

How High-Volume Recruiting Means New Tech in Franchise Organizations



By **EVAN WADE** - Contributor

With their decentralized structure and organizational complexity, franchised businesses often face challenges when making technology decisions. And these decisions are even more difficult to make given the industry's tendency to face high-volume recruiting periods. ADP's National Franchise Report noted that franchise organizations saw 29,000 hires in December 2018 alone, illustrating what's at stake for these organizations: While it's never a good time for technology to get in the way of operations, watching it stymie what should be a period of immense profitability is especially painful.



With franchises facing high-volume recruiting periods, organizations are increasingly turning to cloud-based communications tools.

The industry's unique needs make a compelling case for modern communication solutions. Booming subsects like restaurants (22,300 hires in December 2018, according to ADP) and those in temporary lulls (like real estate's relatively trim 100 hires) both stand to benefit, with improvements that start at hiring and funnel outward to the rest of the organization.

Reducing Complexity During High-Volume Recruiting

The franchise restaurant industry's 22,300-strong hiring spree last December may indicate that individuals performed well enough to justify high-volume recruiting, but that's just part of the story. The key to success in franchises is strong, consistent, and constant communication.

Many communication strategies, however, fail to consider the scaling problem common to franchise organizations across industries. In short, the more growth a best practice enables, the harder it becomes to implement systemwide. Bridging the gap necessitates a closer look at technologies enabling care and communication, and unified communications-as-a-service (UCaaS) platforms foot both bills: powerful, cloud-based solutions that help personnel tackle higher call volumes with greater effectiveness.

The strengths of UCaaS play into the "gateway" role franchisee-facing reps take. Because UCaaS solutions provide internal assets with quicker access to one another via a greater number of platforms, a question that might require half a day and a callback thanks to human latency now takes minutes. Since these reps are rarely in one place for long, features that allow them to make and receive calls from the same number no matter where they are have obvious value. A rep can use one number to place a call from their desk phone, take an urgent call in the field via laptop, and later send a follow-up SMS from their mobile device at home, all without juggling devices in the name of staying consistent.

The ability to use the same number is just one facet of the value UCaaS provides franchises in the midst of high-volume recruiting. A hotel franchise (1,700 hires in December 2018) could use franchise IT solutions like UCaaS to centrally ensure all locations opened during the upswing have the same calling features from front desk to front desk, with less effort needed to manage compliance and fix technical hiccups. An auto parts retailer (2,700 hires), meanwhile, could use a nationwide, brand-friendly phone number, then use UCaaS technology to forward all calls to the appropriate franchise location.



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Removing the Versus

These examples point to a larger idea: Any technology for multi-location organizations enabling consistency allows the franchise to put its best face forward *and* do it all at once. The former carries as much weight as the latter in the digital era, a time when customers demand experiential consistency between locations and mediums (be it physical store or e-commerce site).

Applying this idea in a communications context can have dramatic effects for franchises at every level of growth. Consider a pizza delivery chain that wishes to improve its inter-location consistency by having the same recorded IVR greetings no matter where the customer calls from. With cloud-based communications technology, businesses can implement this change all at once via out-of-the-box phone systems, reducing hardware costs and technical complexity. Making this change also helps remove customers' perception that one local branch is "better" than another, a real concern for companies that undergo staggered rollouts.

Easing the Hiring Burden

As to hiring, communications tools can further enhance consistency by removing potential barriers to training. Features such as video conferencing and screen sharing give every new hire the same chance at success, whether or not they're able to participate in in-person interviews. Just as importantly, this technology creates a greater level of training consistency among locations. Everyone can receive information from the same silo, with added practical and financial benefits: Instead of per diems, mileage checks, and hotel claims, having employees log in from authorized computers or BYOD devices at a set time is an effective, far more affordable option.

In other words, technology begets consistency. For franchises wishing to present a cohesive face to their increasingly choosy clientele, being able to put the same face forward at every location is a compelling perk that only grows more persuasive with every spike in hiring activity. Add in benefits such as simplified internal communications, and franchises everywhere have a tool that makes life easier for employees, locations, and the overarching business. Communication and hiring solutions provide value well beyond the hiring phase.