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Rib Crib adopts secure new credit card technology

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Staff Writer

Using a credit card in a public place – and giving it to someone else to go process your payment, as in a restaurant – can sometimes be scary, as the information on that card is the link to a lot of personal information.

Rib Crib in Benton is the first restaurant in the state to take the fear out of restaurant credit card use by purchasing Pay at the Table Terminals, manufactured by Ingenico and sold to Rib Crib by International Payment Corporation of San Jose, CA and represented locally by former Benton resident Bill Rogers.

The transportable terminals allow the card user to swipe his own card at the table. Therefore, the card never disappears from the sight of the customer and there is no fear about the card being put into the wrong hands.

Chris Zunino, managing partner for Bold Partners Inc., oversees the operations of the Benton Rib Crib. He was a little hesitant of the new technology at first, but has since grown to accept the terminals, especially after the praise he has received from his customers.

“I’m just here to make good barbecue and provide good service. But anything I can do to help my customers out and make them more comfortable to eat in my restaurant, I’ll do in any way, shape or form,” Zunino said.

The portable terminals not only allow customers to keep track of their cards, it keeps the credit card transaction off the main computer system of the restaurant, thus eliminating the possibility of the credit card information being stolen if the main computer system is breached.

Though Zunino has always tried to be one step ahead when it comes to customer security, “I don’t think anything could have happened previously, but it definitely can’t happen now,” Zunino said.

Rogers explained that the initial cost that Zunino and his business partners made could save them tens of thousands of dollars in the end.

“Typically, if a credit card number is stolen from a restaurant or any business, it will cost the owner a minimum of \$10,000 for federal investigators to examine their business practices and conduct a forensic audit of their computer hard drives. Those initial costs will skyrocket based on what these investigators discover. Business owners who cannot absorb six-figure fines and penalties are left with no other option except to close their doors – all because they thought their credit processing system was safe. For restaurant owners and their customers, nothing else comes close to the safety and security this system offers,” Rogers said.

Zunino has experienced firsthand the tragedy that can come with credit card fraud. He has made sure that his customers will not have to experience the same pain.

“The security of our customers is the number one priority with me. If something were to happen, I would lose customers and I don’t want to lose customers,” Zunino said.

While Benton is the first in the state to have the terminals, Rogers said it may be the first in this region as well. The terminals are becoming popular in larger cities, such as New York, and have been in use for nearly ten years in Europe, which is where Bold Partners’ President Mark Fikes first saw the machines. Fikes and Rogers had been friends for awhile, so Rogers introduced Fikes to the idea of the machines being used in his restaurant.

“This is an investment for our customers who not only want a great dining experience, they also want to know we have taken every step possible to keep their credit card information as secure as possible,” Fikes said. Fikes and Zunino also manage the Rib Crib in Searcy and will soon have the terminals at that location as well.

Rib Crib in Benton is located at 1600 Military Road and can be reached at (501) 778-9600.