



How Rodizio Grill Handled over 15k Calls and Booked 1.5k Reservations in Just One Month

Rodizio Grill is a nationally recognized Brazilian steakhouse with more than 30 years of operating history. Over the decades, the company has expanded across multiple markets while maintaining a high-touch, hospitality-first dining experience. Today, Rodizio Grill boasts 23 locations nationwide.

Challenge

As Rodizio Grill revisited its technology stack in 2025, one challenge consistently rose to the surface: phone calls were overwhelming staff and negatively impacting both the guest experience and staff efficiency. Having spent years working on the frontlines at Rodizio Grill, Nick Utrera, now VP of Operations at Rodizio Grill, knew firsthand just how many calls go unanswered during service and how frustrating that experience can be for guests.

Across locations, hosts were unable to keep up with phone volume while managing a busy floor. “For many of those phone calls, the answers are really pretty simple, but they end up taking a lot of time just because of the sheer volume,” Nick said. For managers, the problem extended beyond business hours. Many Rodizio Grill locations open only for dinner, but managers arrive earlier in the day to handle inventory, scheduling, and ordering. During these critical work periods, frequent phone interruptions made it difficult to complete tasks efficiently, and worse yet, “the number of interruptions that used to come in was unmanageable. We’d have to schedule a host just to come answer the phone,” Nick said.

96%
Guest Satisfaction Score
Over past 30 days

15,508
calls handled
19% calls handled after-hours
Over past 30 days

1,481
reservations booked
16% of reservations booked outside of business hours
Over past 30 days

Plus, unanswered calls outside of business hours created another costly gap. Without staff on-site in the mornings, reservation inquiries frequently went unanswered. Nick was well aware of the opportunity cost of missing out on these reservations. “There’s a 50% bounce rate for someone who was unsuccessful in making a reservation the first time,” Nick said, referencing a Nation’s Restaurant News article he had read. He realized that if they could capture even some of those bookings, that would not only positively impact their revenue, but help front-of-house staff out too.

Language barriers further complicated the experience, as many locations received calls from Spanish-speaking guests while not all restaurants had bilingual hosts available. Additionally, front-of-house staff were tasked with manually entering in guest details and private event leads, which often resulted in misspellings, incorrect phone numbers, and incomplete information. Missed calls, voicemails, and urgent guest issues were also scattered across systems, making timely follow-up inconsistent.

Solution

After testing multiple providers, Rodizio Grill selected Slang AI as its Voice AI solution. The decision was driven by Slang AI's more advanced integrations, operational maturity, and proven ability to handle the realities of high-volume, multi-location restaurant environments. Slang AI's official OpenTable integration, combined with its Tripleseat integration for private events, gave Rodizio Grill confidence that the system could fit seamlessly into existing workflows.

With Slang AI answering calls 24/7, Rodizio Grill began capturing reservations even when Rodizio locations were closed. Guests calling early in the morning could now book a table without waiting for staff to arrive, eliminating a major source of lost revenue.

During service hours, Slang significantly reduced interruptions for both hosts and managers by handling routine questions and requests. This allowed staff to focus on delivering brilliant in-person experiences.

The Rodizio Grill team also selected Slang AI for its robust Spanish-speaking capabilities, which were sorely needed: "a lot of our restaurants have a lot of Spanish speakers calling in," Nick said, yet not every location had Spanish-speaking front-of-house staff. The Bilingual Slang AI Concierge was



Slang's Tripleseat integration also improved the quality of private event leads by eliminating incorrectly entered lead information. Nick noted that "hosts make a lot of mistakes entering in leads. The number of typos and misinformation there was pretty bad, so Slang has helped clean that up quite a bit."

The Smart Inbox feature further streamlined operations by surfacing calls and messages that required human follow-up. Hosts were given access to monitor and return priority calls throughout their shifts, enabling busy locations to backfill cancellations and no-shows and keep dining rooms full.

Additionally, automatic email alerts ensured that urgent guest issues, like complaints or food safety concerns, were immediately surfaced to all managers. "Now, if there's a customer complaint or something about food poisoning, it's not just sitting on one person's plate that may be off that day. I can just set up an email alert to all of our managers so whoever is there can deal with it right away," Nick said.

not only helpful in supporting Spanish-speaking guests, but helped train Rodizio staff members to better respond to guests in Spanish. Rodizio staff was actually "calling Slang and asking Slang questions in Spanish to understand how Slang was answering, to help improve their own answering of the phones," Nick said.

With Slang AI, Rodizio Grill modernized their guest communications by capturing missed reservations, easing staff workload, improving operational accuracy and visibility, and delivering a more consistent guest experience, all while scaling efficiency and revenue as locations grew busier, ultimately proving AI as a revenue driver, not a cost center.

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— Nick Utrera
VP of Operations at Rodizio Grill