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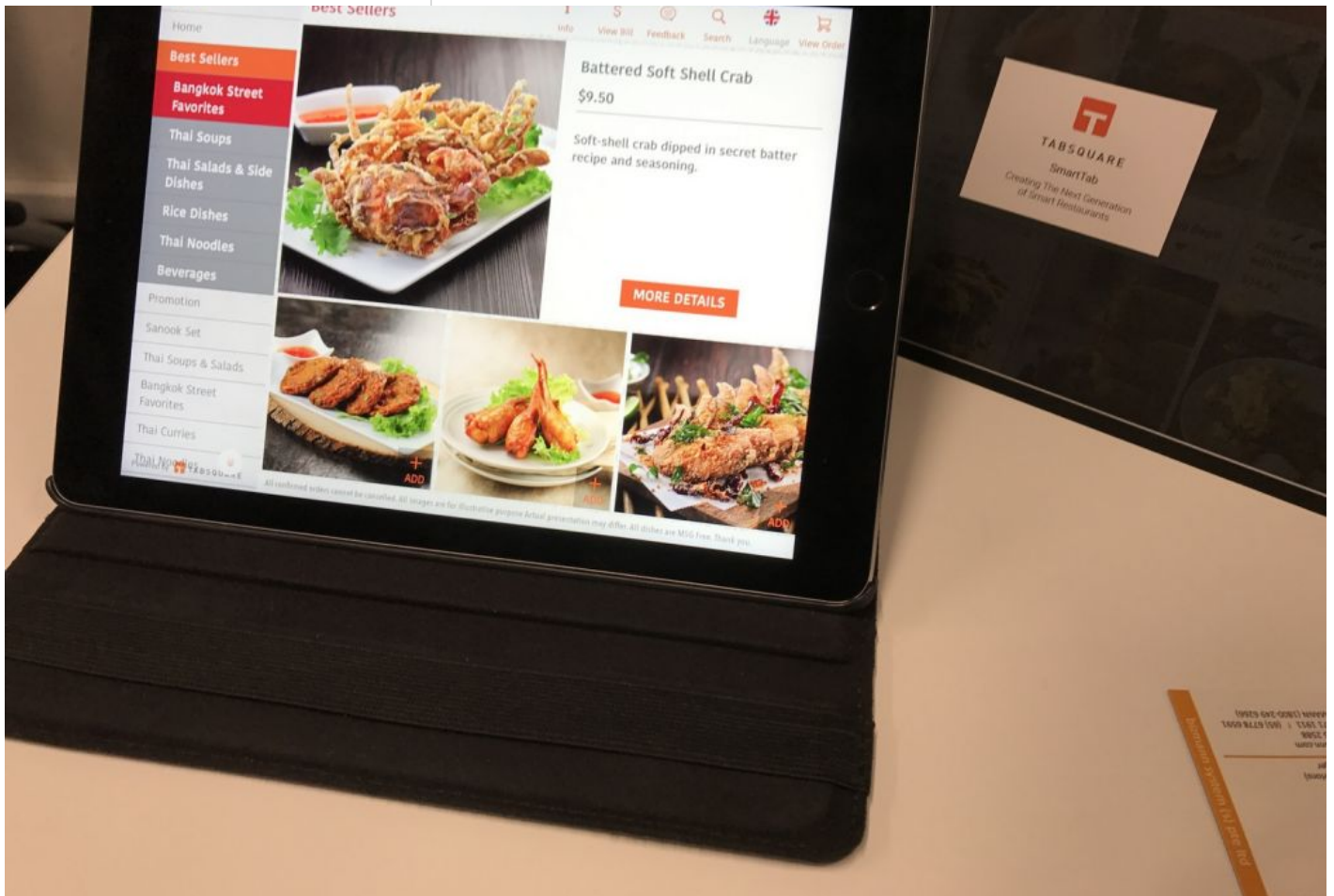


Tech start-ups share solutions to solve food industry's problems

By ANGELA TENG

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Start-up TabSquare tracks customers' food selection and browsing activity to help restaurants increase sales and reduce manpower costs. Photo: Angela Teng/TODAY

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SINGAPORE — Selling affordable hawker food to office workers in business parks through smart self-collection kiosks is what one tech start-up is doing to help the hawkers capture a wider market and increase profit.

Meanwhile, another tech start-up uses data analytics to track restaurant customers' browsing-and-ordering patterns to derive the best placement and pricing of items on the food menu to generate more revenue.

These examples were shared yesterday at the FoodTech Solutions Session, organised by the Action Community for Entrepreneurship at JTC LaunchPad@one-north.

About 100 people attended the session that focused on the challenges faced by the food and beverage industry, mainly the rising cost of operations and labour shortages.

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Mr Khoo Kar Kiat is the founder of Fastbee.sg, a meal delivery service that brings delicious hawker food to the office worker.

The business consolidates orders in the morning, sends the orders to the hawkers, picks them up and then delivers the food to dedicated self-collection smart dispensers.

Restaurant management platform provider TabSquare's director Chirag Tejuja created its data analytics solutions business because he saw the potential for technology to change the food industry landscape.

His team of data scientists and consultants help break down data mined from order tablets in restaurants, and use this to create strategies to drive business in the restaurants.

Today, the biggest challenge in the F&B industry is manpower, and with the constant turnover of staff, the system gives restaurant owners more control over their business, Mr Tejuja said.

Last year, the food services sector industry transformation map (ITM) was the first of the 23 roadmaps announced under the multi-billion dollar programme to drive Singapore's longer-term economic progress.

In the food services ITM, a key strategy is to introduce innovative business formats and technology, such as ready-to-eat or ready-to-heat meals and food-vending machines.

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