

# Ideas & inspiration

Welcome to Issue 7 – with international ideas to inspire Queensland's tourism industry.

## Touch screen innovations

Technological advancements are changing the way businesses interact with their customers.

In many food establishments, for example, we know that the quality of service by staff is a key component of a customer's dining experience. However, with technological gadgets now replacing some human interaction, businesses understand that they need to use other methods to build relationships with their customers.

There are now a number of technology products, such as touch screens, that can provide the right business a competitive edge.



Source: Gil Cohen/Reuters via [wired.com](http://wired.com)

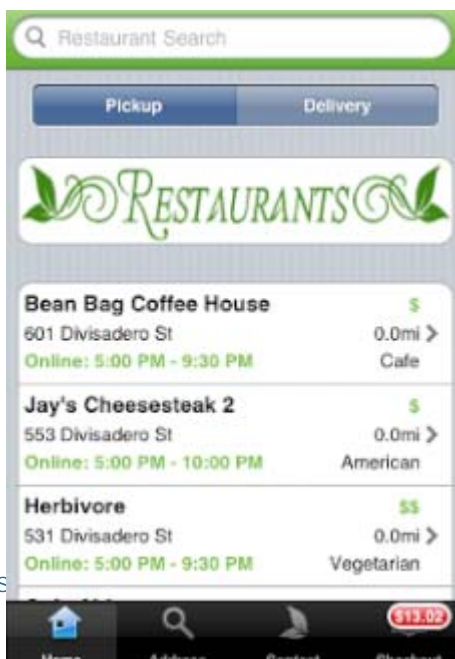
## ...for restaurants

Wired.com journalist [Jose Fermoso](#) identified a number of benefits of restaurant [e-ordering touch screens](#) (example pictured above). These include:

- improving restaurant speed and efficiency
- allowing clients to visualise meals prior to purchase, and
- enabling customers to engage with other entertainment options while they wait, such as videos and games (and advertising)

Although Fermoso highlights fingerprints and cleanliness as a downside, bloggers were quick to point out that these same issues exist for paper menus.

And an iPhone application has already been developed where iPhone users can order food directly from their handset. [CityMint](#) (US) has developed a GPS-enabled iPhone application which detects your proximity and presents a list of restaurants from which to choose. An interactive menu is provided for each listed restaurant, with the iPhone user able to tap on the food items they want. Their order is sent to the restaurant and then verified with the iPhone user via an email confirmation. [CityMint](#) currently offers this service for over 1000 restaurants in the US.



Source: [CityMint](#)

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## ... for hotel lobbies, bars, events

Interactive table tops using [Microsoft Surface™](#) technology are being used in hotel lobbies, nightclubs and events to add to a customer's experience.

[Sheraton Hotels & Resorts](#) provide this product in select US hotels. Guests can use the interactive table tops to explore the city and attractions, plan their next trip and play music.



Source: [Starwood Hotels](#)

[Click here](#) to view **videos** of this technology being used at the Sheraton hotels and the iBar located in the Rio All Suite Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas.

There are many areas of the tourism industry where touch screen technology could be used in the future, and in particular in areas where staffing may be an issue such as Visitor Information Centres.

## The Strategic Value of Complements

[Click here](#) to read **Nicholas Carr's** article that explains '*Sometimes the most powerful innovations may lie outside your company's core business*'.

The article begins with a case study of the Michelin brothers' diversification of their rubber processing business into publishing tourist guide books. Their logic was that encouraging more people to travel by road would lead to more tyres being sold.

The article ends with five questions to get the reader thinking about how to uncover and assess innovation opportunities that can complement their core business.

If there are any interest areas you would like more information about, or would like to see included in a future edition, please contact [Tracy Vincent](#), Senior Consumer Analyst.

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