White Castle optimizes payment transactions

With a solution that matches its own passion for delivering exceptional customer experiences, White Castle brings efficiency and security to its drive-thru and beyond.

Not every 100-year-old, family-owned business embraces innovation quite the way White Castle does. But innovation is in the brand's DNA — it launched in 1921 as the first fast food hamburger chain in the U.S. Today, the Ohio-based QSR operates more than 360 restaurants in a dozen states, and its burger-centric fare (most notably the Original Slider) has inspired a fanatical following.

How fanatical? When White Castle opened its biggest-ever restaurant in Orlando, FL, in spring of 2021, the line of "cravers," as its avid customers are known, stretched for two miles (no, that's not a typo).

Innovation continues to drive the brand's success: It launched online ordering back in 2011 and an app in 2012, and in 2019 its Impossible Slider was named Best Plant-Based Fast Food Burger by Thrillist.

The challenge of pivoting to drive-thru

Because White Castle is all about what Susan Carroll-Boser, Vice President of Technology, calls "creating memorable moments," the brand faced a potentially major existential challenge when the pandemic hit. "We had to drive those memorable moments to the drive-thru," Carroll-Boser says. Pivoting to drive-thru included AI-driven initiatives such as vehicle recognition, voice recognition, and menu optimization, while, in the kitchen, a pilot program was testing out Flippy, the "robot on a rail" manning the french-fry station.

But relying on drive-thru also meant more focus than ever before on contactless card payments and other digital transactions — drive-thru customers expect payment acceptance to be nearly instantaneous. And of course consumers have concerns about cybersecurity. White Castle required a payments and security solution that reinforced customer loyalty and satisfied the new appetite for quick and easy drive-thru transactions.

Case Study
White Castle

A solution that ensures efficiency & security

To navigate new challenges, White Castle did not need to look further than its existing payments partner of more than 14 years, U.S. Bank Payment Solutions powered by Elavon.

"We had a chance to change platforms," says Carroll-Boser, "but we stuck with U.S. Bank Payment Solutions. They are adaptable to whatever the current environment is, and they truly understand our brand, our size — we're big enough to be enterprise-level, but we're smaller than a lot of our competitors. We 'fight above our class,' and our partners support us in that."

White Castle requires speed and continuity. "We're open 24/7, with no downtime," says Carroll-Boser, "and digital payments, especially contactless transactions, are dominating our industry. U.S. Bank Payment Solutions keeps up with the current popular payments that customers want." With restaurant customers eager to adopt a range of digital payments such as contactless cards, money transfer apps, digital wallets, QR codes, text-to-pay, and more, U.S. Bank Payment Solutions partners with platforms including Apple Pay and Google Pay, to test new initiatives to make sure they're working optimally.

For White Castle, U.S. Bank Payment Solutions' payments and security solutions deliver efficiency, ROI, and customer satisfaction. "Their solution integrates with our POS, but keeps all the PCI data control on the U.S. Bank Payment Solutions software," says Carroll-Boser. "And U.S. Bank Payment Solutions created a backend for us so that we can reconcile transactions end-to-end."

20% Faster
payment processing speed

< 1 Minute
reboot time for software updates

Solid results

Thanks to innovations in U.S. Bank Payment Solutions' solution, White Castle has increased validated security, speed, and payment acceptance. There have been an array of recent wins: Payment processing speed is 20 percent faster. Reboot time for software updates is now down to less than a minute. Integration with loyalty via White Castle's app is tighter than ever, allowing for the seamless uploading of customer data. And when it comes to customer experience, White Castle's satisfaction with U.S. Bank Payment Solutions in the areas of efficiency, security, and adoption of new payment methods gets passed on directly to the "cravers" who can't get enough.

"U.S. Bank Payment Solutions' improvements in business continuity and processing compared with some of our peers is stellar," says Carroll-Boser. "And they are continually making it better."

Launched in 1921 White Castle was the first fast food hamburger chain in the U.S.