



Alliant
FOOD & SERVICE
IDEAS[®]

WINTER 2000

BUSINESS BUILDERS

Chef's Special

MENUTRENDS[™]

Changing Tides in Fish & Seafood

SERVICE SOLUTIONS

Scheduling Superb Service

CONNECTION

Betting On Success

Innovation in E-Commerce

Alliant goes for speed and reliability with its Internet-based sales and service system—AlliantLink.com™.

By Martha O'Connell

Sous Chef Ken Levendoski of the immensely popular *Crawdaddy Bayou* in Wheeling, Ill., has stumbled across an idea as hot as the tangy, Cajun-style food served in his restaurant. He's become an avid user of AlliantLink.com, the convenient and flexible order-entry and information system launched by Alliant Foodservice in January. "I can order from anywhere, anytime," says Levendoski. "Every product in the catalog is on AlliantLink.com."

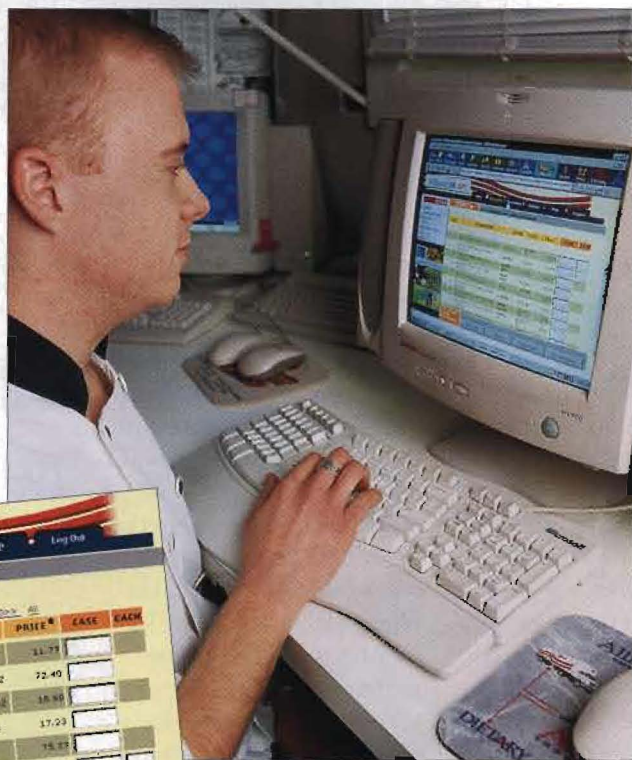
One day I got home and realized that I forgot the chicken. So I ordered from home, right there in my pajamas. It was great."

E-COMMERCE IN FOODSERVICE
AlliantLink.com, an Internet-based sales and service system, is the most visible sign of Alliant's transformation from a traditional foodservice provider into a fast and reliable distributor with technology to match the new millennium.

The on-line system gives customers an instant response to questions and needs, and frees sales representatives and operators to concentrate on tasks other than ordering. AlliantLink.com gives customers access to the company's catalog of 180,000 products. With the Internet, prices are always up to date, and the system is available for use 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Levendoski says the system saves him considerable time because he no longer depends mainly on Tom Jessop, his Alliant Territory

Manager, to place orders. "One of the biggest benefits is the time savings," Levendoski says. "It allows me to shop prices more quickly. When I log into



Crawdaddy Bayou's Chef Ken logs onto AlliantLink.com at work, and even at home at times.

Alliant NEW DIRECTIONS

AlliantLink.com, product pricing is already up to date. I don't have to worry about downloading prices or if my printed product catalog is current."

Crawdaddy Bayou saves money because Levendoski knows where to find the lowest price, right from the start. "Anytime

you get the customers to do their own ordering, it completely changes the relationship totally

because they will create new projects for you that will enable you to help them be more successful," Jessop says. "Now I am pretty much a strategic player on almost everything they are working on in their restaurant. They are asking me questions that they would not normally have asked me in the past because there just isn't time to do both."

After Crawdaddy Bayou logged into AlliantLink.com, Jessop's attention turned to completing projects for the restaurant. He helped set up new kitchens, and plan special events, including the restaurant's enormous seven-week Mardi Gras celebration. And, he tracks down new products for Levendoski to introduce to the menu.

SPEEDING HOSPITAL FOODSERVICE

AlliantLink.com is available to the full range of Alliant customers. Serving between 3,000 to 4,000 employee and patient meals daily, *St. Joseph Mercy Hospital*, the flagship hospital of St. Joseph Mercy Health System in Ann Arbor, Mi., was an early user.

AlliantLink.com was the first foray onto the Internet for St. Joseph's Buyer **Mary Bersuder**. She says the system's powerful reporting system is an important management tool. She can quickly see what items work well for her, and which do not. "The good thing about the reporting system is that it goes back to two years of data," Bersuder says.

St. Joseph foodservice suffers from

With AlliantLink.com, ordering for the always hopping Crawdaddy Bayou is much easier.



the same problem as many institutions. It's being pulled in many directions and still needs to respond to a growing number of customer demands. The reports generated from AlliantLink.com help the hospital save time with quicker purchasing decisions.

"AlliantLink.com can make their life a lot easier. I am so proud of the direction we are going in," says Alliant's Account Manager Mark Jordan. St. Joseph was among those customers who tested early versions of the system, and whose suggestions were incorporated into the 'live' version.

Bersuder, for example, asked developers to make sure that the last item ordered in an order string automatically appeared on the top of the screen so she could keep her place easily. Levendoski, also an early tester, said the system needed an "Add to Order" button so items could be input continuously without looking up product numbers. Both changes happened.

"At this point, the system is very easy to use. When you click on something, it is pretty logical what is going to happen next and you know what you are going to get," Levendoski says. "AlliantLink.com opens a whole new world for Alliant Foodservice," says Ira Haber, the corporate vice president responsible for launching and managing the ongoing devel-

opment of this powerful new system. "It makes it easier for our customers to do business with us, and it makes it far easier for us to deliver valuable information back to the customer."

THE FUTURE OF ALLIANTLINK.COM

The Internet system builds on the same order-entry capabilities as Alliant-LINK® DIRECT, the company's existing, proprietary electronic ordering system. But AlliantLink.com has much greater flexibility and growth potential. It will be expanded to include a broad range of features and services, including information about kitchen tips, order status, inventories, specials, recipes, menu planners, training and cost-management tools.

"AlliantLink.com is a key part of our overall plan for a sales and distribution system that is world-class in every aspect," Alliant President and CEO Earl L. Mason says. "By providing a system of this quality, we immediately begin to help build customer value."

AlliantLink.com

For more information on how you can become an AlliantLink.com customer, contact your local Alliant Foodservice Sales Representative. Or, visit the Web site at www.alliantlink.com, click on "Sign Up For AlliantLink.com" and complete the information requested.