

Calorie labelling: How to get your restaurant ready and stay ahead of the curve

with  vita mojo™

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Introduction

Calorie labelling is coming into force as the government sets its sights on tackling the obesity epidemic. Medium and large-sized operators will now need to display the calorie count for all menu items, by law.

Is your hospitality business ready for calorie-labelling? Are you set to provide enough transparency on your menus? How will you calculate calories and manage your menus?

While the new law has faced criticism over the timing and depth of requirements, overall we see this as a great move for the industry and one that is long overdue. **In fact, we believe that operators large and small who can get ahead of the curve with calorie labelling will set themselves up for success in the future.**

Today's consumers want and demand more transparency from the hospitality brands they buy from. Consumers are actively making purchase decisions based on the businesses that cater to their tastes and nutritional requirements. Brands like McDonald's, LEON and YO! have already recognised this consumer demand for nutrition labelling and acted on it. It's now time for other businesses to step up or risk being left behind.

In this guide, we take a deep dive into calorie labelling and what it means for your business. We'll help you to navigate the new legislation and give you a step-by-step checklist to get your restaurant calorie-labelling ready.

With contributions from experts including Fourth, LEON and Kafoodle, you'll be ready to take your restaurant to the next level of menu transparency.

Foreword

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The more customer appetites change, the more critical it is for operators to keep up with demand and embrace nutrition transparency.

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Nick Popovici, CEO / Founder at Vita Mojo

As an industry, we've always been great at catering to taste. During the pandemic, we also showcased our versatility and resilience by adopting digital ordering and enabling more customers to order delicious food at the click of a button.

Now we're facing a new challenge. Consumers worldwide are expecting more information about the nutritional value, quality and sustainability of their food.

The new legislation may be forcing larger businesses to introduce calorie labelling, but from a consumer perspective the trend towards transparency has been building for years.

Around the world, children are far more likely than ever before to develop food allergies. More and more people are also making dietary choices based on preference and lifestyle. To see this in action you only need to take a look at the huge variety of milk options when ordering your morning coffee. Oat milk, almond milk, dairy milk, the options are endless!

The more customer appetites change, the more important it is for operators to keep up with demand. We all deserve to know what we're eating, the ingredients it's made from and the nutritional breakdown. By not providing nutritional information, operators run the risk of disappointing customers and losing their competitive edge in the process.

This is why we believe providing nutritional information is good for business, regardless of whether you have high or low calorie menu items. Why are we so passionate about this? Because we labelled calories over six years' ago in our own restaurants and we've been helping leading operators do the same thing ever since.

Spotlight on Vita Mojo:

What happened when we labelled calories in our own restaurants?

Understandably, there is concern across the industry that displaying calories might put some customers off enjoying indulgent meals and treats. We actually tested this at Vita Mojo's restaurants when we opened the first totally digital and cashless QSRs in the UK.

We chose to put nutrition at the heart of our concept from day one and we built technology that allowed customers to fully customise their meals based on their preferences. However indulgent, calorie counts were clearly displayed at the point of sale for every item.

We learnt that informing customers didn't reduce demand. In fact, one of our highest calorie dishes - beef short rib with buttery sweet potato mash - sold just as well as our low-calorie menu items. Rather than avoiding the calorific dishes, we heard from customers that knowing calorie amounts upfront helped them to make decisions outside of our restaurant. For example, they might consider a light lunch ahead of a big dinner or a lighter breakfast the day after.

By putting information in our customer's hands, we empowered them to build the right meal and saw loyalty and satisfaction increase as a result.



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Whilst the legislation change applies only for large businesses, smaller companies will too be affected by this as customer awareness is increasing around nutrition and healthy eating. Provision of such information may become an expectation of many.

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Amy Palmer, Operations Director at SureFoot Solutions

**SURE
FOOT**
SOLUTIONS®

Navigating the new legislation



Restaurants, pubs, cafes, supermarkets, takeaway outlets



6th April 2022



250+ employees



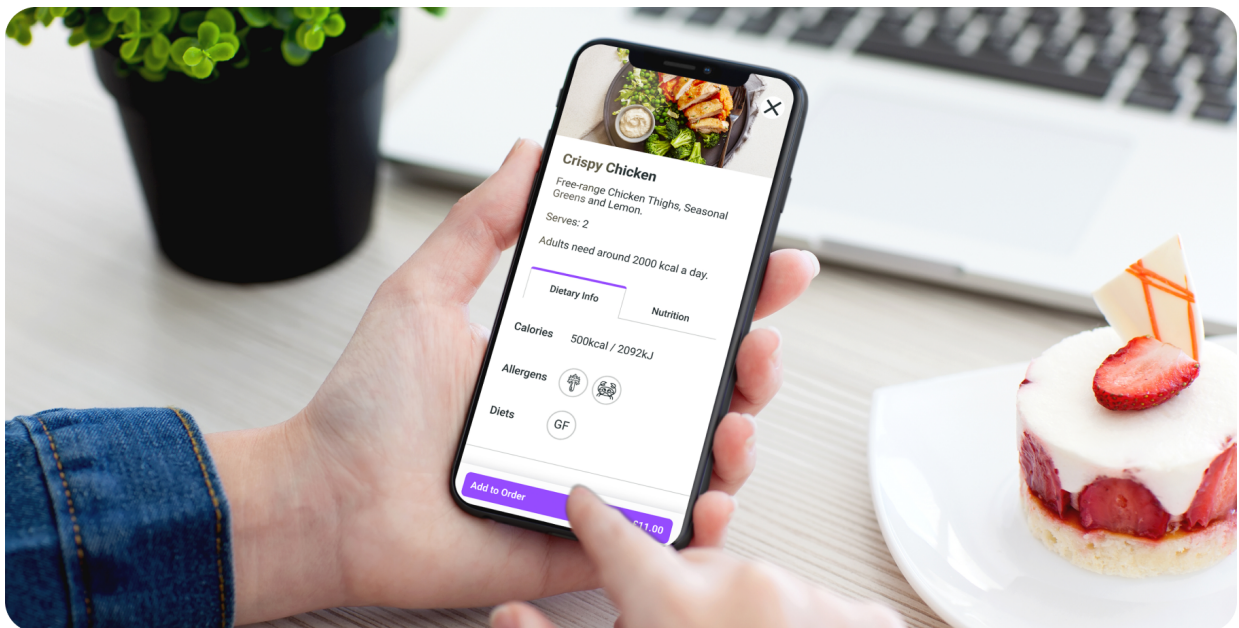
England only



The likelihood is that Calorie Labelling will not be the last of the laws in this area. There is an opportunity for businesses to get ahead of the game by providing more nutritional information than is legally required, if this is what their customers want.



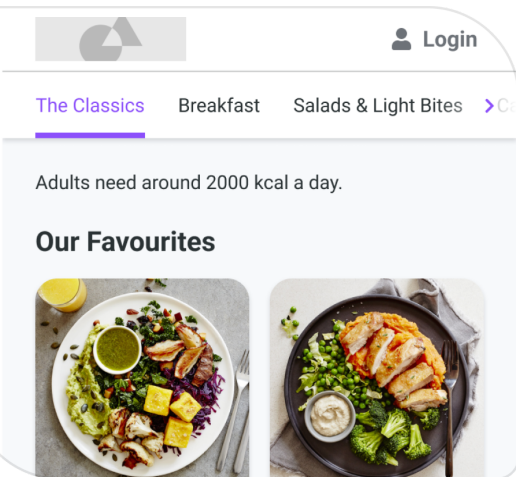
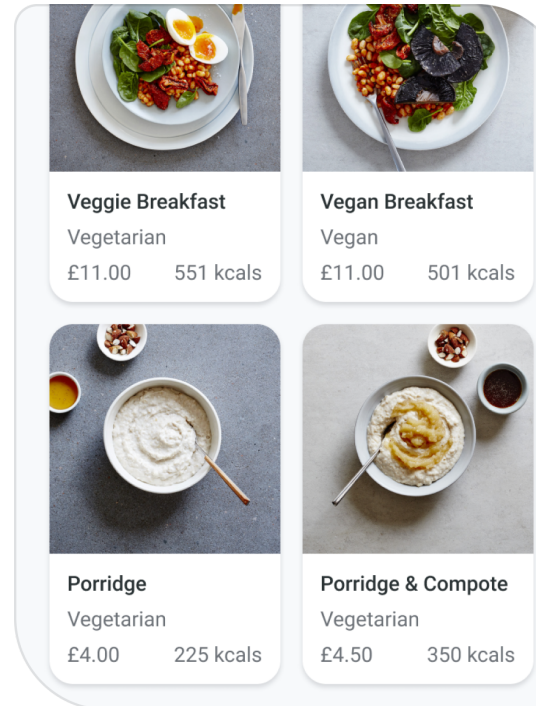
Sebastien Sepierre,
Managing Director – EMEA at Fourth



1 Calorie information must be displayed at 'point of choice'

The government wants consumers to be able to see calorie information at the point of choice. That means calories must be clearly labelled on physical menus, online menus, food delivery platforms and next to the physical item if it's being chosen from a display stand.

- Calorie information must be displayed in kilocalories (kcal)
- Calories must be 'easily visible, clearly legible, and not in any way hidden or obscured'
- The legislation recommends using **the same font or type of lettering, colour, size and background** of the description or price of the food item



2 Menus must include the statement 'adults need around 2000 kcal a day'

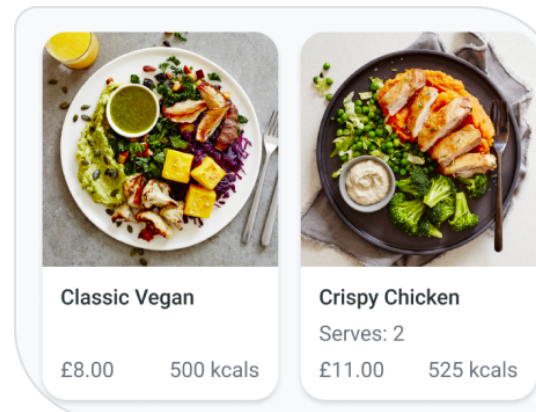
Operators must display this statement 'prominently at the point where people are choosing what to buy' - on a menu screen or web page if it's a digital menu, or on each side of a physical menu.

It doesn't need to be included on children's menus as the calorie needs of children are less.

3 Portion sizes

Do you have any sharing items on your menu? If an item is intended for multiple people i.e. a sharing platter or a whole cake, calorie information must be provided for the whole item as well as information on how many people it is intended to serve.

For example: 16 chicken wings, 1000 kcal, serves 4.



4

Food for immediate consumption

The regulations don't apply to all food and drink.

The new rules are focused on food and drink sold for 'immediate consumption'.

This means food which is intended to be consumed on the premises on which it is sold, or takeaways that don't require any preparation by the customer.

Excluded from the legislation are:

- Prepacked food and drinks
- Condiments given to a customer separately from their food (salt and pepper, coffee syrups added after purchasing, tomato ketchup, mint sauce, mustard, mayonnaise etc.)
- Certain categories of food sold for consumption off the premises such as:
 - Loose fresh fruit
 - Loaf of bread or baguette

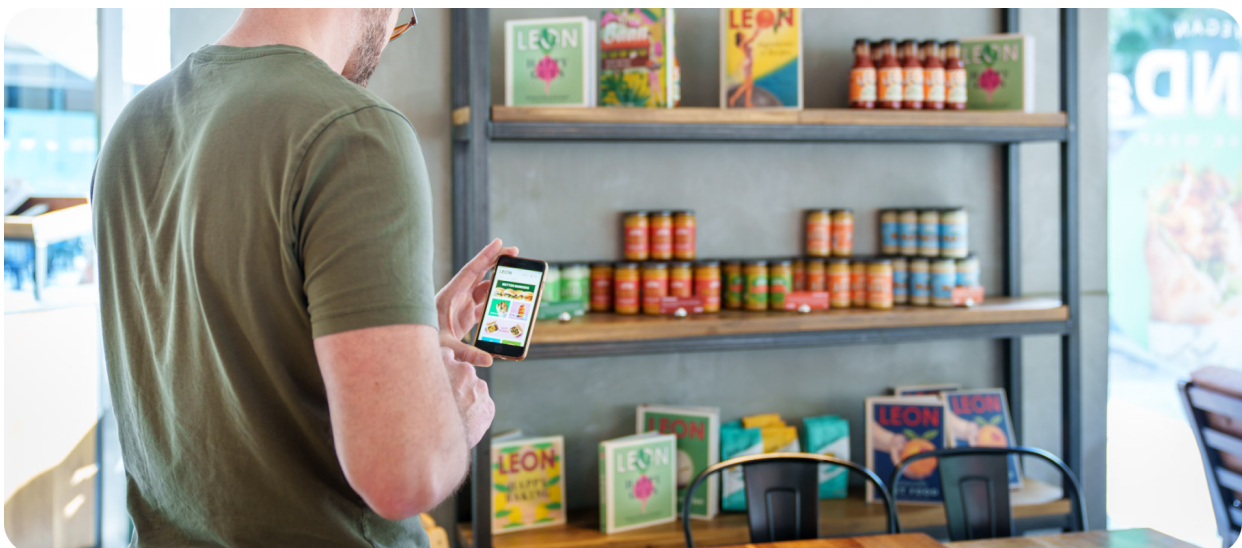
There are also some other exemptions:

- Items that are on the menu for 30 days or less
- Food that is requested by a customer but isn't on the menu. For example, if a customer asks for a different type of milk in a coffee that's not advertised for sale
- Alcoholic drinks with an ABV greater than 1.2%

What happens if operators don't meet the regulations?

Enforcement Officers are set to make inspections where they will check how businesses have calculated calories, whether they are displaying them correctly and whether they're displayed on any online platforms, including third party delivery platforms.

Any person who fails to comply risks a fine of £2,500 as an alternative to criminal prosecution.



How can I get my restaurant calorie labelling ready?

Your step-by-step guide

Many hospitality operators have become more agile during the pandemic, as seen most evidently with the speed of digitisation. The same trait can help operators with nutrition labelling.

Thanks to technological innovation, you can now streamline every aspect of the nutrition transparency process - from automatically calculating calorie amounts for your meals, to managing information on multiple menus in just one click.

Remember: offering your customers nutritional information is great for hospitality operators of any size, not just the largest companies. Any operator can do it - they just need the right tools to help them.





What's your current position on nutrition?

Whenever we help our clients with nutrition labelling, we always start with a deep dive on their current capabilities; what they want to achieve; and how much time they want to invest operationally. Make a start by answering these questions.

Displaying nutrition information

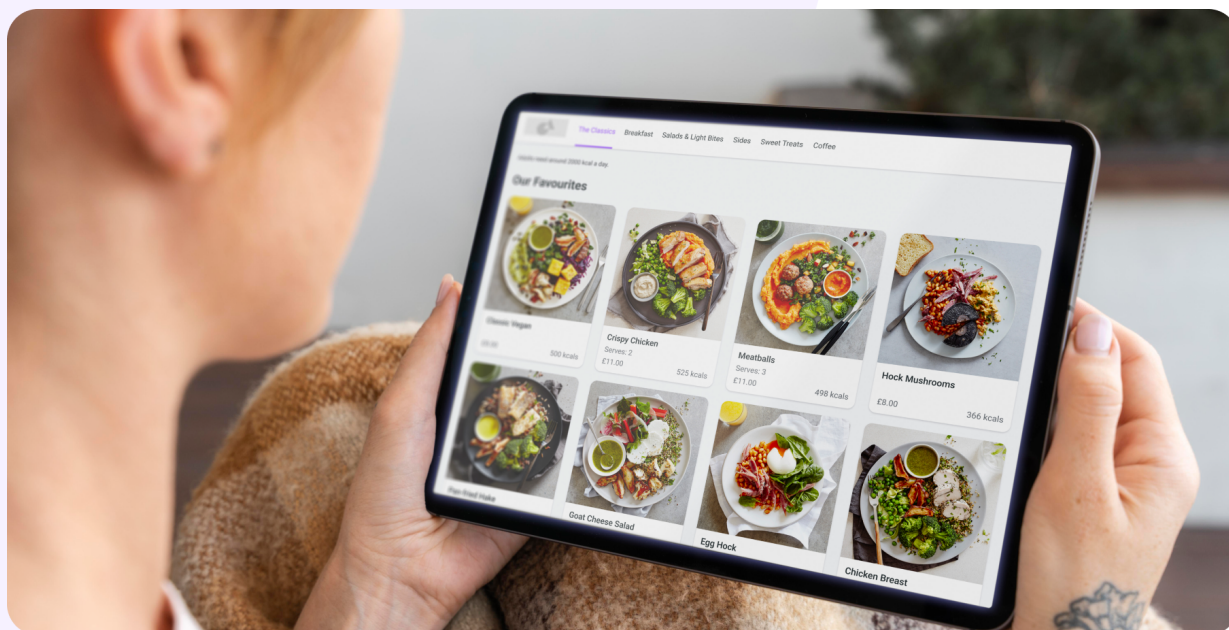
- Where do you display your menu? Do you have physical menu boards, digital ordering menus, menus on third party websites or delivery platforms?
- Who will update nutritional information on menus? Will it be done manually? If so, how much time will they have to dedicate to updating your menus?
- If you have a digital ordering platform, does it support the display of nutritional information - including calories, portion sizes and the 'adults need around 2000kcal a day' statement?
- How would you like your menu to look?
- Do you offer meal deals, customisations or different sizes? For example coffees with different milks, sizes, and syrup flavours, or a choice of meat or veg with a stir fry. If so, have you factored in how you'll display nutrition accurately for these variations?
- What do you want customers to see, think and feel when they look at your menu?

Calculating nutrition

- Who are my suppliers?
- Can I source ingredient information in a digital format?
- Does the supplier dataset provide complete calorific/nutritional information of ingredients?
- Are all my recipes clearly documented?
- Is there a robust process flow to use/update ingredient information in my recipes?
- Do my existing tools enable the use of information in deriving calorific values of recipes?
- Do you have low calorie menu alternatives for calorie-conscious consumers?

By now you should have a much clearer idea of what actions you need to take and what gaps are missing in your operations.

Now we can get to the fun bit: pulling an action plan together!



STEP 2

Create an action plan

As the exercise above might have demonstrated, working out nutritional information and then displaying it in the right way is an ambitious project for any hospitality business.

From calculating calories accurately and managing your menus on different platforms, working out the right operational process for your business is key.

You might be willing to manage the process manually and invest time and resources in making this happen. To overcome the challenge of under-resourcing, we suggest engaging with industry experts who have experience in rolling out such changes for businesses of all sizes.

Another option is choosing the right technology to let you streamline and speed up the process. Companies that leverage experts and technology in this space find the transition far more seamless.

Choose the right tech partners

With so many tech providers on offer, how can you choose the one that's best for you? There are some basic principles that you can apply across the board when choosing a digital ordering partner.

Look for powerful nutrition features

To comply with the legislation, you need to be able to display calories and the statement 'adults need around 2000kcal a day' at the point of choice.

This is simple for some items, but most menus have more complex options:

- Meal deals where you need to display calories for each item
- Coffee with different milk or size options e.g. large oat milk flat white
- Meals where you can make customisations or add extras e.g. 'build your own salad' where you have a base protein option and optional extras like avocado or chicken

Look for technology that can update your customers dynamically through the customer journey - without having to invest huge time and effort to accurately display calories.

Think beyond compliance

It might sound counterintuitive in this situation, but we urge operators to think beyond just complying with the legislation. **How** and **where** you display calories has a significant impact on your customer journey. Display nutrition in a way that complements the presentation of your menu.

Maybe your customers want to be informed, but they don't want calories to dominate the ordering experience. Or perhaps your customers are hungry for nutritional information and want it front and centre. A tech platform with flexible UX will enable you to create the perfect customer journey.

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Operators will need to think carefully not just about being compliant, but also about showcasing their products in the best light. A clever implementation of how calories are displayed can make the difference between an outstanding customer experience and a distinctly average one.

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Rob Pendray, Head of Product at Vita Mojo

Manage multiple menus in one click

Clever menu management will reduce the operational burden of displaying accurate nutrition across multiple menus. Look for a provider that can manage nutrition in a central place and then 'push' this information to your different menus.

Vita Mojo

The most advanced nutrition tool available



When it comes to displaying nutritional information, not all digital ordering platforms are created equal. When we ran our own restaurants, calorie labelling was part of our offering and now as a technology company, we serve our restaurant clients with a breadth of knowledge and the tools needed to do the same.

We've already helped restaurants like Nando's, YO! and LEON to roll-out nutrition labelling across their restaurant network.



Manage your menus effortlessly

Save time and reduce errors by managing multiple menus in one place. Add nutritional information once in Vita Mojo for instant updates across Click & Collect, Kiosks, Mobile Order & Pay and Delivery. Push menu updates to Deliveroo, Just Eat and Uber Eats with our native integrations.



Show off your brand at its best

You don't want to add calories in a way that downgrades your menu or experience. And your customers won't like it either. With our award-winning UI you can satisfy the new regulations while showcasing your menu beautifully.



More than just nutrition

As former operators, we know that menu management is just one aspect of your operations. We can help you create a digital ordering experience that not only helps you stay one step ahead of nutrition transparency. Attract new customers, increase orders and watch your ATV increase by up to 30%.

How LEON put nutrition at the heart of their digital ordering experience

LEON is one of the UK's most innovative restaurant chains and it has revolutionised the face of fast food since its launch in 2004. It now has over 70 restaurants globally, with exciting plans to grow rapidly in 2022.

We started working together in January 2020 when LEON trialled Kiosks, Click & Collect and Mobile Order & Pay. When COVID-19 hit, they quickly adapted to the 'new normal' and accelerated the roll-out of digital ordering across their estate.

LEON's mission is to make it easier for everybody to eat well and live well, so showcasing nutritional information has been important to them from the outset of our partnership.

We helped them to create a digital ordering experience that seamlessly displays nutritional information as well as being fully customised to their brand. By using our advanced nutrition tools, they added allergens, calories and dietary tags to every menu item without detracting from the vibrancy and freshness of their food.



LEON x Vita Mojo: Key results so far

233%

increase in C&C customers after implementing Loyalty & Subscriptions

15%

increase in ATV on Kiosks versus EPOS

95%

of in-store orders through the kiosk

95%

of all orders are placed digitally



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Our commitment to making food that tastes good and does you good has been at the heart of our brand since we launched in 2004. One of the main reasons we chose to partner with Vita Mojo was the sophistication of its nutrition features. We wanted the ordering experience to be fully-customised to our brand and for it to be easy for us to show information like allergens and calories. Vita Mojo’s powerful digital ordering platform means we are in a great position to satisfy the upcoming government legislation.

Giving our customers full transparency about our menu is incredibly important to us and we are always looking for ways to keep one step ahead. In the future, we see calorie and allergen labelling being just as important as being transparent about the environmental impact of our menu.”



Hugo Engel, Head of Digital at LEON

LEON

STEP 3

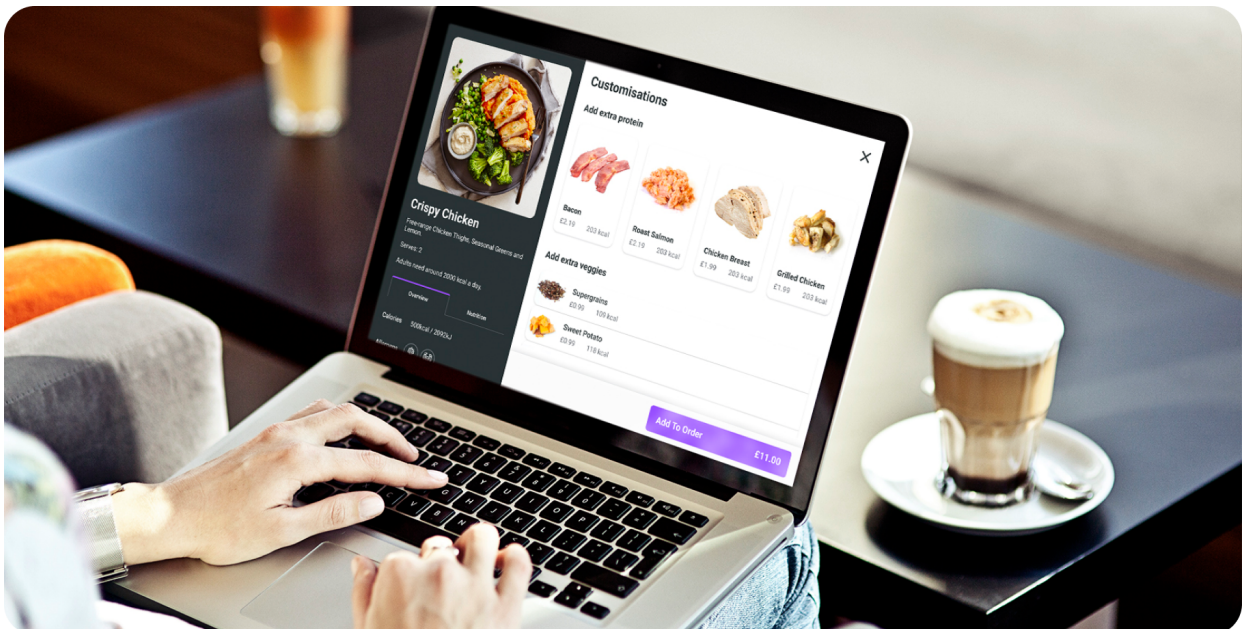
Calculating Calories

According to the Department for Health and Social Care, the information provided to customers should be based on one of the following:

- The manufacturer's analysis of the food
- A calculation from the known or average values of the ingredients used
- A calculation from generally established and accepted data

The regulations allow for a combination of the above methods across a menu, along with an accuracy margin of plus or minus 20%

If your business has never calculated calories before, it can be a daunting task. Thankfully, calorie calculation doesn't need to be costly and cumbersome. Using a nutrition system or calorie labelling partner can break the entire roll-out into manageable chunks and set you up for an efficient process for future menu updates.



How to approach calorie labelling: Q&A with Kafoodle

Using ingredient data from all the major national suppliers, **Kafoodle's smart software calculates the nutritional values for every recipe created to ensure your dishes always have up to date calorie information.** We caught up with Kafoodle's Operations Director, Sarah Dovey, to get her take.



What advice would you give to hospitality operators?

The timing isn't good for hospitality businesses just as business is strengthening, so try to make the process as easy as you can. Do you have components that are in many dishes? Calculate these first, and then it's much more straightforward to build up your recipes without duplicating the work. Speak to industry colleagues who are already publishing calories on their menus. Learn from them: they will be eager to share their experiences.

How can software help?

Streamlining the process with software really does make the job easier and can support other processes within your business e.g. Natasha's Law allergen labelling, Digital and Interactive menus, recipe costings. Ensure your software can do it all so you are not duplicating effort and cost. (I'm biased but Kafoodle's a good one!) Make life easier for yourself and think about how you're displaying your items in the right way.

Should smaller businesses be thinking about complying too?

If you don't legally have to comply now, do still think about it. As the bigger brands display this information your customers will come to expect it wherever they are eating.

What's your advice for operators who tend to have higher calorie menu items?

People like to go out for indulgent meals and I don't think this legislation is going to change that. But you still want to make sure you're appealing to customers who want to eat out without going overboard on calories. Once you have done your recipe calculations, review your menu to ensure you have some 500-600 calorie dishes to promote for "school night" dining out and takeaways.

We've had Natasha's Law and now calorie labelling. What's coming next?

With so much focus now on food sustainability, customers are becoming more interested in knowing what the carbon impact of their food is. At Kafoodle, we are piloting carbon recipe calculations with some of our clients and will launch the product in the spring.

Combining Vita Mojo with Fourth's Recipe & Menu Engineering solution



Wave goodbye to complex menu management

While using Vita Mojo is the most efficient way to update information across customer-facing menus and channels, the Fourth Recipe & Menu Engineering tool is a best-in-class solution to calculate and manage all nutritional content within your dishes.

Combining the two is a sure-fire way to ensure your business is compliant and that it's displaying the most accurate and up-to-date information to customers.

Fourth's highly developed solution can help you adhere to the new regulations by capturing energy content in calories per 100g, as well as a wide range of other nutritional data points, all 14 FIR allergens and any number of intolerances, for all of the ingredients you purchase.

This information is taken either directly from suppliers and manufacturers or from verified external sources.

By combining the two solutions, operators can easily plot and calculate key ingredient-based information related to their recipes and menus in the Fourth tool. When Fourth is connected to Vita Mojo's publishing tool, this updates all customer-facing digital menus and third-party delivery apps.

The information is updated seamlessly in real-time, making it as easy as possible for operators to ensure they're compliant to all menu-based regulations, including the new calorie labelling regulations.

STEP 4

A roadmap for lasting success

We've rounded up a couple of final thoughts to keep in mind for the future.

If the last few years are anything to go by, it's likely more regulatory changes might be introduced across the industry. Giving your customers the information they crave is a great way to nurture repeat, loyal customers who are more likely to repurchase and share their experience with others.

Changing consumer preferences: look ahead to the next big trends

Calorie and diet preferences are just one part of the puzzle when it comes to food transparency. Many customers are keen to get a better understanding of the environmental impact of our food choices: could eco-labels such as a product's greenhouse gas emissions, water use or origin start to appear on menus in the near future? Vita Mojo already has technology solutions in place to support environment labelling.

Proactively engage with your customers

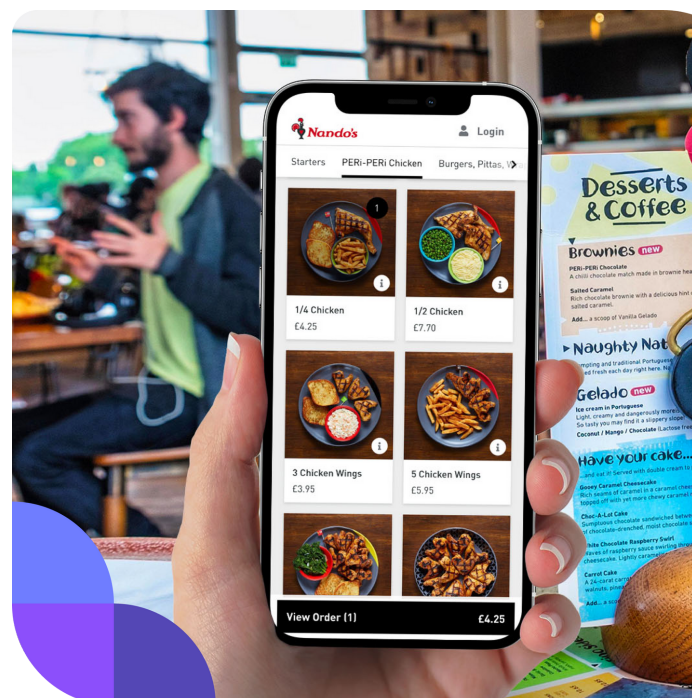
Earlier in the guide we encouraged you to think about your customers and what information you think they'd like from you. To know what your customers really think and feel about nutrition, you've just got to ask.

Customer feedback surveys are a fantastic way to get insights and keep one step ahead.

“
The speed of delivery wouldn't have been possible without an agile approach and close collaboration with Vita Mojo throughout. We launched Order at Table quickly and tested and iterated to refine the experience at an incredible speed.”

Reg Meyer

Head of Technology Solutions at Nando's



Thank you for reading!

We hope that the tips and stories in this guide will help you as you embark on your nutrition labelling journey.

Want to know more?



Book a 1:1 with Vita Mojo to find out how we can help

Together we will work through next steps on how to adapt your business to the new calorie labelling legislation.



Digital Transformation Report

We spoke to 100+ operators across 4000+ sites including restaurants, bars, and cafes to explore digitalisation within the hospitality industry. How can technology help our businesses thrive in the long run?



Fourth Calorie Labelling Guide

Fourth's guide to making the new requirements work for your business is a great way to deepen your knowledge of nutrition labelling.



Kafoodle Calorie Labelling Webinar

In this informative video, Kafoodle is joined by Food Safety expert Audrey Deane (Safer Food Scores) and Business Analyst Jay Bammeke (Metropolitan Pub Company) to discuss the upcoming legislation and how businesses can prepare for it.