



Warwick Online

**Some people see things as they are and say 'why?'
...but The University of Warwick, with technology partners
MCR and VMC, dreamed things that never were and said 'why not?'**



Card-holders can count on a minimum 10% discount in all cafés, bars and restaurants.

Information is meat and drink to all university catering departments. Without the low-down on what is selling, where, and to whom, the challenge of delivering targeted offers can be more 'miss' than 'hit'. At the University of Warwick, the stakes are high. The award winning campus, at over 700 acres, is home to

over 17,000 students and staff. The social facilities on site are impressively modern and unmistakably retail and include a Costa outlet. It's cost a fortune to create and the investment has been made so that there is no impediment to Warwick achieving 'World Top 50' status.



The major innovation of the 'Eating at Warwick' cashless scheme is that students can manage their cashless account online.



Simon Oke

Following its nomination as a TUCO approved supplier MCR Systems implemented its Metro Symphony solution. Metro Symphony offers complete web enabled central EPoS management and real-time reporting software that allows customers to implement tighter controls and ease administrative tasks. Its availability as an internet-based service, via a web browser, makes it quicker, easier and cheaper to deploy than traditional software. Metro Symphony provides complete control over all aspects of the maintenance and management of an EPOS & Cashless Payment systems estate, built on Microsoft Server architecture, ensuring that Symphony has a solid foundation that inherently provides scalability, resilience, security and simplified administrative operations.

The major innovation of the 'Eating at Warwick' cashless scheme is the fact that it can be topped-up online and is available to use in all of the University's commercial areas including the Retail areas, shops as well as the Students Union. Anxious parents in Birmingham or Brunei, Coventry or Cambodia – there are 125 nationalities represented here - can make payments into the system and funds are available for use on campus around three minutes after the

transaction is completed. Compare that with bank transfer times... And parents have the comfort of knowing that their regular contributions – or their responses to the inevitable cries of 'help!' – are ring-fenced for food, groceries and other sustenance, and can't be used for a night out on the town. Card-holders, to boot, can count on a minimum 10% discount in all cafés, bars and restaurants.

The University of Warwick's Simon Oke picks out one example of this: 'Transactions costs', he says. 'With our previous system, we were locked into a banking deal that cost us 30p each time a card was used. Now, because 'Eating at Warwick' integrates with our administrative database, through which funds such as tuition fees flow, we've been able to negotiate a much better deal that has decimated our transaction costs, and that's had a significant bearing on our margins.'



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