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Scaling smarter: 5 ways to build a sustainable leadership team

By Drew Yancey, PhD

In the fast-paced world of restaurants and food service, sustainable growth hinges on strong leadership. As businesses scale—from a single location to multiple units or from independent operations to franchised enterprises—leadership must evolve beyond founder-driven decision-making. The ability to attract, develop, and retain high-performing leaders directly impacts operational efficiency, guest experience, and long-term brand success.

For restaurant groups, catering companies, and hospitality-driven food service providers, leadership gaps, operational inefficiencies, and cultural misalignment can disrupt growth. Expanding teams often struggle to maintain consistency in service standards, kitchen operations, and brand identity. Without a scalable leadership structure, decision-making bottlenecks emerge, accountability weakens, and frontline execution suffers.

To build a leadership team that fosters long-term success, food service companies must embrace strategies that empower managers, define core values, and invest in leadership development. In this article, we explore five key ways restaurant and food service companies can scale their leadership

teams effectively—ensuring operational excellence, brand consistency, and future-ready resilience.

To build a leadership team that fosters long-term success, food service companies must embrace strategies that empower managers, define core values, and invest in leadership development. In this article, we explore five key ways restaurant and food service companies can scale their leadership teams effectively—ensuring operational excellence, brand consistency, and future-ready resilience.

At the core, leadership often must transition from being founder-centric to team-oriented. As companies scale, the centralized decision-making that propelled early success becomes a bottleneck. Effective leadership in this phase hinges on fostering accountability, cultivating alignment, and delegating decision-making authority to the right individuals. Addressing these challenges requires a deliberate approach to building a leadership structure that scales with the organization.

- 5 strategies for building a scalable leadership team
1. Shift from founder-centric to team-centric leadership

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Drew Yancey, PhD

At the core, leadership often must transition from being founder-centric to team-oriented.

Bobby's Burgers expands Arizona footprint with deal for multiple new restaurants in Phoenix area

Utah franchisee Joe Sample to bring chef-driven burger brand to Maricopa County after recent debut in Orem



Franchisee Joe Sample shares a laugh with Bobby Flay

Phoenix, AZ – Bobby's Burgers By Bobby Flay, the concept co-founded by renowned chef Bobby Flay, announced a multi-unit franchise agreement to expand its presence in Arizona, with all locations planned for Maricopa County. The new deal comes from franchisee and veteran restaurateur Joe Sample, who recently opened his first Bobby's Burgers location in Orem, Utah, in December 2024.

Sample's swift expansion into a new state marks an exciting milestone following his deal for statewide rights in Utah, announced in July 2024. Bobby's Burgers' current Arizona location can be found at The Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. The first of this new agreement with Sample is projected to open in 2026.

"After the incredible welcome we've received in Orem and the unwavering support from the Bobby's Burgers team,

expanding into Arizona just made sense," said Sample, founder of Crave Management Group. "This brand is fantastic. It's bold, craveable and the Bobby Flay-curated menu speaks for itself. Arizona's dynamic market is the ideal place for us to continue the success we've seen in Orem and we're beyond excited to bring Bobby's Burgers to a whole new audience.

Sample's background in franchising began straight out of college, where he quickly built a reputation as a standout franchisee and respected community leader. Today, his company, Crave Management Group, now includes both Taco Bell and Bobby's Burgers in its growing portfolio, showcasing Sample's ability to lead and expand high-performing brands.

"Joe is exactly the kind of partner we look for at Bobby's Burgers,"

See BOBBY'S page 10



What's Going On

Important new products, corporate news and industry events

Restaurants recently closed!

After over 25 years being open and serving diners, **Hanamizuki Japanese Restaurant** located at 8255 International Dr in Orlando has permanently **closed**.

Also, in Orlando, **Nick's Family Diner** at 1235 N Orange Ave has also **closed** after about 15 years.

Villa Azur closed after 13 years in business, ending its run as a South Beach staple for upscale Mediterranean dining and nightlife. A part of Villa Azur Hospitality, it held a memorable place in Miami Beach. The Hospitality Group has other concepts in other countries, such as [Dubai](#), [Riyadh](#), [Bodrum](#) and [St Tropez](#).

Closed after 30 years in business is **Portofino Italian Ristorante**, which was located at 5035 34th St South in St. Pete. Another restaurant is locating there this year. Circo Pizzeria & Italian Kitchen will take the spot later this year.

Niki's has been a neighborhood staple for 35 years. Located at 6947 N. Wickham Rd, in Suntree, FL. It will close May 31st.

Finnegan's Road was a classic Irish-style pub serving Guinness on tap and offering a range of mixed drinks. The establishment had served



NEFT Vodka, the award-winning, ultra-premium vodka celebrated for its clean, two-ingredient recipe, is now pouring across 12 Innovative Dining Group (IDG) locations in Los Angeles, Newport Beach, CA, Las Vegas, NV, and Austin, TX. Guests at some of the most successful and legendary restaurants across the portfolio, including BOA Steakhouse, Sushi Roku, Katana, and more, can now savor expertly crafted cocktails and NEFT Vodka pours on the rocks, elevating the bar experience. "Partnering with Innovative Dining Group just makes sense for our product," said Justin Burnett, Chief Sales Officer, U.S., NEFT Vodka. "Their restaurants are where people go for a top-tier dining experience, and that experience should extend to what's in their glass. Today's diners are looking for high-quality, clean spirits served in a way that feels intentional, and that's exactly what NEFT Vodka brings to the table." NEFT Vodka is now available at all Innovative Dining Group locations. Neftvodka.com.



patrons for 25 years but no more. **Finnegan's Road** in Miami Beach located at 942 Lincoln Road **has closed**.

◆◆◆◆◆
◆◆ In a groundbreaking move to combat waste and inefficiency in the hospitality industry, **86DeadStock** emerges. This innovative online platform is on a mission to transform how

restaurants, hotels, and event planners manage overstock, **especially from businesses that have closed**. Another concept born of necessity, created by the site of hundreds of restaurants and franchises closing during Covid. The app (<https://linktr.ee/86DeadStock>) simplifies the process, making it easy to list everything from kitchen equipment and barware to dry goods and furniture, connecting sellers with buyers who need those items. "86DeadStock, is the first-of-its-kind B2B marketplace

built by hospitality industry veterans," explained Fitzgerald. Officially launched last month, it will give restaurants, bars, hotels, food trucks, and suppliers a seamless way to buy and



sell surplus inventory. The platform helps businesses reduce waste, recover costs, and access quality products at a discount—all while keeping valuable resources in circulation. And it is available to anyone looking for these types of bulk items at a discounted price. Our platform is a beacon of sustainability, offering a second chance for products and a first-rate solution for our users."

◆◆◆◆◆
◆ A popular Canadian restaurant chain has ambitious expansion plans into the United States and globally. **Tahini's Restaurants**, renowned for its innovative Mediterranean fusion cuisine and recognized as one of Canada's fastest-growing restaurant chains, as it celebrates the grand opening of its 60th location on King Street East in Toronto. What began as a single restaurant in Ontario has transformed into a thriving

See **WHAT'S GOING ON** page 6

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Supply chain management in the restaurant industry

Chris Rodrigue ♦ Today's Restaurant Contributor

Supply chain management is essential in the restaurant industry for ensuring efficient and cost-effective delivery of food and beverage products to meet customer demands. The restaurant industry has met several challenges in recent years, including those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and tariffs on imported goods. These challenges have emphasized the importance of effective supply chain

management in keeping profitability and customer satisfaction.

One significant concern for restaurant operators is the impact of tariffs on imported food and beverage products. The proposed tariffs, including a 25% tariff on imports from Canada and Mexico and an added 10% tariff on Chinese goods, are expected to affect the restaurant industry significantly. The National Restaurant Association

has requested an exemption for food and beverage products from these tariffs to reduce the impact on restaurant owners and consumers. Higher prices for imported goods, such as Mexican avocados and canned goods, could lead to increased menu prices, which may deter customers sensitive to price increases.

Independent restaurant operators, with profit margins of 3%-5%, may see profits drop by up to 30% due to rising food costs. This potential decline highlights the necessity for strategic supply chain management to mitigate the effects of tariffs and other supply chain challenges. Partnering with experienced supply chain partners can offer unique insights and strategies to help operators maintain their margins and manage the complexities of the supply chain environment.

Besides tariffs, the restaurant industry has faced challenges related to packaging materials. Tariffs on steel and aluminum have raised the cost of packaging materials, further affecting the supply chain. Effective supply chain management involves finding alternative sources for packaging materials and negotiating better terms with suppliers to reduce costs.


The COVID-19 pandemic has also significantly affected the restaurant industry's supply chain. Disruptions have led to shortages of essential products, requiring restaurant operators to adapt rapidly to changing circumstances. This situation has highlighted the importance of flexibility and resilience in supply chain management. Restaurant operators must be prepared to pivot and find alternative suppliers to ensure a consistent supply of products.

A strategy for effective supply chain management is to consolidate suppliers. Relying on a multiple suppliers can be risky, especially during crises. Suppliers typically are loyal to their contracted customers first. Without committing your purchases, and in return getting a commitment to your items being stocked, restaurateurs may find themselves shorted on deliveries.

By consolidating suppliers and committing your business, restaurant operators can reduce the risk of supply chain disruptions and ensure a steady flow of products. Building strong relationships with suppliers is also important. Collaborative partnerships can lead to better communication, improved terms, and more reliable deliveries.

Technology plays a vital role in modern supply chain management. Advanced software and tools can help restaurant operators track inventory, forecast demand, and manage orders more efficiently. Implementing technology solutions can streamline operations, reduce waste, and improve overall supply chain performance.

Supply chain management is crucial for the success of the restaurant industry. The challenges posed by tariffs, packaging material costs, and the COVID-19 pandemic have underscored the need for strategic and resilient supply chain practices. By consolidating suppliers, implementing negotiated distribution programs, leveraging technology, and partnering with experienced supply chain professionals, restaurant operators can navigate the complexities of the supply chain environment and maintain profitability while delivering high-quality products to their customers.

Chris has worked with multiple organizations in and outside of the restaurant industry in a CEO and other C-Suite roles. Chris' core competencies include strategic planning, organizational cultures, management training, operational excellence, and effective reporting. He consistently drives top tier employee retention and guest experience, leading to top tier financial performance. His restaurant industry experiences span over 4 decades, in virtually every industry segment short of fine dining. In addition to an active partner role with Strategic Supply Chain Partners, Chris continues to provide fractional CEO services for organizations that need support. chris.rodrigue@ssc.partners, chris-rodrigue@acrexiconsulting.com, cell: 985-778-1515. 

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Patina Restaurant Group rebrands as Patina Group

Delaware North’s premium lifestyle division unveils growth plans and enters a bold new era, blending culinary excellence with radical hospitality at scale across North America

New York, NY – [Patina Group](#), formerly known as Patina Restaurant Group, has officially unveiled a bold new brand identity that reflects its evolution from a singular fine dining restaurant to a modern, lifestyle-driven hospitality brand. The announcement marks a new chapter for the company, one that celebrates its legacy while embracing an ambitious path forward: to double its restaurant portfolio by 2030.

Founded in 1989 as the Patina restaurant — and known for earning Los Angeles’ first Michelin star — Patina Group today operates more than 40 restaurants and offerings across North America. Patina’s catering division delivers world-class hospitality at prestigious events for clients including serving as the official catering partner to the PGA of America inclusive of the PGA Championship and the 2025 Ryder Cup. The brand has also long been associated with iconic cultural institutions, including The Grand Tier Restaurant, which is set within one of the most spectacular cultural destinations in the world — Lincoln Center’s Metropolitan Opera House. With venues and strong partnerships with iconic institutions such as Lincoln Center and Disney Parks & Resorts, Patina is redefining what premium hospitality means — through culinary innovation, radical hospitality, and experiences that scale without compromise.



“The new Patina Group identity is not just a design update — it’s a declaration of who we are and where we’re headed,” said John Kolaski, President of Patina Group. “We’ve always stood for excellence in every experience. Now with a bold new vision, we’re scaling that excellence to meet today’s appetite for premium lifestyle dining, from the stadium to the stage and everywhere in between.”

Patina Group’s growth strategy centers on expanding chef-led restaurants, large-scale events, entertainment and cultural-adjacent dining, and corporate hospitality. Key initiatives include:

Hundredfold expansion, a new American brasserie developed in partnership with James Beard Award

Winning Chef Timothy Hollingsworth, opening soon at Belmont Park Village in New York. Additional locations are already in development, with ten locations projected by 2030.

Scalable restaurant concepts with both new Patina-developed brands — like Hundredfold — and strategic acquisitions of high-potential brands.


Partnerships with renowned chefs similar to the brand’s work with Michelin-starred Chef Carlos Gaytán (Paseo, Centrico, Tiendita in Downtown Disney) and Iron Chef Morimoto (Momosan Ramen in Boston, Morimoto Asia in Orlando).

Expansion within luxury catering and the launch of new “eatertainment” experiences.

Strategic investment in content and storytelling platforms.

Unlocking premium dining and catering opportunities across the global network of parent company Delaware North, one of the largest privately held hospitality companies in the world.

The updated name and visual identity — clean, elegant and timeless — align with Patina Group’s commitment to delivering unforgettable experiences in every setting.

As Patina Group enters this next era, the brand remains firmly rooted in its founding values: culinary excellence and radical hospitality. With its eyes on the future, Patina Group is poised to lead the next generation of premium hospitality at scale, and with soul. 

About Patina Group: From iconic restaurants and cultural institutions to world-class events and destination venues, Patina creates thoughtful, chef-driven experiences that blend timeless quality with modern creativity. Founded in Los Angeles in 1989—and the first restaurant in the city to earn a Michelin star—Patina has grown into a national hospitality leader with over 40 unique restaurant concepts and more than 4.3 million guests annually. Its venues include celebrated partnerships with Lincoln Center, The Empire State Building, The Plaza Hotel, Disney Parks & Resorts—alongside culinary collaborations with renowned chefs including Iron Chef Morimoto, Carlos Gaytán, and James Beard Award-winner Timothy Hollingsworth. Patina also produces elevated, large-scale catering experiences for some of the world’s most prestigious events. With a vision grounded in innovation, storytelling, and the comfort of unforgettable food, Patina Group is redefining hospitality—one experience at a time. www.patinagroup.com.

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What's Going On from page 3

franchise across Canada, with ambitious expansion plans into the United States and globally. This 60th store opening is a significant achievement in Tahini's remarkable growth story, underscoring its commitment to delivering a high-quality, unforgettable dining experience. "Our journey has always been about more than just food," says Omar Hamam, Founder and CEO of Tahini's Restaurants. "Reaching our 60th location is a testament to the dedication of our team and franchise partners, who share our vision of creating not just meals but meaningful experiences that customers cherish." 1st up is Loves Park, Illinois and going then to New Jersey, Alabama, Baltimore and Ohio to start.

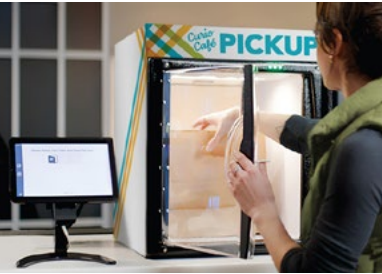


From the family behind The Sahara Grill, comes Naar Mediterranean Bar and Grill in Woodstock, GA. The planned summer opening will offer a casual, full-service dining experience with a full bar. Partner Tony Edwar, will open the new restaurant at [5335 Holly Springs Pkwy #101 in Woodstock](#).

Powerhouse Dynamics, the leading Internet of Things (IoT) solution provider for multi-site foodservice operators,

showcased its groundbreaking solution, [OilSmart by Open Kitchen®](#), during the 2025 National Restaurant Association Show last month, at McCormick Place, Chicago. The firm's solution recently earned a 2025 Kitchen Innovations (KI) Award, a benchmark of excellence in foodservice technology innovation. An esteemed panel of expert, third-party judges selected award recipients based on their ability to enhance operational efficiency, improve safety, drive sustainability, and address key industry challenges. "A lack of visibility into fryer equipment performance, staff behavior, and oil quality and consumption has been a challenge for multi-site operators whose fryers are core to their operations. OilSmart by Open Kitchen closes the gap, enabling operators to elevate their performance," said Jay Fiske, President, Powerhouse Dynamics, a Middleby company.

Based in Texas, Pappas Restaurants is buying On The Border Mexican Grill & Cantina restaurants. On the Border has closed more than 60 locations after filing Chapter 11 bankruptcy earlier this year. Pappas CEO is Mike Rizzo.



The deal is expected to close in the coming weeks.

Beyond Juicery + Eatery, is entering into the South with its first Georgia location. The new restaurant located at 1927 Peachtree Road NE, marks the brand's official entry into the Atlanta market as part of five-unit agreement. Entrepreneurs Ross Hare and Ricky Burch are leading the development in Atlanta. Continued expansion plans are in the works.

Apex Order Pickup Solutions, a pioneer in automated order pickup technology for streamlining off-premises order handoff, has announced [OrderHQ™ Array Series](#), a new modular, scalable line of pickup solutions that can be deployed in any configuration and in any space that fits a restaurant's floor plan. The flexibility of Apex's newest product line enables operators to achieve the efficiencies of automated food pickup without expensive remodeling. Apex Order Pickup Solutions is a leading provider of self-serve pickup locker solutions used in restaurants, hospitals, campus dining, retail, B2B ecommerce, and sports and entertainment venues. Apex's technology has received multiple industry

honors, including several Kitchen Innovations Awards from the National Restaurant Association. The company's roots go back to Apex Supply Chain Technologies, whose founder patented the first industrial vending technology more than 25 years ago. Visit [apexorderpickup.com](#).

Jessena and Michael Waldo have opened a tasting room for their Divinely Elegant Vines located at 2730 Broad St in Austell, GA. They offer fine vintage wines from the California region. "All of our wines are curated using Sustainable Farming Practices. Whether you're a seasoned connoisseur or just beginning to explore the world of wine, we offer a curated selection that caters to every palate." Divinely Elegant Vines is a Family, Veteran and Woman owned wine brand based in Georgia.

Lee's Famous Recipe Chicken has expanded its presence in Georgia, with the opening of its new location in Eastman. The Franchisee is Terry Coleman, Ryan Weaver is the company's CEO. Lee's started in 1966 when Lee Cummings and Harold Omer open "Harold's Take Home" restaurant in Lima, Ohio where Lee introduces his Famous Recipe chicken. The Parent company is Artemis Restaurant Corp.



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Restaurant Events wins 10 prestigious awards at trade show including the Grand Award

Senior Marketing Manager Stephen Hess, honored as an Industry Trailblazer

Orlando, FL - [Restaurant Events](#), the dynamic team behind the [New York Restaurant Show](#), [California Restaurant Show](#), [Pizza Tomorrow Summit](#), has announced that it has received 10 awards at the 2025 Trade Show Executive (TSE) Fastest 50 Awards & Summit, cementing its status as an industry leader in foodservice trade events. The TSE Fastest 50 Awards recognize the top 50 U.S. trade shows based on percentage of growth in net square feet, exhibitors, and attendance. The annual summit celebrates these achievements while fostering innovation among the industry's top leaders.

Among the highlights was the Pizza Tomorrow Summit's Fastest 50 Grand Award with recognition as the Fastest-Growing Food Show by Blended Growth in 2024, with a remarkable 42.1% blended growth, a testament to the show's increasing influence in the national pizza and foodservice space. Coupled with the Grand Award, the New York Restaurant Show, California Restaurant Show and Pizza Tomorrow Summit all won awards for percentage of growth in all three categories – increases in attendance, square footage and number of exhibitors. Additionally, Stephen Hess, Senior Marketing Manager, Restaurant Events LLC, was honored with the



Pictured from left to right are Paul Pedrow, Vice President, Sales; Mack Nishball, Director of Operations; Andrea Tencza, Vice President, Marketing; Stephen Hess, Senior Marketing Manager; and Glenn Celentano, CEO, Restaurant Events, LLC.

coveted Trailblazer Award. This award recognizes professionals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, vision, and innovation in the trade show industry.

“We are honored to be recognized by Trade Show Executive with nine Fastest 50 awards for year-over-year percentage growth in total attendance; exhibiting companies; and net square feet of exhibit space as well as the Grand Award for Fastest Growing

Food Show by Blended Growth for the Pizza Tomorrow Summit,” said Glenn Celentano, Partner & CEO of Restaurant Events. “This is a testament to the hard work, creativity, and innovation of our entire team, and is only just the beginning of more amazing things to come. Receiving the Trailblazer Award is a tremendous personal honor for Stephen, and I share that pride with every member of the Restaurant Events family.”

According to Andrea Tencza, Vice

President of Marketing, Restaurant Events, “Since joining our team, Stephen has consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of how data drives decision-making, optimizes campaigns, and enhances engagement. He’s shaped impactful marketing strategies, developed digital advertising campaigns that rebuilt our post-COVID lead pipeline, and stayed ahead of trends with a fun, industry-specific tone that resonates with our audience. Stephen played a pivotal role in the impressive attendance growth across all four of our shows last year.”

Restaurant Events produces premier trade shows designed to support and celebrate the restaurant and foodservice industry. With a focus on innovation, education, and connection, each show creates dynamic experiences that fuel business growth and industry advancement. Upcoming Events:

[California Restaurant Show](#) (with [Pizza Tomorrow Summit Pavilion](#)): August 3–5, 2025 | Anaheim Convention Center

[Pizza Tomorrow Summit & Florida Restaurant Show](#): November 11–13, 2025 | Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL

[New York Restaurant Show](#): March 8–10, 2026 | Javits Center, New York City

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Featured City: Philadelphia
Wonder Food Hall with several locations now in PA and other states will open a new Wonder at 1001 S Broad St. in Philadelphia this summer. Fast food delivery, takeout, and dine-in from iconic restaurants, all in one place. Whether it's pizza, Mexican, Mediterranean, BBQ, anything in between, or all of the above: it's all under one roof for delivery, pickup or dine in. "The cool thing about Wonder is you never have to choose what you want to eat," says Jessica Malone, head of brand marketing for Wonder. "Here, you can order from multiple restaurants all at once." There are over 40 locations nationwide. For all details visit their website at wonder.com.



Sapore, a vibrant and welcoming new Italian kitchen, is now open at **Rivers Casino Philadelphia**, offering guests a cozy dining experience with a menu that blends traditional flavors, modern twists and handcrafted cocktails. Susan Foster is the GM of Rivers Casino Philadelphia. Sapore joins Fishtown's now burgeoning restaurant community. Sapore is now home to Philly's most robust limoncello menu, featuring every limoncello brand available from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. After a rich and flavorful Italian meal, guests can top off their evening with a glass of traditional Italian lemon liqueur. Online at RiversCasino.com/Philadelphia.

In East Kensington **Fleur's** a new 14,000 sq-ft property with



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Isgro Pastries rising up in a 22,000

Isgro's story begins in rustic Italy, winds through elegant Vienna, and settles in bustling Philadelphia. As a young teenager in Sicily, Mario Isgro's innate cooking skill earned him a chance to study culinary arts 1,100 miles away in pastry-obsessed Vienna. He excelled in baking and brought his craft to Philadelphia in 1904. Mario opened Isgro Pastries in the food-centric Italian Market at 1009 Christian Street—where it still stands today.

A family-run operation, Isgro Pastries quickly became Philadelphia's go-to bakery for cannoli, ricotta cookies, sfogliatelle, Italian fruit-filled cookies, almond macaroons, pignoli cookies, butter cookies, torrone, biscotti, rum cake, and so much more.

Today, Mario's grandson stewards the Isgro legacy. Born in the Italian Market and raised in the bakery, Gus Sarno's life has revolved around Isgro Pastries. Having inherited Mario's creativity and culinary talent, Gus



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spent his childhood learning from his grandfather. He took over the business in 1969 and has run it, with his wife Lucille, ever since.

Though Gus likes to say “change isn’t in our vocabulary,” he’s created some irresistible Isgro items, including the bakery’s best-selling ricotta cookies. *Chefs and restaurateurs know Gus for his incredible palate and culinary instincts.*

Today, Gus and Lucille run the show with their sons Michael and A.J. Complementing her husband’s


creative skills.

Now in its fourth generation of family ownership, the Sarno family carries forward the Isgro Pastries legacy that Mario Isgro, their patriarch, started more than a century ago.



Recently, Isgro Pastries has undergone its first ever expansion, relocating its production to a new 22,000 sq. ft. warehouse in South Philly, which will also serve as a retail space. Keep up with the expansion online at their website. 



a two-floor restaurant, six-room boutique hotel, event space, and a rooftop bar is opening at 2205 N Front St. The venue comes from Graham Gernsheimer, Josh Mann and Chef George Sabatinom, who will head the kitchen. They are all three hospitality veterans. Fleur will offer French cuisine and drinks at its restaurant. The first floor and mezzanine is just opening now, and the roof and event space will follow with an opening later in 2025. Some of the 6-floor building in total will have a rooftop bar and the four-seasons dining room. More to follow after that. Visit fleursphilly.com.

 **Chef Carlos Aparicio, a two-time James Beard Award semifinalist, is opening his 2nd location of El Chingón in Fishtown.** El Chingón Philly is a vibrant restaurant in Philadelphia, known for reimagining Mexican cuisine with bold

flavors and innovative techniques. The menu features elevated traditional dishes, including a renowned sourdough flour tortilla program, highlighting Chef Aparicio’s commitment to quality and authenticity. With a lively atmosphere that enhances its bold cuisine, El Chingón has gained significant acclaim, earning a spot as a James Beard Award finalist in 2024 and ranking among The New York Times’ Top 50 Restaurants. It was also named one of the Top 10 Best Restaurants in Philadelphia for 2024. To learn more see www.elchingonphilly.com.

 **Today’s Restaurant** invites you to submit your information for the What’s Going On column at any time. Please e-mail your company, product or event information to terri@trnusa.com. It’s any easy way to get free publicity for your company, product or service! 

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4 reasons your restaurant isn't profitable

David Scott Peters ♦ Today's Restaurant Contributor

Restaurant owners regularly ask me why they can't seem to turn a profit in their business. Most of the time I don't even have to review their financial reports before I answer the question. This is because the crux of the problem often extends beyond the day-to-day challenges and runs deeper. Most of the time a restaurant isn't profitable because they struggle with systemic issues within their operation. I break those issues down into four categories: systems, which support consistency, which then support culture, which is all supported by leadership.

Restaurant systems are the backbone of success

Let's start with systems—the cornerstone of any thriving restaurant. Without them, chaos reigns supreme. Imagine your ordering processes in disarray—over-ordering leading to waste or under-ordering resulting in popular dishes being 86ed. I've witnessed firsthand the transformative power of streamlined ordering systems tailored to sales data and seasonality. The result? A 3% reduction in food costs and improved customer satisfaction. Efficient, consistent systems are paramount to success.

Consistency builds loyalty with restaurant customers

Consistency is king in the realm of customer experience. A great dining experience followed by disappointment due to inconsistencies in service or food quality can drive guests away. Each interaction matters, and consistency fosters loyalty. Without it, you're gambling with your restaurant's reputation.

Effective leadership is the compass guiding your restaurant's direction.

Culture is the heartbeat of your restaurant

Culture permeates every aspect of your operation. A negative work environment breeds discontent among team members, leading to subpar customer service and costly turnover. Cultivating a positive, supportive culture isn't just about morale—it's smart

economics. Happy teams are stable teams, saving you money on training and hiring.

Leadership guides the way to restaurant success

Effective leadership is the compass guiding your restaurant's direction. Setting standards, motivating your team, and aligning everyone with your goals are all hallmarks of strong leadership. Without it, your restaurant will struggle to be profitable.

If profitability eludes you, it's time to revisit the basics. Addressing foundational aspects—systems, consistency, culture, and leadership—can yield tangible changes to your bottom line.

Unlocking profitability in your restaurant requires a holistic approach that addresses core foundational elements. Focus on systems, consistency, culture and leadership to pave the way for sustainable success. **TR**

David Scott Peters is an author, speaker, restaurant expert and coach who coaches restaurant operators how to stop being prisoners of their businesses and to finally achieve financial freedom. His book, Restaurant Prosperity Formula: What Successful Restaurateurs Do, teaches the systems and traits restaurant owners must develop to run a profitable restaurant. Thousands of restaurants have worked with Peters to transform their businesses. Get his free 30-minute training video <http://www.davidscottpeters.com>.

Bobby's from pg. 1

said Michael McGill, President of Bobby's Burgers by Bobby Flay. "He's passionate, experienced, and he knows how to build a team that truly brings our brand to life. I'm excited to see Bobby's Burgers make its mark in the Phoenix area, and with Joe leading the way, I have no doubt that his locations will continue to thrive."

Bobby's Burgers, inspired by Flay's love of bold flavors and craveable simplicity, delivers elevated counter-service classics with a twist. The brand offers a menu of signature burgers, mouth-watering fries and spoon-bending shakes, all with Flay's distinctive culinary flair. In March, the brand celebrated the successful launch of its first-ever limited-time offer, featuring the Buffalo Burger and Dulce de Leche Shake. **TR**

About Bobby's Burgers by Bobby Flay: Bobby's Burgers by Bobby Flay is the unbeatable burger experience co-founded by renowned chef Bobby Flay. As a reflection of his successful 40-plus-year career in the restaurant industry, Flay has handcrafted every ingredient and menu item to create both a craveable and approachable Bobby Flay dining experience. Backed by a team of veterans in the restaurant industry, Bobby's Burgers offers tailored support from experts to ensure that every location has the highest-quality burger experience. With nine locations currently open and several in the development pipeline, Bobby's Burgers is launching its full-scale U.S. and international franchise expansion plan.

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Del Llano Farms partners with Frites Street to launch first 100% seedless oil national french fry brand

Scottsdale, AZ - On trend and in line with Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.'s DHS (Department of Health and Human Services) initiatives to identify healthier alternatives to seed oils, [Del Llano Farms](#) announced an agreement with [Frites Street](#), the chef-trusted frozen fry brand known for its clean-label Belgian-style fries, who will convert their entire food operations to Tropical High Oleic Oil, making it the first national fry manufacturer in the U.S. to go 100% Non-Seed Oil.

Del Llano Farms is a leading producer of tropical seedless Non-GMO RSPO Certified, Kosher, High Oleic Olein Oil with its headquarters in Arizona and its farms in Colombia, South America.

Under the agreement, Frites Street, also based in Arizona company, will exclusively utilize the seedless oil for the initial preparation of its nationally renowned french fries, and will also sell the oils to its culinary customers to be used for cooking in their commercial kitchens. Frites Street fries are also Non-GMO, Vegan, Kosher, and Gluten-Free. Now, they will be 100% Seed Oil Free.

"Frites Street's mission has always been to give professional chefs the highest quality fry that does not cut corners and goes beyond the potato, and this partnership with Del Llano Farms for seedless oil helps us achieve that promise," said Flip Isard, founder of Frites Street. "Using seedless oil from



Del Llano Farms allows us to level up and innovate responsibly from start to finish. From our sourcing to our processes, our customers can feel confident they are receiving the best fries that are healthier and taste great, while also respecting the planet."

Del Llano Farms' oils are non-GMO, as well as rich in heart-healthy oleic acid, natural antioxidants, and rich in Vitamin E, making it a better choice for frying, and a smarter choice for chefs looking to align with clean-label menus and healthier alternatives like Frites Street Fries.


"We are very excited to partner with Frites Street as it becomes the first national fry brand to go 100% seedless oil," said Roberto Herrera, CEO of Del Llano Farms. "Seedless oil is quickly gaining

popularity thanks to its health benefits and superior taste with no chemicals and no shortcuts. Del Llano Farms has made a long-term commitment to regenerative agriculture and is committed to sustainability and transparency for

Del Llano Farms is a fifth-generation regenerative farm in Colombia, with its non-seed oils grown without deforestation.

our customers, and the public."

Del Llano Farms is a fifth-generation regenerative farm in Colombia, with its non-seed oils grown without deforestation. Certified by both RSPO and ISCC, the global standard in sustainability for the harvesting of palm oil, participating in the national- zero deforestation agreement, the farms run on renewable biomass and methane capture systems, making them energy independent and Carbon Negative/Climate Positive.

Arizona-based [S&K Oil Sales](#) is the distributor for Del Llano Farms' oil in North America and is credited with introducing the health-centric seedless oil to Frites Street. Since the 1960s, the Herrera family has cultivated palm fruit on previously transformed grasslands in Eastern Llanos, never in deforested land ensuring a stable habitat for wildlife, all while growing Del Llano Farms. 

About Frites Street: Founded in Arizona, Frites Street produces premium frozen fries for chefs who do not settle. Trusted by Michelin-starred restaurants and award-winning chefs, the company is reimagining what a frozen fry can be - healthier, better tasting with fewer ingredients, better sourcing, and no seed oils.

About Del Llano Farms: (Del Llano Alto Oleico): Founded in Colombia, South America in 1965, Del Llano Farms' fully integrated operations span thousands of acres across Guaicaramo and Hacienda La Cabaña regenerative estates. Del Llano Farms is known for its sustainable approach in producing high-yield, non-GMO hybrid High Oleic palms that are rich in oleic acid and natural antioxidants. Online at [Skoilsales.com](#).

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Food Trucks Heaven welcomes nine new culinary concepts in 2025

Food Trucks Heaven expands fleet; now offering over 50 food truck options

Kissimmee, FL – Food Trucks Heaven, the premier food truck park located in Kissimmee announced the addition of nine new food trucks to its diverse lineup this year.

“At Food Trucks Heaven, we’re thrilled to keep growing and evolving with our amazing community,” said Chuck Young, Owner of Food Trucks Heaven. “This year, we’re especially excited to welcome nine new food trucks to our family, each bringing unique flavors and culinary traditions to the park. Our mission has always been to provide family-friendly dining options for everyone, and this expansion is just another step toward making Food Trucks Heaven the ultimate destination for food lovers in Central Florida.”

New additions in 2025 include:

Da Jerk Hut – Da Jerk Hut brings Jamaica’s bold and flavorful tastes to the heart of Central Fl. A family-owned and operated food truck specializing in traditional Jamaican dishes prepared with authentic spices and fresh ingredient.

Sabor do Nordeste – Sabor do Nordeste brings the taste of Brazil to Kissimmee with regional specialties, including traditional dishes from Brazil’s northeastern region, known for its rich flavors and unique ingredients.

Antojitos Mis 3 Amores—The family-owned business food truck is

committed to authentic flavors and presentation. It offers a variety of traditional Mexican street foods, including tacos, quesadillas, and their beloved antojitos.

Samba Brasil – Samba Brasil offers a culinary experience that captures the essence of Brazilian cuisine. Their menu features a variety of grilled meats and traditional sides, delivering a taste



of Brazil in every bite. With a focus on quality ingredients and traditional recipes, Samba Brasil Orlando has become a popular destination for those seeking genuine Brazilian street food in the area.

JJ Arepas y Barril – Specializing in Colombian-style arepas, JJ Arepas y Barril is a go-to destination for authentic Latin street food. Alongside their signature arepas, the truck serves perfectly grilled meats, seasoned and cooked to perfection, capturing the essence of Colombian parrilla culture.

El Mangolote – El Mangolote features a unique menu centered around mango and corn dishes. It specializes in classic Mexican favorites like elotes (grilled street corn) and esquites (corn in a cup), as well as refreshing mango slushies, mango bowls, and tangy maracuyá mango treats.

The Point Grill drink kiosk – From the popular The Point Grill food truck

culinary heritage. Boricalle prides itself on using time-honored recipes and high-quality ingredients to deliver the bold, comforting flavors that define Puerto Rican cuisine.

These additions bring the total number of food trucks at Food Trucks Heaven to over 50, offering a wide range of cuisines from around the globe. The park continues to be a family-friendly destination, providing not only diverse culinary options but also live music, games, and a vibrant atmosphere for guests of all ages. It also offers outdoor and indoor seating and free parking.

Whether you’re a local resident or a tourist seeking a unique dining experience, Food Trucks Heaven offers a delightful mix of flavors and entertainment, making it a must-visit spot in Central Florida.

For more information about the new vendors and upcoming events, visit foodtrucksheaven.com.

About Food Trucks Heaven: Food Trucks Heaven is a premier culinary destination located in Kissimmee, Florida, just a short drive from Orlando’s world-famous theme parks. Situated at 5403 W Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway, within the Main Gate Flea Market, this vibrant food truck park features over 50 diverse food trucks offering a wide array of global cuisines, including Latin American, Middle Eastern, Asian, American and more. Food Trucks Heaven provides both indoor and outdoor seating options, allowing guests to enjoy their meals comfortably regardless of the weather.

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Islamorada’s 15-acre, 214-room **Three Waters Resort & Marina**, a Tribute Portfolio Resort, Marriott Bonvoy’s collection of independent hotels, has opened the brand’s first in the Keys. Located at 84001 Overseas Highway, the resort features The Cove, an adult-centric resort-within-a-resort with island-inspired rooms and king suites, a private beach lagoon, and **restaurants Kindler and The Hideaway**. With 80,000 square feet of indoor and alfresco event spaces, the property also offers additional multiple dining outlets: a fully renovated Tiki Bar; Little Limon, Mercado Morada, Lucky Twist, Islamorada Pizza Co. and Kokomo.



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Scaling smarter

from page 1

Founders often struggle to relinquish control, but effective scaling requires empowerment across the leadership team. The founder's role must evolve into that of a strategic leader who focuses on vision and culture.

Action Steps

- ◆ **Delegate Decisions:** Clearly define decision-making responsibilities for team leaders, allowing the founder to focus on high-level strategy.
- ◆ **Hire Complementary Skills:** Bring in leaders with expertise in areas where the founder lacks depth, such as operations, marketing, or finance.
- ◆ **Set Boundaries:** Establish clear protocols for when leaders need to consult the founder versus when they can make independent decisions.

2. Define core values as behavioral anchors

A cohesive leadership team must operate under shared values that align with the company's purpose. Core values should be actionable, guiding both decision-making and interpersonal dynamics.

Action Steps

- ◆ **Operationalize Values:** Translate abstract principles into specific behaviors. For instance, a value like "customer focus" might include responding to client inquiries within 24 hours.
- ◆ **Use Values in Hiring:** Assess leadership candidates for alignment with company values to ensure cultural fit.

- ◆ **Reinforce Daily:** Incorporate values into performance reviews, team meetings, and company-wide communications.



3. Foster accountability through clear objectives

Accountability is essential for sustaining momentum during growth. A lack of clarity in leadership roles and objectives often leads to misaligned priorities and inefficiencies.

Action Steps

- ◆ **Define KPIs for Leaders:** Establish measurable objectives for each leader, tied directly to the company's growth goals.
- ◆ **Implement Feedback Loops:** Regularly evaluate performance against objectives and adjust strategies as needed.
- ◆ **Create a Culture of Ownership:** Encourage leaders to own outcomes, celebrating successes and learning from failures.

4. Invest in leadership development

Leaders need tools and training to address new challenges. Investing in their development not only enhances individual performance but also strengthens the organization's resilience.

Action Steps

- ◆ **Tailored Training Programs:** Offer leadership development programs focused on skills like strategic thinking, team management, and conflict resolution.
- ◆ **Mentorship Initiatives:** Pair emerging leaders with experienced executives to facilitate knowledge transfer.
- ◆ **Continuous Learning:** Encourage participation in industry conferences, workshops, and networking events to stay abreast of best practices.

5. Build resilience for uncertain times

The ability to lead through adversity is a hallmark of great leadership teams. Mid-market businesses often face external pressures, such as market volatility and competition, that demand resilient leaders.

Action Steps

- ◆ **Scenario Planning:** Train leaders to anticipate and prepare for potential disruptions.
- ◆ **Cultivate Adaptability:** Encourage leaders to view challenges as opportunities for growth and innovation.
- ◆ **Promote Well-being:** Support leadership teams with resources for stress management, work-life


balance, and mental health.

The long-term benefits of strong leadership

A scalable leadership team provides the foundation for sustained growth. Benefits include:

- ◆ **Increased Agility:** Leaders equipped to make informed decisions can respond quickly to market changes.
- ◆ **Improved Efficiency:** Clear accountability and alignment reduce operational redundancies.
- ◆ **Stronger Culture:** Unified leadership fosters consistency in values and practices across the organization.
- ◆ **Greater Innovation:** Empowered leaders are more likely to pursue creative solutions and drive long-term success.

Leadership is the linchpin for success. By transitioning to a team-centric approach, defining actionable values, fostering accountability, and investing in development, businesses can build a leadership team capable of sustaining growth and navigating challenges. The journey requires intentionality, but the rewards—both for the organization and its people—are transformative.

About the Author: Drew Yancey, PhD is Founder & CEO at Teleios Strategy, a premier strategic planning, leadership development, executive coaching and succession planning advisory firm. With a proven track record in high-performance team building and strategic execution, Yancey solves challenging problems at the nexus of growth, strategy, and innovation. Yancey is also the co-author of "Leading Performance... Because It Can't Be Managed: How to Lead the Modern Workforce." Reach him at www.teleiostrategy.com. 

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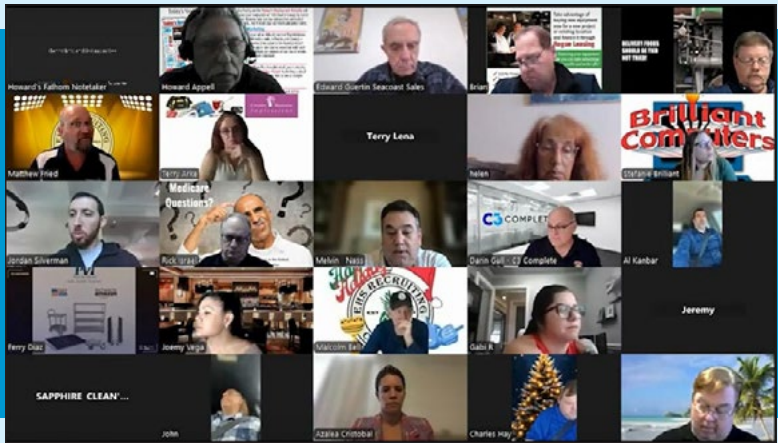
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10, 20, 30, 40, 60, 80, 140, 200 QTS



Vertical Cutter Mixer
15 hp, 90 min. Digital Timer
Two Speeds



**TDR-36 Semi-auto Dough
Rounder/Divider**
Optional Dividing Units for
Choice (14.30.36.52)



ISO 9000



Call us Today!

THUNDERBIRD FOOD MACHINERY, INC.

(PIZZA HUT OFFICAL VENDOR)

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