

HOW HABIT BURGERS IS OPTIMIZING ITS DRIVE THRU

The Yum! Brand chain relies on innovative, best-of-breed partner solutions.

HABIT BURGER & GRILL, A YUM! BRANDS CHAIN is famous for its made to order, chargrilled burgers, chicken, innovative salads, stacked sandwiches, and handspun shakes while still offering the speed, efficiency, and accessibility that define the quick-service restaurant industry. Like any restaurant, it faced challenges with clear communication between the front and back of the house, as well as maintaining the speed of service and order accuracy demanded by consumers, particularly in the drive thru, where more revenue is coming from than ever before.

When looking for solutions, it became harder to find a comprehensive software and hardware solution because, as Habit expanded, the brand often bought preexisting restaurants rather than building new ones, meaning layouts in back and front of house were not standardized across locations. Crystal Canavan, senior director of restaurant technology and innovation at Habit, shed light on the problem and how this growing brand found a platform that customized solutions to address every obstacle.

“Before partnering with QSR Automations, we faced challenges with our ticketing system order accuracy, handling peak

drive thru and delivery periods, and managing guest modifications,” Canavan says. “We needed a solution to streamline kitchen operations and improve communication between the front counter and kitchen teams. QSR Automations provided that.”

To stay competitive in the current marketplace, drive thrus have to deliver on brand promises, with speed, accuracy, and incredible customer service. To do this, communication between technology, both hardware and software, and the employees using it needs to be customizable, highly integrated, and smart. QSR Automations’ system prioritizes orders in real time,

so employees and managers can smoothly manage rushes and peak hours. “Features like sticky printer labels ensure guest customizations are clearly identified, reducing mistakes and remakes,” Canavan says.

“With varied kitchen layouts, a one-size-fits-all routing system doesn’t work,” Canavan says. QSR Automations also customizes configurations to any location and layout, taking on any level of complexity and curating simple, intuitive interfaces and solutions that can handle any variation a restaurant has. “A well-configured kitchen display systems adapts to each store’s setup and ensures orders are routed correctly. Since we don’t cook until a guest orders, everything must be carefully coordinated so food comes out fresh and together.”

Consumers’ expectations are evolving as competition strains the industry. A lack of insight into what bottlenecks are in the back of house or drive thru can hurt a brand’s reputation, as slowdowns and inaccuracies can frustrate guests.

“Our brand promise is to serve fresh, high-quality food exactly as the guest ordered it,” Canavan says. “QSR Automations helps us deliver on that daily. Features like order tracking and sticky printer labels

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QSR AUTOMATIONS



ConnectSmart
Kitchen

Order Ready Displays

With order ready display boards, restaurants can bridge the gap between kitchen operations and guest pickup, displaying real-time order status to reduce confusion and improve flow.

“When they walk through the front door, they view the board & they can tell if their order is ready or not.”

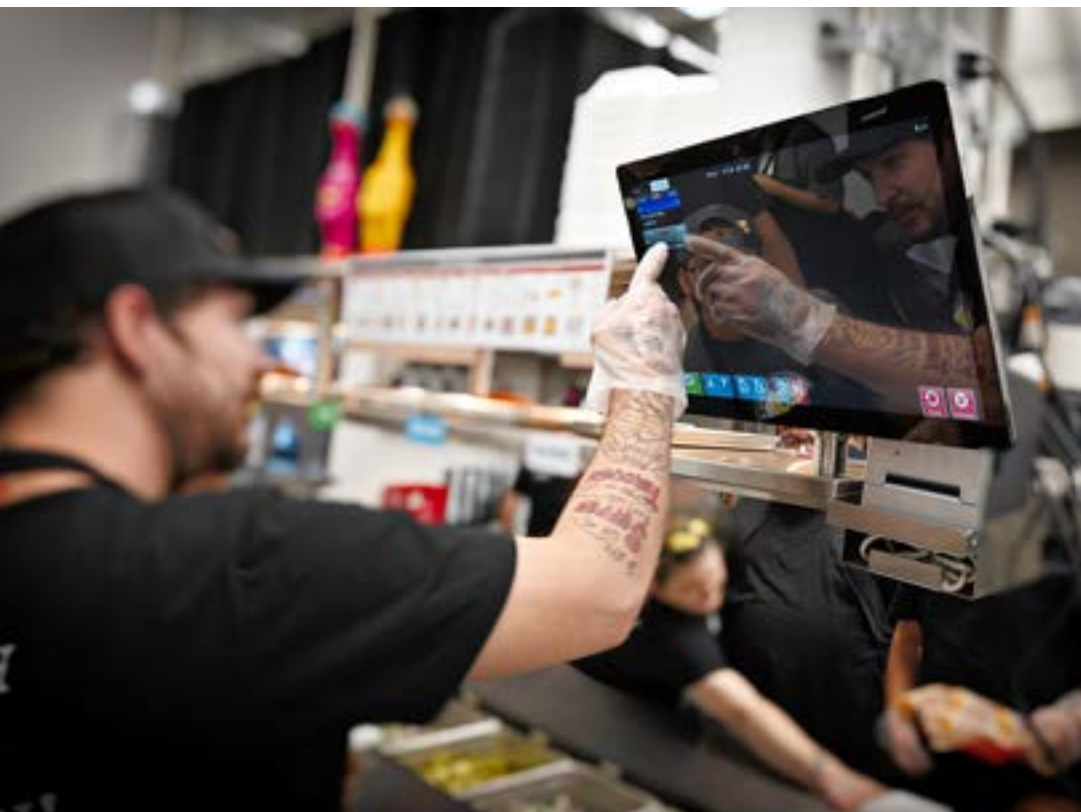


Steven Ledesma
Senior Manager of IT
Dave's Hot Chicken



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reduce errors, speed handoff, and ensure consistency across dine-in, pickup, and delivery.”

Beyond operational efficiency, one of the most surprising benefits Habit saw from QSR Automations’ technology was its impact on team morale. “The sticky printer integration reduced double-checking and remakes, boosting morale,” Canavan says. “Crews could focus on delivering great food and service instead of being stressed during peak times.”

This speaks to an often-overlooked aspect of restaurant technology: its effect on the people who use it daily. By cutting down on stress during rushes, the solution allows team members to feel more supported and in control, which translates into smoother service for guests. Technology that empowers employees not only streamlines operations but also enhances the human side of hospitality—critical in a segment where service quality is just as important as speed.

The benefits extended into training as well. Habit no longer had to rely on employees memorizing complex systems of verbal cues or mental math to coordinate kitchen timing. “With the legacy system, communication was very manual,” Canavan says. “Moving to an automated system and making that part of the kitchen flow was very helpful. New employees didn’t have to learn the old math—they could get up to speed faster, which resulted in bet-

ter food quality and a better guest experience.”

The impact on customer-facing outcomes has been equally clear. “Guests highlight order accuracy, especially with modifications,” Canavan says. “That’s thanks to the KDS and sticky printer integration. It reduces remakes, cuts food waste, and ensures guests get fresh, accurate food the first time. We’ve seen improvements in Yelp and Google ratings, as well as our own survey scores.” For a brand like Habit, where food is cooked to order and customization is common, accuracy isn’t just a nice-to-have—it’s essential to maintaining trust and loyalty.

Automation has also helped Habit prepare for the future. With the rise of mobile ordering, third-party delivery, and increasingly complex menus, consistency across channels has never been more important. By



integrating QSR Automations’ tools, Habit can deliver on its promise of fresh, high-quality food, whether a guest visits the dining room, orders in the drive thru, or chooses delivery. This consistency safeguards the brand’s reputation and strengthens its competitive edge in a crowded QSR marketplace.

As consumer expectations for speed and accuracy continue to rise, restaurants must lean on smart, flexible technologies that can adapt to varied layouts, empower employees, and improve the guest experience. Habit’s success with QSR Automations shows how the right tools do more than solve operational headaches—they unlock new levels of consistency, morale, and customer satisfaction. For an industry built on both efficiency and hospitality, that balance is the true recipe for long-term growth.

Visit qsrautomations.com for more information on how to streamline your drive thru.