From Record Growth to Recruitment Crisis—and Back Again

How Keyrenter Property Management Escaped the Emerging Brand Trap

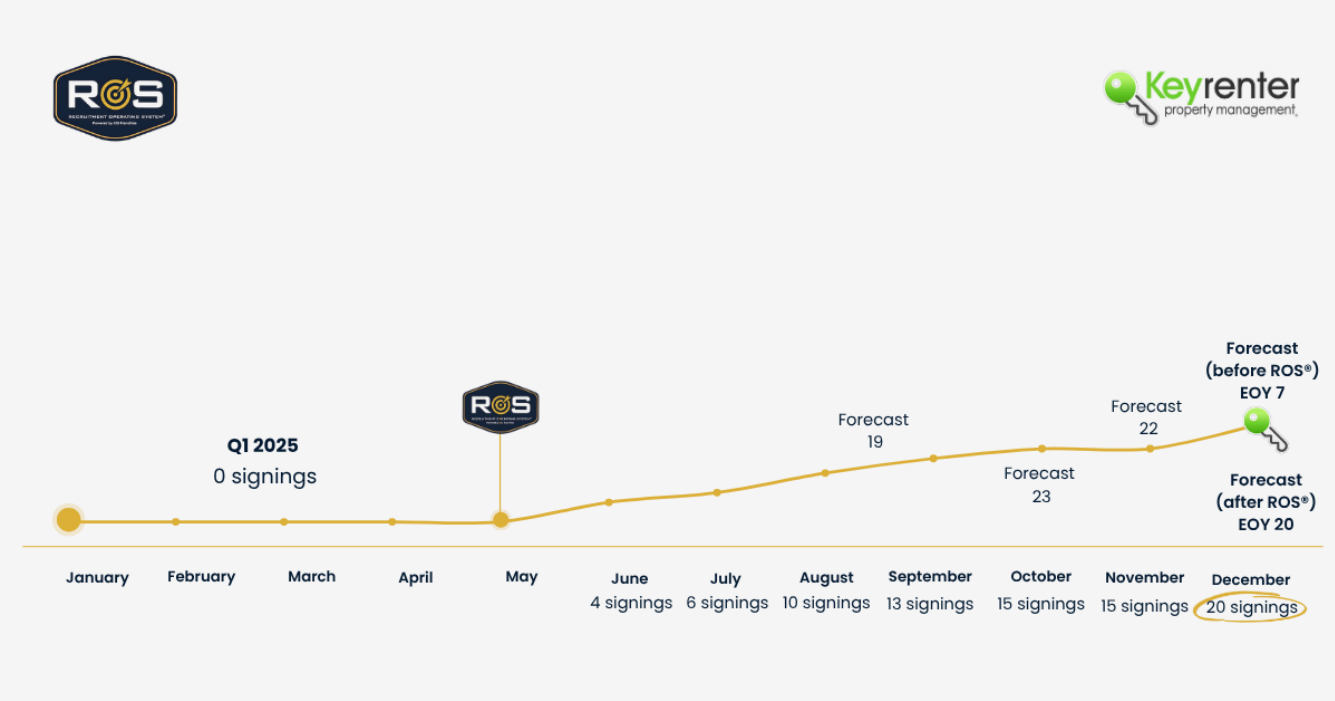
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many emerging franchise brands aspire to rapid growth. Few are prepared for the operational demands that accompany it.

In 2024, Keyrenter Property Management achieved record franchise recruitment, signing more new franchisees than at any point in the company's history. However, the success created an unintended challenge. The organization's onboarding infrastructure was not prepared to support the volume of new franchisees entering the system.

As leadership shifted focus from recruitment to onboarding, the franchise development pipeline began to weaken. By early 2025, recruitment performance had collapsed, targets were being missed, and visibility into the data and processes that had previously driven success was fading.

This case study explores how Keyrenter identified the root causes of these challenges, partnered with ROS® to restore operational discipline, and rebuilt a sustainable growth model that positioned the company to pursue its long-term vision of becoming a billion-dollar revenue organization.



THE CHALLENGE

The Emerging Brand Trap

The challenge Keyrenter faced is common among growing franchise systems.

Brands often become intensely focused on one strategic objective, typically franchise recruitment. Until success creates pressure elsewhere in the organization. Resources are then diverted to address the new challenge, causing the original growth engine to stall.

This creates a boom-and-bust cycle:

- Recruitment accelerates.
- Operational capacity becomes strained.
- Focus shifts to onboarding and support.
- Recruitment activity declines.
- Pipeline quality deteriorates.
- Growth stalls.

Many emerging franchise brands struggle to break this cycle. Some never do.

> "There was a moment when we realized the problem wasn't the market, the candidates, or the opportunity. The problem was that we had drifted away from the process. Once we got back to the fundamentals, we started moving in the right direction again."
>
> ***Nate Tew, CEO, Keyrenter Property Management***

BACKGROUND

Record Recruitment Creates New Challenges

Throughout 2024, Keyrenter Property Management placed a strong emphasis on franchise recruitment and achieved record signing numbers.

While this marked a significant milestone for the brand, leadership recognized by the end of Q3 that the organization's onboarding systems were not sufficiently developed to support the influx of new franchisees.

As a result, organizational focus shifted rapidly toward onboarding and integration.

The challenge was not the decision itself; new franchisees required support. But rather the unintended consequence of removing focus from the recruitment pipeline.

By October 2024, franchise development activity had slowed significantly as resources and leadership attention were redirected elsewhere.

THE CONSEQUENCES

The Consequences Appear in 2025

The impact of reduced recruitment activity became clear as 2025 began.

As with most sales and franchise development organizations, results in Q1 are largely determined by the work completed in the previous quarter. With recruitment activity slowing in late 2024, the pipeline entering 2025 was significantly weaker than expected.

Attempts to recover performance quickly led to further challenges:

- Process discipline weakened.
- Data became less trusted and less utilized.
- Reports continued to be produced, but key insights were not driving decisions.
- Short-term fixes replaced long-term strategy.

The harder the organization pushed for immediate results, the further performance declined. By the end of May 2025, Keyrenter had signed only four new franchisees against an annual target of twenty. The company had entered a pattern that many growing franchise brands know all too well: growth had outpaced the systems needed to sustain it.

THE SOLUTION

A Strategic Reset

Leadership recognized that the issue was not a lack of opportunity. It was a breakdown in execution.

The Vice President of Development exited the organization, and Keyrenter transferred franchise development responsibility to ROS® on an outsourced basis.

The goal was not simply to improve recruitment numbers. It was to rebuild the foundations that create sustainable growth:

- Clear process management
- Data-driven decision making
- Pipeline visibility
- Consistent candidate progression
- Leadership accountability

ROS® SUPPORT

Rebuilding Through Process and Data

ROS® began by re-establishing discipline within the franchise development processes.

Rather than chasing quick wins, the focus shifted toward creating a predictable and measurable recruitment system.

Once process consistency was restored, the underlying data became reliable again.

The analysis revealed an important insight: opportunities already existed within the pipeline. They simply were not being managed effectively.

As a result:

- Candidate quality improved.
- Pipeline visibility increased.
- Forecasting became more accurate.
- Future royalty potential increased.
- Recruitment became more controlled and sustainable.

The impact was felt almost immediately.

> ***"The issue has never been a lack of prospects. The issue was a lack of process discipline." - Art Coley, CEO, ROS®***

THE RESULTS

The Recovery

By June 1st, 2025, Keyrenter had signed four franchisees.

Over the next 30 days, the team executed five additional franchise agreements with qualified candidates that already existed within the pipeline.

The challenge was never a shortage of prospects. The challenge was converting existing opportunities through a disciplined process. Once structure and accountability were restored, conversion rates improved, and momentum returned.

By the end of Q3, Keyrenter was once again on track to achieve its annual target of twenty new franchisees.

More importantly, the organization had regained visibility into what was ahead, not just what had already happened.

Pipeline forecasting indicated:

20	27	45
Signings projected for 2025	Signings projected for 2026	Signings projected for 2027

The business had moved from reactive management to strategic growth planning.

ONGOING SUPPORT

Beyond Recruitment: Building Long-Term Franchise Success

The turnaround extended beyond franchise recruitment. ROS® also supported franchisee onboarding through structured workshops delivered at ROS® headquarters in Temple, Texas.

These programs focused on helping new franchisees:

- Shorten their ramp-up periods.
- Acquire customers faster.
- Achieve revenue milestones sooner.
- Contribute to long-term royalty growth.

By connecting franchise recruitment and onboarding within a single operating framework, Keyrenter created stronger alignment between development efforts and franchisee success.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Growth Requires Balance

Recruitment and onboarding are not separate initiatives. As one grows, the other must keep pace.

Process Creates Predictability

When process discipline breaks down, visibility declines, and decision-making becomes more difficult.

Data Must Drive Action

Reports alone do not create results. Results come from leaders who use data to make decisions and hold teams accountable.

Sustainable Growth Beats Reactive Growth

Shortcuts may temporarily improve performance, but long-term success depends on disciplined execution.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Keyrenter Property Management's experience demonstrates how quickly growth can create challenges when operational systems do not evolve at the same pace.

It also demonstrates that recovery is possible.

By restoring process discipline, rebuilding confidence in the data, and creating accountability throughout the recruitment and onboarding journey, Keyrenter regained control of its growth trajectory and strengthened the foundation for future expansion.

Today, the organization has greater visibility into its pipeline, a more predictable recruitment process, and a clearer path toward its long-term vision.

> ***"When the process is followed and the right data is analyzed consistently, outcomes take care of themselves." - Lennon Coley, VP of Analytics, ROS®***

Ready to Create Predictable, Sustainable Growth?

Discover how the Recruitment Operating System (ROS®) can transform your franchise development.

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