

OPERATOR CASE STUDY

CAPRI'S PIZZA ILFORD

Building a resilient, system-led hospitality business through major disruption, operational redesign and changing customer behaviour.



ROLE

Owner, Director & Operator

BUSINESS

Pizza & fast-food takeaway

HOURS

10am-2am | 3am weekends

PERIOD

2017-2025

TEAM

Approx. 8 staff

LOCATION

17 Cranbrook Road, Ilford

Rebuilding around systems, not footfall

Capri's Pizza was not built in ideal conditions. It emerged from a long-running family takeaway, a complete refurbishment during lockdown, a short-lived franchise model, and a prolonged collapse in the passing trade that had historically made the site valuable. The response was to redesign both the premises and the way the business was managed.



THE CHALLENGE

What had to be solved

- Passing trade fell from hundreds of customers a day to almost none during lockdown, while pedestrian access outside the shop remained severely disrupted until 2022.
- Delivery became necessary for survival, but driver wages, platform commissions and unpredictable demand made high sales less attractive than they appeared.
- Historical food hygiene ratings sat around 3 despite a physically clean premises, exposing weaknesses in documentation, record keeping and management controls.
- A late-night station-side location brought intense competition, difficult customer interactions and recurring antisocial behaviour around the premises.

THE RESPONSE

How the operation changed

- Rebuilt the premises and created a new independent brand rather than remaining tied to a model that did not suit the site.
- Introduced structured cleaning, food safety, allergen and record-keeping systems, with standards checked routinely rather than only around inspections.
- Brought weekly purchasing, stock, wage, cash and sales-channel reporting under tighter management control.
- Used stock-to-sales monitoring to control waste and identify abnormal usage, while pricing and promotions were reviewed regularly.
- Reduced reliance on delivery once passing trade returned, refocusing the business on the economics of its strongest channel: walk-in customers.
- Recruited for reliability and judgement, delegated responsibility gradually and built a low-turnover team capable of operating with much less owner intervention.



RESULTS

Results that improved the quality of the business

The objective was not simply to increase sales. The more important outcome was a business that could maintain standards, control avoidable cost and operate with less dependence on the owner.

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FOOD HYGIENE RATING

Achieved and maintained at subsequent inspections during

c. £500

PER WEEK

Estimated reduction in avoidable waste after tighter

4 YEARS

INDEPENDENT BRAND

Built and operated before an unsolicited approach led to



KEY OUTCOMES

- Food hygiene performance moved from historically around 3 to a sustained rating of 5 after management and record-keeping systems were formalised.
- Stock monitoring and waste controls produced an estimated saving of around £500 per week in avoidable waste-related cost.
- Several employees recruited or developed within the business continued working with the operator across other sites after Capri's was sold.
- Operational responsibility was progressively delegated, allowing the owner to become largely hands-off in routine day-to-day management.
- The business moved away from an increasingly unattractive delivery model once footfall returned, rather than protecting turnover at the expense of margin.
- Relationships with Ilford BID, Redbridge and policing partners were strengthened while handling town-centre antisocial behaviour and late-night trading pressures.

A useful failure: 100,000+ leaflets

A large Royal Mail door-to-door campaign was tested but did not produce sufficient commercial value. The activity was discontinued rather than repeated simply because money had already been invested. This became an important operating principle: marketing is judged by commercial return, not by how substantial the campaign looks.



The systems behind the result

Capri's became a practical testing ground for the systems now reflected in CrownHill's operator-led approach. The business was managed through repeatable controls rather than owner memory alone.

CLEANING & COMPLIANCE

An 11-part daily cleaning schedule covering work surfaces, toilets, floors, contact points, glass, tills, product storage, bins, dough trays, sinks and closing tidiness.

STOCK & WASTE

A structured stock list and weekly stock-to-sales review used to control usage, detect abnormal movement and reduce avoidable waste.

ALLERGEN CONTROL

Ingredient-level allergen records supported by staff training and regular review as products and suppliers changed.

WEEKLY COMMERCIAL REVIEW

Sales channels, platform commission, wages, purchasing, cash/card and profit were brought together in a regular management review.

WHAT THIS DEMONSTRATES

Why this experience matters to CrownHill clients

This case study demonstrates the practical side of business improvement: diagnosing the real constraint, building controls that staff can actually follow, knowing when a high-revenue activity is commercially weak, and reducing owner dependence without losing oversight. Capri's also reinforced that strong physical standards are not enough unless the business can evidence and repeat them through management systems.

"Systems should do the heavy lifting."

The end goal was not a business that needed the owner to remember and supervise every detail. It was a business where clear controls, trusted people and regular review made good performance repeatable.

Operator Case Study: this document describes work undertaken by Moeen Sajjad as owner/operator of Capri's Pizza, before the establishment of CrownHill Business Consultants Ltd. Supporting operational records and source documents are available where appropriate. The c. £500 weekly waste figure is an operator estimate, not an independently audited saving.

