

How The Boathouse boosted bookings with Clover

This long-standing local business seamlessly adapted from cash-only to card payments, improving the customer and staff experience.

“We needed a POS that had affordable fees and gave customers a great experience. Clover was the best option for that,”

— Kelan Herr, owner of
The Boathouse

THE CHALLENGE:

Cash-only payment and a rudimentary point-of-sale (POS) system were hurting the customer experience at The Boathouse, a family-fun restaurant and boat rental business. Owner Kelan Herr needed a payment system to improve efficiency.

THE SOLUTION:

Clover Mini and Clover Flex made it easy for customers to make card payments, streamlined the boat rental process and allowed for advance bookings, which created a faster and more enjoyable experience for visitors and staff.

THE RESULTS:

With easy card payments and an efficient booking process, The Boathouse has seen a **36% increase year-over-year**, primarily in boat rentals, which is directly linked to incorporating Clover POS.





"No one has to show up early to sort out payment or stick around afterward to settle the bill. Now they can arrive, enjoy their event, and head out without any hassle."

IN JULY 2025, a brutal storm hit Stratford, Ont., Canada, damaging a dam on the Avon River. For The Boathouse, a three-generation family boat rental and restaurant business with a riverside patio, the resulting low water levels meant their customers had to cancel their boat rental reservations.

Fortunately, The Boathouse had recently adopted Clover as its point-of-sale system.

While their bottom line did take a hit, co-owner Kelan Herr credits Clover for making a difficult situation easier.

"Clover helped to absorb some of the cancellation and refund fees for customers who pre-booked," he says. "We didn't have to worry about a third-party fee on top of the cancellation logistics."

An evolving business with legacy bottlenecks

Since 1913, The Boathouse has been a beloved landmark of the Stratford community. It was originally a spot to store boats, but after the Herr family took over the business in 1965, it evolved into a community hub for tourism.

For years, the business only accepted cash for boat-rental payments. Eventually, they added an ATM, but customers had to trek upstairs to get cash. It was a significant hurdle for those eager to get onto the water. They incorporated a rudimentary point of sale system, too. But Herr, who took over running the Boathouse with his sister Amanda after their father retired, says, "It was slow, limited and created a bottleneck, which kept customers from getting into their boats and enjoying their experience." They knew they needed a better solution.

The streamlined solution for customers and staff

One advantage of living in a small community is that it didn't take long for Herr to hear about Clover from fellow business owners, who told him that the system seamlessly integrates into existing software and apps. "I saw a lot of small businesses using Clover, so I did some investigating, and the process was so streamlined," says Herr, who has incorporated the Clover Mini and the handheld Clover Flex to handle payments for the restaurant and rentals.

Naturally, customers are happy with this evolution — everyone can now easily tap their cards to pay for rentals and other services — but staff are thrilled, too. "Adding Clover to the boats this year has been a huge time-saver and easier for our staff," Herr says.

That's especially true during wedding season when boats are often booked for private events. With their previous POS system, every transaction had to be completed in person, which meant private groups still had to wait in the same walk-in line as everyone else renting canoes, kayaks, or paddle boats. With Clover, Herr can take payment and details over the phone in advance. "No one has to show up early to sort out payment or stick around afterward to settle the bill," he says. "Now they can arrive, enjoy their event, and head out without any hassle."

Charting a course for growth

As water in the Avon returns to normal levels, canoe, paddle boat, and kayak rentals are starting to increase, too. With Clover, Herr knows they'll be ready for when even more tourists start coming to Stratford. "This system really helps speed everything up," he says. "It's smooth, and there are no customer delays." ❦



The Clover Difference

A sleek POS solution lets you run your whole business from your countertop. An all-in-one handheld device lets you take payments from anywhere – including a boat.