



HOSPITALITY **FIRST.**

SHULA'S STEAK HOUSE NAPLES, FL

Shula's Steak Houses are consistently listed among the top fine dining establishments in America, thanks in large part to a culture of excellence in every aspect of operations, created by founder and legendary football coach, Don Shula.

The Shula's Steak House in Naples, Florida, has built a reputation of its own as a leader in Southwest Florida's fiercely competitive fine dining market. The restaurant has built a strong voice across the social media spectrum, attracting a broad and diverse audience of emerging young professionals, in addition to their established affluent clientele. General Manager Tom Donahue wanted a way to create a unique dining experience that made his younger guests feel at home without alienating his more mature diners.

TECHNOLOGY THAT **EMBRACES EVERYONE**

The solution was a Digital Wine List, built on the interactive iPad® platform, with a digital DNA developed by Uptown Network™.

Mr. Donahue explains: *"Typically, in a fine dining restaurant like this, you get a 15- to 20-page booklet, where you see the wine's name, vintage, BIN number, and a price, but not much about the wine. **This system from Uptown Network™ changes the game for the guest, no matter their level of wine knowledge.** Our older, more affluent guests may be more familiar with fine wines, but the younger guests are catching up, and this technology, with social sharing, is how they are discovering it. People of all ages are now familiar with the iPad® and every demographic is really embracing it, so it makes our job easier. So now, guests can see not only the BIN number and a price, but they can educate themselves, get tasting notes from the wine maker and other experts, see the accolades the wine has received, and look at options before they commit to a bottle. **Educated guests drive revenue.**"*

IMPACTING SALES **FROM DAY ONE**

The results were astonishing. Mr. Donahue's team launched an early iteration of the Wine List in the off-season and saw an **18% increase in wine sales in the first month.** *"We really saw the potential long-term value in it,"* he says, *"because it allowed us to take something we already serve and sell more of it. We didn't have to reinvent the wheel. **We just saw our sales go up.**"*



CLIENT

Shula's is a brand built on excellence in every aspect of operations, from the meat selection process to the guest experience. The 10 Shula's Steak Houses have established themselves as fine-dining leaders in highly-competitive markets.

SOLUTION

- Digital Wine List (inventory updated in real time)
- Dessert Menu
- Cocktails and Spirits Menu
- Sales Staff Training Module
- Free public version in AppStore
- Network of Top Sommeliers and Restaurateurs
- Enhanced BI through Digital Activity Tracking
- Apple Business Solution Provider

RESULTS

- 18% increase in wine sales in first month
- 20% increase in dessert sales
- Year-over-year sales growth, 5 consecutive years
- Greater variety of wines sold
- Improved inventory tracking
- More knowledgeable sales staff
- Increased gratuities

"When a guest downloads Uptown Network™ to their iPad®, they are going to see the wine list **updated in real time** wherever they are, and that does **drive traffic.**"



Tom Donahue
Food & Beverage Director,
Hilton Naples / Shula's Steak House



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Mr. Donahue's next venture was to add desserts to the system. The iPad® medium lends itself especially well to the visual appeal of desserts. "A picture is worth a thousand words, so rather than describe them, we have high-resolution pictures of all of our desserts. **Our dessert sales, when we first put it up, went up 20%.**" Since that successful launch, sales growth has been consistent year-over-year.

THE BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIP

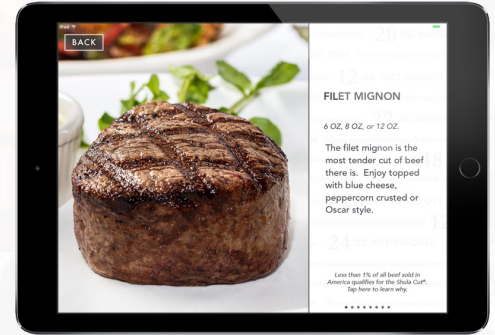
Uptown Network™ is not software, nor is it just a software company. It's a collaboration of restaurateurs, sommeliers, and hospitality professionals whose combined expertise is internalized and made available to every individual member. **Mr. Donahue benefits every day from tasting notes, success stories, and strategic thinking of some of the best in the business,** including Master Sommelier Robert Bath, The Capital Grille, Governors Club in Tallahassee, Norman's at The Ritz Carlton Grande Lakes, and dozens of other top restaurants. One thing that makes Uptown Network™ so unique is that many of the principals have started and operated restaurants themselves, so they understand the day-to-day operational challenges restaurants face.

EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING

One of Mr. Donahue's concerns before implementation was that the sales team would become complacent in developing its wine knowledge because the wine list is so powerful and intuitive. However, the system actually had the opposite effect. He explains, "What I'm finding is our sales staff is now utilizing the iPad@s as a teaching tool for themselves. When they have some down time, before we get that first table, or towards the end of the night, waiting for those last few tables to leave, they're opening the iPad@s, studying wines and looking at the tasting notes, so when they walk to their next table or during the next day, they can suggestively sell - and sell with authority - because they know all about this wine. They choose four or five each night that they want to sell."

Shula's digital menu includes food pairings. When a guest orders a ribeye, for example, "our sales team can very intelligently say, 'that would go great with our Nickel & Nickel.' So, it's a great teaching tool."

One of the most powerful opportunities of Uptown Network™ is the Staff Training component. Mr. Donahue recognized early on the power this affords him. "We give each person an iPad® at our nightly huddle-ups, which are 15 minutes before we open," he explains. "We go over nightly specials, training standards, and VIP guests that might be coming in. So, it's much more powerful than a traditional manual. Well-prepared, well-informed servers are professionals. They're not order takers, they're sales people."



"If you are considering doing anything like this, before you sit through two, three, or four presentations, call Uptown Network™. They'll answer all your questions and give you the best demos. Since I've been the General Manager at Shula's, **it's probably been the best decision I've ever made.** The main purpose of my job is to drive revenue, and this is helping more than anything else."



Tom Donahue
Food & Beverage Director,
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