



MERITAGE WINS INNOVATION AWARD FOR SIMPLIFIED HIRING EXPERIENCE IN 300+ QUICK-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

The hospitality group won top honor for employee recruiting in 3rd annual Franchise Update Media Awards

GRAND RAPIDS, Michigan, JULY 13, 2021— [Meritage Hospitality Group](#), one of the nation’s premier restaurant operators, was recently recognized with the “Most Innovative Employee Recruiting” Award for reimagining its restaurants’ hourly recruiting and hiring experience through conversational AI.

The company set out to build a competitive advantage in a volatile hourly market by creating a fast and simple candidate experience, as well as alleviating the administrative recruiting work that consumed its store managers. After implementing their mobile-first, conversational assistant Olivia across 340 Wendy’s franchise locations, Meritage:

- Hired 999 new team members within an average of 3.82 days from application to offer
- Saved store general managers 2+ hours of administrative work per week by automating initial screening, interview scheduling, and candidate reminders
- Saw 91% of candidates complete the chat application via Olivia, with an average time to complete of just over 4 minutes
- Saw candidates accept an interview within an average of 2 days from their first conversation with Olivia

“People are always our top priority at Meritage. Whether someone engages with us as a customer, employment candidate, or teammate, we strive to provide the best experience possible,” stated Meritage President & Chief Operating Officer, Gary Rose. “[Paradox’s conversational AI solution](#) has enabled us to elevate our candidate experience and allowed our restaurant leaders to spend less time reviewing applications and scheduling interviews, and more time building and developing strong teams to deliver strong results.”

After implementing the new experience, Meritage’s franchise managers reported feeling much more confident in their ability to recruit and staff their restaurants given the automated assistance in screening and scheduling.

"Innovative clients like Meritage allow us to continue our own product innovation," said Paradox Chief Product Officer Adam Godson. "Hourly hiring is at an apex right now across so many verticals, especially restaurants. I'm exceptionally proud of the work Meritage is doing with us to think beyond the status quo experience."

Franchise Update Media conducted its 3rd annual Franchise Innovation Awards contest this spring, with a jury of 7 judges evaluating innovation, objectives and results of more than 100 entrants. The goal of the awards is to identify and recognize the franchisors creating and implementing the most original and successful strategies and tactics to build their brand.

CONTACT

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About Meritage Hospitality Group

Meritage Hospitality Group is a Grand Rapids based company, driving strategic growth in the competitive culinary market. The company is one of the nation's premier restaurant operators, currently with 342 restaurants in operation located in Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. Meritage is headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, operating with a workforce of approximately 11,000 employees. Meritage is comprised of five concepts – Wendy's, Morning Belle, Stan's Tacos, Twisted Rooster and Freighters Eatery & Taproom. Each concept delivers a distinctive dining experience for its guests, a work environment with opportunity for its team members and optimum results for its shareholders.

For more information, visit <https://www.meritagehospitality.com>

About Paradox

Launched in late 2016, Paradox was founded with the belief that if companies get the people thing right, they can build teams that change the world. In a few short years, the Scottsdale-based startup has grown into the clear leader in Conversational AI, supporting some of the world's largest employers, including Unilever, McDonald's, CVS Health, PepsiCo, and Aramark. Olivia, the company's conversational AI assistant, is helping TA teams automate tasks like screening, interview scheduling, candidate communications, and more, so recruiters can spend more time with people, not software. Paradox has won numerous awards, including Human Resource Executive's Best HR Product of 2019 and the 2020 Brandon Hall Gold Award for Best Advance in AI for Business Impact. It was also recently named one of Forbes' Top 500 Startup Employers. To learn more, visit www.paradox.ai.