Case Study:
Putting a New Restaurant Concept to the Test

By Jay Parks

Challenge

An international restaurant company faced declining sales and a highly competitive landscape. In an effort to improve top-line results and brand perception, company leadership was eager to test a new concept at one of its locations. Launching the test concept required restaurant renovations and changes to the restaurant design, operating and labor models, IT environment, supply chain, marketing plans, human resources approach and lease documents. The company engaged Point B to provide the focused leadership needed to manage its many teams and meet its aggressive timeframe.

An innovation methodology

Point B brought together the internal project teams and governance to identify project dependencies, uncover issues and risks, and develop a consolidated project plan. In addition to running the program, we developed an innovation methodology to help our client better understand how its new concept should flow from the initial idea to concept development, including design, construction, implementation, testing and operational rollout. The methodology gives our client clear, deliberate decision points on whether to move forward and invest more time and resources on new concepts.

What does success mean?

Point B also developed the criteria to determine whether our client’s new concept was a success at the test restaurant—and, if so, whether it should proceed to a beta test or a full operational rollout. In the process, it was important to define the difference between "concept success"—whether the idea tested is successful—and “project success”—whether the project team is successful at conducting the test. Employees need to know that their success is independent from the success or failure of the concept they are testing. In fact, the ability to identify a failing concept early, before more money is spent on it, should be considered one of the greatest project successes of all.

Launching on time and budget

Our client’s new concept was launched at its test location in less than four months—on schedule and budget. Point B met construction delays by finessing some rescheduling that kept the overall program on track to meet the launch deadline. Going forward, our client is equipped to make deliberate decisions at specific points in the process about whether to scale this concept across multiple restaurants; so far, the results show promise. And the company has a methodology in place to make informed decisions about new concepts in the future.

Find out how Point B can help you achieve your vision. Visit pointb.com or contact us at insights@pointb.com.