



CREED
THE FOODSERVICE COMPANY

PLATES TO PROFITS REPORT

JUNE 2023



FOREWORD



Philip de Ternant, Managing Director at Creed Foodservice

It's a challenging time for the hospitality sector. We recently surveyed directors, owners, managers and chefs in restaurants, hotels and pubs and 86% said they will likely have to close in the next three years if business costs don't reduce and they don't increase their prices*. Half of these (50%) will likely have to close within 12 months' time. It's incredibly sobering and stark to see the numbers stack up.

Unsurprisingly, two thirds (63%) said business concerns around revenue and profit have impacted their mental health over the past

12 months. That's not to say the sector's fighting spirit isn't alive – we're seeing some really great innovation coming through – but we need to acknowledge the landscape we're all currently operating in.

It's affecting the whole supply chain – from suppliers, logistics companies, transportation, the frontline (restaurants, pubs and hotels) and wholesalers like us. Over the last year we've seen a 27% increase on eggs and baking potatoes, another staple, have seen an £8.00 increase a case.

Of course, consumers are also impacted. The ONS figures showed the Consumer Prices Index rose 8.7% in the 12 months to April 2023 and food and non-alcoholic beverage prices continued to rise. Although inflation is back in single digits, it remains well above the Bank of England's 2% target.

The knock-on effect is consumers simply don't have the same levels of disposable income. Data from KPMG in April 2023 revealed more than half of UK consumers have cut back on discretionary spending since the start of the year, with nearly

two thirds choosing to reduce the amount they spend on eating out. Our data also reflects this with nearly half (47%) of operators reporting the number of bookings at their establishment has reduced.

The vast majority of operators (85%) told us they will need to increase their menu prices to stay financially viable. However, 83% are worried that if they do this it will alienate consumers and put them off visiting their establishment. They feel stuck between a rock and hard place.

However, we do know that when consumers eat out, they are willing to spend and treat themselves. Data from Lumina** reveals 86% of consumers think good quality has a price and 75% are happy to pay more for higher quality.

Whilst times remain challenging, our research shows fantastic innovation within the sector, as I mentioned. Operators are adapting and implementing various initiatives to try and drive customer spend. They're finding ways around the staff shortages and navigating the increased operating costs through dynamic thinking.

It's also highlighted the importance of the entire supply chain working together. We're all facing similar challenges; no one is immune. It's evident that in many cases seeking support from each other is already happening; over three quarters (77%) of operators consult their wholesalers for cost-saving advice. However, that leaves 23% who don't currently do this.

"Our Plates to Profits Report is focused on two things: Getting under the skin of those on the front line – the managers, owners and chefs of restaurants, hotels and pubs – and genuinely understanding the state of their operations; and giving those operators tools, insights and ideas to generate more revenue and greater profit margins from their plates."

*The research was conducted by 3GEM on behalf of Creed Foodservice and surveyed 150 UK Directors, General Managers, Assistant Managers and Chefs across hotels, restaurants and pubs.

**Lumina Intelligence EDOP October 2022

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CHANGING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR



**Anna Clapson, Insights Manager
at Creed Foodservice**

"There is a lot of data out there from the consumer's point of view on how they are changing their spending, but there is limited information on what operators are seeing first-hand in their restaurant, hotel or pub. We wanted to hear from them and understand how the cost of living is changing their customer's behaviour."

This is what operators told us:

45% said customers are visiting less regularly. 45% also said customers are choosing sharing food options

43% said customers are reducing the number of courses they order

40% said customers are choosing more affordable dishes and reducing the number of sides they order

33% said customers are booking into earlier time slots to make the most of 'early bird' menu deals

29% said customers are not ordering coffee or tea at the end of their meal

19% said customers are not ordering alcohol and instead choosing soft drinks or water

NAVIGATING STAFF SHORTAGES & STILL CREATING QUALITY FOOD DISHES

50%

of operators have changed their menu to simpler dishes

Staff shortages in the hospitality sector have been widely reported; not only impacting the UK but countries across the globe. The biggest staffing issue for UK hospitality businesses is attraction and retention, with 43% reporting they are operating with fewer staff than needed – which is higher than Netherlands (33%) but lower than Germany (54%)*.

Our data paints a similar picture; due to not having a highly skilled chef / catering team, half (49%) of operators told us they have had to change their menu to more simpler dishes and a further 39% have had to buy in more pre-prepared or semi-prepared dishes and ingredients. Four out of ten (39%) have had to stop serving food on certain days or reduce opening times as they don't have a chef or catering team available.



Rob Owen, Business Development Chef at Creed Foodservice

"Not serving food on some days, or reducing operating hours, leads to missed revenue opportunities; not something operators can afford to do in the current climate."

"There are a lot of high-quality dishes that can still be served without the input of a highly skilled chef team. We're talking about food that is made from quality ingredients, tastes great, is simple and easy to make on-site and has a good mark-up, so each plate served delivers a healthy profit for operators."

Our Chef's Recipe Suggestions

Dishes that can be served in the absence of a highly skilled team and that drive profit

"The range of pre-made sauces, stocks and gravies, frozen desserts and part-bake dishes available on the market is wide-ranging and quite incredible. Even for professional chefs it's not always easy to tell the difference between freshly made dishes and these options, let alone the typical consumer. Operators don't need to sacrifice quality food because they don't have the staff; there is a way to do both with some creative thinking around the menu and considering what can feasibly be created on-site."

*Data source: Lightspeed, 2022 Report: State of the Global Hospitality Industry

Coconut Panna Cotta with Pineapple Chilli Salsa

Serves
10

INGREDIENTS

For the panna cotta:

- 500ml Double cream
- 130g Carte d'Or panna cotta powder mix
- 500ml Coconut milk

For the pineapple chilli salsa:

- 200g Pineapple
- 10g Red chillies
- 10g Mint

To assemble the dish:

- 5g Lime zest
- 125g Ginger biscuits
- 20g Dessicated coconut lightly toasted

METHOD

For the panna cotta:

1. Place the coconut milk and double cream in a pan and bring to the boil stirring continuously
2. Remove from the heat and whisk in the Carte d'Or Panna Cotta

3. Allow to cool slightly, then pour into dariole moulds
4. Cover and place in the fridge to chill and set for 3 hours

For the pineapple chilli salsa:

1. Dice the pineapple, finely chop the chillies and shred the fresh mint, place in a bowl and mix well, cover and refrigerate until required

To assemble the dish:

1. Unmould the panna cottas by dipping the base of the moulds in hot water then turn out onto the serving plate
2. Arrange the pineapple salsa around the panna cotta
3. Crumb the ginger biscuits and place around the plate
4. Finish the dish by sprinkling toasted desiccated coconut on the top of the panna cottas and then finely grating the zest of a lime



Beef Ramen

Serves
2

INGREDIENTS

- 600g x Beef broth
- 1 x Chilli
- 10g x Ginger
- 1 x Garlic clove
- 20g x Soy sauce
- 6 x Button mushroom
- 200g x Shredded beef from bones
- 2x Spring onion
- 2 x Noodle nests
- 1 x Egg
- Half of a broccoli
- 1 x Carrot

METHOD

1. Take the garlic, chilli, and the ginger and finely slice them. Put this all together in one pot and set aside. Keep the soy sauce with them
2. In a pan of boiling water add the egg and cook for 6 minutes. When ready remove and peel. When ready to serve cut in half and serve 1 half per person
3. Take the remaining veg and julienne, use the stalk of the broccoli and the peeling of the carrot for crisps to top the ramen
4. In a pan add the beef stock and bring to a boil, add the chilli, garlic and ginger along with the soy

sauce. Bring to a simmer and allow to infuse for 2-3 minutes.

5. When infused add the remaining vegetables and the picked beef, allow to simmer for 5 minutes to cook the vegetables
6. Place the noodles into boiling water and cook for 2-3 minutes, when ready strain and add to a bowl ready to serve
7. Ladle the broth over the noodles adding the meat and the veg evenly in the bowl. Top with half of the cooked egg. To reduce further waste fry the peelings and use as a topper. You can also use sesame seeds and chilli

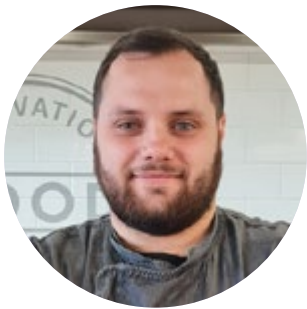


SEASONAL SAVINGS

Our Chef's Recipe Suggestions

Dishes that utilise seasonal product to help keep the cost of ingredients down

Half (50%) of operators told us they are using more seasonal produce to try and manage increased business costs and a further 47% have streamlined their menu to utilise more affordable ingredients.



Joseph Oliver,
Development Chef at Creed
Foodservice

"Seasonal produce is fresher and tastier and allows operators to easily update their menu regularly – offering customers new and appealing dishes, encouraging them back again and again. It's also a really great way to support local producers and enhance the story behind your dishes. Consumers like to know where the food they are eating is from, and being able to share anecdotes of which grower or farm your produce is from is a strong selling point."

Starter Dish: Asparagus and Pea Tart

Serves
4

INGREDIENTS

- 4 x 6cm Savoury tart cases
- 1 x Asparagus round
- 100g x Peas
- 50g x Parmesan
- 20g x Cooked spinach
- 3 x Eggs
- 200ml x Milk
- 200ml x Double cream
- Chives, tarragon, parsley

METHOD

1. Trim and peel the asparagus and blanch in boiling salted water for 90 seconds, refresh in cold water and reserve
2. Combine the milk, cream, cheese and eggs and whisk
3. Squeeze any excess moisture from the spinach and ensure that the peas are defrosted
4. Finely chop the herbs and add to the cream and egg mix
5. Layer up the tart cases with spinach, peas and sliced ends of the asparagus
6. Fill the tarts with the egg mix leaving 1cm from the top
7. Place the asparagus tips on the top to garnish with a sprinkling of parmesan cheese
8. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 160 degrees until the egg mix is firm to touch, leave to cool and serve while still warm.





Main Dish: Buddha Bowl

Serves
10

INGREDIENTS

- 500g x BBQ chicken
- 1kg x Rice
- 2 x Avocado
- 200g x Edamame beans
- 100g x Spinach
- 200g x Tahini paste
- 200g x Cucumber
- 200g x Pickled beetroot

Chef's tip - the beetroot can be swapped out for another vegetable depending on the season

METHOD

1. In a pan add water and your rice and cook
2. Place your chicken on a tray and roast through the oven for 15 minutes
3. On a board cut your cucumber into quarters and remove the seeds, cut into nice slices. Now cut your beetroot into nice slices
4. The edamame beans and spinach can go on as they are
5. In a bowl place your rice at the bottom and the layer all the remaining ingredients on top making it as colourful as possible. Finish by spooning over the tahini paste, alternatively you can use sweet chilli

Side Dish: Roasted Sweet & Sour Sprouts

Serves
10

INGREDIENTS

- 2kg x Prepped sprouts halved
- 200ml x Olive oil
- 200ml x Tamari soy sauce
- 200ml x Balsamic glaze
- 200g x Dark brown sugar
- 1tsp x Ground ginger
- ½ Bunch x fresh parsley

METHOD

1. Coat sprouts in olive oil and roast at 190 degrees for 25 minutes until a deep golden brown
2. Meanwhile add tamari, balsamic, brown sugar and ground ginger to a saucepan and reduce until a syrupy consistency, around 10 minutes
3. Once the sprouts have cooked toss them through the sweet and sour glaze
4. Garnish with chopped parsley



FOOD WASTE EATS PROFITS

When asked what would help them reduce their food waste, operators told us:

58%

Using pre-prepared stocks, sauces and gravies

Essential Cuisine No.1 Savoury

Gravy Mix: This gravy is suitable for vegans, vegetarians and coeliacs, and tastes as gravy should. You can portion some off and add meat juices to customise the taste for different dishes.

Essential Cuisine Premier Veal Jus

Paste: A rich, concentrated base which gives a delicious, quality jus in just minutes. You can also deglaze pans with it to add that extra flavour to dishes.

Miso Broth Base: This is so versatile, full of umami flavour and can be used as a base to a whole host of Asian dishes such as broth for ramen, a marinade for veggies or meat – the options are endless!

95%

of operators agreed they could improve on the levels of food waste their business produces.

Click the product names to view them on our website

55%

Ordering bespoke sized cuts and packs of meat



Nic Veale,
Butchery Category Manager at
Creed Foodservice

"The key to getting this right is in operators establishing close partnerships with wholesale meat suppliers that utilise traditional butchery practices – something we do here at Creed Family Butchers. Given the current importance of cost saving, this collaborative approach becomes even more crucial in minimising waste and maximising financial benefits for operators."

53%

Using frozen bake-off pastries and desserts

Carte D'or Panna Cotta Dessert

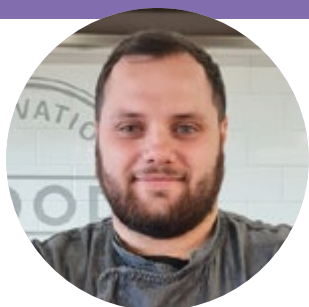
Powder Mix: A huge time saver and it also helps reduce waste as you can prepare the exact amount you need. You can top the panna cotta with different seasonal berries or coulis, to easily offer an ever-changing menu.

Individual Tarte au Citron: The perfect tarte base which works well as the centre piece on the plate. It can be finished with ice cream or sorbet, sprinkled with toppings such as crushed nuts or fresh fruits or can be drizzled with sauces.

Chantilly Individual Rich Vanilla

Cheesecake: You can easily create a premium dessert option by topping these with a range of flavours, berries and coulis. These can be adapted to the seasons to make the ingredients as affordable as possible – fresh raspberries with a coulis drizzle, fresh mint and pomegranates or blackberries, a rich dark chocolate sauce and sea salt sprinkled on top.

49% Using typical food waste ie. potato peelings on top of pies, cauliflower stalks in dishes not just the florets



Joseph Oliver,
Development Chef at Creed
Foodservice

"Using food waste is more about a mindset change than anything else and seeing typical 'waste' differently. Any root vegetable peelings, such as potatoes, carrots or parsnips, can be dried and fried to use as a garnish on dishes such as macaroni cheese or cottage pie. Leftover vegetables can also live up a side dish – green beans topped with fried crispy onions is delicious."

Peelings can also be seasoned and used as a crispy, bar snack. You can be as creative as you like – rub them in salt, BBQ seasoning or chilli flakes to offer different flavour options, or even make into a sweet treat by rubbing cinnamon and sugar onto them.

Any vegetable trimmings can be turned into purees or soups and equally fruits that are past their best can be frozen and used in smoothies or made into homemade jams. You can even offer mini pots of jams to customers to purchase; add a simple tag describing the flavour and that it's homemade locally, and they make ideal Christmas gifts and offer another revenue stream opportunity."

Beef Fat Scone

Serves
10

INGREDIENTS

- 220g x Plain flour
- 60g x Rendered beef fat
- 3g x Salt
- 20g x Baking powder
- 100ml x Milk
- 100ml x Double cream
- 15g x English mustard
- 30g x Crème fraiche
- 5g x Chives
- 50g x Beef sauce
- 30g x Shredded beef

METHOD

1. In a vacuum pac bag mix the shredded beef with the gravy and vacuum pac. Place in a steamer or water bath to get hot
2. In a bowl mix all your dry ingredients together, add your beef fat diced into small pieces. Mix until you achieve breadcrumbs. Next add the milk cream and mustard bring together into a dough
3. Move onto a floured surface and knead the dough until it comes

together and is smooth. Roll out to the desired depth and cut into circles, if you want a different shape, they look great as a square or triangle

4. Lightly brush with egg wash and place on a tray to prove, prove for 40 minutes in a warm area
5. Cook in the oven at 180 degrees for approximately 10 minutes, the scones may require longer, you can check by tapping the bottom, you want a nice crisp tap
6. Allow to cool down or cut open straight away, you can serve with a chive crème fraiche by just simply mixing some chives in with crème fraiche. Top with the left-over beef and enjoy



COMMUNICATING THE STORY BEHIND YOUR DISHES

With consumers increasingly interested to know where their food is from, it's important for operators to share the story behind their dishes – for example, where ingredients are sourced from, if they work with local suppliers and so on. Six out of ten operators told us they display this info on their menu (64%), have staff verbally tell customers (63%) or share details on social media and their website (63%).

Four out of ten (43%) display information on the walls or a specials board, and just 28% communicate the story behind their dishes on signage outside their building, meaning many are missing out on tempting passing footfall into their establishment.



Anna Clapson, Insights Manager at Creed Foodservice

“For restaurants, hotels and pubs, sharing information about where your ingredients are sourced from is a simple and incredibly low cost (pretty much free) way to help drive more revenue into your establishment; it’s a no-brainer.

Consumers these days are far more conscious about where their food is from. Lumina data shows that nearly seven out of ten consumers (67%) are very sustainability conscious. If you’ve taken the time and effort to source meat from nearby farmers, vegetables from local growers, gin or ales from breweries in the region or cheeses from regional producers, you should be using this as a sales tool and a way to make customers feel they are getting real quality for their money. It will only serve to make you a more appealing place to visit, and reflect positively on your approach to food and supporting other local businesses. It will also help to justify any price increases; consumers will be far less likely to grumble if they recognise the food they are being served is locally-sourced and of really high quality.”*

* Lumina Intelligence Eating and Drinking Out Panel October 2022

Ideas & tips

THE PIG has a 25-mile menu, where at least 80% of the fresh ingredients will be sourced from within a 25-mile radius or from their kitchen garden. On their 25-mile menu – which is available online and also as a hard copy – is a map with sketches of the produce and where it's from, which is a great way to visually bring their sourcing to life.



GARDEN, GREENHOUSE & POLYTUNNEL "A Selection of Our Plant Based Dishes, Mostly Picked This Morning"

Wye Valley Asparagus
Buffalicious Mozzarella &
Garden Herb Dressing **£15**

Early White Cauliflower Soup
Sunflower Seeds & Bath Harvest
Rapeseed Oil **£8**

I.O.W. Tomatoes
Lievito Sourdough Croutons &
Polytunnel Basil **£13**

Charred Garden Kohlrabi
Dorset Dairy Yoghurt, Mint &
Broad Bean Salad **£10**



APRICITY restaurant in London uses hyper-seasonal produce from small-scale farmers and locally foraged ingredients, together with a zero-waste approach to cooking. They also have this approach explained on their menus.

We're also seeing operators sharing greater detail - so not just naming the local farm that the produce is from but a description of the farm, how they rear their animals, how long the farm has been going – all details that help the consumer connect much more with the menu.

It's really promising to see operators making use of all consumer touchpoints. Showcasing where produce is from on your menus or in your establishment is one way, but also communicating this on social media platforms gives consumers the chance to get to know your values before they even visit you. Brands like Leon promoted the seasonality of their menu through a social media campaign.

DISHES THAT MAXIMISE MARGINS

Our data shows that burgers are the dish that delivers the highest margin for most operators (41%). Italian fare including pizzas and pasta dishes make the most margin for over a third of operators, and nearly a quarter find that steak and chicken dishes deliver the best margin, as do plant-based dishes.

But how can operators make these dishes work harder for them in terms of maximising margins; and also elevate them with easy hacks so they stand out amongst competitors?

"In the current climate, ensuring every dish we serve is delivering maximum margin is essential. Some dishes naturally provide a healthy margin and finding ways to make these work harder for us – through tweaks to the recipe or adding a twist that means we can justify a price increase on the menu – is an important part of ensuring our bottom line is as healthy as it can be."

**Phil Vickery MBE,
Owner of No.3 Restaurants**



Rob's top 5 tips

1

Think about how you can create unusual burger flavour combinations from ingredients you already have. For example, if you offer pizzas on your menu as well you could take a classic pizza ingredient such as marinara sauce but drizzle it over a burger along with mozzarella and pepperoni to create a pizza-inspired burger.

2

You can also top burgers with ingredients that are typically considered food waste. Crispy, fried salty potato or carrot peelings add a crunchy texture and flavour - a whole new dish at no extra cost.

3

Think about ways to take your burgers to the next level by going all out on your theme. If you want to offer a spicy option then don't just add a spicy sauce but also layer it with spicy chorizo slices, a jalapeno on top, all kept in place with a cocktail stick through the burger, and a side of spicy jam. These are low-cost items but create a much more impressive dish on the menu.

4

For pizzas, simple tweaks that are easy to execute in the kitchen are always good. You could mix your mozzarella cheese with a local smoked or blue cheese or for charcuterie toppings, use a local British company like The Real Cure Charcuterie company. Highlighting where your produce is from on the menu will give consumers a sense of the quality of the ingredients and will help deliver better margins.

5

Creating premium side dishes for steaks or chicken dishes is an effective way to maximise margins. Sides like Persian spiced roasted carrots with pistachio dukkah or maple and apple braised red cabbage, are far more appealing than simple buttered green beans. Don't forget about loading up classic sides like fries with truffle and parmesan or crispy bacon and onions – super easy to create.

INITIATIVES TO DRIVE CUSTOMER SPEND



Anna Clapson, Insights Manager at Creed Foodservice

"In addition to the key themes we've already covered, there are many other initiatives that operators can deploy to drive customer spend. Initiatives that don't require any additional investment and bring some fresh perspective to how things could be done."

Maximising covers: Streamline your operation through set service times ie 6pm and 8pm, meaning you can get double covers on tables.

Equally, existing outdoor space could be utilised to create cosy eating areas and extend your current capacity. Four out of ten operators told us they have already done this in response to rising inflation. Alfresco tables could be used for family lunches or outdoor seating can be a hub for summer evening drinks and nibbles – rethink your space! Little touches like solar-powered fairy lights and blankets on seats help bring the experience to life.

Charge for bread and butter: Consumers won't quibble this if it feels premium. Source your bread from a local bakery, offer a variety of flavours and types (olive, rosemary, sourdough, foccacia), serve with flavoured butter – get as creative as you can with this - and you have a delicious appetiser in itself. Any leftovers which are at risk of going stale can be used in specials recipes such as panzanella salad, or made into pangrattato - flavoured Italian breadcrumbs - for a food waste saving dish topping.

Offer a two or three-course set menu: A great way to streamline menus and reduce the amount of ingredients you're buying in, and it gives customers perceived value for money. These menus also allow you to use your stock well as you can build in dishes which feature ingredients that need using up and would otherwise spoil.

Sharing experiences: 45% of operators told us that consumers are choosing sharing food options. This is in part due to cost of living but also in part due to the experience sharing plates and platters bring to the dining experience. The trend for experiences is reflected in the rise of themed bars and restaurants opening – for example Control Room B in Battersea Power Station which is a 1950s themed bar overlooking one of the station's giant turbine halls. Regular hotels, pubs and restaurants can create this sense of theatre through sharing platters and plates that look visually impactful, can easily be themed to suit different occasions and make perfect Instagram shots.

Higher priced specials: These could be regularly changed to enhance their appeal to consumers, and this also means you can utilise seasonal produce to make them as affordable as possible to create. It's also a useful way to trial new dish ideas that could then be brought onto the main menu if they prove particularly popular. This doesn't need to be limited to just main dishes – it could be side dishes, desserts or cocktails/mocktails and soft drinks too.

Lunch time deals: If dinner is traditionally your busier time, and lunch is quieter, introducing a deal-led menu offering at lunch time will help to drive greater footfall. You can test the waters and offer it on specific days only and if the demand is there you can then increase how often you offer it.



WHO WE ARE

Creed Foodservice is one of the UK's leading independent, family-owned foodservice wholesaler. Chris Creed is CEO, Philip Creed is Sustainability Director and the business, although a nationwide operator, holds family values at its heart.

With three distribution centres based in Staverton in Gloucestershire, Ilkeston in Derbyshire, and High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, Creed services over 3,500 customers across the UK spanning care, education, hospitality and destination leisure sectors.

Creed offers over 6,000 products, works with over 380 suppliers, makes 600+ deliveries each day, has grown from a two-person family team to a 300-plus strong team and has won multiple awards including the Foodservice Wholesaler Gold Medal from the Federation of Wholesale Distributors' (FWD) in 2021, a Best Companies 'Two Star'

accreditation in 2022, as well as achieving a place in the top 100 Best Big Companies to work for list in the same year.

Creed Family Butchers has an on-site, fully accredited, EEC approved butchery facility, providing top quality fresh meats and poultry for over 15 years and Creed Fresh Produce offers a great range of quality seasonal produce, locally sourced where possible and with regular deliveries from Covent Garden Market, as well as a number of leading suppliers.

Investing significantly in catering development spaces, Creed has a state-of-the-art Food Innovation Centre specifically dedicated to supporting its customers, a Barn, an outdoor venue perfect for live cooking demos and trade events, and The Hub, their café innovation space designed to emulate the customer experience for coffee shop, café and leisure brands.

Our Values



Friendly



Commercial



Nurturing



Proud

The research was conducted by 3GEM Research and Insights in April 2023 on behalf of Creed Foodservice and surveyed 150 UK Directors, General Managers, Assistant Managers and Chefs across hotels, restaurants and pubs.



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