

Madhu's

Zoho One: The secret sauce behind Indian caterer's growth





The Company

Madhu's is the most illustrious and highly-ranked South Asian restaurant and catering business in the UK. For over 40 years, customers have enjoyed its Punjabi fine dining with East African twists, reflecting the family-owned business' heritage. Madhu's flavours can be enjoyed at one of its six Central London restaurants, including at The Savoy, The Peninsula, and The Landmark, as well as at its first international restaurant in Istanbul.

Additionally, Madhu's arranges and caters for events, including lavish weddings, parties, and corporate gatherings. Notably, Madhu's was the first Asian caterer to provide food at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle, and is the primary Asian caterer at 10 Downing Street.

With scores of industry accolades, (including "Best Asian Restaurant 2024" in the Asian Curry Awards and AFRA's "Caterer of the Year 2024"), an MBE for Chairman Sanjay Anand, and "Rising Star" recognition for Director Arjun Anand from the House of Commons, Madhu's is heating up the food sector. We caught up with Arjun, a 4th generation Madhu's pioneer, to discuss how Zoho software is adding extra shine to his star.

The Challenge

Source a CRM platform to manage complex event bookings



We needed software
to take the company to the
next level.

Arjun Anand
Director



When Arjun joined the family firm, he recognised an urgent need to digitise its operations by implementing a CRM system. "The systems that we had were very old school. Everything was manual, in Excel spreadsheets and paperwork." With new restaurants opening and a growing team, Arjun sought to banish spreadsheets, standardise how his team worked, and improve productivity. He also wanted to simplify data collation and reporting whilst eliminating duplication.

However, Arjun's CRM journey was to be long and arduous, with various mainstream, vertical, and custom solutions failing to cut the mustard. "All the hotels that we work with used MICROS, so I thought it would fit us well. Unfortunately, it wasn't dynamic enough," he explains. A promising bespoke build stalled when the developer parted ways with the vendor. "Our project came to a dead stop. It worried me; I couldn't risk putting all of our business in the hands of such a small team." Investigating a well-known CRM platform for the third attempt, Arjun felt the vendor lacked understanding of his business. "It took the company forever to understand our requirements. Our business has so many different elements, and our quotes are so bespoke, so nothing off the shelf could work for us," he says.

After almost ten years of searching, Arjun discovered Zoho and found its software capabilities to be greater than he had ever hoped for. "What I found with Zoho was unique; I could access so many different software suites that all talked to each other. The more I'm learning about Zoho, I don't think anyone else offers anything like it!", he enthuses. Extending beyond just CRM, Madhu's subscribed to the Zoho One bundle, a collection of 45+ business applications to manage sales, marketing, HR, finance, and productivity. "The plan now is to digitise every process that we have in our company and get insights into our business that we've never had before," Arjun adds.

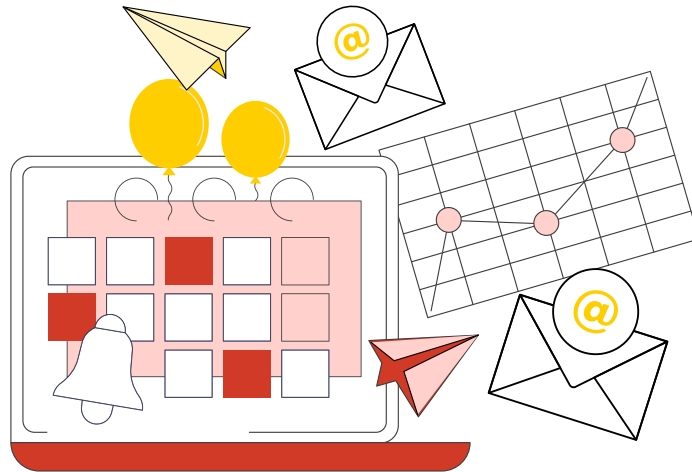
Acknowledging the complexity of Madhu's operations, particularly its events, Zoho's representative recommended that Arjun work with ThoughtLogik, an approved Zoho partner. ThoughtLogik's Principle Consultant, Yuvaraj Ramamoorthy, worked closely with Arjun to map out the scope of the project and a phased approach to the development.

Madhu's requirements:

- A comprehensive quote-builder to incorporate thousands of event choices.
- A digital catalogue of venues, collating bookings, contracts, pricing, amenities, images, and logos.
- E-signature capabilities for quotes and contracts.
- Automated workflows to send payment schedules and reminder emails.
- A single calendar to view confirmed and provisional events, site visits, food-tasting days, and more.
- A mobile app for real-time availability of dates and venues during external site visits.
- HR software to track leave allowance for hundreds of full-time and casual staff.

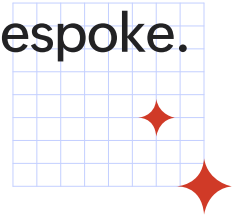
The Solution

Digitising event management with Zoho CRM & Creator



The kind of system we have built in Zoho doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. It's so bespoke.

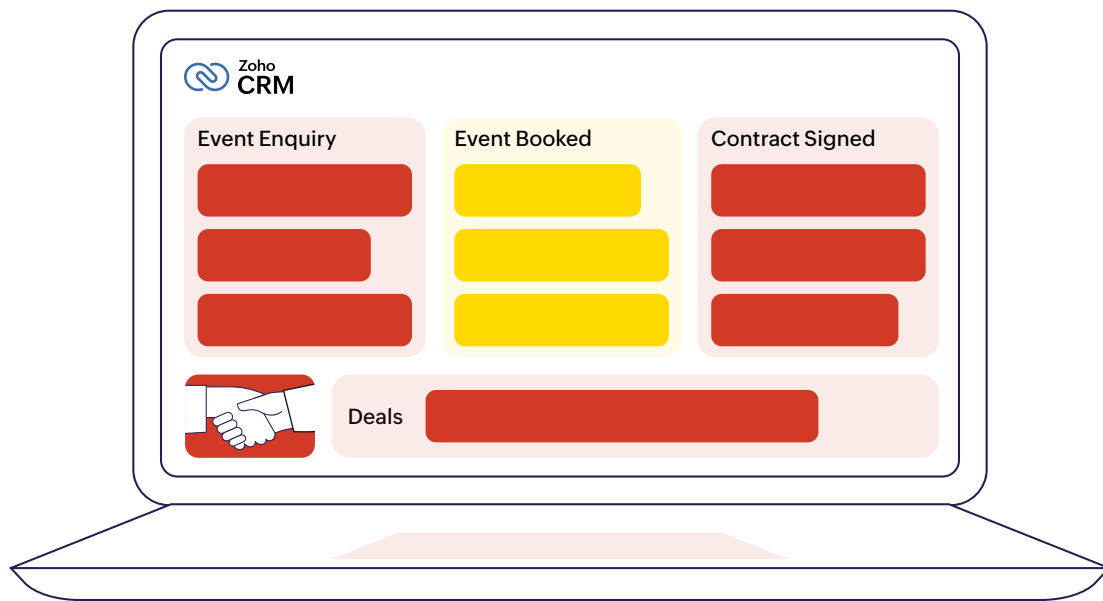
Arjun Anand
Director



The event pipeline

In the first phase, Zoho CRM was implemented as a comprehensive event management tool for Madhu's sales team. Now it records new enquiries ("we've connected our website contact form to the Leads module," says Arjun), manages opportunities, and logs the full pipeline of events up to the contract acceptance stage. Zoho Sign is integrated with Zoho CRM to share event contracts and collect signatures from venues and clients, with PDF copies posted to the CRM opportunity as an attachment. Finally, confirmed events are then pushed from the CRM into Madhu's Sage accounting package for invoicing. To streamline data entry and maintain accuracy across Zoho and Sage, ThoughtLogik also incorporated a custom UK postcode address-finder extension.

Zoho CRM enhances Madhu's communication and collaboration by sending regular automated emails to customers and venues, keeping all parties informed about the status of an event. "We have automated emails throughout the whole journey, from the enquiry stage to making the bookings. Automating these makes our life a lot easier because nothing is missed and no errors are made," Arjun explains. Payment schedules and reminders are also sent automatically to clients. And if a change is made to a booking, automations in CRM ensure the data is automatically updated across every related field for consistency.



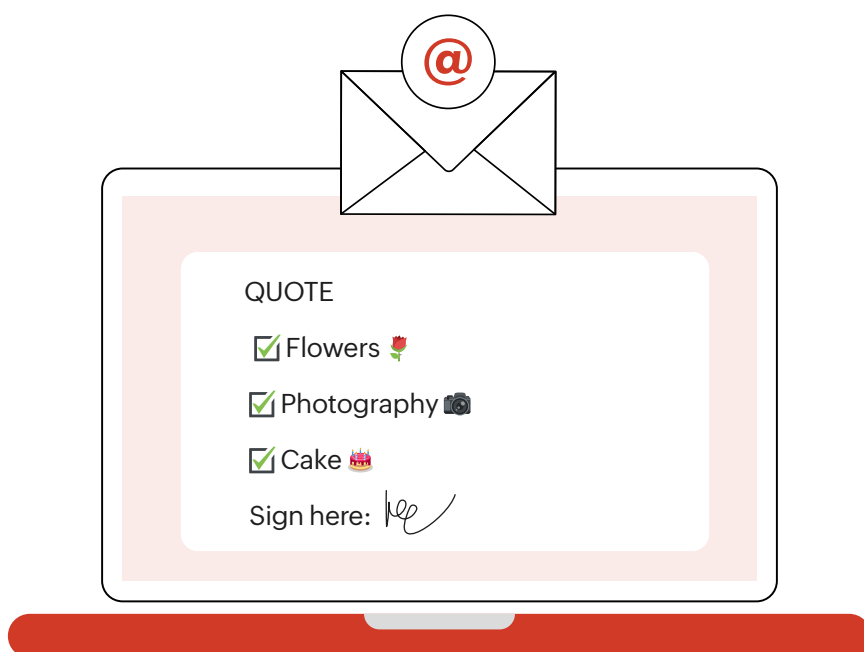
For the trickier aspects of event management, ThoughtLogik tightly integrated Zoho CRM with Zoho Creator, a low-code application development platform that's also included in the One bundle. This means that Madhu's salespeople don't need to navigate away from the CRM to generate quotes and make venue bookings, although Creator is doing the heavy lifting for both these elements. "The quotations are built inside Zoho Creator in the background, which could better handle their complexity. To create one quotation, there are over 200 workflows in Zoho Creator!" reveals Yuvaraj.

Event quotations

All of Madhu's quotes are formulated inside Creator, which pulls together combinations of event variables and inventory items to form highly personalised proposals for its client. This element was the project's biggest challenge, admits Arjun.

Unlike most outside caterers, Madhu's often handles much more than just food supply (although with scores of different menus, Madhu's food service alone is incredibly complex). Via its network of partners, the team can also book hotel suites, entertainment, furniture hire, photography, security, flowers, cars, and cakes. "We don't operate like any other outside caterer in the world; we act more like wedding planners. We hold 18 different contracts at our venues, and there are so many available add-ons, some with prices per person or piece," explains Arjun.

ThoughtLogik had to reflect each of these event choices in Creator's forms and subforms, including some specific stipulations unique to certain venues. "Some venue bookings need to have bedrooms allocated to them. Zoho has to understand this and automatically add bedrooms onto the quotation," Arjun adds. Seasonal pricing variations and dynamic rate adjustments based on capacity and peak and off-peak days are also factored into Creator's powerful quote calculations.



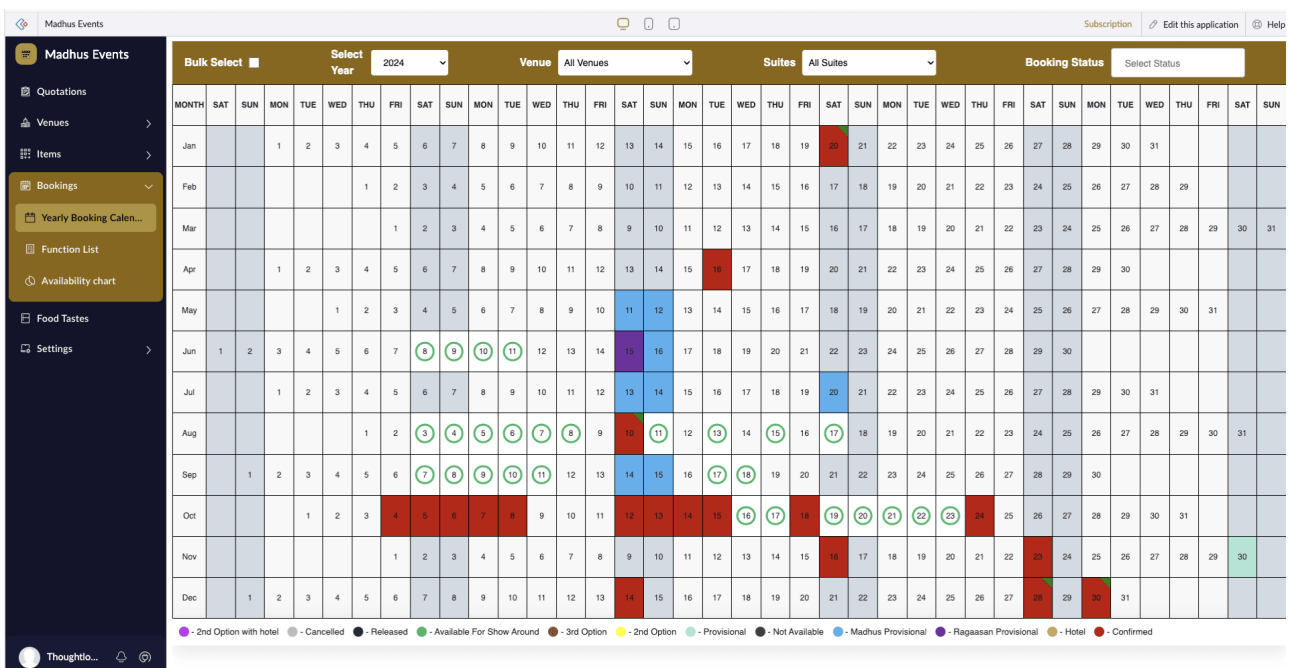
Once a quote is compiled, it needs to be presented to clients in a logical and on-brand format, so ThoughtLogik integrated Zoho Writer with Creator. "The quotes built in Creator use Writer APIs to output to a document and PDF file at the click of a button inside Zoho Creator," says Yuvaraj. In true Madhu's style, each quote is a masterpiece, incorporating branding, images, and rich details about the event. "Our quotations are almost like a brochure with images and venue logos. They are dynamic with certain bullet-pointed notes that change according to the selections," adds Arjun. From the CRM, Madhu's salespeople use a custom "send" button to email the finalised document to the client and store it against the opportunity's record.

Booking calendar

Central to event bookings are, of course, dates. A single event may require multiple bookings, including an initial site visit, food-tasting appointment, provisional dates with second and third options, and finally a confirmed date. Madhu's team also has to be aware of newly-released dates for each venue and any cancelled events. With Arjun looking to grow the events side of the business ("We have the capacity to do as many as ten events in a day; we're currently only doing six), the new Zoho software needed to provide complete visibility of event availability in a single calendar. "Our calendar is our ammunition for our sales team, for them to be able to sell," explains Arjun, highlighting how critical it is to Madhu's operations.

ThoughtLogik used Zoho Creator to build a shared calendar that the entire team could consult from the CRM, accessible both in the office and during site visits via the mobile app. Each type of booking is represented with a separate colour, offering a real-time, at-a-glance view of venue activity. A key was added for easy interpretation, and each colour code relates back to sales opportunities inside Zoho CRM for consistency. ThoughtLogik also ensured that the food-tasting slots included links to the menus, which then push into the CRM as sales opportunities.

The benefits of the Creator calendar widget cannot be overstated, with Arjun telling us: "Before, there were multiple Excel calendars that we were working from, which was confusing. Now we have one live calendar, which really helps our sales team speed up the process of knowing if a date or venue is available."



Venue page

Zoho Creator is also used to house an extensive venue catalogue. Built as a custom HTML page, it allows Madhu's team to upload swathes of information about each venue, including key contacts, web links, amenities, photographs, rates, contracts, and booking history. This venue inventory has become a one-stop shop for the sales team, who need to assist clients with venue choices and liaise with multiple representatives each day.

A simple tick box on the venue homepage allows the agent to create and auto-populate a dedicated Zoho Workdrive folder for each venue, which holds high resolution images of each venue and any related files for reference.

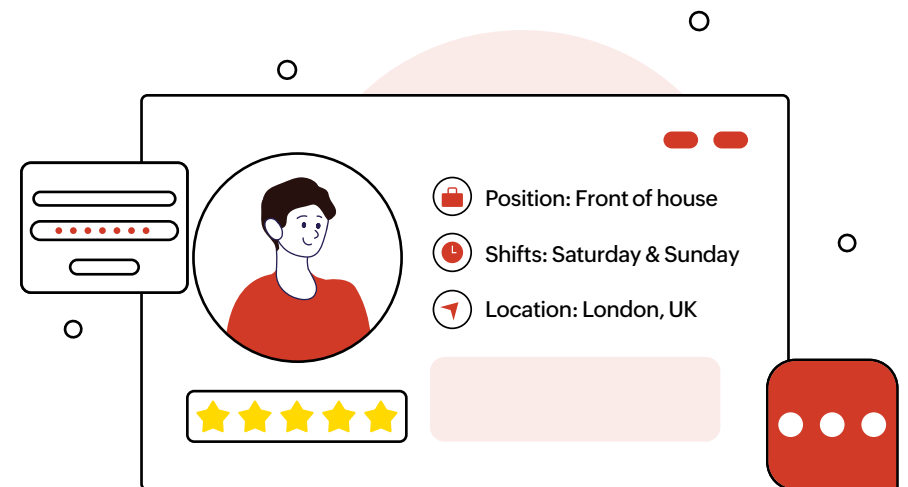
The screenshot shows a Zoho Creator form for a venue named 'BEAUMONT ESTATE'. The form is organized into several sections:

- Details:** Venue Name (BEAUMONT ESTATE), Contact (+44 1753 640000), Email (beaumont.weddings@devere.com), Address (Burfield Road, Old Windsor, Windsor, SL4 2JJ, United Kingdom).
- Virtual tour:** A URL field with 'https://'.
- Mandatory Services:** Checkboxes for Mandatory Wine Waiters, Mandatory Linen, Mandatory Butlers, Mandatory Hostesses, Mandatory Kitchen Porters, Mandatory Cutlery, Crockery, Glassware, and Mandatory Transportation.
- Optional Extra:** A table with columns for Description, Selling Price, Purchase Price, and Mandatory.

Description	Selling Price	Purchase Price	Mandatory
testmw	1,900.00	100.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
testmw123	90.00	67.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

The right side of the form features a preview area with the venue logo 'DEVERE BEAUMONT ESTATE', a logo upload field, a main picture upload field (HERO_IMAGE.JPG), and a preview image of a grand hall.

Employee management with Zoho People



Madhu's events operation requires input from hundreds of hands-on staff members, both behind the scenes and front of house. Currently, the business employs 180 full-time colleagues with a further 400 agency workers on the books.

"Employee data was on a spreadsheet before; we were having to manually track and calculate holidays," shares Arjun. When he onboarded the Zoho One bundle, Madhu's were instantly granted access to Zoho People, a cloud-based HR platform. Adding each employee to the People database enabled Madhu's to view each employee's shifts, configure leave allowances and approve requests, store employee records, and onboard new starters with ease. "We were having to send so many attachments to new joiners on emails. Now, it all happens via an onboarding workflow in People, which looks much more professional," says Arjun. "Plus, it gives us access to employee data at the click of a button that we didn't previously have. Zoho People just makes our lives so much easier!"

Looking to the future



I haven't stopped talking about Zoho.
I tell anyone that runs a business to try it out.

Arjun Anand

Director

After his 10-year software search, Arjun is keen to settle in with Zoho for the long-term. However, he isn't resting on his laurels and has big plans for both ThoughtLogik and Zoho. "This will be a continuous build because so many new scenarios keep arising when I talk to customers," he says. "ThoughtLogik has adapted to every single scenario I've presented so far, and understands the complexities of our business," he adds reassuringly.

In the next phase of digital transformation. Arjun wants to implement more applications from the One bundle, including Zoho Inventory to track catering equipment and food and beverages, right down to individual ingredients. "We have so much stock for events, and we need to track things that go out and come back, or if things are broken. The movement of our stock is the movement of our money."

He also wants to explore Zoho Analytics for management reports, connect Zoho People to Sage Payroll, bolt on a food safety module in Zoho CRM, and add modules in Creator for audits and mystery diners. "The plan eventually is to use Zoho as a one-stop shop for every process," Arjun explains.



A phase already well underway is the deployment of Zoho Marketing Automation to send promotional mailers to diners and event clients, with plans to enhance its use in 2025. "We will be using the Zoho marketing tool to target the catering and restaurant sectors, building up different databases and using automated marketing journeys to promote our services," reveals Arjun. "We're also looking to integrate Marketing Automation with a third-party booking platform called SevenRooms to increase our reach."

Reflecting on the potential of Zoho One's suite of tools, Arjun says: "It's a massive bonus to have one vendor for all our software. We can stop some of the subscriptions that we had with Mailchimp and others and use Zoho for everything. We'll save a lot of money over its lifetime."

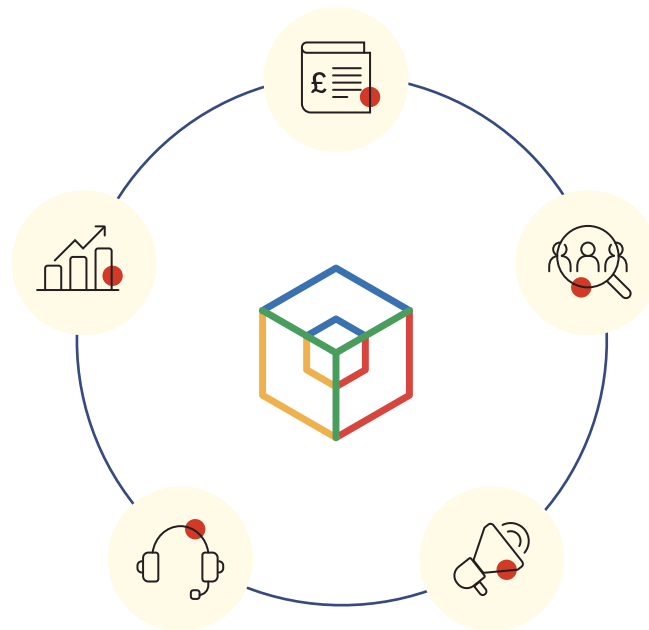
About ThoughtLogik



ThoughtLogik boasts extensive expertise in Zoho solutions, having partnered with over 200 SMEs from more than 40 industries across the UK and abroad. With more than 20 certified Zoho developers on board, and over 250 Zoho projects successfully delivered, ThoughtLogik is well-placed to assist any organisation seeking success through software.

To learn more about ThoughtLogik, visit: <https://www.thoughtlogik.com/>

About Zoho One



Developed as the ultimate "operating system for business", the Zoho One bundle is a collection of 45+ integrated applications that cater to every diverse need of a modern business. From Sales to Marketing, Customer Support, HR, Operations, Finance, and Legal, Zoho One's powerful suite of tools can be relied upon by every department to improve performance, enhance collaboration, and streamline processes. An unrivalled yet affordable solution, Zoho One's cloud-based apps bring extraordinary value to any organisation.

Please find out more via our website: <https://www.zoho.com/one/>





zoho.com



Madhu's website

<https://www.madhus.co.uk/>

Email us:

Sales@zohocorp.com

Contact us:

+44 (0)203 564 7890