

ROOTS NATURAL KITCHEN — A CASE STUDY

**ROLE: RESTAURANT DESIGN, EQUIPMENT SUPPLY,
INSTALLATION & REPLACEMENT, SMALLWARES**



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ROOTS NATURAL KITCHEN

A BOELTER CASE STUDY SPOTLIGHT

A HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE

The success of Roots Natural Kitchen is based on a simple idea – a love of food. The founders recognized a need for healthy alternatives and understood very early on that serving a delicious meal was a fantastic way to provide their customers with a memorable experience. But, not all foods are created equal and, as a result, not all food experiences are the same. Far too often, the food that we eat leaves us feeling tired and run down. And it was this understanding that Roots Natural Kitchen was intent on changing.

The menu options at Roots Natural Kitchen are primarily broken down into two food groups: grain bowls and salad bowls. The grain bowl works with a primary base of brown or purple rice, flavored with lime, parsley and seasonings. The salad bowl starts with kale, spinach or a spring mix. From there, customers may choose from up to 26 fresh ingredients and dressings to create their own, custom dish. There is also the option to pick from an ever-growing list of “signature bowls” which are chef selected combinations of bases and ingredients that match well to create a variety of distinct flavor profiles. Roots Natural Kitchen offers a much needed healthy alternative, prompting a fan base that continuously sees lunch lines that extend out the front door.

Fresh and nutritious meals remain a constant across all Roots Natural Kitchen locations. Just as important is the speed at which the staff is able to serve their customers. With an ever-growing list of ingredients to choose from, the average meal prep time – from order, to payment, to being

handed the meal – is 90 seconds; all while serving upwards of 150 to 200 customers each hour.

“Nature does an outstanding job of supporting life. The sun shines. There are nutrients in the ground. Plants grow and produce oxygen. It works. That is why we trust nature when it comes to food and primarily serve things that grow. Natural stuff.” – *Roots Natural Kitchen*

STRONG LEADERSHIP

Peter Gavin began his career with Roots Natural Kitchen as Chief Development Officer in the early days of the restaurant’s history. His focus was on the development of new locations, which eventually led to his taking on and managing the new construction process. Peter has overseen the development of the Pittsburgh, Richmond and Penn. State locations while, at the same time, has scouted potential new sites, defined the various leasing agreements, built out new restaurants and managed the internal needs of the business.

Growing the Roots Natural Kitchen brand continues to be a goal of Peter’s team. In a very short amount of time, the company expanded from four units to eight units. Along the way, they launched a variety of new operational systems, development programs and compensation structures; everything a young and upcoming business is consistently refining and perfecting. Even with the constraints and difficulties of COVID-19, the foundation for continued growth has been established.

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Existing Roots locations vary in size and design, with many of their kitchen spaces ranging from 2,500 to 3,200 square feet on the large side, to as compact and efficient as 2,000 – 2,500 square feet at some of their smaller locations. And while each restaurant offers its own unique design and history, location continues to be key.

Some store fronts are much older and take inspiration from buildings that were considered new at the turn of the 20th Century, while others are clearly brand-new construction. Regardless of design or exterior presentation, the goal of Roots Natural Kitchen is inclusive catering through “radical accessibility of natural food.” The heart of their business model is to offer a healthy food alternative in an environment that both their customers and employees feel comfortable in.

“It requires repetition. It requires consistency, good training and clear expectations. It requires

a very solid business operating model. Radical accessibility applies to everyone. You should be able to get good food. You should be able to have a good work experience. Employing and consuming should be accessible and the intention is that anybody can do it.” – Peter Gavin, Chief Operating Officer, Roots Natural Kitchen

Eventually taking on the role of Chief Operating Officer (COO), Peter Gavin continues to view the success of the Roots brand as less regional and more regionally local. The intent has consistently been on creating an enhanced restaurant experience, catered specifically to the market that they're in, but with a reliance on replicating a higher level of service across all locations. And where Roots Natural Kitchen once focused almost exclusively on locations in and around college universities, they continue to explore new opportunities to expand further out to serve a broader spectrum of customers.



ROOTS NATURAL KITCHEN

A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

Adam Goodloe, Boelter's Contract Sales Project Manager, began working with Roots Natural Kitchen in 2018, providing kitchen design, equipment procurement and installation support. Since then, Adam has completed the development of four separate restaurants, with a fifth well into production and a future schedule that includes locations six and seven later this year.

Every new Roots Natural Kitchen restaurant begins with a site visit. Adam spends a day with the Operations or Construction Manager, as well as with any of the architects involved. He meticulously measures each space for future walk-in refrigeration units, custom fabrication and table spaces, as well as making special note of the dish room. He verifies the location of the individual water and electric access points and identifies the various hood packages that will work best for that specific kitchen

"Adam stays on top of everything throughout the project. He goes out to the site to take measurements, to make sure that the General Contractor hasn't installed anything the wrong way and ensures all of the kitchen equipment will fit. He understands our equipment package. He could design our entire kitchen at this point." –

Peter Gavin, Chief Operating Officer, Roots Natural Kitchen

After being provided the architectural background of each new location, Adam works closely with the General Contractor to assess what will eventually become the kitchen layout. He helps to identify and address potential custom fabrication or serving counter needs and adjusts the layout accordingly for any required shelving or equipment installation. Early on in



Boelter's relationship with Roots, Adam proposed an open area directly below the counters to provide better access to the frequently used trash bins, creating a more efficient workspace.

Throughout the lifecycle of each project, Adam meets with and assists the General Contractor to identify any issues that Boelter may be able to assist with. This often requires on-the-fly pivots with equipment selection or other design adjustments based on newly revealed construction or fabrication concerns. Having a solid relationship with the Roots Natural Kitchen development team has made it easier for Adam to make these adjustments quickly, provide recommended solutions and obtain approval for any revisions to the original design work. In the end, every new location benefits from a thorough site visit and ongoing engagement with the General Contractor.

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DETAILED DELIVERY

Based on the variety of kitchen spaces, it's imperative that the delivery of the kitchen equipment and other necessary supplies is intelligently managed to avoid any disruptions during the new construction or remodeling process. Adam works with the various equipment suppliers and schedules multiple trips (when needed), taking more of a phased delivery approach. Thorough planning of the delivery schedule ensures that not all of the equipment is delivered at the same time but, rather, when ready and needed.

"There is always a lot of trade work happening at the same time, and the last thing that any project needs is for those workers to be overwhelmed. It's easier and results in a more smoothly run project when the right people are on site at the right time." – Adam Goodloe,

Contract Sales Project Manager, Boelter

Relying on his years of Project Management experience, Adam ensures that each and every delivery is scheduled in a manner that works best for each trade and aligns with the overall status of the project. One day may require the delivery and installation of fabricated stainless steel, while the next may focus on the installation of the refrigeration and dish machines. Thoughtful planning of each piece of equipment ensures that the project stays on track.

BUILDING THE BRAND

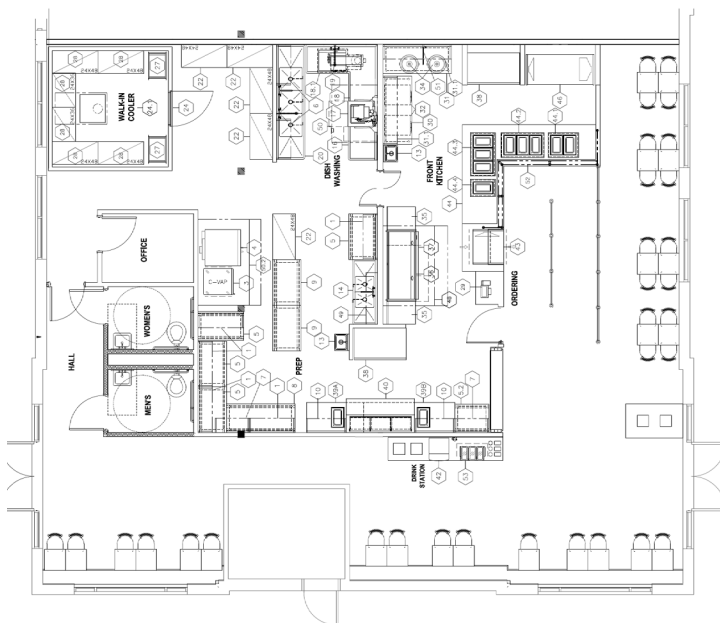
As Adam's relationship with Peter Gavin and the entire Roots Natural Kitchen team has expanded over the years, he has become the primary point of contact for all of their kitchen design and installation projects. Most recently, and in addition to all of their new business solutions, Adam has also addressed each restaurant's equipment replacement schedule. His goal is to ensure that each Roots restaurant has what it needs to efficiently serve their customers and avoid any disruptions in business.



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Working closely with Kristin Silverwood, Project Coordinator with the Boelter Supply team, Adam recently secured the smallwares package, providing a more complete, start-to-finish working relationship with Roots Natural Kitchen. Although the quantities may vary from one location to the next, Boelter is the primary supplier of everything from garbage cans, brooms and mops, to cooking spatulas, immersion blenders and mixers. Dedicating himself to providing an enhanced customer experience, Adam has positioned Boelter as a one-stop shopping experience, with the singular task of continuously growing the Roots Natural Kitchen brand.

"Adam has taken complete ownership of the equipment package. I know that if I pick up the phone I'm always going to get a call back. I know that it's going to be professional advice. I know that he's looking out for our best interests." – Peter Gavin, Chief Operating Officer, Roots Natural Kitchen



INNOVATING EFFICIENCY

Building upon an already strong business relationship with Roots Natural Kitchen, Adam Goodloe is well on his way to completing the fifth location. However, there will always be opportunities to improve the overall efficiency of their foodservice operation. Most recently, a persistent problem with their grease traps was identified. After reviewing the situation and workflow, Adam provided an updated solution.

Kitchen staff frequently clean the grain mixing bowls that are consistently used to prepare orders at the front of the house. This cleaning process generally involves a rapid pre-rinse that sprays excess food down the drain. As might be expected, the accumulation and buildup of rice overtime results in the need to thoroughly clean and unclog the grease traps. The solution? Install a Salvajor pot and pan collector unit designed to improve efficiency, manage food waste disposal and reduce costs.



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Often reserved for large school cafeterias, these units are the go-to option for kitchens that may also restrict the use of more common food disposers. Rather than grinding the food waste, the installed collector unit washes soluble food waste through the sewer while holding non-soluble food waste in the associated scrap basket. The design of the collector unit frees up the operator's hands, scrapping speed is often doubled or sometimes even tripled and – when combined with the water circulation feature – thousands of dollars are saved each year in wasted water.

Understanding the importance of efficiency and cost savings, Adam also reviewed Roots' dish washing rental arrangement and brought in a Hobart representative to discuss opportunities that would further benefit their business model. Not only does Hobart install their own equipment – saving Roots the added expense of General Contractor installation fees – but their pro assurance service contract also provides 24/7 equipment service that addresses any failures, as well as routine equipment checks; giving peace of mind and ensuring optimal equipment efficiency. Moving forward, Hobart has become the primary dish machine provider across every Roots location.

“Adam understands my questions. And so, you're not just getting an equipment supplier, you're really getting a true professional. It's like having an additional person on your engineering staff, but one that's specialized in kitchen equipment.” – *Peter Gavin, Chief Operating Officer, Roots Natural Kitchen*

Roots Natural Kitchen has become a household name in every city they service. Their healthy alternative and impeccable design philosophy has promoted continued success through rapid word of mouth, with countless customers eagerly awaiting the next location to move into their neighborhood. With a schedule that includes 3 additional restaurants opening by the end of 2021 and 6 - 8 more locations already planned for next year, Roots Natural Kitchen is set on deepening their presence in current markets while, at the same time, expanding their footprint into both Ohio and North Carolina.

YOUR PASSION IS OUR BUSINESS. AND OUR BUSINESS IS DEDICATED TO GROWING YOURS.

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