

MARKETING SERVICES

## UNLOCKING AGILITY

Staying competitive in a  
labour-constrained market



PARAGON 

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# When you can't rely on labour, you need to rely on agility

The hospitality sector is navigating a perfect storm. Labour shortages persist despite wage increases. High staff turnover disrupts service continuity. Rising costs squeeze margins. Consumer spending remains cautious. And competitors – from cafes delivery apps – are capturing leisure time that used to default to pubs.

In this environment, operational rigidity is fatal. Venues that can't adapt quickly (whether that's adjusting trading hours when staffing is tight, pivoting menus based on what's actually profitable, deploying technology to offset labour gaps) simply can't compete effectively.

What's essential today is developing the operational flexibility to respond quickly when circumstances change. When venues struggle to recruit and retain the right people. When a delivery app launches aggressive promotions. When consumer trends shift and your core offering suddenly feels outdated.

Traditional hospitality operations weren't built for this level of disruption. Long planning cycles. Rigid processes. Technology that constrains rather than enables. Siloed teams making decisions independently without visibility into broader operational reality.

At Paragon, we've helped hospitality businesses build this operational agility – creating systems and processes that enable faster response to market changes, labour challenges and competitive threats.



**Mitch Cornelia**  
COO for Marketing Services, Paragon UK

# Building operational agility in hospitality

Hospitality has always required adaptability – responding to seasonal demand, weather patterns, local events. But today's challenges are different in scale and persistence. Labour shortages aren't temporary. Competitive threats from cafes and delivery apps aren't going away. Consumer caution about discretionary spending is structural, not cyclical.

Operating in this environment requires a level of agility many hospitality businesses haven't needed before. Yet legacy processes, fragmented systems and rigid operational models make quick response difficult.

## THE COST OF OPERATIONAL RIGIDITY

### Missed opportunities

When you can't respond quickly to market changes, you miss revenue opportunities. A competitor launches a promotion and you take weeks to counter. Consumer trends shift and your menu feels dated. Labour availability improves in certain areas but your hiring processes are too slow to capitalise.

### Inefficient labour deployment

Without real-time visibility into staffing needs across your estate, labour gets deployed inefficiently. Some venues are overstaffed while others struggle. Management time gets consumed with manual scheduling and coordination. High turnover means constant recruitment and training, but onboarding processes haven't been optimised for speed.

### Competitive vulnerability

Cafes offering excellent coffee and comfortable spaces. Delivery apps making it frictionless to get food and drinks at home. These competitors move fast and adapt quickly. When your operations are rigid (locked into fixed trading hours, inflexible menus, manual processes) you can't match their responsiveness.

### Management capacity consumed

When everything requires manual coordination, management capacity gets consumed with operational firefighting rather than strategic thinking. Responding to each labour shortage. Coordinating each menu change. Managing each promotional campaign. Without systems and automation, there's no capacity left for improving the business.

## Building operational agility

Success requires:

- **Centralised visibility:** Real-time data on what's happening across your estate – labour deployment, sales performance, operational issues. When you can see problems emerging, you can respond before they escalate.
- **Automated processes:** Technology that handles repetitive tasks (whether scheduling, ordering, reporting) and frees management capacity for higher-value work.
- **Flexible operations:** Systems that enable quick changes – menu updates, promotional launches, trading hour adjustments – without manual coordination across hundreds of venues.
- **Fast execution:** When you decide to act, you need infrastructure that enables rapid implementation across your estate, not weeks of coordination.

# Paragon: Enabling operational agility

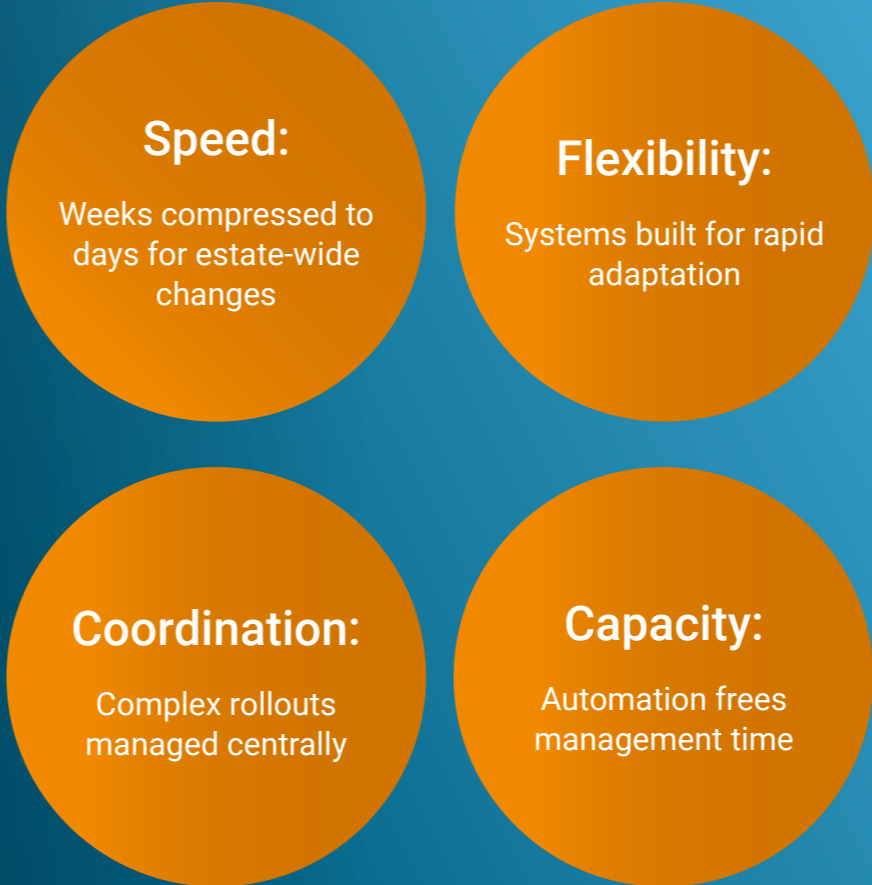
We've helped hospitality operators build the systems and processes that enable faster response to market changes, labour challenges and competitive threats.

**Our expertise spans:**

- **Campaign orchestration at speed:** Launching promotional campaigns, menu changes, or operational initiatives across large estates quickly with coordinated materials and communications.
- **Process automation:** Technology that handles repetitive coordination tasks, freeing management capacity for strategic work.
- **Centralised platforms:** Systems that provide visibility and control across your estate, enabling faster decision-making.
- **Flexible production:** Materials and collateral that can be updated and deployed rapidly when market conditions change.



## WHY HOSPITALITY OPERATORS PARTNER WITH PARAGON:



# How we support hospitality clients

We work closely with multi-site hospitality organisations to build operational flexibility that enables faster response to market challenges.

We support our hospitality clients to address their specific needs, including:



## Rapid campaign deployment

Across large estates when competitive or market conditions demand quick response



## Menu rollout coordination

Enabling faster adaptation to ingredient costs, consumer preferences, or seasonal changes



## Marketing operations automation

Freeing management capacity by handling repetitive coordination tasks systematically



## Centralised platforms

That provide visibility and control across operations

## REAL-WORLD APPLICATIONS



### Scenario 1: Rapid competitive response

**The challenge:** Delivery app competitor launches aggressive promotions in key markets. Need to counter quickly with own promotional campaign across affected regions. Traditional timeline for materials production and venue coordination would take several weeks – too slow to effectively respond.



#### The Paragon approach:

Centralised campaign management platform with pre-approved promotional templates enables rapid customisation and deployment. Within 48 hours, promotional materials created, approved, produced and distributed to 200+ venues in affected regions. Email campaign to database launched simultaneously. Social media assets deployed. Staff briefing materials ensure consistent execution. Digital workflow eliminates manual coordination bottlenecks. Automated production scheduling ensures materials arrive before campaign launch. Centralised tracking provides visibility into deployment status across all venues.



#### The result:

Competitive counter-campaign live within one week versus traditional 3-4 week timeline. Revenue impact minimised. Management capacity preserved for other priorities. Process established for future rapid response needs.

### Scenario 2: Menu adaptation at scale

**The challenge:** Rising costs on key ingredients and shifting consumer preferences require menu adjustments across estate. Traditional menu update process involves weeks of regional coordination, design revisions, print production and venue distribution. Need to compress timeline while maintaining brand consistency and quality.



#### The Paragon approach:

Template-based menu system with centralised management enables rapid updates. New menu items added to templates with locked brand elements. Regional teams customise pricing and emphasis within guardrails. Digital approval workflow ensures quality control without bottlenecks. Consolidated production order across entire estate captures volume efficiency. Distribution managed centrally with venue-specific tracking.

Process takes 5-7 days from decision to materials in venues versus traditional 3-4 week timeline. All venues launch new menu simultaneously. Brand consistency maintained through template structure.



#### The result:

Reduction in menu update timeline. Ability to respond quickly when market conditions demand adaptation. Consistent execution across the entire estate. Management time freed from coordination to focus on menu performance and ongoing optimisation.

## ABOUT PARAGON MARKETING SERVICES

As our clients strive for efficiency and growth, we bring clarity to brand and direct marketing activation. We combine cutting-edge technology with deep industry expertise to deliver seamless, data-driven marketing solutions on a global scale – from strategic thinking to delivery.

Across brand marketing activation, direct marketing activation, and marketing operations outsourcing, we enable our clients to cut through competitive markets, strengthen customer relationships, reduce costs, and turn marketing budgets into growth. All underpinned by our proprietary cloud marketing technology and the creative talent of our 1,700+ strong team.

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