Q2 2025 Report

Contents

Summary

18

Pieces of Coverage

Total number of online, offline and social clips in this book

46M

Total Impressions

Coverage

18 pieces

Franchising.com

Trade

257K
Unique Visits

April 07, 2025 ONLINE

How Have You Cultivated a Productive...

franchising.com/articles/_how_have_you...

Franchising.com

ARTICLES | NEWS | FRANCHISES | RESOURCES | MULTI-UNIT | INTERNATIONAL | MAGAZINES | CONFERENCES | NEWSLETTERS

LOGIN

Home: Articles: Multi-Unit Franchising:

How have you cultivated a productive relationship with your franchisor? Any tips for effective communication and negotiation?

By: Kevin Behan | 461 Reads | 1 Shares

Owning a franchise business is a joint venture with shared success. What is good for the franchisee is good for the franchisor. While franchisees have a certain amount of independence to run their business on a daily basis, it is also important they communicate and collaborate with the corporate office.

Franchise Update asked several multi-unit restaurant owners for their advice on how to cultivate relationships with the franchisor. Most emphasized having clear lines of communication and taking steps to share in the mutual success for both parties. That often involves following a proven operating system, utilizing the provided resources, and relying on the support from the franchisor.

Some of the most successful people in business also realize they don't have all the answers and are always looking to improve. We asked several multi-unit restaurant operators about what they are trying to do better. The question received a wide range of responses from improving operations, to managing employees, to utilizing social media to enhance their business. Read below to see how a few multi-unit franchisees across the restaurant industry are trying to improve each day.

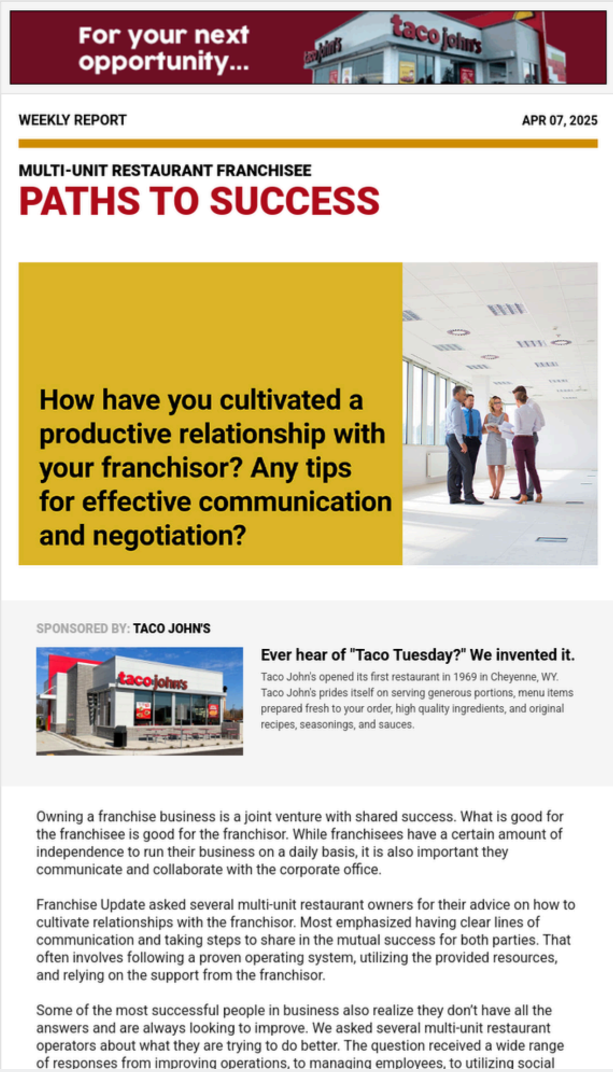
Jamie Stapleton

FRANCHISE UPDATE MEDIA

Multi-Unit Restaurant Franchisee Paths to Success

Trade

15K
Unique Visits



For your next opportunity...

WEEKLY REPORT APR 07, 2025

MULTI-UNIT RESTAURANT FRANCHISEE
PATHS TO SUCCESS

How have you cultivated a productive relationship with your franchisor? Any tips for effective communication and negotiation?

SPONSORED BY: TACO JOHN'S

Ever hear of "Taco Tuesday?" We invented it.
Taco John's opened its first restaurant in 1969 in Cheyenne, WY. Taco John's prides itself on serving generous portions, menu items prepared fresh to your order, high quality ingredients, and original recipes, seasonings, and sauces.

Owning a franchise business is a joint venture with shared success. What is good for the franchisee is good for the franchisor. While franchisees have a certain amount of independence to run their business on a daily basis, it is also important they communicate and collaborate with the corporate office.

Franchise Update asked several multi-unit restaurant owners for their advice on how to cultivate relationships with the franchisor. Most emphasized having clear lines of communication and taking steps to share in the mutual success for both parties. That often involves following a proven operating system, utilizing the provided resources, and relying on the support from the franchisor.

Some of the most successful people in business also realize they don't have all the answers and are always looking to improve. We asked several multi-unit restaurant operators about what they are trying to do better. The question received a wide range of responses from improving operations, to managing employees, to utilizing social

April 07, 2025 ONLINE

How Have You Cultivated a Productive...

franchising.com/newsletters/mum/20250...

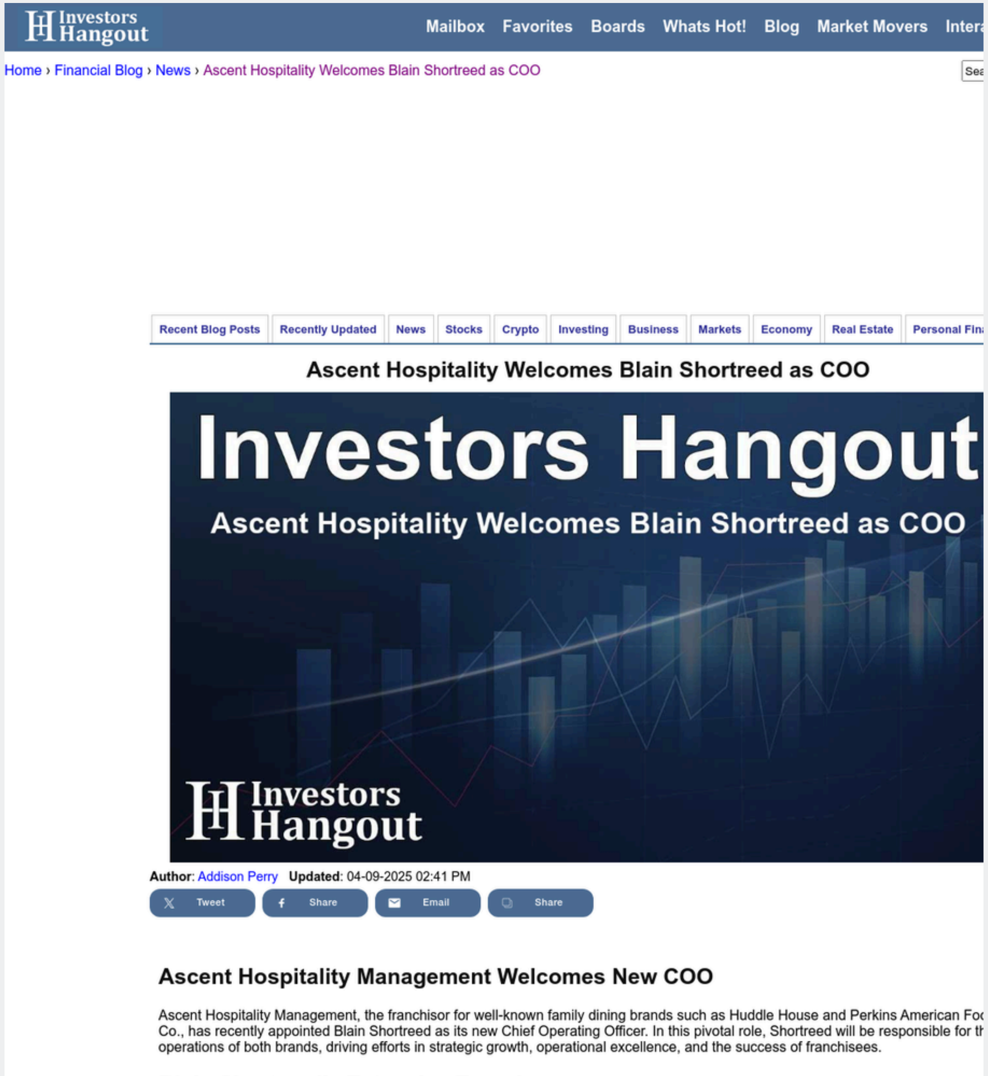
Investors Hangout

National

34.1K

Unique Visits

Provided by SimilarWeb



Investors Hangout

Mailbox Favorites Boards Whats Hot! Blog Market Movers

Home › Financial Blog › News › Ascent Hospitality Welcomes Blain Shortreed as COO

Recent Blog Posts | Recently Updated | News | Stocks | Crypto | Investing | Business | Markets | Economy | Real Estate

Ascent Hospitality Welcomes Blain Shortreed as COO

Author: Addison Perry Updated: 04-09-2025 02:41 PM

Tweet Share Email Share

Ascent Hospitality Management Welcomes New COO

Ascent Hospitality Management, the franchisor for well-known family dining brands such as Huddle House and Perkins American Foo
Co., has recently appointed Blain Shortreed as its new Chief Operating Officer. In this pivotal role, Shortreed will be responsible for th
operations of both brands, driving efforts in strategic growth, operational excellence, and the success of franchisees.

April 09, 2025 ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Welcomes Blain Shortreed as COO

investorshangout.com/ascent-hospitality-...

Restaurant Dive

Trade

67.4K

Unique Visits

Provided by SimilarWeb

informa ▾ TechTarget and Informa Tech's Digital Businesses Combine.

RESTAURANT DIVE | Deep Dive | Opinion | Library | Events | Press Releases | Sign up

Consumer Trends | Delivery | Finances & Deals | Franchising | Labor & Policy | M&A | Executive News | Menu Development | Operations | Tech

Ascent Hospitality promotes Blain Shortreed to COO

Shortreed, who joined the company in 2023 as Huddle House president, will focus on strategic growth, operations and franchise relations in his new role.

Published April 10, 2025

Julie Littman
Senior Reporter

Blain Shortreed, previously Huddle House brand president, was promoted to COO of parent company Ascent Hospitality Management in April 2025. *Permission granted by Huddle House*

Listen to the article 2 min

Name: Blain Shortreed

New title: Chief operating officer, Ascent Hospitality Management

Previous title: Brand president, Huddle House

TRENDLINE

How today's restaurants are navigating financing

With ongoing macroeconomic pressures facing restaurants, operators are entering into alternative financing, mergers and acquisitions and even bankruptcy to sustain their businesses.

Get the free newsletter

Subscribe to Restaurant Dive for top news, trends & analysis

Work email address

Sign up

MOST POPULAR

April 10, 2025 ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Promotes Blain Shortreed to COO

restaurantdive.com/news/ascent-hospitali...

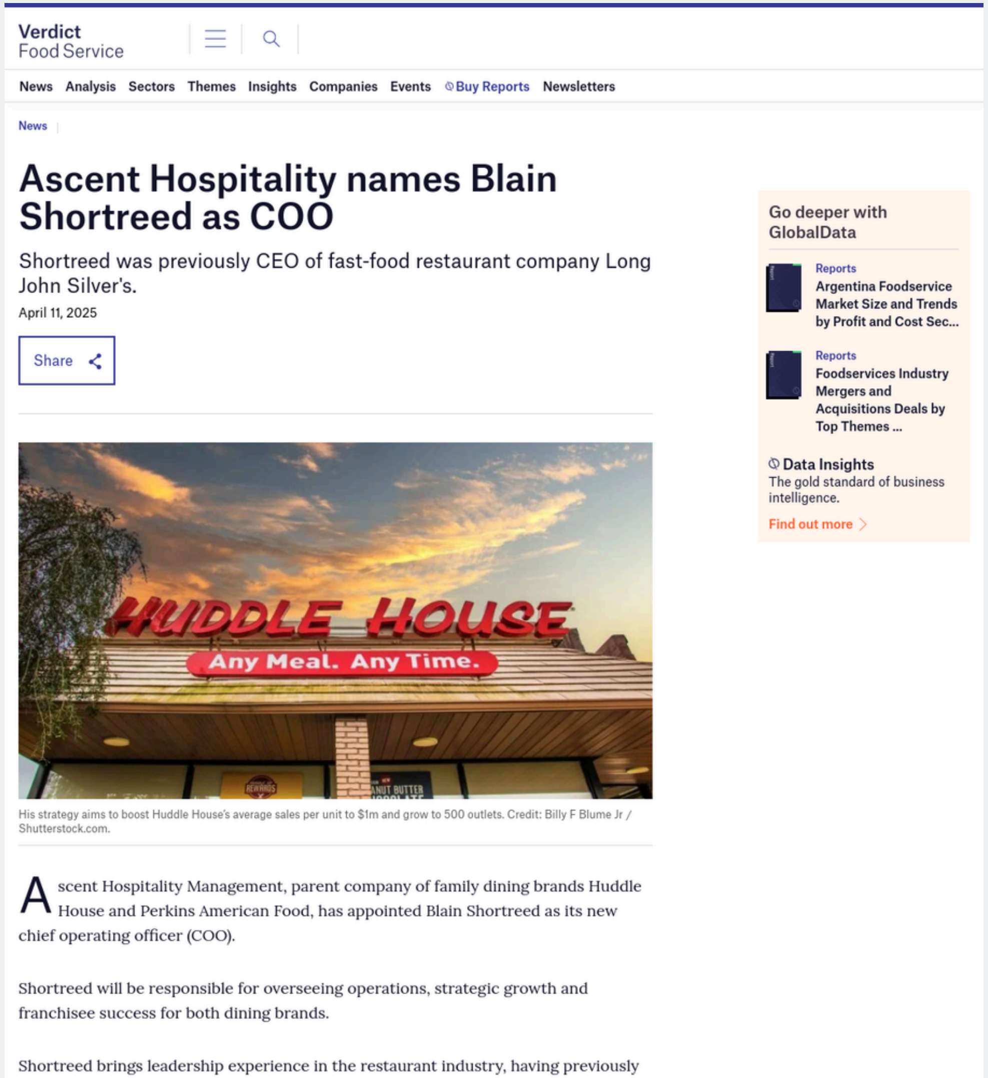
Verdict Foodservice

Trade

14.1K

Unique Visits

Provided by SimilarWeb



Verdict Food Service

News Analysis Sectors Themes Insights Companies Events Buy Reports Newsletters

News

Ascent Hospitality names Blain Shortreed as COO

Shortreed was previously CEO of fast-food restaurant company Long John Silver's.

April 11, 2025

Share

His strategy aims to boost Huddle House's average sales per unit to $1m and grow to 500 outlets. Credit: Billy F Blume Jr / Shutterstock.com.

Ascent Hospitality Management, parent company of family dining brands Huddle House and Perkins American Food, has appointed Blain Shortreed as its new chief operating officer (COO).

Shortreed will be responsible for overseeing operations, strategic growth and franchisee success for both dining brands.

Shortreed brings leadership experience in the restaurant industry, having previously

Go deeper with GlobalData

Reports

Argentina Foodservice Market Size and Trends by Profit and Cost Sec...

Reports

Foodservices Industry Mergers and Acquisitions Deals by Top Themes ...

Data Insights

The gold standard of business intelligence.

Find out more

April 11, 2025 ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Names Blain Shortreed as COO

verdictfoodservice.com/news/ascent-hos...

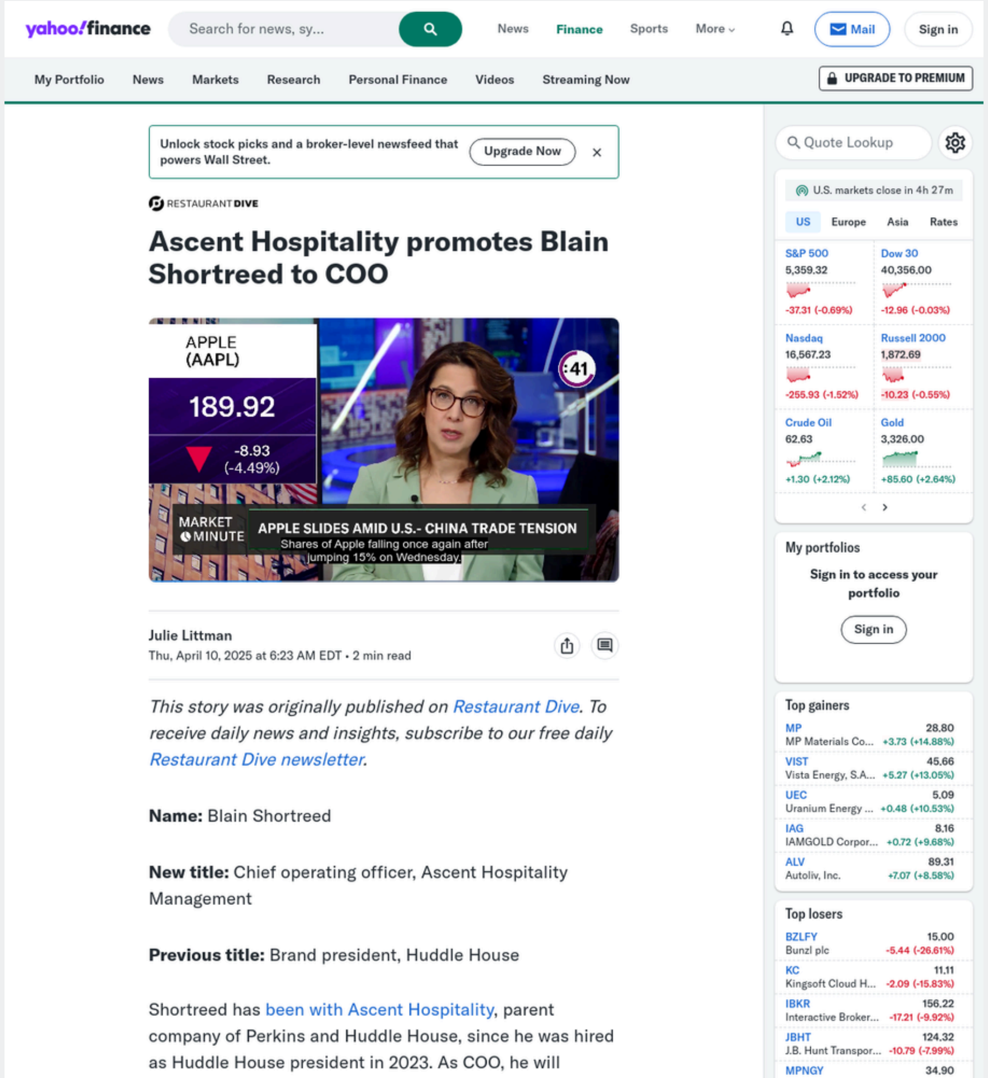
Yahoo! Finance

National

44.5M

Unique Visits

Provided by SimilarWeb



yahoo!finance

News Finance Sports More Mail Sign in

My Portfolio News Markets Research Personal Finance Videos Streaming Now UPGRADE TO PREMIUM

Unlock stock picks and a broker-level newsfeed that powers Wall Street. Upgrade Now

RESTAURANT DIVE

Ascent Hospitality promotes Blain Shortreed to COO

Julie Littman
Thu, April 10, 2025 at 6:23 AM EDT • 2 min read

This story was originally published on Restaurant Dive. To receive daily news and insights, subscribe to our free daily Restaurant Dive newsletter.

Name: Blain Shortreed

New title: Chief operating officer, Ascent Hospitality Management

Previous title: Brand president, Huddle House

Shortreed has been with Ascent Hospitality, parent company of Perkins and Huddle House, since he was hired as Huddle House president in 2023. As COO, he will

April 10, 2025 ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Promotes Blain Shortreed to COO

finance.yahoo.com/news/ascent-hospitalit...

FRANCHISE UPDATE MEDIA

Franchising.com

Trade

257K

Unique Visits

Franchising.com

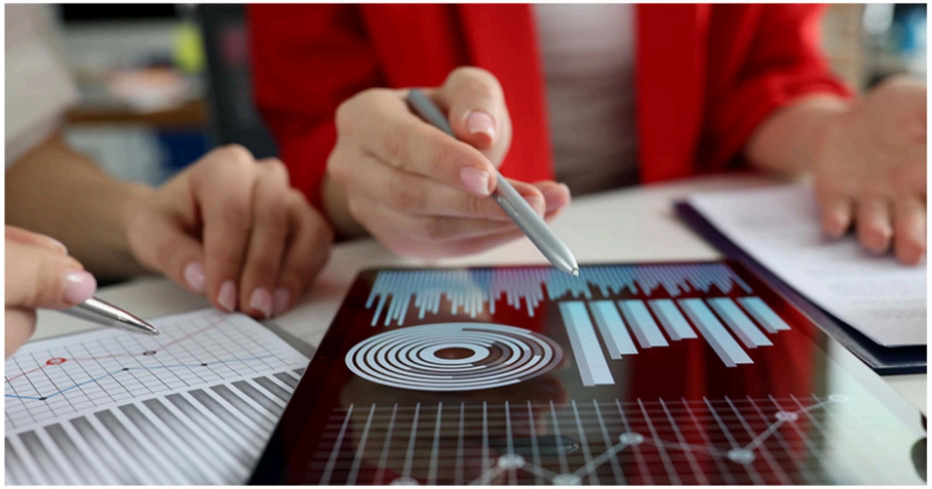
ARTICLES | NEWS | FRANCHISES | RESOURCES | MULTI-UNIT | INTERNATIONAL | MAGAZINES | CONFERENCES | NEWSLETTERS

LOGIN

Home: Articles: Multi-Unit Franchising:

Can you share some financial strategies or practices that have been instrumental in the profitability of your units?

By: Kevin Behan | 188 Reads | 1 Shares



All businesses are run differently, and each owner has their own approach to what makes their operation profitable. However, there are certain commonalities across different brands and industries that lead to operational success.

Franchise Update asked several multi-unit restaurant franchisees about the financial practices that have played an important role in creating profitability for their locations. Each was willing to share some of the secrets to their success and provide helpful information for other franchisees looking to maximize the profitability of their restaurants.

Several franchisees stressed the importance of tracking operating expenses, including labor costs and inventory, while making smart purchasing decisions and eliminating unnecessary spending. Others recommended having strong programs in place for team member training and development as well as administrative systems for HR and employee health benefits. See their answers below for some of the top takeaways of ensuring restaurant profitability.

Switching to a lighter topic, we also asked some multi-unit franchisees about their favorite movie. Whether the film provides a laugh and much-needed distraction from the long hours of restaurant operations or an inspirational message for their business, movies are still a way to escape and find another source of enjoyment for several hours. Take a look at the Franchisee Bytes and see if you find any of your favorites.

April 21, 2025 ONLINE

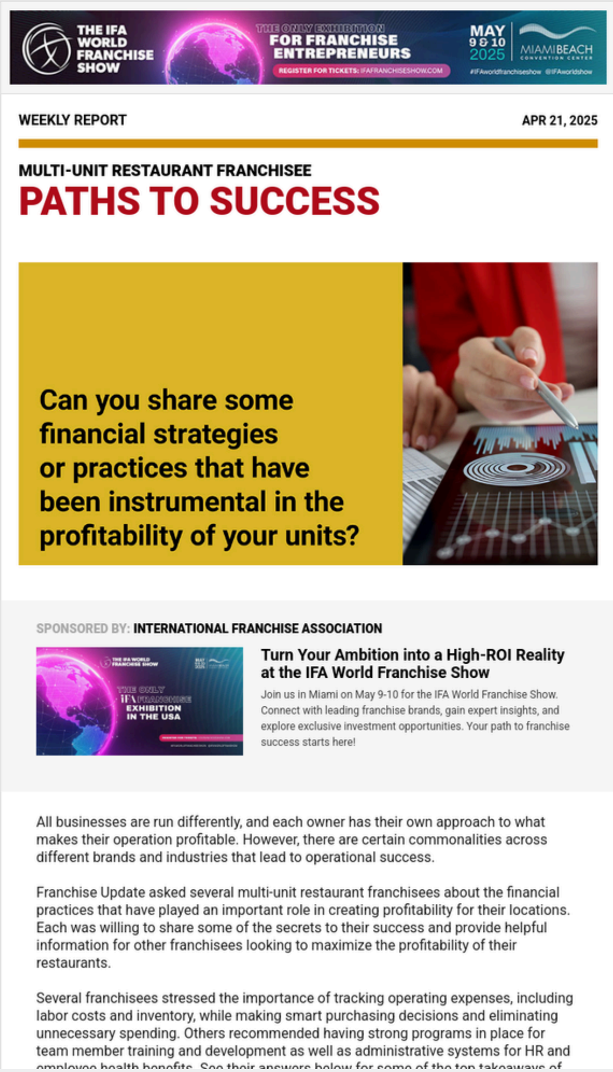
Can You Share Some Financial Strategies or Practices That...

franchising.com/articles/20250421_can_...

Multi-Unit Restaurant Franchisee Paths to Success

Trade

15K
Unique Visits



THE IFA WORLD FRANCHISE SHOW | THE ONLY EXHIBITION FOR FRANCHISE ENTREPRENEURS | MAY 9 & 10 2025 | MIAMIBEACH CONVENTION CENTER

WEEKLY REPORT APR 21, 2025

MULTI-UNIT RESTAURANT FRANCHISEE
PATHS TO SUCCESS

Can you share some financial strategies or practices that have been instrumental in the profitability of your units?

SPONSORED BY: INTERNATIONAL FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION

Turn Your Ambition into a High-ROI Reality at the IFA World Franchise Show

Join us in Miami on May 9-10 for the IFA World Franchise Show. Connect with leading franchise brands, gain expert insights, and explore exclusive investment opportunities. Your path to franchise success starts here!

All businesses are run differently, and each owner has their own approach to what makes their operation profitable. However, there are certain commonalities across different brands and industries that lead to operational success.

Franchise Update asked several multi-unit restaurant franchisees about the financial practices that have played an important role in creating profitability for their locations. Each was willing to share some of the secrets to their success and provide helpful information for other franchisees looking to maximize the profitability of their restaurants.

Several franchisees stressed the importance of tracking operating expenses, including labor costs and inventory, while making smart purchasing decisions and eliminating unnecessary spending. Others recommended having strong programs in place for team member training and development as well as administrative systems for HR and employee health benefits. See their answers below for some of the top takeaways of

April 21, 2025 ONLINE

Can You Share Some Financial Strategies or Practices That...

franchising.com/newsletters/mum/20250...

FRANCHISE UPDATE MEDIA

Franchising Update

Trade

257K

Unique Visits

May 05, 2025 ONLINE

How Do You Maintain Consistency in Employee Training,...

franchising.com/articles/20250505_how...

Franchising.com

ARTICLES | NEWS | FRANCHISES | RESOURCES | MULTI-UNIT | INTERNATIONAL | MAGAZINES | CONFERENCES | NEWSLETTERS

LOGIN

Home: Articles: Multi-Unit Franchising:

How do you maintain consistency in employee training, culture, and service quality across different locations?

By: Kevin Behan | 412 Reads | 1 Shares

Happy Cinco de Mayo to all multi-unit Mexican restaurant operators.

Consistency is one of the hallmarks of a franchise business. Whether you dine at a franchise restaurant in Bangor, Maine, Topeka, Kansas, or La Jolla, California, the menu, branding, and general layout should all be the same. Having a standard appearance, products, and services that ensure customer familiarity is one of the benefits that attract entrepreneurs to franchises.

That consistency also extends to how each restaurant operates. It starts on a new employee's first day during training to learn about the job. But it goes beyond being able to cook, serve, answer the phone, or work the register. Team members need to know about the overall system, its culture, and why it is unique. What is the best way the brand believes it can connect with and serve its customers? While that is important in any industry, having employees who know and understand this is essential for service-based businesses like restaurants.

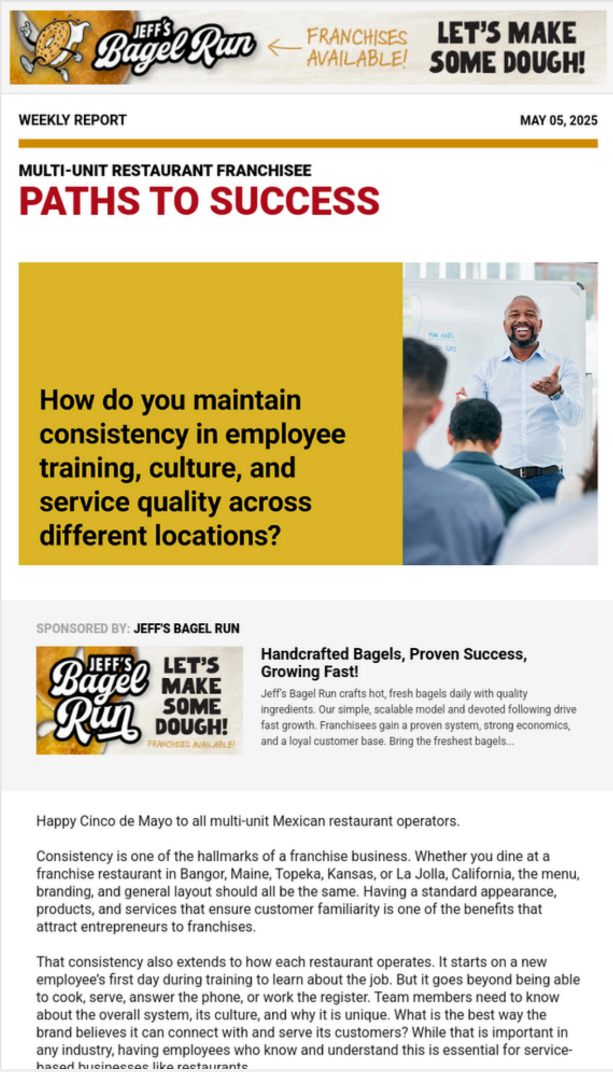
Franchise Update spoke with several multi-unit restaurant franchisees about how they maintain consistency in training, culture, and service across all their locations. Many said the process begins with having good managers in place to lead the employee training, increasingly with comprehensive Learning Management Software (LMS) programs. Establishing a strong culture is developed over time through providing ongoing support, leadership, respect, personal interaction, and team-building activities. It is also important to take the same approach at each location, establishing the consistency that comes with franchising.

FRANCHISE UPDATE MEDIA

Multi-Unit Restaurant Franchisee - Paths to Success

Trade

15K Unique Visits


JEFF'S Bagel Run ← FRANCHISES AVAILABLE! LET'S MAKE SOME DOUGH!

WEEKLY REPORT MAY 05, 2025

MULTI-UNIT RESTAURANT FRANCHISEE
PATHS TO SUCCESS

How do you maintain consistency in employee training, culture, and service quality across different locations?

SPONSORED BY: JEFF'S BAGEL RUN

JEFF'S Bagel Run LET'S MAKE SOME DOUGH! FRANCHISES AVAILABLE!

Handcrafted Bagels, Proven Success, Growing Fast!

Jeff's Bagel Run crafts hot, fresh bagels daily with quality ingredients. Our simple, scalable model and devoted following drive fast growth. Franchisees gain a proven system, strong economics, and a loyal customer base. Bring the freshest bagels...

Happy Cinco de Mayo to all multi-unit Mexican restaurant operators.

Consistency is one of the hallmarks of a franchise business. Whether you dine at a franchise restaurant in Bangor, Maine, Topeka, Kansas, or La Jolla, California, the menu, branding, and general layout should all be the same. Having a standard appearance, products, and services that ensure customer familiarity is one of the benefits that attract entrepreneurs to franchises.

That consistency also extends to how each restaurant operates. It starts on a new employee's first day during training to learn about the job. But it goes beyond being able to cook, serve, answer the phone, or work the register. Team members need to know about the overall system, its culture, and why it is unique. What is the best way the brand believes it can connect with and serve its customers? While that is important in any industry, having employees who know and understand this is essential for service-based businesses like restaurants.

May 05, 2025 ONLINE

How Do You Maintain Consistency in Employee Training,...

franchising.com/newsletters/mum/20250...

Multi-Unit Restaurant Franchisee - Paths to Success

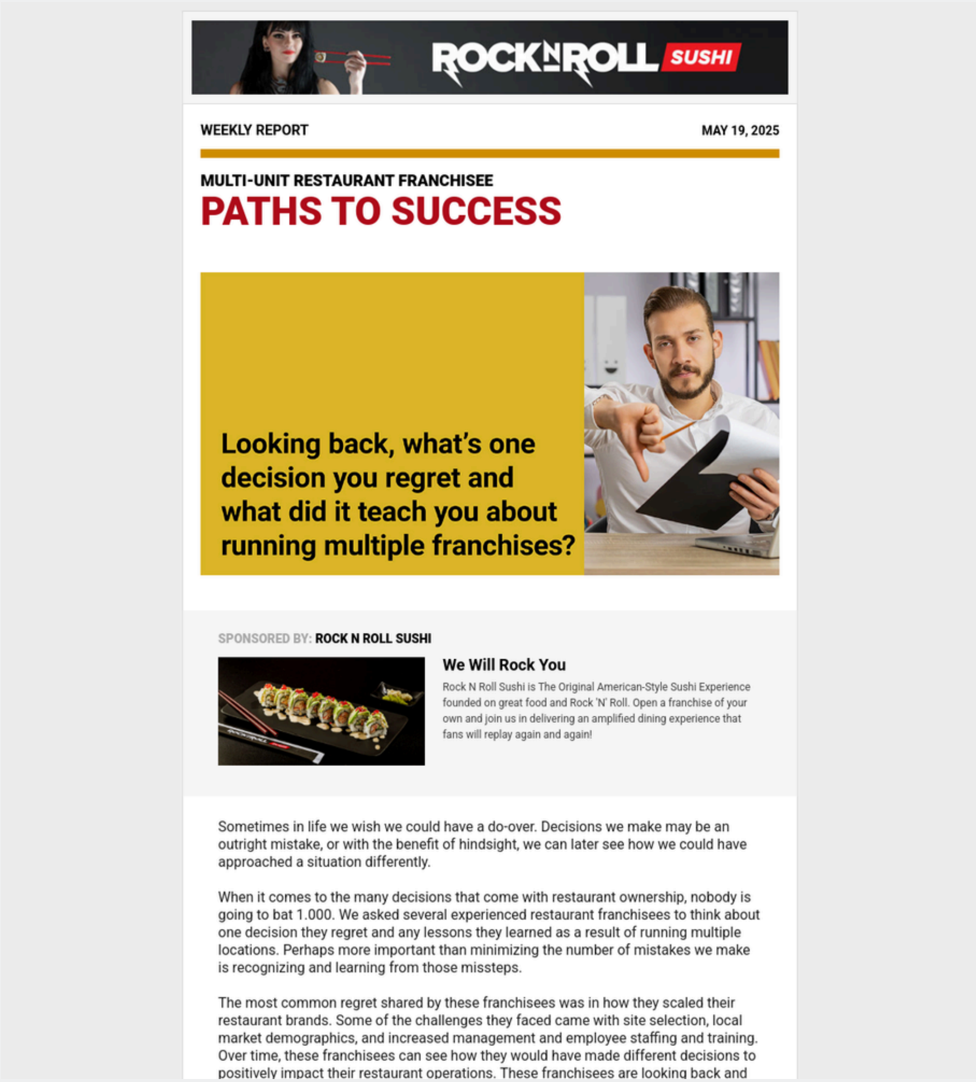
Trade

15K
Unique Visits

May 19, 2025 ONLINE

Looking Back, What's One Decision You Regret and What Di...

franchising.com/newsletters/mum/20250...


ROCK N ROLL SUSHI

WEEKLY REPORT MAY 19, 2025

MULTI-UNIT RESTAURANT FRANCHISEE
PATHS TO SUCCESS

Looking back, what's one decision you regret and what did it teach you about running multiple franchises?

SPONSORED BY: ROCK N ROLL SUSHI

We Will Rock You

Rock N Roll Sushi is The Original American-Style Sushi Experience founded on great food and Rock 'N' Roll. Open a franchise of your own and join us in delivering an amplified dining experience that fans will replay again and again!

Sometimes in life we wish we could have a do-over. Decisions we make may be an outright mistake, or with the benefit of hindsight, we can later see how we could have approached a situation differently.

When it comes to the many decisions that come with restaurant ownership, nobody is going to bat 1.000. We asked several experienced restaurant franchisees to think about one decision they regret and any lessons they learned as a result of running multiple locations. Perhaps more important than minimizing the number of mistakes we make is recognizing and learning from those missteps.

The most common regret shared by these franchisees was in how they scaled their restaurant brands. Some of the challenges they faced came with site selection, local market demographics, and increased management and employee staffing and training. Over time, these franchisees can see how they would have made different decisions to positively impact their restaurant operations. These franchisees are looking back and

Franchising.com

Trade

257K

Unique Visits

Franchising.com

ARTICLES | NEWS | FRANCHISES | RESOURCES | MULTI-UNIT | INTERNATIONAL | MAGAZINES | CONFERENCES | NEWSLETTERS

LOGIN

Home: Articles: Multi-Unit Franchising:

Looking back, what's one decision you regret, and what did it teach you about running multiple franchise locations?

By: Kevin Behan | 362 Reads | 1 Shares

Sometimes in life we wish we could have a do-over. Decisions we make may be an outright mistake, or with the benefit of hindsight, we can later see how we could have approached a situation differently.

When it comes to the many decisions that come with restaurant ownership, nobody is going to bat 1.000. We asked several experienced restaurant franchisees to think about one decision they regret and any lessons they learned as a result of running multiple locations. Perhaps more important than minimizing the number of mistakes we make is recognizing and learning from those missteps.

The most common regret shared by these franchisees was in how they scaled their restaurant brands. Some of the challenges they faced came with site selection, local market demographics, and increased management and employee staffing and training. Over time, these franchisees can see how they would have made different decisions to positively impact their restaurant operations. These franchisees are looking back and sharing those decisions as a cautionary tale in which others can learn and better lead their business.

Just as these franchisees are providing advice for our readers, we asked other multi-unit restaurant operators to tell us about the best advice they have received. While some important words of wisdom are about business, many of the responses are core philosophies that can be applied to life in general. See below for valuable suggestions from several successful multi-unit restaurant franchisees.

May 19, 2025 ONLINE

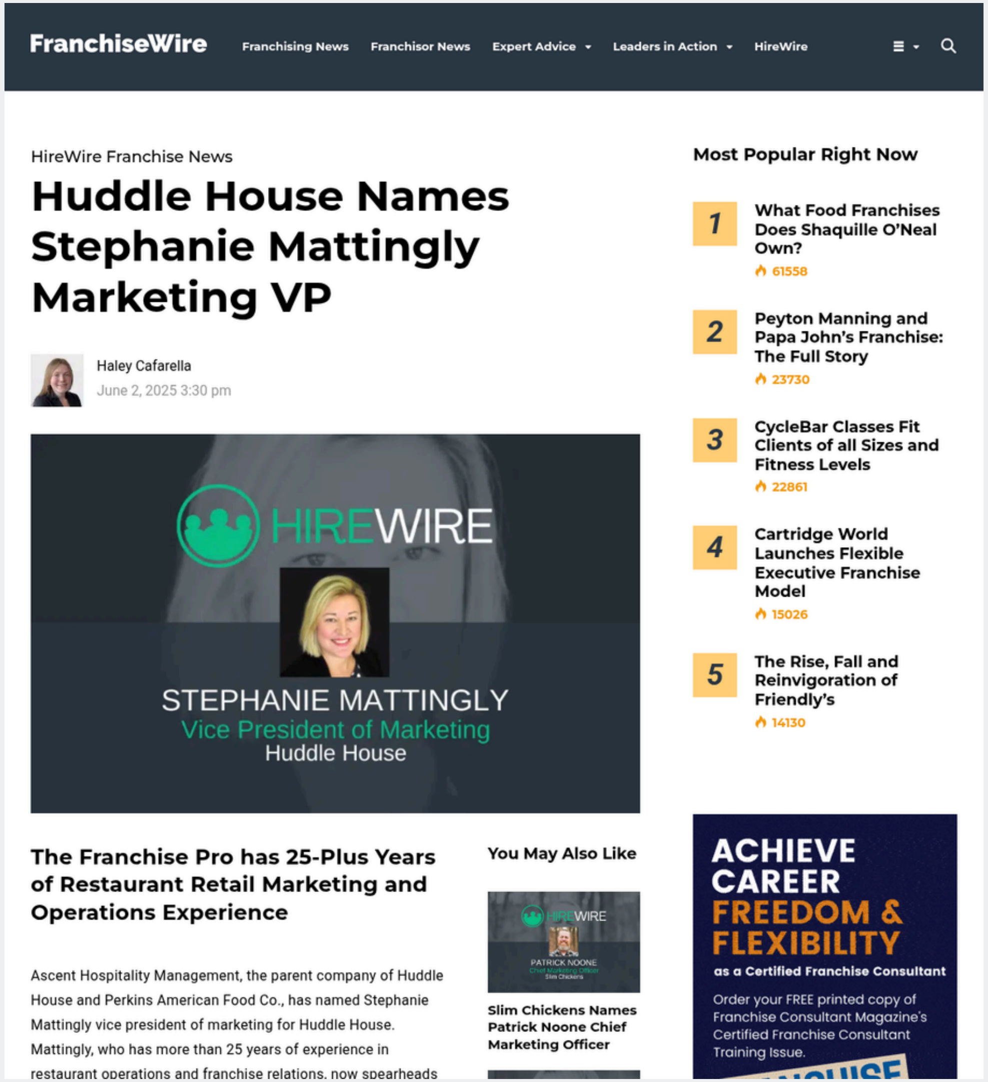
Looking Back, What's One Decision You Regret and What Di...

franchising.com/articles/20250519_looki...

FranchiseWire

Trade

12.7K
Unique Visits


FranchiseWire Franchising News Franchisor News Expert Advice Leaders in Action HireWire

HireWire Franchise News

Huddle House Names Stephanie Mattingly Marketing VP

Haley Cafarella
June 2, 2025 3:30 pm

HIREWIRE
STEPHANIE MATTINGLY
Vice President of Marketing
Huddle House

The Franchise Pro has 25-Plus Years of Restaurant Retail Marketing and Operations Experience

Ascent Hospitality Management, the parent company of Huddle House and Perkins American Food Co., has named Stephanie Mattingly vice president of marketing for Huddle House. Mattingly, who has more than 25 years of experience in restaurant operations and franchise relations, now spearheads

You May Also Like

Slim Chickens Names Patrick Noone Chief Marketing Officer

Most Popular Right Now

1. What Food Franchises Does Shaquille O'Neal Own? 61558
2. Peyton Manning and Papa John's Franchise: The Full Story 23730
3. CycleBar Classes Fit Clients of all Sizes and Fitness Levels 22861
4. Cartridge World Launches Flexible Executive Franchise Model 15026
5. The Rise, Fall and Reinvigoration of Friendly's 14130

ACHIEVE CAREER FREEDOM & FLEXIBILITY as a Certified Franchise Consultant
Order your FREE printed copy of Franchise Consultant Magazine's Certified Franchise Consultant Training Issue.

June 02, 2025 ONLINE

Huddle House Names Stephanie Mattingly Marketing VP

franchisewire.com/huddle-house-names-...

Franchise.org

Trade

170K

Unique Visits

June 12, 2025 — ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Management Grows Leadership Team wit...

franchise.org/2025/06/ascent-hospitality-...

NEWS & MEDIA

POSTED JUNE 12, 2025

Ascent Hospitality Management Grows Leadership Team with Appointment of Brian Wallunas as Chief Technology Officer

Share

Atlanta, GA (June 11, 2025) – Ascent Hospitality Management ("Ascent"), franchisor to leading family dining brands Huddle House and Perkins American Food Co., announced today the appointment of Brian Wallunas as Chief Technology Officer. In this role, Wallunas will lead the company's digital strategy, with a focus on implementing customer-centric technology solutions that drive operational efficiency, elevate the guest experience, and fuel brand growth.

Wallunas brings more than two decades of experience in hospitality and technology, having successfully led digital transformation efforts across some of the industry's most recognized brands. Most recently, he served as Chief Technology Officer at Smokey Bones, where he spearheaded a comprehensive overhaul of the brand's technology infrastructure and eCommerce platform. Under his leadership, online sales tripled, and the brand's guest engagement capabilities were significantly enhanced.

"Brian is a forward-thinking technology leader with a deep understanding of how to leverage digital innovation to advance brand performance and guest loyalty," said James O'Reilly, Chief Executive Officer of Ascent Hospitality Management. "His proven track record and strategic vision will be invaluable as we continue to modernize our operations and accelerate the digital evolution of both Huddle House and Perkins."

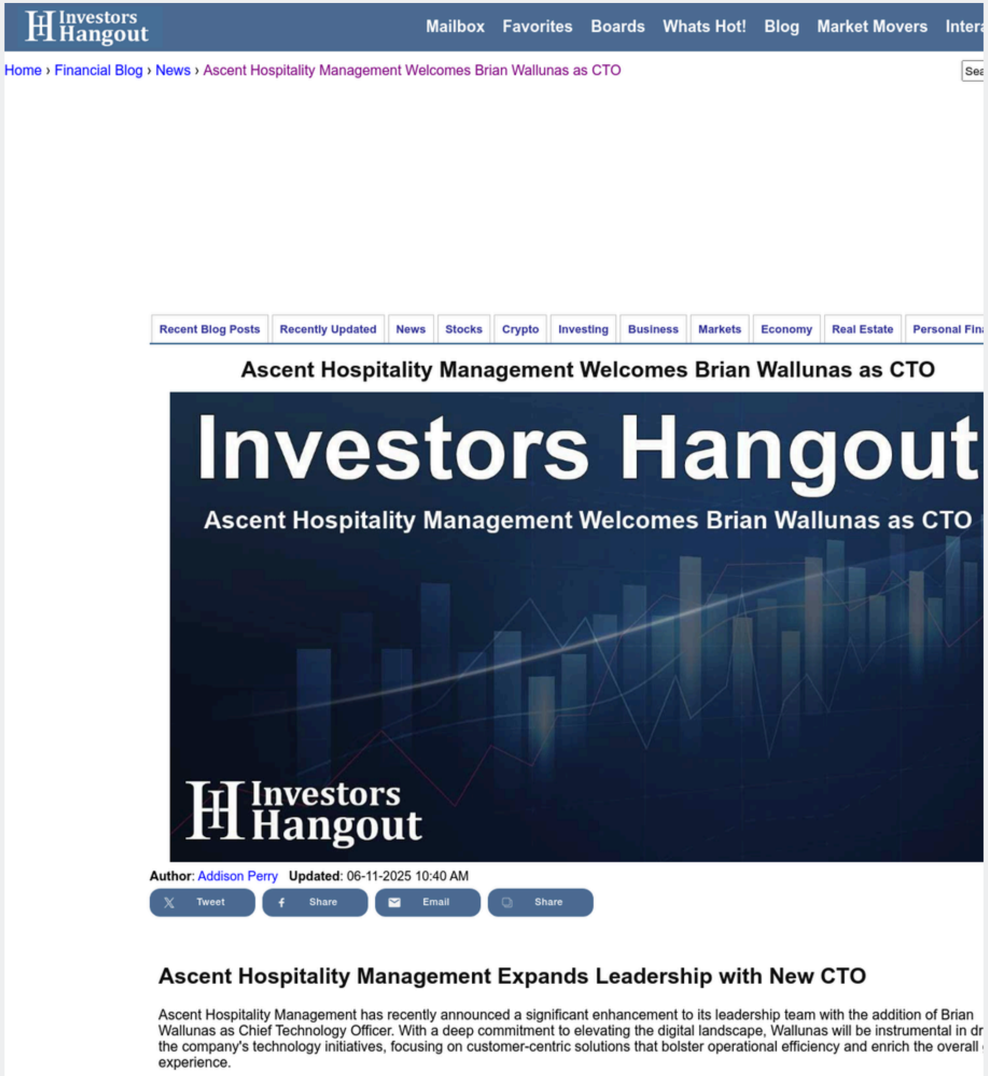
As Chief Technology Officer, Wallunas will lead the development of brand-specific technology strategies across the Ascent portfolio. He will

Franchising In The News
IFA Press Releases
IFA Thought Leadership
CEO Update
Franchising World Articles
Sponsor Spotlight

Investors Hangout

National

34.1K
Unique Visits



Investors Hangout Mailbox Favorites Boards Whats Hot! Blog Market Movers Intera

Home › Financial Blog › News › Ascent Hospitality Management Welcomes Brian Wallunas as CTO

Recent Blog Posts | Recently Updated | News | Stocks | Crypto | Investing | Business | Markets | Economy | Real Estate | Personal Fin

Ascent Hospitality Management Welcomes Brian Wallunas as CTO

Author: Addison Perry **Updated:** 06-11-2025 10:40 AM

Tweet | Share | Email | Share

Ascent Hospitality Management Expands Leadership with New CTO

Ascent Hospitality Management has recently announced a significant enhancement to its leadership team with the addition of Brian Wallunas as Chief Technology Officer. With a deep commitment to elevating the digital landscape, Wallunas will be instrumental in dr the company's technology initiatives, focusing on customer-centric solutions that bolster operational efficiency and enrich the overall experience.

June 11, 2025 ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Management Welcomes Brian...

investorshangout.com/ascent-hospitality-...

Metro Atlanta CEO

Local

9.49K
Unique Visits

Provided by SimilarWeb

June 12, 2025 ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Management Appoints Brian...

metroatlantaceo.com/news/2025/06/asc...

About Direct Connect Newsletter Contact Sponsor

METRO ATLANTA CEO

News | Features | Video | Direct Connect | Dilbert | goBeyondProfit

Local Communities Albany Athens Augusta Columbus Gainesville LaGrange Middle Georgia Newnan Rome Savannah Tifton Valdosta

Home › News › Jun 2025

Ascent Hospitality Management Appoints Brian Wallunas as Chief Technology Officer

Staff Report From Georgia CEO

Thursday, June 12th, 2025

Ascent Hospitality Management ("Ascent"), franchisor to leading family dining brands Huddle House and Perkins American Food Co., announced today the appointment of Brian Wallunas as Chief Technology Officer. In this role, Wallunas will lead the company's digital strategy, with a focus on implementing customer-centric technology solutions that drive operational efficiency, elevate the guest experience, and fuel brand growth.

Wallunas brings more than two decades of experience in hospitality and technology, having successfully led digital transformation efforts across some of the industry's most recognized brands. Most recently, he served as Chief Technology Officer at Smokey Bones, where he spearheaded a comprehensive overhaul of the brand's technology infrastructure and eCommerce platform. Under his leadership, online sales tripled, and the brand's guest engagement capabilities were significantly enhanced.

"Brian is a forward-thinking technology leader with a deep understanding of how to leverage digital innovation to advance brand performance and guest loyalty," said James O'Reilly, Chief Executive Officer of Ascent Hospitality Management. "His proven track record and strategic vision will be invaluable as we continue to modernize our operations and accelerate the digital evolution of both Huddle House and Perkins."

As Chief Technology Officer, Wallunas will lead the development of brand-specific technology strategies across the Ascent portfolio. He will oversee the implementation of scalable digital solutions tailored to each concept, with a focus on enhancing guest engagement, streamlining operations, and supporting franchisee growth. By aligning technology investments with brand goals, Wallunas will play a critical role in strengthening the digital foundation and long-term success of both restaurant systems.

"I'm eager to join Ascent at such a pivotal time and help build a best-in-class digital ecosystem that supports our guests, franchisees, and teams," said Wallunas. "There's incredible potential in the Huddle House and Perkins brands, and I look forward to working with the leadership team to create frictionless, rewarding experiences that keep our guests coming back."

To learn more about franchising with Huddle House visit www.ascenthm.com/franchising.

Email Print

Tweet

Share on LinkedIn

Recommend Sign Up to see what your friends recommend.

Search

Get the Daily Metro Atlanta CEO Briefing

The Metro Atlanta CEO Briefing is a daily email newsletter that contains the day's top business news headlines and a summary of each day's feature. Subscribe Today.

{% ad_placement sidebar-4 %}

About Metro Atlanta CEO

Metro Atlanta CEO is a daily publication that focuses exclusively on business issues in the greater Atlanta metro. We invite you to learn more about how to expose your business to others in the community. Contact us today to receive more information about editorial, video and promotional exposure at Atlanta CEO.

Metro Atlanta CEO is part of the Georgia CEO Network which includes newswires, newsletters, databases and local web sites in cities across Georgia: Albany, Athens, Atlanta, Augusta, Columbus, Gainesville, LaGrange, Middle Georgia, Newnan, Rome, Savannah, Tifton, and Valdosta.

Retail & Restaurant Facility Business

Trade

4.82K

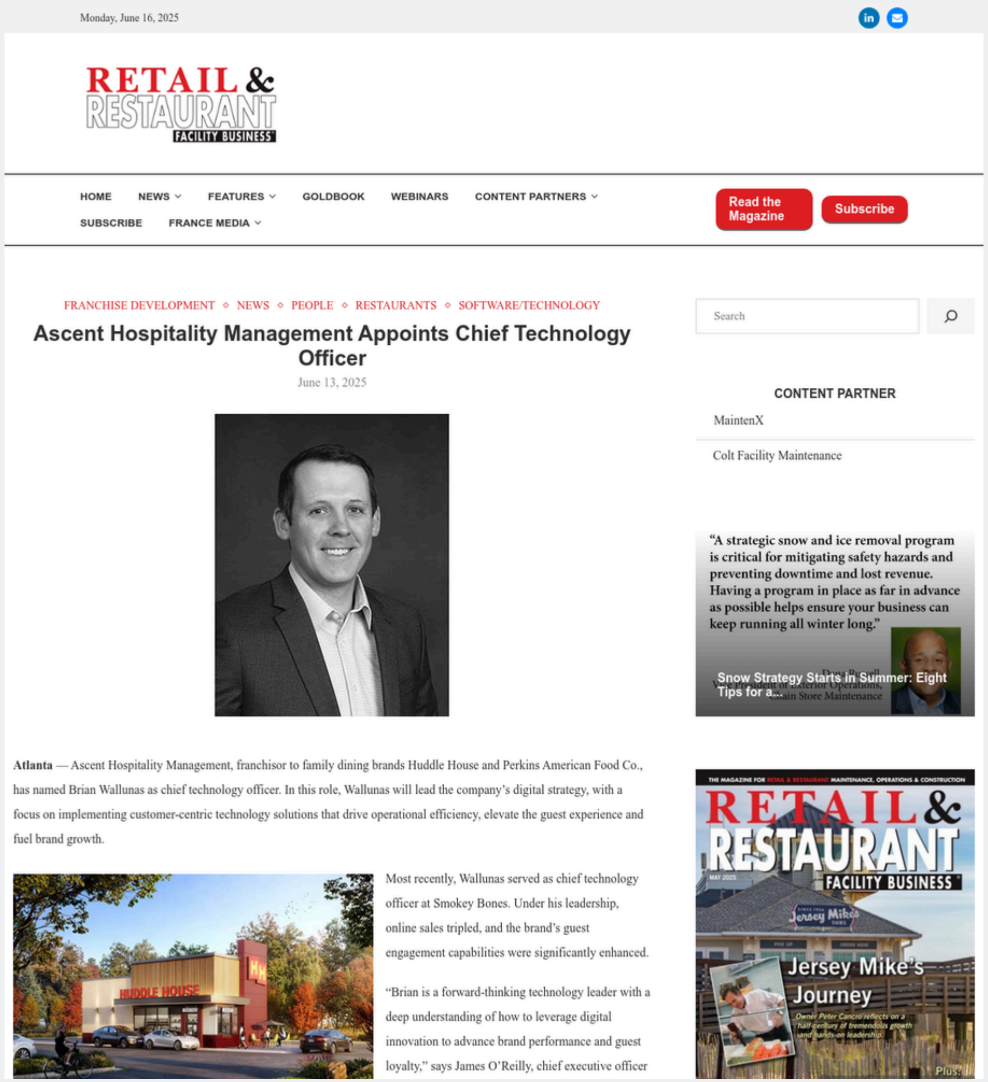
Unique Visits

Provided by SimilarWeb

June 13, 2025 ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Management Appoints Chief...

retailrestaurantfb.com/ascent-hospitality-...



Monday, June 16, 2025

RETAIL & RESTAURANT FACILITY BUSINESS

HOME NEWS FEATURES GOLDBOOK WEBINARS CONTENT PARTNERS SUBSCRIBE FRANCE MEDIA

Read the Magazine | Subscribe

FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT ◇ NEWS ◇ PEOPLE ◇ RESTAURANTS ◇ SOFTWARE/TECHNOLOGY

Ascent Hospitality Management Appoints Chief Technology Officer

June 13, 2025

Atlanta — Ascent Hospitality Management, franchisor to family dining brands Huddle House and Perkins American Food Co., has named Brian Wallunas as chief technology officer. In this role, Wallunas will lead the company's digital strategy, with a focus on implementing customer-centric technology solutions that drive operational efficiency, elevate the guest experience and fuel brand growth.

Most recently, Wallunas served as chief technology officer at Smokey Bones. Under his leadership, online sales tripled, and the brand's guest engagement capabilities were significantly enhanced.

"Brian is a forward-thinking technology leader with a deep understanding of how to leverage digital innovation to advance brand performance and guest loyalty," says James O'Reilly, chief executive officer

Search

CONTENT PARTNER

MaintenX

Colt Facility Maintenance

"A strategic snow and ice removal program is critical for mitigating safety hazards and preventing downtime and lost revenue. Having a program in place as far in advance as possible helps ensure your business can keep running all winter long."

Snow Strategy Starts in Summer: Eight Tips for a...

RETAIL & RESTAURANT FACILITY BUSINESS

Jersey Mike's Journey

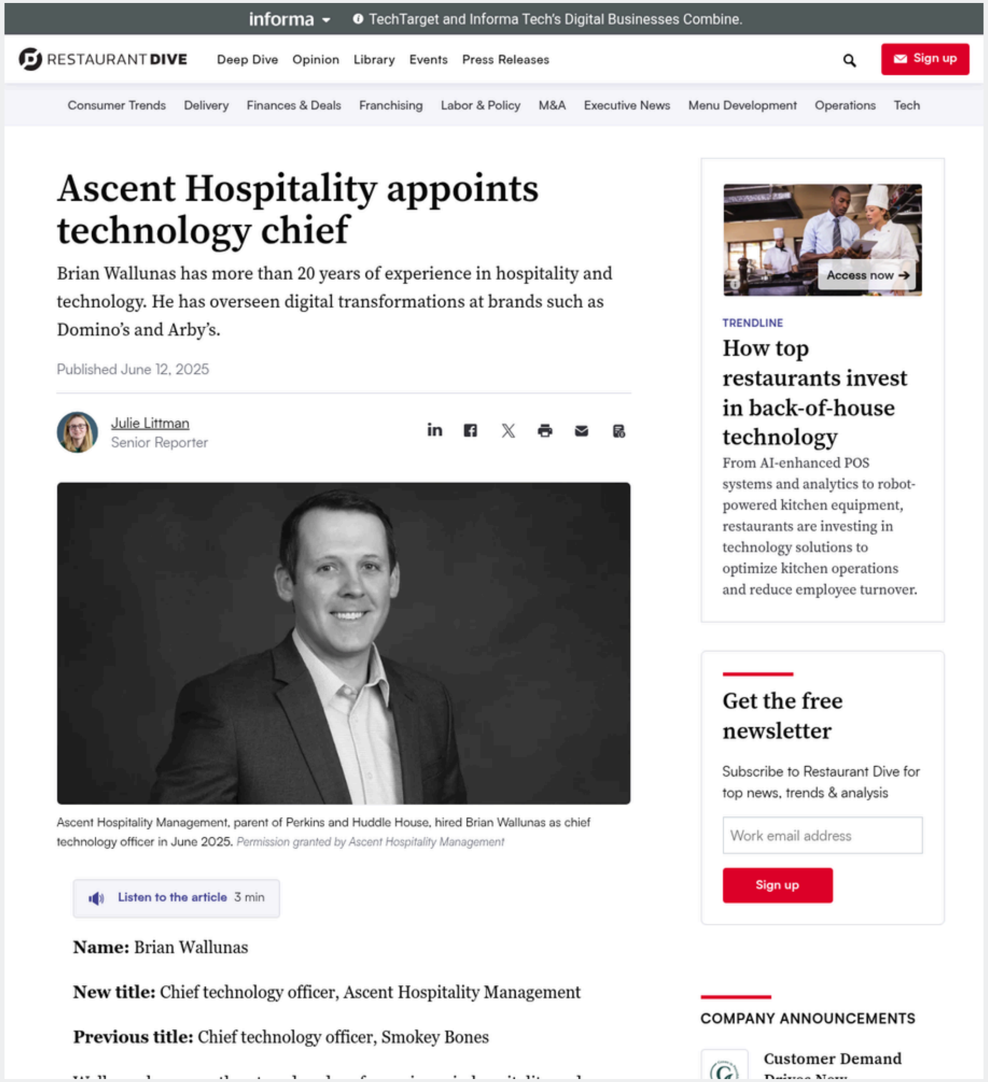
Restaurant Dive

Trade

53.5K

Unique Visits

Provided by SimilarWeb



informa · TechTarget and Informa Tech's Digital Businesses Combine.

RESTAURANT DIVE · Deep Dive · Opinion · Library · Events · Press Releases · Sign up

Consumer Trends · Delivery · Finances & Deals · Franchising · Labor & Policy · M&A · Executive News · Menu Development · Operations · Tech

Ascent Hospitality appoints technology chief

Brian Wallunas has more than 20 years of experience in hospitality and technology. He has overseen digital transformations at brands such as Domino's and Arby's.

Published June 12, 2025

Julie Littman
Senior Reporter

Ascent Hospitality Management, parent of Perkins and Huddle House, hired Brian Wallunas as chief technology officer in June 2025. *Permission granted by Ascent Hospitality Management*

Listen to the article 3 min

Name: Brian Wallunas

New title: Chief technology officer, Ascent Hospitality Management

Previous title: Chief technology officer, Smokey Bones

Access now →

TRENDLINE

How top restaurants invest in back-of-house technology

From AI-enhanced POS systems and analytics to robot-powered kitchen equipment, restaurants are investing in technology solutions to optimize kitchen operations and reduce employee turnover.

Get the free newsletter

Subscribe to Restaurant Dive for top news, trends & analysis

Work email address

Sign up

COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Customer Demand

June 12, 2025 ONLINE

Ascent Hospitality Appoints Technology Chief

restaurantdive.com/news/perkins-parent-...