Pepper Lunch Team on Seizing Unique Opportunities for Global Growth



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In the competitive global restaurant industry, having a unique concept that captivates both operators and consumers is no easy task. But Pepper Lunch has done it.

Pepper Lunch North American CEO Troy Hooper is helping position the popular Japanese fast-casual restaurant brand to grow significantly in the US and Canada. Pepper Lunch showcases an innovative, interactive dining experience, with a focus on quality.

“The brand story, first and foremost is the food.” Troy Hooper says on the *Restaurant Influencers* podcast. “You can see the quality when you receive the food.”

Troy Hooper was interviewed by Shawn Walchef of CaliBBQ Media at the 2023 National Restaurant Association show, along with Hot Palette Holdings' Sumio Matsumoto and Yuto Tago. The executives were there to draw attention to Pepper Lunch franchise opportunities and further grow the brand's reach in North America.

"Our U.S. locations continue to flourish and their sales success further cements that this brand is redefining the fast-casual space," Troy Hooper said when joining Pepper Lunch in February 2023. "There's no one in the marketplace offering an experiential dining element at this price point, making this concept a portfolio game-changer."

Hooper (also the founder/CEO of Kiwi Restaurant Partners) recognized the uniqueness of Pepper Lunch right from the start. From his perspective as a seasoned restaurant operator and brand builder, he was able to see how the concept had the possibility to be a one-of-a-kind experience for the consumer.

Since 1994, Pepper Lunch has offered an experiential dining entertainment feature that is not commonly found in other restaurants. There are over 500 Pepper Lunch locations in 15 countries, with more on the horizon.

The concept revolves around "DIY Teppanyaki," where customers can order at a kiosk or counter and have their food served on a sizzling hot plate. The interactive aspect allows diners to personalize their dishes by adding various sauces and spices, making each meal a truly one-of-a-kind QSR experience.

"Where else can you go to have an experiential dining entertainment feature that's not a full service or fine dining establishment?" asks Troy Hooper. "That doesn't exist in another quick, fast casual environment."

The growth of Pepper Lunch could not be possible without partner relationships. Building a successful restaurant brand requires strategic partnerships, and Hooper understands the

value of investing time in finding the best partners for Pepper Lunch.

Through years of experience and collaboration with different restaurants in various markets, he has cultivated relationships and identified those who align with the brand's vision.

Troy Hooper's leadership and drive could help propel Pepper Lunch to the forefront of the restaurant industry.

"I've made a long-term investment of consistently trying to understand who the best partners for our businesses are. And not every technology partner or supply chain partner or equipment partner is best for every restaurant," explains Hooper. "So that investment of time is paying off now as it has over the last few years."

As Pepper Lunch continues to expand its reach, it serves as a testament to the success that can be achieved when passion, innovation, and dedication to quality come together.

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