ShoreServe

Deep Innovation Report

Executive Summary

ShoreServe is a digital hospitality platform that connects beachfront businesses with beachgoers, allowing visitors to order food and drinks directly to their location on the sand. By integrating precise location mapping with local kitchens, the platform aims to enhance the seaside experience for visitors while helping local businesses manage peak seasonal demand efficiently.

The Better Everyday

What if ordering a cold drink on a hot afternoon did not require leaving your spot on the sand or losing sight of your family?

- ShoreServe is a digital operating platform designed specifically for beachfront bars, kiosks and restaurants, enabling guests to scan a location-specific QR code on their lounger or table to order food and drink directly to their seaside spot. The platform integrates real-time sand-safe mapping with the venue's existing point-of-sale system, coordinating service across sandy terrain and simplifying peak-season beach logistics.
- Imagine a warm July afternoon on the beach near Boscombe Pier where a parent watching two young children can order fresh fruit and cold drinks directly to their rented windbreak without packing up their towels or leaving the water's edge. A runner at Poole Quay can tap their phone on a smart bench to summon a recovery smoothie from a nearby independent cafe, receiving it within minutes without navigating a busy indoor queue. This seamless integration of coastline and kitchen removes the friction of beachside leisure, letting people stay present in the moment.
- The project addresses the deep human need for safety, comfort and relaxation during leisure time, which is currently frustrated by the logistical headache of leaving belongings unattended or dragging tired children into crowded beachside kiosks. Today's workaround involves carrying heavy coolers, queuing in hot beach shops, or abandoning prime spots on the sand, all of which diminish the pleasure of a coastal visit. These manual systems fail during peak periods, causing long delays, order errors, and stressed hospitality staff.
- By proving that high-quality service can extend reliably onto the sand, ShoreServe will raise the local expectation for how public spaces and commercial hospitality can interact. This new standard of seamless service could quickly travel to other outdoor amenities, such as ordering hot drinks to park benches in municipal gardens or summoning bike repair kits along regional cycle paths. It shifts the perception of BCP's seafront from a chaotic summer rush to a managed, premium, and highly accessible coastal experience.

Who It Could Matter To

A smarter shoreline changes how visitors, families and local businesses navigate the seasonal peak, making the beach feel less like a logistical challenge and more like a shared resource.

The Solo Parent

- A local resident visiting the beach with young children during the busy summer holidays, constantly balancing safety with basic comfort.
- When the children are playing happily in the sand but desperately need hydration, and leaving the spot means packing up the entire camp.
- They can order cold water and fresh fruit directly to their beach blanket, maintaining constant supervision of their children without physical exhaustion.

The Independent Beachfront Cafe Owner

- A small business owner running a popular kiosk near Southbourne who struggles with massive queues and lost revenue during sudden hot weekends.
- When the queue stretches out onto the promenade, discouraging potential customers and overwhelming the two staff members on shift.
- They can distribute order volume across the beach footprint, preparing items in a managed queue while staff deliver them systematically using digital sand-mapping.

The Mobility-Impaired Visitor

- A resident who loves the sea air but finds walking across deep, soft sand or standing in long, cramped kiosk lines physically painful.
- When wanting to enjoy a hot coffee near the shoreline but facing the physical barrier of a steep, sandy incline to the nearest promenade cafe.
- They can settle into an accessible promenade seating area and have their order delivered directly to them, removing physical barriers to coastal enjoyment.

What This Could Change for BCP

Integrating digital service with the physical coastline helps bridge the seasonal divide, turning the summer rush into a highly efficient, year-round economic engine.

- This platform leverages the established digital, creative and tech sector in BCP, directly aligning with the council's ambition for inclusive, sustainable regeneration that supports year-round economic growth. By partnering with local tech developers via the Silicon South network, the platform can be tailored to the unique geography of the area's three towns rather than relying on generic, off-the-shelf ordering apps.
- The direct effect is a boost in average transaction values for beachfront hospitality businesses, as customers order more frequently when they do not have to wait in physical lines. Staff spend less time managing chaotic queues and more time preparing high-quality food, improving job satisfaction and creating more stable, structured roles in the visitor economy.
- A possible ripple effect is the reduction of litter along the promenade, as the platform can incentivize customers to return reusable cups and packaging by offering digital credits on their next order. This digital connection could eventually link beachfront businesses with inland retailers, offering visitors discounts at town centre shops to encourage exploration beyond the sand.
- The trade-off involves balancing commercial activity with the preservation of natural, quiet spaces, as some residents may fear the commercialisation of peaceful stretches of coastline. Decision-makers must designate specific active zones for delivery while keeping other areas entirely digital-free to protect both tranquil spots and coastal wildlife from increased foot traffic.

Who Must Connect

Unlocking the coastline's digital potential requires a partnership that matches technical agility with a deep respect for public spaces.

- An independent beachfront operator, such as a prominent cafe near Boscombe, would lead the system, relying on a local digital agency from the Silicon South network to build the rugged, sand-mapped ordering interface. The agency brings technical expertise in real-time location mapping, while the operator provides the kitchen capacity and local hospitality knowledge needed to test the service.
- Local residents, regular beachgoers and access advocacy groups would help design the interface and delivery pathways, ensuring the service does not block public thoroughfares or access ramps. Their early feedback will shape the delivery zones, ensuring that walkers and sunbathers can coexist peacefully alongside the delivery staff.
- BCP Council, as the landowner of the beaches and promenade, must grant temporary permission for digital location marking on public structures like windbreak rentals or promenade benches. This partnership ensures that the service aligns with beach safety guidelines and does not interfere with emergency vehicle access along the shoreline.
- A consortium of local hospitality businesses would fund the ongoing platform maintenance through a shared subscription model, ensuring the technology remains affordable for smaller, independent kiosks. This collective funding model supports year-round platform updates, keeping the service active for dog walkers and winter visitors during the colder months.
- **The missing link** is the connection between the coastal tech startups and the traditional seaside concession operators, two groups that rarely interact in daily business. A local innovation hub must make the first move, hosting a collaborative workshop to show traditional business owners how digital mapping can ease their summer operational stress.

Why This Fails

Without clear operational limits and robust local coordination, a digital beach service can easily collapse into logistical chaos or public frustration.

- **Logistical gridlock** occurs when the kitchen team is overwhelmed by orders but has no way to slow down the incoming digital requests, leading to massive delivery delays and warm drinks. The early warning sign is a spike in digital order cancellations and staff physically searching the beach for lost customers while holding melting ice cream.
- **Device disconnect** happens if beach delivery runners cannot navigate the shifting beach geography, or if strong glare and poor mobile connectivity prevent guests from accessing the menu. You will first notice this when delivery staff spend more time squinting at screens or asking sunbathers for directions than actually delivering orders.
- **Local backlash** arises if delivery runners constantly disrupt quiet beachgoers, kick up sand, or create noise on the promenade, leading to complaints about the commercialisation of public spaces. The first sign of trouble will be negative local press coverage and angry social media posts demanding a ban on beach deliveries.

One Experiment to Start

Before building a complex, fully integrated digital platform, a low-fidelity test can prove whether visitors actually want sand-side delivery and if staff can physically manage it.

- The single most important uncertainty to resolve is whether customers are willing to pay a small premium for beachside delivery and whether staff can reliably find them without GPS tracking. If beachgoers find the process too complicated or if staff cannot locate the orders in the sand, the digital platform's underlying business model collapses.
- To test this, run a two-weekend pilot in September at a single beach kiosk in Southbourne using a basic, numbered physical flag system. Customers rent a numbered flag for a small deposit, plant it next to their beach towel within a fifty-metre radius of the kiosk, and order from a simplified menu via a basic web form.
- Keep going if customers easily adopt the flag system, delivery times remain under fifteen minutes, and staff report that finding the flags is straightforward and low-stress. Stop or rethink if beachgoers ignore the service, if runners struggle to find customers even within the short radius, or if delivery staff face constant interruptions from non-paying visitors.
- **Next step:** A local beachfront cafe owner should partner with a digital design student from Bournemouth University to draft a simple mobile ordering page and buy fifty numbered beach flags to launch a pilot next weekend.