

KAIRAK[™]

UNRIVALED REFRIGERATION TECHNOLOGY

CASE STUDY: LUCILLE'S BAR-B-QUE

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KAIRAK'S BLU SAVES LUCILLE'S BAR-B-QUE FROM DOWNTIME AND LOWERS MAINTENANCE COSTS

BEHIND THE PROJECT

Lucille's Bar-B-Que currently has 13 locations across California, Nevada, and Arizona. After years of battling with repairs and the cost of maintenance and downtime, Project/Construction Manager Ryan Hofman was eager to find a resolution. Having studied engineering in college, he could not believe how far behind the restaurant industry was on their refrigeration technology. Upon being introduced to Kairak's BLU technology at NRA he thought,

“Finally, it's about time!”

Confident he could improve his operation significantly by switching to BLU, Lucille's Bar-B-Que has since installed the BLU Remote system in all of their new locations and is in the process of upgrading several existing locations to BLU.

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BEFORE BLU

The biggest problem facing Lucille's Bar-B-Que in terms of refrigeration was the cost and downtime associated with long term repair and maintenance. Knowing the chain's reputation could be put at risk from faulty equipment was also a primary concern.

“Refrigeration cannot be ignored, as it affects the quality of our food and potentially the health of others.”
– Ryan Hofman

Refrigeration and HVAC repairs were by far the number one maintenance expense at all Lucille's Bar-B-Que locations. Persistent issues included refrigerant leaks, bad time clocks, bad solenoids, and bad coils. Hofman explains:

“When I have refrigerant leaks, I have 100 feet of suspect refrigeration lines to inspect. With hundreds of welds per line, and when you start talking about 13 plus stores, with thousands of welds and hundreds of expansion valves, you statistically have a huge number of areas of potential concern for leaks and problems.”

Servicing these issues in a busy kitchen, with already limited space, was also a hardship, particularly when equipment went down during a rush. “Servicing our old equipment in the kitchen was extremely difficult during working hours”, Hofman notes. Interruption to the kitchen flow from constant maintenance problems was an expense Lucille's Bar-B-Que was eager to eliminate.

THE SOLUTION

When Lucille's Bar-B-Que decided to go with Kairak's BLU system, they considered all their options from a statistical point-of-view with the desire to reduce the potential costs associated with their existing performance and maintenance problems. BLU Remote systems have been installed at five of their locations.

AN INNOVATIVE PARALLEL RACK SYSTEM

All BLU Rack systems utilize a parallel compressor design for maximum energy efficiency. The use of low-pressure chilled glycol minimizes the risk of refrigerant leaks, which are a common concern with traditional parallel systems. Durable ABS piping is used to connect the BLU Rack with associated coils and fixtures, thereby saving a considerable amount on installation materials and labor.

BLU is flexible and efficient in other ways, too. It's variable capacity allows the addition and subtraction of equipment when designing or redesigning a kitchen. Also, BLU Remote coils and fixtures require no defrost cycles, minimizing downtime and temperature fluctuations.

SIMPLIFIED DESIGN

A typical full-store remote system would require an estimated 29 thermal expansion valves (TXV) and 27 defrost time-clocks. By comparison, the BLU systems now installed use only 9 TXV's and 6 defrost time-clocks throughout the entire store. By minimizing these high-failure rate components, BLU has dramatically reduced maintenance costs and improved reliability.

Just as the BLU Rack is simplified, so are the pan chillers on the chef's line. BLU Pan Chillers have no electrical or mechanical parts. And for added convenience and productivity, BLU Pan Chillers are approved for use with 8" deep pans, while most competitors recommend 4" deep pans. Deeper pans can more than double the food storage capacity in the top rail.

Beer lines are now chilled using the BLU Rack system as well, eliminating the thousands of dollars in additional equipment previously required. Instead of a condenser, evaporator, heat exchanger, and glycol pump, now the lines are chilled via the remote, rooftop rack.

BIG RESULTS WITH BLU

The results of switching to Kairak's BLU system have been hugely beneficial to Lucille's Bar-B-Que in a multitude of ways. Their primary goal of lowering repair and maintenance costs has been more than satisfied, while additional benefits of efficiency and superior performance have also been recorded.

FOR LUCILLE'S BAR-B-QUE LOCATIONS USING KAIRAK'S BLU, THE NEW SYSTEM HAS:

- ▶ Reduced maintenance costs by over 50%
- ▶ Provided energy efficiency and savings
- ▶ Kept temperature fluctuations in an extremely tight range
- ▶ Solved the problem of disruptions in the kitchen due to service calls
- ▶ Eliminated the expense associated with unnecessary and problematic equipment
- ▶ Provided flexibility when developing new concepts to add and subtract equipment without having to worry about capacity variations

Lucille's Bar-B-Que plans to install BLU in all new locations and is eager to replace the equipment at older locations with BLU in the near future.

Ryan Hofman sums it up by saying:

“BLU has proven to be the reliable solution I was looking for!”

