



## MICROWAVES FOCUS CATERING INSIGHT – MARCH 2021

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### ***Why should dealers consider specifying a microwave instead of other prime cooking equipment?***

A microwave is a true kitchen essential and has a place in every kitchen. A microwave is traditionally seen as an enhancement to use alongside other items of prime cooking equipment, but their versatility is often underestimated and they can be of particular use where space or budgets are limited.

### ***What other appliances could microwaves replace and what benefits would this bring?***

Combination microwaves can be used in place of a grill or oven where space is limited, combining these traditional cooking methods with microwave speed for outstanding results – even when cooking foods such as pastries, pies and pizza. Items such as pastry will become soggy if reheated in an ordinary microwave whereas using a combination microwave the crisp, golden brown and conventional finished result will be achieved in microwave time. As well as traditional regeneration, microwaves can also be used for steaming vegetables and sauces or gravies. For operations looking to introduce a simple food offering, the right microwave can help them create a 'kitchen in a box' with a small footprint and a minimal budget.

### ***Do you feel dealers are completely aware how to correctly specify microwave power and the difference this makes to the final dish?***

Education is key when it comes to microwave cooking and by working with the right supplier, dealers can ensure the right machine is specified for any requirement. At R H Hall we train our distributors to be able to offer the best advice and training to the end user. We also have an extensive facility at our HQ fitted out with all the very latest equipment so clients and distributors can see and operate a number of microwaves in addition to a very wide range of kitchen equipment. It is very important to choose the correct microwave oven wattage. You need to choose an oven with sufficient power, but just as importantly, do not over specify. If too low, you can be frustrated by delays, and if too high, it will be difficult to judge the timing of small portions. Whilst it is common for caterers to choose speed (the higher the output the faster reheat times), it is also very important to understand that for some food products too much speed will destroy smaller portions of food or the delicate and sugary types of products.

A recent development in the commercial microwave market is the introduction of inverter technology, which differs from traditional microwaves by providing constant, rather than pulsed, power when cooking, reheating or defrosting at reduced power levels. For example, a traditional microwave set at 50% will pulse by switching power on and off throughout the cooking period, which can lead to un-even results in some foods. Inverter technology will provide a precise and constant supply of power at 50%, making it easier to cook or reheat foods slowly and defrost dishes to perfection. Thanks to precise temperature control, you can cook, reheat or defrost a far greater variety of dishes that conventional microwaves were previously not able to prepare to the same high standard. Our team can advise further on the results available from inverter technology.

### ***Do you think dealers understand the full scope of microwave usage – why/why not?***

Most would view the main benefit for the reheating of cooked food product, boosting food temperatures and defrosting usage. However, today's kitchen demands rely on microwave ovens for much wider tasks. Understanding a microwave and getting the right techniques for each type of food, succulent meat, poultry and fish together with perfectly cooked vegetables that retain taste, texture and nutritive value are all possible. Many of the techniques used in microwave cooking are the same as used in conventional cooking, but with a few minor adjustments. There is a great deal of diversity of dishes that can be prepared quickly and easily from fresh ingredients and to get the most from a microwave the right education and budget should be provided. A commercial microwave oven within today's commercial kitchens are a vital part of the kitchen's operation with many operators using a bank of microwave ovens for multiple and many uses.

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