

# GPS Hospitality: A Freebird Customer Success Story

Freebird helps Multi-Unit QSR Franchisee GPS Hospitality to monitor operational performance and communicate with managers to drive better performance and growth

## About GPS Hospitality

Founded in 2012, GPS Hospitality is a BURGER KING®, Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen®, and Pizza Hut® franchisee, operating nearly than 500 restaurants in Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia. GPS Hospitality was named Burger King Franchisee of the year for 2018.

## Business Needs

GPS Hospitality’s business information requirements fell into two main related areas.

- The company needed a data analytics/dashboarding solution that would allow staff to monitor key performance metrics and trends. Restaurant general managers needed to view daily/weekly/monthly data related to such things as actual to projected sales, items ordered, amount spent by order, speed of service, food usage, wastage, staffing hours, store standards ratings, etc. Corporate and regional managers, in addition to monitoring store level performance, also needed to view and compare results at the above store level.
- The company needed a means to easily communicate important information to restaurant and regional managers. This information included training material on policies, procedures and management practices, as well as product announcements, upcoming promotions and events, and internal performance contests and results. They also wanted to have a capability to receive feedback from restaurant managers.
- An important requirement was that the performance dashboards and non-quantitative information had to be accessible in a single and easy-to-use portal.

*“For GPS to continue to expand, we needed a one-stop information portal where managers could readily access company news, instructions, and training materials, as well as performance dashboards showing all of their key metrics.”*

*- Gary Thomas, VP of Operations Support*

## Challenges

In trying to address these needs, GPS faced several major challenges.

- The important operational data was fragmented and scattered in various back-office systems covering operations, finance, accounting, HR, etc., and spreadsheets. This prevented users from being able to readily see the status of all key metrics in one place and to understand the relationships between them.
- Because of the rapid growth in the number of new restaurants and managers being hired, extensive individual training by GPS corporate staff was no longer feasible. This issue would limit the ability for GPS to expand as rapidly as it planned.
- The information solution had to be a very easy to use, could not require ongoing IT involvement, and had to be deployed at a low cost.

## The Freebird Solution

The Freebird solution met all of GPS's requirements. It is a collaborative information platform that integrates data analytics/dashboarding capabilities with unstructured information (e.g. news, comments, documents, and discussions). Freebird automatically imports data from different GPS systems and presents it in unified dashboard views that allow users to view the status of metrics at glance, or to explore the data further to identify trends and anomalies. This ensures that all of the critical data and related information that otherwise would be scattered throughout the GPS organization, is readily accessible and organized to meet the needs of each user group.

*"The power of Freebird is that it integrates data from a wide range of systems and presents it as a unified set of tables, charts, and dashboards in a way that is intuitive and actionable."*

## The Results with Freebird

Since its deployment, the Freebird information portal has become a vital management tool for GPS, bringing together all of the information, news, and operational data into one place. Managers at all levels in the GPS organization now use the portal every day.

- **Restaurant managers** access their own dashboards to monitor all of their key operational metrics to see how they are tracking relative to projections and targets, allowing them to make any necessary adjustments in a timely manner. They also get updates on the latest news, instructions, promotions, products, internal contests, and access to policy and training related materials. Because Freebird is a collaborative environment, they also have the ability to draw on community knowledge and advice on best practices. New managers now have easy, one-stop access to all of the information and corporate knowledge that can get them up and productive much more quickly.
- **Regional managers** compare the metrics of individual restaurants in their areas and roll up results to see how they are performing as a group and relative to other regions. Also, with Freebird, regional managers have the ability to provide restaurant managers with guidance and instructions on areas that need improvement. They also use the Freebird to provide recognition to superior performing restaurants and employees.
- **Corporate managers** view the performance of individual or groups of restaurants, as well as gain information on the effectiveness of various promotions and new products. They can also communicate important news and announcements to all managers and receive their feedback on the success of various initiatives. Because Freebird is a self-service solution, corporate staff and managers can post and curate content all content.

Since its original deployment, GPS has extend its reliance on Freebird in several new functional areas, including: a cash deposit validation facility, an integrated forms and survey capabilities, an employee engagement and reward system, and a text/email alerts facility to communicate timely and critical news to all managers and hourly staff.

In summary, Freebird has enabled all levels of management to have a complete and shared understanding of operational performance, expected corporate standards, and upcoming events. It also has allowed corporate management to communicate and collaborate with managers in the field around such things as marketing strategies and best practices. The result is that Freebird has become an important tool for GPS to help drive operational efficiency, improve corporate communications, and facilitate the smooth integration of new stores and managers into the GPS family as it continues to grow.

*"Freebird has become an essential tool for GPS. It helps us to identify, and quickly address, operational areas that require improvement at an individual restaurant or corporate-wide level."*