

ADAPTING TO THE NEW NORMAL.

A VISUAL GUIDE TO THE CHALLENGES FACING
THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR AND HOW DESIGN
CAN ASSIST IN FINDING SOLUTIONS.

WHEN WILL YOU RETURN

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WE AT HARRISON UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES CURRENTLY BEING FACED BY THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR, AND TRULY BELIEVE COLLABORATION AND COLLECTIVE THINKING CAN HELP TO FIND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR ALL.



01 INTRODUCTION



**THE TIME IS NOW TO PAUSE AND
LOOK AT HOW THE HOSPITALITY
SECTOR CAN ADAPT TO THE NEW
NORMALS THAT FACE THEM. WE
WANT TO BE THERE WITH YOU EVERY
STEP OF THE WAY COMING UP WITH
CREATIVE DESIGN SOLUTIONS.**

In a short space of time COVID-19 has changed lives and livelihoods around the world. It has challenged us as individuals and as a society to re-think our accepted behaviours. Every business and sector has/will have to adapt to these 'new normals'.

The Hospitality sector will be particularly hit hard due to the fact that the very ethos of hospitality is social engagement, and sharing experiences with loved ones and strangers alike. For the time being at least, these experiences will mostly be shared with co-habiting loved ones.

This conjures up all kinds of problems in every step of the dining experience, from entry to exit, every component that makes the machine run needs to be re-thought and adapted. With limited timescales and increased pressures to come up with solutions quickly, this is by no means an easy feat.

So we at Harrison have compiled this visual guide to try and alleviate and highlight some of these processes and ascertain where Design can play a part in helping with this.

This document provides an opinion based on our understanding at the time of publishing. All brands should review local and national guidelines on CV-19.

02 WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO RE-OPENING POST LOCKDOWN?

Customer anxiety around personal space and being in a closed environment in close proximity to strangers post isolation.

Gaining customer trust, any activity outside of 'essential' will be perceived as a risk. Communicating all safety measures and procedures will be key to winning trust and repeat business.

There will be an increased emphasis on hygiene levels both in customer facing and staff populated areas.

Ways to minimise touch points for the customer, QSR screens, condiments bottles and menus. Contactless payments are a step forward. Consider if customers feel comfortable using touch screen food order kiosks and if exterior solutions should be explored?

How do you create an enjoyable and relaxed dining experience that is both 'on-brand' and adheres to the strict social distancing measures in place?

Controlling the amount of customers coming in and going out. You want customers to have an unrushed experience, yet you still need the quick turn around to make profit to cover overheads

**HOW DO YOU CREATE
AN ENJOYABLE AND
RELAXED DINING
EXPERIENCE WHILE
ADHERING TO THE NEW
SAFETY MEASURES?**



03 WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIC APPROACHES FOR RE-OPENING?



PHASED OPENINGS.	PRIORITISING.	LOCATION.	EXISTING CAPABILITIES.	DESIGNING NEW LAYOUTS.
				
<p>Phased or 'soft' openings trialling out the new measures to get key data to determine and adjust existing measures in place and how this will have an overall effect on staff required and predicted takings.</p>	<p>Assessing current sites and which ones make sense to re-open based upon the following factors:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Location — Capabilities — Design layouts 	<p>Location and therefore maximum potential footfall. Sites that are close to Hospitals and delivery depots, hitting the key worker market for both eat in and take-out</p>	<p>Sites that have drive-thru and click and collect capabilities already in place. Again this can drive footfall and reach a wider target market.</p>	<p>Looking at existing floor plans and exploring how maximum covers/seats can be attained with minimal impact on the current layout. Clever solutions are required to minimise the need for off-site storage.</p>

04 DEALING WITH CUSTOMER ANXIETY

ON ARRIVAL.

Create a great welcome experience by the host on arrival, staff training on all new procedures and safety measures will ensure they can communicate well and answer queries to **build trust**. physical measures that can be taken such as copper and operable door hardware, Consider introducing "brand promise" notice clearly outlining safety measures in place.

PERIPHERAL ATMOSPHERE.

With largely reduced covers, staff numbers and distancing procedures enforced, creating a great atmosphere is essential to giving customers a feeling of normality or escape. Crank up the music with a **carefully chosen playlist** and use **lighting levels** to create ambience.

IN AND OUT.

Where there is a single entrance, **staff can control** customer entry and exit, clearly signed waiting zones at entrance pinch points will allow customers to maintain social distancing. **Multiple entrances can be designated for entry and exit if the current layout allows**. Explore "on brand" ways of communication to guide guest journey.

DEFINED AREAS.

Queuing for takeaway, collections and driver pick ups will also need to be **clearly signed**, separated and managed. If the customer understands what is in place straight away then this **takes any pressure off them** so they can relax and enjoy their experience.



05 COMMUNICATING TO YOUR CUSTOMERS



BE CLEAR.

Communicating all new procedures (*hygiene, food preparation & service, queuing system, waiting, direction floor signage for customer flow and distancing etc*) to customers through clear simple signage / graphics to instruct and reassure customers at every step. **Off the shelf signage can look clinical, design graphic communication which is individual to the brand and speaks messages in your tone of voice.** Customers will find comfort and trust in brands who execute this well. Develop and display a “brand promise” that clearly communicates your safety & hygiene standards and procedures at the entry and in key areas.

COMMUNICATE HYGIENE.

At the forefront of customers minds will be **how clean are the restaurants?** how many touch points has there been from grill to plate to table? And what is being done to ensure staff are properly trained in these areas? One way to do this is using **graphic communication at pay points, sanitizing dispensers, entrances, restrooms and on tables.**



GOODBYE MESSAGING.

A great goodbye message is an opportunity to thank customers for visiting when personal safety is paramount and a chance to **create a lasting connection with the brand.**



MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

- **Face masks & PPE** could be mandatory for staff, branding these items will make them more familiar and less clinical. This will be particularly important in open kitchens where food prep and cooking are visible to customers.
- **Any shared areas** Effective management procedures shall be developed for buffet style displays and condiment units.
- **Sanitiser stations** spaced throughout the restaurant and entrances.
- **Anti-bacterial shields** fitted to all door handles.



RECYCLABLE ELEMENTS.

Disposable table covers, food packaging (*meals in a box*) and cutlery to minimise perceived risk of infection. **These should be branded and carry information on social care measures** the brand are involved in. The disposables should also be environmentally friendly / recyclable where possible.



06 ADAPTING RESTAURANT OPERATIONS



PRE-BOOKING.

Pre-booked time slots (*perhaps an hour*) booked on-line or through an app to **minimise queuing and maximise trading.**

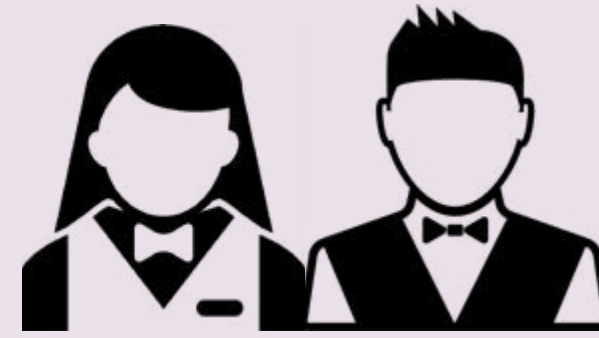


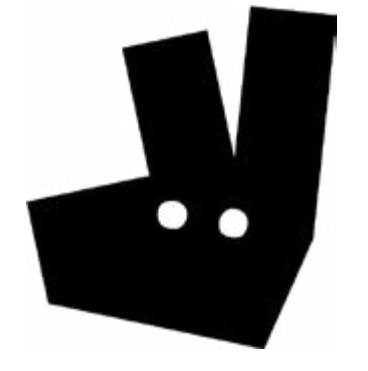
TABLE SERVICE.

Table service **minimises contact with staff** and allows ordering and payment **without the need to queue** (*wasted valuable space for covers or collection*) or order at the counter. Consider placing menus under a transparent acrylic panel that is easily cleaned to avoid customer contact with menu.



ORDER AT TABLE.

Ordering and payment via an app is an option if the brand already has it in place. Time and cost to build a new app may be prohibitive when balanced against the benefits.



ONLINE ORDERS.

A lot of brands already have this in place with a variety of online delivery services. However if you don't now is the time to get them on board to broaden your sales potential.

Is it time that your company considers if a ghost kitchen could maximize sales potential for your brand in high density areas?

07 DESIGN FOR AFFORDABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY

THIS DOESN'T HAVE TO COST A FORTUNE, OR MEAN A TOTAL RESTAURANT RE-DESIGN. THERE ARE LIGHTWEIGHT AND TRANSPORTABLE SOLUTIONS OUT THERE. IT JUST REQUIRES SOME CREATIVE THINKING AND CAN DO ATTITUDES.

SCREENS.

Screening to physically zone the social distancing measures and create cosy, intimate pockets of dining within the space to increase customer feelings of separation and safety. This could be achieved with planters to soften the appearance of the divisions and add some additional natural freshness. Simple hoarding type screens that display graphical customer communications, public service, community support and empathetic brand

LAYOUTS.

There are 2 obvious ways to tackle this:

Option 1 - Removing loose furniture to maintain distances (2m or 6ft depending on the legislation of the specific country or state). This ensures clarity for customers but will make the space feel empty and lacking in atmosphere.

Option 2 - Retain most of the loose furniture in place and find interesting ways to use this redundant furniture whilst still keeping to the distancing rule. This will allow the space to feel more whole and could be an opportunity to show some humour and brand personality.

THINK POP-UP RESTAURANT.

One way we suggest to think about this is if you were setting up a pop-up restaurant in a new temporary location. Obviously you wouldn't have the spend that you would do on a physical store, but you therefore get creative with lightweight, cheap and recyclable materials. Cheap doesn't have to mean tacky, with the right minds and thought processes these temporary solutions can look professional!



08 TACKLING THE HIGH CONTACT AREAS

THE 3 POINT PROCEDURE.

One of the toughest areas to enforce these measures will be in the restroom areas. Usually **tight spaces** that cram in sinks, urinals and hand dryers all designed to be **used by people in quick succession**. This obviously will provide a problem with the current proposed measures and therefore needs to be **carefully managed**. We suggest the following 3 point procedure.

01 REVIEW

Sit down and **look at your restroom layouts**. Define which cubicles and urinals can be used and which are out of use. **Clearly demarcate** the out of use areas. Look at cubical handles, can they be fitted with shields? Can you install **automated** soap dispensers and taps? Appropriate safety and hygiene signage can be added.

02 TRIAL

During phased openings **review how people adhere to these guidelines**. If they aren't being adhered to then **additional measures will need to be enforced**. Such as a member of staff on the restroom entrances controlling numbers in and out.

03 IMPLEMENT

Once all of the measures have been reviewed, tried and tested, implement when the restaurant fully re-opens. This will mean that staff are clear on what the procedures are and how to deal with them. Automated devices can be introduced to doors, where a code allows for ease of access.

THERE ARE GOING TO BE AREAS IN A RESTAURANT ENVIRONMENT THAT ARE GOING TO BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO CONTROL.



IT WILL TAKE BOTH CUSTOMERS AND STAFF TO ENSURE THAT THESE PROCESSES ARE CONTROLLED AND WORK.

09 THE GREAT OUTDOORS / UTILISING EXTERNAL DINING SPACES



PRIOR TO COVID-19 THERE WAS AN EVER INCREASING TREND OF BIOPHILIC DESIGN TO PROMOTE MORE NATURAL AND SERENE ENVIRONMENTS, DON'T EXPECT THIS TO GO AWAY!

External dining areas will become more popular (at least during the warmer months) and be viewed as the safer option. A good lighting scheme and patio heaters will increase the longevity of these areas. **Is there an opportunity to negotiate enlarged external areas with landlords or councils?**

START TALKS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES NOW TO APPLY FOR PERMITS FOR EXTENDED OUTDOOR AREAS

External signage ("we are open" banners) to communicate opening times, services and offers.

CAN SHOPFRONTS OPEN TO FORM SERVING HATCHES FOR PICK-UPS?

Many sites will have openable shopfronts, these can be converted into takeaway and collection areas by retrofitting a temporary low-cost kiosk style service counters which can vend directly to the street.

EXTERNAL SIGNAGE CLEARLY SHOWING ENTRANCE, EXITS AND PICK UP LOCATIONS

REVIEW EXISTING LAYOUTS

SCREEN OFF TABLES WITH PLANTERS

CREATE EXTERNAL KIOSKS

EXTERNAL AREAS ARE AN EXTENSION OF YOUR BRAND

THIS WILL BE A CUSTOMERS FIRST IMPRESSION OF YOUR RESTAURANT

INSTALL EXTERNAL LIGHTING SUCH AS FESTOONS

10 BEING FLEXIBLE TO EVER CHANGING REGULATIONS AND ADVICE

KNOW YOUR FACTS

There is a lot of 'fake' and 'click bait' news out there which is purely for pay per click revenue. So knowing what sources to listen to and which to ignore, will ensure a **smooth and clear** transition.

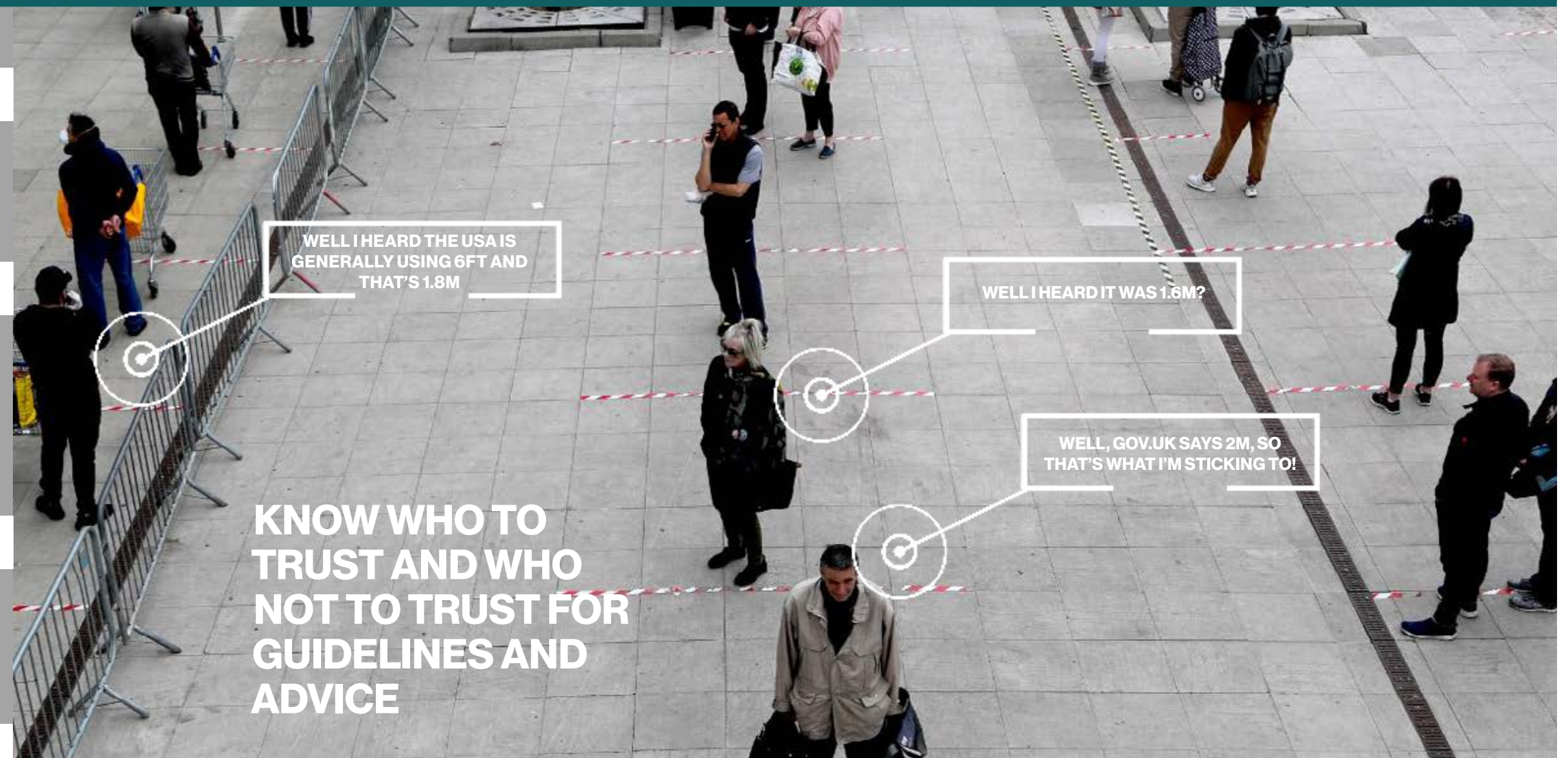
CAN YOU ADAPT?

Guidelines are changing on an almost daily basis, with a lot of us having to fill in the blanks and make assumptions that are geared towards what we think will be acceptable for when restaurants are able to re-open. **So do you have things in place to adapt?**

WHAT TO ADAPT?

If you have temporary screens, can these be **moved or extended** to allow for maximum cover capacity? **Do you have the staff to call on** and off to depending on demand?

Please
keep
2m / 6ft
apart



11 HOW TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

NOW MORE THAN EVER, TECHNOLOGY IS SHOWING HOW IT CAN CONNECT PEOPLE VIRTUALLY IN A WORLD THAT IS PHYSICALLY DISCONNECTED

GHOST RESTAURANTS

Prior to COVID-19 there was a rise in restaurants that **only existed on a virtual basis**. Brands could be quickly created **without the need for a physical restaurant**, just a kitchen that can handle getting food out there to paying customers. The number of “dark” restaurants/kitchens will continue to rise and become an essential flexible business model for many brands.

It’s important to consider how your brand personality can shine through what could otherwise be a sterile, faceless transaction. Consider ways to make a home meal a genuine experience – curate playlists to accompany the food; make more of the design ‘real estate’ you have in this limited exchange – every piece of food packaging – even the bill – is an opportunity to reinforce your brand’s values and keep your voice at the heart of the experience.

ORDER AT TABLE

A handful of brands already offer this as a service such as the Mitchells and Butlers owned Ember Inns and JD Wetherspoons in the UK. By downloading an app and entering card payment details, food, snacks and drinks can be ordered to your table number within minutes. This minimises the need for queuing at a bar. This is the perfect time to get an app to work for your brand.

TECHNOLOGY WAS DESIGNED TO MAKE OUR LIVES EASIER. IN RECENT YEARS IT HAS BEEN CRITICISED AS BEING THE KEY DRIVER FOR THE DOWNFALL OF PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL INTERACTION. THE IRONY NOW IS, THAT IT HOLDS THE KEY TO BEING ABLE TO BRING US TOGETHER AGAIN TO PHYSICALLY INTERACT.

12 HOW WE CAN HELP

A BIT ABOUT US.

Harrison is a specialist, multi-discipline, full service International strategic brand, Architecture & Interior Design consultancy with offices in London, Birmingham, Dallas and Melbourne who work exclusively in the hospitality and leisure sector.

WHAT WE DO.

- Brand Strategy
- Concept Innovation
- Interior Design
- Architecture
- Branding and Identity

CHECK US OUT.

www.harrison.hn

**WE ARE CURRENTLY CREATING
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES & BESPOKE
DESIGN SOLUTIONS TO ACHIEVE
OPTIMUM DINING LAYOUTS AND
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES TO HELP
BRANDS ADAPT TO CV-19.**

**IF YOU'D LIKE US TO SEE WHAT
WE COULD POTENTIALLY DO
FOR YOUR BRAND, THEN
PLEASE EMAIL US AT...**

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