**Summary of Customer Comments for The Food Corridor**

The following is the summary of 7 of 10 customer interviews by the three RVC lead investors of The Food Corridor (TFC). These interviews were held by phone, and by email responses to 8 questions. The lead investors summarized pages of narrative to these points. The complete commentary of these customer interviews is available on pages 2-5 in this document and in The Food Corridor due diligence data room, maintained by RVC.

***Major topics:***

**Product**

* Scheduling – Glowing comments from customers who all liked the scheduling feature of TFC. It saves them significant time over a manual system, and somewhat less time over an off the shelf scheduling software.
* Billing - Some good comments, but some say it is clumsy, and has some errors, not easily integrated to Quick books. Not flexible enough for some large kitchens with multi tiers of customers. Would like to have billing integrated into Quickbooks, or Salesforce systems. Outside of these limitations the billing feature is helpful to a large percent of the customers. One large kitchen would pay $300 / month for TFC product without the billing feature if it could be separated.
* Messaging – need to split the messaging between operational messages and billing messages
* Some customers would like to see other features in the product.

**Services**

* Excellent training and education makes product easy to learn and use. The training module could use more work.
* Glowing comments on Dan’s prompt and efficient technical support. It is top notch and much appreciated. Lead investors ask if this level of support can be maintained with scaling.

**Other comments**

* Personal association with Ashley brought many customers into TFC. Others were recruited with the TFC Social media contacts.
* Value to customers as quantified by customers :

Over manual system – approx. 16 hours per week

Over other off the shelf software tools approx. 4 hours per week

Overall mission to focus on small producers/ food makers versus shared kitchens is a problem for larger kitchens. Some customer concern about the size of the market for shared kitchens, since shared kitchens are few in number currently.

Users who have been using manual systems see big improvements, and value, but more technically savvy customers who moved from off the shelf tools expect more, and see somewhat less value. Almost all customers see value greater than the current pricing TFC charges, which allows room for revenue increases.

**The Food Corridor Customer Interviews**

*# 1: Tara Novak, Founder at* [*Foundation Kitchen*](https://foundationkitchen.com/)

* How long have you been a client of TFC? - **We first spoke with TFC in early December 2016, and starting working with the program (preparing our clients for the transition in banking and calendars, setting up our profile, etc) in January 2017. We went live with TFC April 1, 2017.**
* How did you find out about TFC? - **We have been running shared kitchens since August 2013, and the industry is very small… you pretty much know what everyone else is doing.**

**We looked at a competitor of TFC when we were still managing a previous kitchen (before opening our business, Foundation Kitchen), and at the time decided to continue to manage our own calendars and billing.**

**Ashley contacted us in December last year - she had been visiting shared kitchens in the New England area, and she must have heard about us from her other contacts here. At that point, we had heard TFC mentioned by other kitchen managers, but we weren’t actively looking for a program such as this.**

* Did you evaluate any other products? - **Yes, we looked at Book Here Cook Here and at using a combination of our own calendars and Quickbooks.**
* **What were the reasons you selected TFC? - Two of the biggest issues that shared kitchens face are collecting payments (you are dealing with lots of small business owners, many struggling with cash flow) and correctly tracking/billing clients for time used.**

**To help address the payment issues, I was about to switch all of our client’s invoicing to Quickbooks when Ashley contacted us.**

**Since TFC integrated the calendars and billing and had the option of automatic ACH payments from kitchen members, I figured it was worth trying the program to see if it worked for us.**

**Book Here Cook Here didn’t have payment processing, so we didn’t even consider it.**

* How has your experience been?
	+ Education and training on the product and service? - **Their education is great, and Ashley and Dan have both been helpful whenever we have had questions. If I may constructively criticize their education/training information, it tends to be a bit long-winded and difficult to follow. It all needs to be stream-lined down to bullet points or numbered steps.**
	+ On-Boarding process- How long did it take and how easy was it? - **We took 3-4 months to on-board, but that was our choice.  We had a transition going on with some members at the time, and wanted to wait until that had settled to fully move to TFC.**

**There were plenty of bumps on the on-boarding process (problems with calendar views, messaging, billing, etc), but the on-boarding itself was not difficult.**

* + Continual support? - **Ashley and Dan are always responsive and respectful. Ciaran (Tara’s partner) and I have sent them long lists of requests for improvements in the product, and some have been integrated.  Others seem to have been requested only by us, so they haven’t happened yet… But it is evident that they care about our experience and are always attentive and helpful.**
	+ Any problems you have had with TFC? - **The billing is quite clumsy.  I need it all to be faster and easier.  Having worked with various accounting software and online billing/accounting programs, I can say that TFC is not a replacement for any of these.  The billing issues within how TFC is coded/written have led to some mistakes and misunderstandings with our own clients - each incident has been resolved, but I would prefer that they hadn’t happened in the first place.**
* How has TFC helped your kitchen business? Can you say the dollar value (positive or negative) of TFC to your kitchen operations? - **TFC has definitely tightened our accounts receivable, and eliminated time spent adding client hours (and debating with clients over hours used). I don’t think there has been a definitive dollar value added - more a clarity on our side of our business.  This is somewhat an intangible, but very positive.**
* What else could TFC do to help your business - **I know Ciaran has some issues with how the calendars operate, and I have my list of issues with billing. The messaging also drives me crazy (they can’t be split between operation and billing, so if I want to receive messages at all, I have to receive everything.)**

**The final thing with how TFC could help is something more to do with their own mission - I feel somewhat that they have been trying to build a nice front-end for the small producers/food makers that use TFC.  However, the real clients of TFC are the shared kitchens.  We are the ones that pay them a monthly fee and a percentage on our billing.  Less time seems to have been spent on our admin end, which seems backwards to me. (Without the shared kitchens, TFC has no clients at all.)**

*#2: Natalie Leffler – Food Hub manager at Greeley School District*

* How long have you been a client of TFC? – **October, 2016**
* How did you find out about TFC? – **A personal friend introduced her to Ashley**
* Did you evaluate any other products? – **Yes but they weren’t as complete in all functions to manage a kitchen as TFC**
* What were the reasons you selected TFC? **– Personal connections with Ashley and the completeness of the product and a desire to get another revenue stream for the District**
* How has your experience been?
	+ Education and training on the product and service- **Excellent training and education makes product easy to learn and use**
	+ On-Boarding process- How long did it take and how easy was it? - **Since I was not a technical person I was most worried about this, but it was painless- very good**
	+ Continual support? - **Get back quickly on any issues**
	+ Any problems you have had with TFC? - **None**
* How has TFC helped your kitchen business- dollar value of TFC to your kitchen? - **Hard to quantify, but could not possibly take on renters and manage the school food programs with TFC**
* What else could TFC do to help your business? - **They are doing everything we need now but there are 35-50 school districts that want to get more revenue and TFC could help them achieve that through a rental program for the open times on their kitchens.**

*#3: Joi Chevalier, Founder & CEO of The Cook’s Nook*

* How long have you been a client of TFC? - **March, 2017**
* How did you find out about TFC? - **Met Ashley last year at a Food event and then Ashley reached out to her concerning being a customer on TFC.**
* Did you evaluate any other products?- **Looked at one other and found TFC far more finished and liked her business road-map.**
* What were the reasons you selected TFC? -**There were many, but I really liked the design of the user experience (UX), based on my IT experience examined in detail how the software worked and the fact they could accommodate a membership model, since I am a n incubator kitchen.**
* How has your experience been?
	+ Education and training on the product and service -**Needs a little bit of work. Had a challenge at the beginning Videos and documentation needs improvement**
	+ On-Boarding process- How long did it take and how easy was it? - **All and All went very well**
	+ Continual support? - **TFC is very responsive to her messages and concerns**
	+ Any problems you have had with TFC? -**Not really**
* How has TFC helped your kitchen business- dollar value of TFC to your kitchen? -**Still assessing that. It has certainly made the rental process easier to manage, but I still 15 hours a month on reconciliations and invoicing**
* What else could TFC do to help your business? -**Add more self-service capabilies by the clients so they can sign-in and out through an app and request food storage**

*#4: Blake Kutner, Culinary Manager at La Cocina SF*

La Cocina SF passed on being a customer of The Food Corridor, but was willing to share their reason why. See below:

**Our reason for choosing not to use the Food Corridor is fairly particular to our unique business.   We run a non-profit here in San Francisco that helps lower barriers to entry for low-income, female food entrepreneurs.  So, our commercial kitchen space is subsidized in order to be affordable to our users.  Therefore, we often have businesses that cannot afford to pay their kitchen bill on time (especially as they first start their businesses) and end up offering credit to these businesses as they start to build cash flow.  We also have many users who pay in cash, personal check or sometimes even cashier’s check.**

**Additionally, we have a very complicated billing system where businesses pay less as they use more time in the kitchen as we try to encourage businesses to maximize their kitchen utilization as they would when they paid rent on their own space.  That in conjunction with different spaces at different rents and different users under different pricing structures according to how long they have been in the program (their programatic stage) added up to too many variables for the current Food Corridor set-up.  Basically, over the 11 years that we have operated this non-profit, our kitchen billing has become so customized, that we were not able to work within the parameters that the Food Corridor offered and not ready to change our billing structure.**

**The final issue for us is that we utilize Salesforce for all of our client data and we really need a kitchen billing system that can import directly into Salesforce.**

**I really was impressed with what they offered at the Food Corridor and if our billing was a little less complex, I think it could be a great system.  I have recommended it to other commissary kitchen owners in the past.**