

## Project Profile

# Small Coffee Company Scale-up

Verve Coffee Roasters  
Santa Cruz, California

VERVE COFFEE ROASTERS



### The Company

Verve Coffee Roasters found success as a small, local roaster and retailer with three stores in Santa Cruz, California. They feature small-lot coffees dealing direct with farmers. A team of some 60 baristas, roasters, managers and administrative staff ran operations.

A local favorite, they found success early on and grew organically. They leveraged a small footprint and central location, even selling retail at their roasterie.

### Issues

In the vanguard of third-wave coffee, they wanted to scale-up with more stores and wholesale distribution. They were ready to grow beyond Santa Cruz.

With both founders still involved in daily operations and a newly hired operations leader, they set out to open new stores in Southern California, hundreds of miles away.

With plans to open multiple stores in rapid succession, they were poised to more than double in size in eighteen months. Staffing and on-boarding needed to happen fast. How will they open stores? Who do they hire? How many do they need?

Opening stores is one thing. Replicating their model of success was something more. Could they grow and keep what made them special in Santa Cruz? Did they know what made them special?

With little infrastructure, their ability and pace of growth was limited. They needed to build out the systems and processes to support an emerging enterprise. They needed to develop a team of leaders that could manage this growth. They needed to hire staff that embodied Verve's culture.

### Solution

Staffing would be critical. Known for their service and energy, new hires had to embody the Verve style, learn coffee and the craft of specialty coffee.

We developed a talent strategy to:

- Articulate values that make Verve special
- Outline a hiring profile
- Identify traits to be hired versus what to train
- Develop an on-boarding plan
- Design an on-boarding experience

A clear talent strategy made finding capable people that were the right cultural fit clear and consistent. That helped keep pace with new store openings and build a new market.

