



Innovation is Key at Joe's Crab Shack

Interview with Joe's Crab Shack
President – Jim Mazany

If you ask Jim Mazany, President of Joe's Crab Shack, the key to the concept's success during his tenure, one word that you'll most certainly hear is innovation. When Ignite Restaurant Group purchased Joe's Crab Shack in 2007, average unit volumes hovered around \$2.2 million. Today, just six years later, the chain boasts 136 restaurants with average unit volumes of \$3.3 million.



Mazany credits a forward thinking team and a commitment to innovation for the success of Joe's Crab Shack under Ignite's ownership.

To increase unit volumes by 50 percent, Mazany and his team took a hard look at Joe's guests and their preferences, then set about improving operations to meet guest expectations. They turned to the EnviCor SmartTank to assist with an oil management system that increased food quality while also minimizing risk and improving overall safety.

"We were looking for a safer, cleaner and more discreet alternative to an open container on the back dock," said Mazany. ***"Appearances were important, of course, but employee safety was paramount, as was the effect on overall food quality."***

The EnviCor SmartTank, an indoor used cooking oil (UCO) management system, was the solution. ***"Once we tested the SmartTank in several restaurants, we were very pleased by the effect on our overall operation. From our initial test, we made the decision to roll out the SmartTank in all Joe's Crab Shack restaurants. We have also started using them in our other Ignite Restaurant Group brands as well."***

Mazany identified three key benefits of the SmartTank that contributed to the Joe's Crab Shack rollout:





Mazany explains, ***“We were looking for a solution that would offer a safer and cleaner alternative while providing us with the opportunity to lower costs. We found that this is exactly what the EnviCor SmartTank offers.”*** Mazany goes on to share that since the switch to the SmartTank, the chain has seen a decrease in the number of burn-related injuries to their employees. ***“Team Member safety is a top priority at all of our Ignite restaurant brands. By hard piping directly to the fryer unit, the SmartTank eliminates the handling of hot oil, which has greatly minimized risk of injury,”*** Mazany said.

Joe’s was also attracted to EnviCor’s data-driven approach. The SmartTank, powered by EnviCor’s Liquid Management Solution (eLMS), provides accurate real time reporting on oil usage. ***“We were looking to minimize costs across the system,” said Mazany. The data provided by EnviCor allowed us to bring down costs associated with fresh oil by identifying usage and waste, which we quickly addressed and corrected.”***

The strong culture of innovation at Joe’s is built on the belief that all aspects of the business should have a positive impact on the quality of the food and the overall guest experience. According to Mazany, ***“Food quality and guest experience are the driving forces behind all of Joe’s innovations, whether it’s in the front of the house or in the kitchen.”***

While some companies might take oil management for granted, Mazany and his team analyze every detail to ensure it contributes to the end goal. Each chef is carefully trained in all areas of food quality – including how cooking oil management affects the end product, and management reviews data carefully, such as oil absorption rates, an underutilized piece of data that affects food cost and food quality.

Said Mazany: “The SmartTank, powered by eLMS, provides the ability to accurately track very detailed data so we can develop a baseline for COGS and continue to monitor our high food quality standards.”



After testing the SmartTank in ten Joe’s locations, the system-wide rollout to all 136 Joe’s Crab Shack locations came with some inherent challenges. As Mazany openly points out, ***“One of my major reservations with the system-wide roll out to all Joe’s locations was the potential disruption of operations and the effect it would have on our business***

during our busiest time of year. I was impressed by the dedication and capabilities of the entire EnviCor team. Even in our most unique locations, including some on piers and riverfronts, EnviCor was able to complete even the most difficult of installations with no disruptions to our business.”



The EnviCor SmartTank offers tailored solutions to fit any operation and fryer model. The SmartTank is available in a standard 240 gallon version and a smaller 160 gallon unit. It is equipped with a variety of accessories to fit any requirement. From helping restaurants choose the best location for the SmartTank, to providing hassle-free installation, EnviCor is committed to providing exceptional customer service.

EnviCor is dedicated to providing restaurants with the most accurate and informational UCO solution on the market. ***“As a restaurant veteran with more than twenty years of experience, I understand that you can’t manage what you don’t measure. For the first time, restaurants using the SmartTank powered by eLMS can measure and properly manage their fresh oil usage. It is the most integrated and value-added UCO solution on the market today,”*** says Howie McEachern, VP of Sales at EnviCor.

EnviCor’s dedication to customer service and innovation plays a key role in the advancements and development of the SmartTank. ***“As the Joe’s example showcases, we are sensitive to our customers’ needs and are continuously working with them to improve the SmartTank and provide actionable operations information that will have a positive impact on both operations and profitability,”*** says McEachern.

As for Joe’s, Mazany continually strives for– and achieves– excellence. He feels that perhaps more than any generation before them, Millennials are raising the bar for restaurants.

To learn more about the EnviCor SmartTank and how it can help improve your business, please visit **www.esmarttank.com**. To find the nearest Joe’s Crab Shack, please visit **www.joescrabshack.com**.

“Millennials have extremely high food IQ’s and expectations for the restaurants they choose to visit. The challenge before us is to meet and exceed those expectations by being laser-focused on innovation and improvement. The SmartTank and the data we are able to collect will continue to play a significant role in our operations.”

