

Restaurant veteran Ray Villaman backs VoicePlug AI, joins Board after selecting their technology for his own restaurants

Move follows Villaman's selection of VoicePlug AI for his own restaurant group after rigorous testing of competing Voice AI solutions

PALO ALTO, CA, UNITED STATES, August 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- VoicePlug AI, a leading

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Ray Villaman

provider of enterprise-grade Voice AI and Conversational AI ordering solutions for restaurants, today announced that Ray Villaman, a respected 30-year restaurateur and technology entrepreneur, has joined its Board of Directors. In this role, Villaman will help guide the company's enterprise growth and strategic industry partnerships.

Villaman is widely recognized for opening over 150 successful restaurants and holding leadership roles at brands including Bennigan's, California Pizza Kitchen, and Boston Market. Most recently, as President and Owner of

Tahoe Restaurant Group, he built award-winning, people-first restaurant businesses. He has also co-founded and advised multiple restaurant-technology ventures, bringing a rare perspective as both an operator and a technology founder to the challenge of technology adoption in restaurants.

Villaman has been an Advisory Board Member to VoicePlug AI for the past two years, giving him a firsthand view of the company's rapid progress and in-store performance. During this time, he led his team in evaluating AI ordering solutions to address labor constraints and rising guest expectations. After testing multiple providers, his operators selected VoicePlug AI for its accuracy, reliability, and ability to integrate seamlessly with existing technology and day-to-day restaurant operations.

“I've spent my career optimizing restaurant operations and the guest experience,” said Ray Villaman. “We pressure-tested a range of AI ordering solutions in the real world, and VoicePlug AI consistently demonstrated the best results — fast, accurate, and delivering an exceptional guest experience. That is why our managers chose VoicePlug AI, and why I am joining to help scale this across the industry.”

Why VoicePlug AI Stands Out for Operators

According to Villaman, VoicePlug AI's operator-first approach and proprietary technology are clear differentiators.

"When I spoke with VoicePlug's clients, the feedback was unanimous: calls were no longer being missed and team members were more productive without the distraction of answering phones or handling drive-thru orders," Villaman stated. "I was very impressed to find clients reporting tangible labor savings and increased revenue within the first month. Our team's research confirmed that VoicePlug's core technology, including its proprietary Restaurant Domain Language Model, is mature and proven across multiple brands. Other providers we looked at were still in the early stages of experimenting with the technology."

Strategic Leadership for Scale

As an active board member and seasoned restaurant operator, Villaman will be the voice of the operator at VoicePlug AI, helping expand VoicePlug's relationships with enterprise brands and multi-unit franchise operators nationwide. He will help guide the company's product roadmap, ensuring it continues to address real-world operator pain points while strengthening the ecosystem of restaurant technology integrations.

"Ray is the rare leader who has both built restaurants at scale and co-founded restaurant technology companies," said Jay Ruparel, CEO of VoicePlug AI. "When someone with his credibility first validates your platform as a customer, then joins your Advisory Board, and now steps up to your Board of Directors, it's the ultimate validation of our technology and our approach. Ray's guidance will be invaluable as we cement our position as the most trusted AI partner for restaurants."

About VoicePlug AI

VoicePlug AI provides enterprise-ready Voice AI and Conversational AI ordering solutions that help restaurants improve speed, accuracy, and guest satisfaction across drive-thru, phone, and kiosk channels. Its platform integrates seamlessly with major POS systems and existing restaurant workflows, delivering a natural and reliable ordering experience. Built by restaurant industry veterans and technologists, VoicePlug AI serves leading brands and franchise systems nationwide. Learn more at www.voiceplug.ai.

About Ray Villaman

Ray Villaman is a restaurant industry veteran and technology entrepreneur with over 150 restaurant openings and senior roles at major brands including Bennigan's, California Pizza Kitchen, and Boston Market. As President and Owner of Tahoe Restaurant Group, he has led the creation of award-winning, sustainable, and profitable restaurant businesses. He is also recognized for his work in bringing practical, results-driven technology solutions to restaurant operators.

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