

Success Story

Revolution American Bistro

Pawtuxet Village
Cranston, RI

Restaurant Type:
Upscale Casual

In Business Since:
1999

Joined Rewards Network to:

- Fund renovations and updates
- Attract customers from outside their immediate area
- Get verified customer feedback

We thrive on the evolution of the restaurant.

Every restaurant — in order to succeed in the long term — needs to grow and change: to adapt to new trends, to expand to area demand, and to satisfy changing customer interests. Not every restaurant makes that kind of evolution core to its mission.

But **Revolution American Bistro** does.

“Revolution is a bit of a play on words,” said Dean Scanlon, owner of Revolution American Bistro. “Take the R and separate it. We are an evolving place. We thrive on evolution. The restaurant has been remade several times over the years. In fact, we plan on doing it again soon, with the help of Rewards Network.”

Of course, the name has historical significance as well for Revolution’s home in Pawtuxet Village. This sleepy little village was the site of the first act of aggression against the British Empire in 1772, a full two years before the Boston Tea Party. A group of colonists burned the HMS Gaspée, a customs enforcement ship,

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adding a spark to what would eventually be the Revolutionary War.

Out of a place with such profound beginnings rose a restaurant that nearly two decades later is still innovating — and bucking against expectation at every turn. “I don’t think you could have a place stay open for the better part of 20 years unless you continue to make improvements.”

“I am fortunate to have had some really generous and talented people that I worked with through the years,” Scanlon beams. “I’ve had an amazing chef, a truly gifted guy who really digs deep into recipes. We make our own bacon. We make our own cheeses. We make our own tasso ham.

“We always say: bring everyone. Bring your kids. Bring your aunts and uncles. Bring your foodie friend. Everyone will find something they like.”

The Rewards Network customer keeps you on your toes.

But every small restaurant knows that growing their customer base is a significant challenge, even with the kind of in-house expertise and commitment Revolution has.

“I’ve got probably an 80–85% regular customer base from the two great neighborhoods we’re surrounded by,” Scanlon shared. But it’s reaching out beyond their immediate area that’s taking Revolution all the way.

“We know that if we can bring [customers] in from a 10-mile diameter, as opposed to three or



four, or even five miles, we have the opportunity to make those new customers regular. Since we've been involved with Rewards Network, I've seen these customers — fresh faces — being driven from places outside of our immediate locale."

Who Rewards Network sends to Revolution American Bistro isn't the entire story, however. It's what happens next that helps local restaurants like Dean Scanlon's get to the next level.

"The anonymity of the Rewards Network customer, it does keep you on your toes," Scanlon surmised. "You can get commented anywhere. There's lots of sites where you can go and post reviews. [But Rewards Network] does a great job of keeping track of way more information than I ever thought possible: spend averages, return customers vs. new customers. I simply wouldn't have time to do it." Nor the money.

"The level of advertising [Rewards Network provides is marketing that you would not do yourself," Scanlon continued. "You will not go out and spend the amount of money that Rewards Network does to get the kind of marketing that they provide.

"That's a fact, that's not hyperbole."

The customer feedback reports Rewards Network provides go into his manager meetings, giving the staff an opportunity to tighten up service and the quality of a particular food item if feedback shows they're not hitting the target every time. It helps employees do their job better and improve the business one day at a time.

And the best part? Scanlon knows that every customer review provided through Rewards Network is an actual customer with a verified visit.

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“The restaurant business is tough,” Scanlon adds. “[Customers] don’t always have to write great reviews, but when you get satisfied customers — and for that matter, satisfied employees — that’s the greatest satisfaction you can get.”

The best of both worlds: marketing and funding.

In the 17 years of partnering with Rewards Network, Revolution has used the funding it received to purchase equipment, for leaseholder improvements, to have on hand for emergencies, and to hire new staff. It all works together to generate new revenue for the restaurant and keep it moving forward.

“If we’re going to have a remodel, funding is necessary for that,” Scanlon shared. “And from a cost perspective, let’s face it: nothing ever goes down. My rent goes up. Insurance goes up. Labor goes up. Utilities go up. Food costs have certainly gone significantly up over the last 10 years.

“And it’s much easier to work with capital at your side, as opposed to working from behind.”



What distinguishes Rewards Network's financing from other options Scanlon investigated was the pairing of marketing to new customers with the cash advance. No other company does that for the restaurant industry.

"I have considered other cash advance merchants in the past," Scanlon admits. "But I have chosen to stay with Rewards Network because I like the fact that they send customers to me, as well as deliver cash to my account."

"Rewards Network gives me the best of both worlds, through marketing and funding," concluded Scanlon. "[It's] the money I need to make the changes necessary to keep employees and clients happy, and feeling like the money is well spent."



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