

Stone Brewing has come a long way since opening in 1996. The brewery has grown from a small microbrewery into one of the largest craft breweries in the United States, employing more than 1,100 amazing women and men. From the beginning, their goal has been to brew outstanding, unique beers while maintaining an unwavering commitment to sustainability, business ethics, and the art of brewing.

Background



Before COVID, Stone had some common challenges shared by large-scale brewery operators. Their venues are generally a very large format. For example one of their Escondido venues has over 70,000 square feet and 700 seats. That's why they engaged GoTab in late 2019. The core problem was how to cost-effectively staff such large spaces. We "originally thought of GoTab as an incremental change to utilize our space better," said Dominic Engels, former Stone CEO.

Meeting a Surge in Online Demand

When quarantines required the suspension of indoor dining, Stone's "Fans" went from shopping on their website, to buying. And because Stone has such high brand loyalty, Stone was among those trusted brands that experienced a surge in demand. To meet the surge in demand, Stone moved 100 percent of their take-out and delivery orders through GoTab almost overnight. Once states and municipalities gradually reopened first outdoor and later limited indoor dining, Stone moved all on-venue dining through GoTab as well.

A New Model with New Steps to Service

Stone has fully adopted GoTab contactless ordering and payments across all their hospitality venues. While it was a fast rollout, Stone made five important changes to their front-of-house operations to ensure success.

1. **"One-Team One-Dream":** Make sure every staff member is equally invested in guest satisfaction. Tactics like tip-pooling can help.
2. **Change front-of-house roles:** Now, staff need to make a great first impression and make sure everyone understands how to order. Stone trains a lot on this.
3. **Increase the right interactions:** Now that the guests place their own orders, increase table touches and do things like pre-bussing tables.
4. **Use "concierge" features like GoTab's text feature:** Stone lets guests communicate directly through the app. Team members are expected to respond in less than a minute.
5. **Don't forget to focus on a great host farewell.** Even though guests can leave when they are ready, don't forget to make a good impression until the very end.



A New Standard for the "Stone Fan" Experience

The move to complete contactless ordering and payment has been overwhelmingly positive for Stone and their fans. **"When you're going to 100% digital ordering on premise, you not only made it better for the customer, that now does not have to get up and wait and wonder if they can get a server, they can. So you get more incremental revenue, they get a better experience, and in the process you're changing your labor model. You're getting better throughput."** - Gregg Frazer, VP of Hospitality, Stone Brewing.