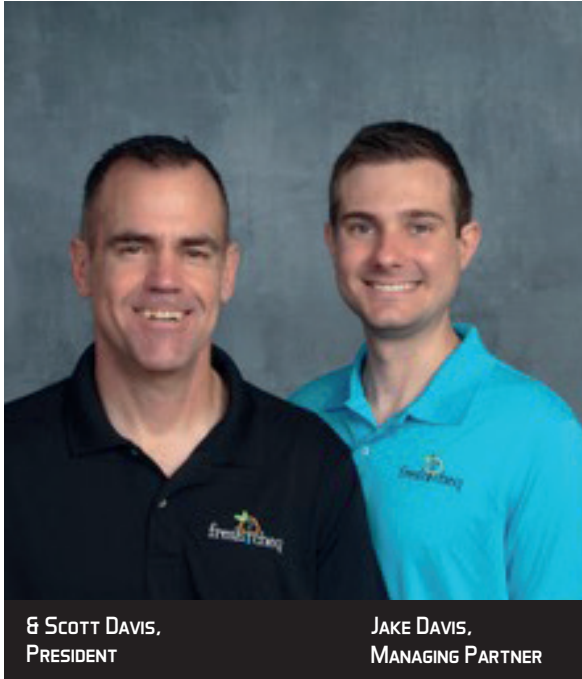# FreshCheq

Ensuring Food Safety with Digital Checklists and Logs

& Scott Davis, President

Jake Davis, Managing Partner

As we navigate through these unprecedented times, we realize that the importance of food safety and hygiene has never been more. Cleanliness at hotels and restaurants has always been a marker of quality, but not essentially a marker of safety. Today, customers are hyper-focused on food safety and hygiene, and to restauranteurs, this new trend is a make-or-break issue. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to stir up health concerns among customers, restaurants recognize the need for regularly maintained checklists of food safety and hygiene operations. Traditionally, these tasks have been managed the old-fashioned way on paper and clipboards, resulting in minimal accountability and traceability, limited operational visibility, and non-compliance with food safety standards and regulations. This has compelled restaurant owners to say goodbye to paper logs and focus on digital solutions to manage food safety and store processes with efficiency. Helping companies on their journey toward the digital-first approach to food safety is FreshCheq, a family-owned business that delivers easy-to-use software for simplifying food service operations.

In a conversation with the editorial team at CIO Applications, Jake Davis, Managing Partner, and Scott Davis, President of FreshCheq, discuss how their company helps restaurants keep a tab on their food safety and store operations and create a culture of safety by using digital logs and checklists.

Could you share the inception story of the company?

Scott: FreshCheq was founded by our family to address a longstanding problem in the food service industry. We recognized that there is a need to improve digital reporting in restaurants. The majority of the store workflows associated with food safety, sanitation, and reporting are usually managed by the staff on pen and paper, which is both time-intensive and error-prone. To solve this problem, we built our food service software that helps restaurants achieve operational excellence and ensure food safety by streamlining checklists and auditing. Our focus has always been on making food safety and store operation management easy for the hardworking staff in restaurants and food service companies. We have built the application with their needs in mind and have incorporated many employee-focused features for easy adoption. We have been in business for over three years now.

What impact has the COVID-19 pandemic had on the restaurant industry?

Jake: Much like any other industry, the pandemic has created a new set of challenges for the restaurant industry. Before COVID, proper maintenance and supervision of checklists, logs, and on-time reporting was not the highest priority for many restaurants. However, restauranteurs have now realized the need for excellent reporting as people are concerned about their health and safety when eating out. Also, the food safety regulations and the much-dreaded health inspections have become more stringent, which is an added pressure on restaurants.

Scott: We have addressed the primary pain point around manual processes with our solution by automating them to facilitate robust reporting. This is because you can't improve what you can't measure and manage. Besides, our solution is designed to address the massive labor shortage that the pandemic has created. Our platform can streamline and speed up food safety operations without the need to increase staff headcount. Restaurant managers can practice self-inspections and gain insights into store performance. Also, employees can simply log into the application and follow the instructions from their manager to complete a task.

What are the services you provide, and how do they benefit your clients?

Scott: Apart from food safety reporting, we help with all kinds of auditing, including self-audits for EcoSure, Steritech, and NSF. Our solution enables customers to keep track of store workflows and daily checklists comprising open/close, cleaning, and training tasks. We have a digital cooling log that is unique to our platform. It is a digital solution to complete mandated cooling logs and alert users from time to time to ensure that no measurements are missed. We offer a variety of tools to increase restaurant efficiency, such as inventory logs, food waste logs, prep logs, and more to track and expedite operations. Our solution is the easiest to adopt in stores and for employees to use. In addition, our platform comes with engagement features such as streaks and badges to incentivize and motivate employees.

Could you highlight some of the features of your platform?

Scott: All of the setup and admin reporting can be performed through our web application. For log keeping, we offer a mobile app with an offline feature. We have noticed that restaurants often have poor Wi-Fi connections and, as such, inconsistent feeds. Our app enables users to pull down a log, complete the tasks, and upload it when there is connectivity. Users can also set up push alerts to remain updated on missed logs in real-time.

Jake: Our application allows customers to schedule a task and provides reminders accordingly. For instance, if a job is supposed to be completed between 10 AM and 11 AM, the staff will receive a notification at 10 AM to complete the task. If the job is not completed within the deadline, the owners or regional managers are notified immediately on their devices. Our mobile app is hardware agnostic and is compatible with all iOS and Android devices.

What process do you follow when it comes to catering to your clients?

Jake: The first step is to have a detailed discussion with a prospective client to understand their business and the challenges they are facing. This helps us set up a more efficient and customized process specifically geared toward their needs. Next, we figure out a mutual "good fit" and import our client's current paper-based processes into our system. Our aim is not just to deliver the software to the client but also to set up the platform and provide them with a great experience. We create the lists and audits within the system, and host training calls for managers at the store and even at the administrative level. All our system features have been developed based on user requests and feedback. We listen to our clients, identify their pain points, and figure out a way to solve them with utmost efficiency.

Could you provide a case study where you could help your client achieve what they were seeking?

Scott: One of our clients, a large Buffalo Wild Wings franchisee with 42 locations, was heavily reliant on paper-based logs to manage store operations. After partnering with us, 50 percent of their stores successfully adopted and implemented our solution within the first day, and by the end of the week, the numbers rose to 75 percent. By the end of the month, they were managing 95 percent of their logs digitally on our app. They even utilize our streaks to earn recognition for log competition and executing their checks daily with diligence. Our application is extremely intuitive and has shown an incredible adoption rate so far.

> **Our focus has always been on making food safety and store operations management easy for the hardworking staff in restaurants and food service companies**

Jake: With manual processes, restaurant owners often fail to verify if a task is completed. Our solution stands apart as it offers complete visibility into the task completion and allows for instant follow-ups. Usability is at the core of our app, which makes it easy for hardworking restaurant staff to hit the ground running with minimal or no training.

What does the future hold for FreshCheq?

Scott: We are looking to add new exciting features to our platform, which will be built out with a keen focus on our customer feedback. While COVID has made a serious impact on the industry, we will keep working with our customers to improve their business amidst these challenging times. We plan to be around and available for our customers and uphold the promise of providing the best possible customer service. **CA**