manage inventory, staff scheduling, learning and development, food safety, operational tasks, and audits. Crunchtime enables customers including Chipotle, Culver's, Domino's, Dunkin', Five Guys, and P.F. Chang's to control food and labor costs, and deliver great guest experiences. For more information, visit crunchtime.com.



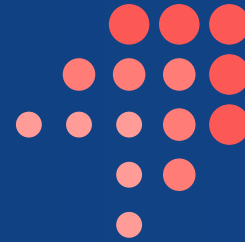
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GET IN TOUCH



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