

TITLE OF THE CASE STUDY:

Impact of COVID-19 on family business and measures to adapt and survive the crisis.

Name of the organisation:

EURO catering

Country and sector of the organisation:

BULGARIA, food and catering

Type of organisation:

- Private organization

Size of the organisation:

- small

Brief description of the organisation:

Founded in 2010, Euro Catering started as a small family company, its main activity is the production of sandwiches. Subsequently, the company grew and currently employs over 40 people. The company built its own workshop in the town of Ihtiman, near Sofia and is stimulating the regional economy and creating new job positions for the local people. The main activity is maintained in 2019, Euro Catering is a market leader in the production of sandwiches, with a distribution network throughout Bulgaria. Thanks to the long-standing values that the company has preserved over the years, the WIN Sandwiches brand has become one of the most recognizable and trusted sandwich choices.

Short description of the case study (500 characters)

EURO catering was one of the most impacted businesses from the COVID-19 emergency state declared. The manager reviewed all the circumstances in order to implement the necessary measures to avoid the risk of the disease in his company. Main strategy of the company was to maintain a strong communication and relations with his staff and to keep employees loyal to the company.

The leaders provided several measures :

- work from home (when possible)
- different organization of work (rules for social distancing)

- protective equipment (masks, gloves, disinfectants...)
- increased both team and personal responsibility by instructions and providing information and updates on a daily basis
- changed their way of sales and the target groups

KEY WORDS:

family business, COVID-19 measures, catering, adaptation

BEST PRACTICE PROFILE

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Each employer is responsible for the health and safety of his employees. The law says that

he must take actions and measures for protecting them and controlling the implementation of these measures. He has to monitor every small change of circumstances.

The first measure was to let the administration staff to work from home. This measure leads to more work for leaders as they have to monitor the work done and require daily or weekly reporting. Face to face meetings were held online, so at the beginning sales staff had some issues as customers were afraid to make advanced payments or even worse – they were afraid to make orders as the situation for the future was very unclear. TIWA project was presented to Mrs Kalina Hristova, co-manager of EURO catering. She was totally aware of the importance of making the workplace a pleasant and positive environment for the employees. She thinks that the biggest challenge they have faced during the pandemic was the fact that no concerts, football games and other big events were held for more than 1 years. For EURO catering these kind of events are their main target. First weeks were very stressful for the management as they didn't know for how many weeks more they could continue paying salaries. She was the initiator to implement a totally new model of work for their company : food deliveries.

As the country was in total lockdown, people weren't allowed to go out, restaurants and bars were closed, Kalina saw this negative situation as a challenger for their business. She made some changes in the menu : removed sophisticated and expensive catering bites like salmon and caviar rolls and added party boxes of mini sandwiches, tapas, protein cookies and other bites that are suitable for eating at home.

EURO catering was part of the biggest food delivery platform in Bulgaria – Foodpanda. All levels of the company were involved as the workflow was the same as for the catering. Even better, they became more popular through young generations and kept their leader position on the Bulgarian market.

The biggest issue they had was the fact that before the COVID-19 pandemic, EURO catering was preparing all the food in advance as they knew weeks before when exactly they will have to provide the catering. Usually they were responsible for the cocktails in the National stadium, the biggest lounges in concert buildings, theatres and other events. With food deliveries it wasn't the same way of work. They

received the order and they had to prepare immediately. This is the reason why in the first weeks they couldn't predict the possible number of orders and some of the food left.

A lot of additional measures for sanitary control were taken in the workshop. For the employees that met some end-customers they established several rules :

- Provided an alcohol-based disinfectant
- To clean hands after each delivery
- Contactless delivery with placement of the bag on the ground, in the presence of the customer
- Replacement of the customer's signature with a photo of him with his delivery

RATIONALE

The new strategy was important for the company as managers didn't know for how many months they could pay salaries if the country is closed and no events are allowed. It was more than necessary to have a new vision in the organisation and to implement several activities. EURO catering took very quickly the decision to open a new way of sales through delivery applications and this is what saved them from failure.

Main motives behind these activities were :

- To keep employees in good health and to minimize the risk of infection in the workplace
- To keep them motivated and to prove employees that they are important to the company
- To stay innovative and reach younger generations

GOALS

EURO catering aimed to :

- Keep their position on the market
- Develop new ways of providing catering
- Reach new target group
- Use new channel for sales
- Digitalize their company
- Motivate employees to continue working
- Adapt the food they provide to the current market needs

IMPACT

Mrs Kalina Hristova says that financially the company isn't doing better than prior to the pandemic. Fortunately, new technologies have helped them to stay on the market and to handle the negative impact of the lockdown. She says that the workplace atmosphere is becoming better as employees were stuck in a sort of routine. With the changes they have made in the menu, employees were encouraged to give ideas, be innovative and find new outcomes of the company.

LESSONS LEARNED

The crisis has shown once again how important is team work. COVID-19 changed our lives and our mindset. The co-manager of EURO catering says that thanks to this situation they have realized that their employees are very loyal and responsible. Leaders developed their management skills and employees understood their importance for the future of the company. Bad times learn us more than we can imagine and this is the biggest reason to never quit and to accept the challenge!

MATERIAL



Box of sandwiches for deliveries.



The new healthy cookie they have added to their menu

REFERENCES

Interview with co-manager of EURO catering Mrs Kalina Hristova

<https://winsandwich.com/>