



Restaurant Portfolio Integration and Growth
ANONYMIZED CASE STUDY

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Client Overview:

An established East Coast restaurant operator expanded into independent full-service concepts in the Washington, DC market. Its acquisitions brought six restaurants into the portfolio without a shared structure for operations, people, financial management, or growth. The HNC Agency was retained to provide an embedded Director of Operations and build a repeatable model for integrating and managing the group.

CLIENT Confidential restaurant group

SCOPE Six restaurants | 180+ employees

ENGAGEMENT Embedded operations leadership | July 2023–November 2025

The Challenge

The parent company had deep experience in franchised restaurants. Acquiring standalone full-service concepts required a different integration system. The locations arrived with their own service habits, purchasing practices, staffing models, and financial routines. Each had an identity in its local market, but there was no common management framework for operating them together.

Without shared standards, leaders could not consistently compare performance, coach managers, control costs, or bring another acquisition into the company. The mandate was to establish how the group would absorb, operate, measure, and grow distinct restaurants as one portfolio.

The HNC Agency Approach

Establish portfolio accountability

The agency clarified operating responsibilities across location leadership and central oversight. Management routines, compliance expectations, and performance controls created a consistent way to review results and resolve issues across six restaurants.

Unify service and people practices

A shared operating playbook aligned front-of-house and back-of-house procedures, steps of service, training expectations, and management standards. An employee handbook gave the portfolio a common foundation for people policies and accountability while leaving each concept room to retain its own guest-facing identity.

Connect financial controls to daily decisions

Budgets, P&L reviews, purchasing, food cost, labor, and bar performance became part of recurring operations management. Leaders could identify drift and respond through staffing, purchasing, menu, pricing, and manager coaching.

Make acquisition integration repeatable

The acquisition playbook set out the core sequence for bringing a restaurant into the portfolio: assess the existing operation, establish reporting and leadership, align employee and service standards, put purchasing and financial controls in place, train the team, and join the common performance cadence.

Build multiple routes to revenue

The growth playbook coordinated menu and pricing strategy, catering and events, nightlife programming, strategic partnerships, and local-market development. These initiatives broadened demand beyond routine dining room sales and gave leaders a shared commercial agenda.

The Result

Reported outcomes

RESULT	PORTFOLIO IMPACT
More than \$10.5M	Incremental annual revenue from growth initiatives
More than \$40M	Annual portfolio revenue
17%	Reduction in food costs
Below 28%	Labor costs sustained across the portfolio
2.7 stars	Improvement in guest ratings across locations

Additional result Bar profitability was restored, and common standards supported execution across more than 180 employees.

The restaurants moved from a collection of independently run locations to a managed portfolio with common operating standards, clearer P&L ownership, aligned front-of-house and back-of-house execution, consistent people practices, and a framework for future acquisitions. Portfolio-wide growth initiatives generated more than \$10.5 million in incremental annual revenue, while the group reported improvements in food cost, labor discipline, bar profitability, and guest ratings.

The work demonstrates how embedded leadership can turn an acquisition strategy into a functioning operating company: create the structure for integration, put managers and teams on a common cadence, and build commercial programs that make scale productive.