



"There's no shame in saying things are good today, but you might be surprised how great they can be. Pepper helped us make that leap."

KEY OUTCOMES

**More
non-order**

**Easier
customer**



Problem

Good Wasn't Good Enough in a Competitive Market

[Willie Itule Produce](#), an Arizona-based produce company that has served market since 1979, had an e-commerce portal that was **"good, but not great"** for where their customers were headed:

Willie Itule Produce had already embraced digital ordering. Their existing eCommerce system was dependable, but didn't necessarily gain adoption while many customers preferred emailing or calling in their weekly lists. But as the foodservice landscape evolved, so did their buyers.

A younger generation of chefs and purchasing managers began asking for a faster, sleeker, and more intuitive experience. They wanted to search, add,

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mirrored their favorite consumer apps.

Internally, the team also needed more from their technology. They wanted to understand customer behavior beyond the static order guide: what products were being searched, which items were trending, and where new category opportunities might emerge.

“Our previous setup was fine. But customers were pushing for the **next level**. More modern, more mobile, more powerful.” – **Billy Itule, CEO**

Solution

Meeting Buyers (and Reps) Where They Are

Pepper quickly became the connective tissue between Willie Itule Produce, their sales reps, and their customers.

With a clean, modern interface built for both desktop and mobile, Pepper made ordering intuitive for chefs working the line and flexible for reps managing accounts. Customers could browse, search, and chat directly with their salesperson in-app - no more juggling texts or emails.

The team added product photos to over 95% of their catalog, eliminating common ordering errors and giving buyers visual confidence in what they were purchasing. Promotions and

specialty dairy and dry goods.

Internally, Pepper's analytics revealed new insights. Tracking non-order-guide items helped the team spot demand signals (like surging interest in microgreens) that informed purchasing, inventory, and marketing strategies.

"Pepper isn't just a storefront," Billy explained. "It's a **growth engine**. We can see where demand is shifting, meet it faster, and make smarter decisions."

The rollout itself was deliberate but smooth. The team started with tech-forward customers, then worked their way to those less comfortable with digital ordering. Once skeptical reps quickly realized that placing and managing orders via phone could be *simpler* than using a laptop.

Rollout

Willie Itule Produce ran a **soft, sequential rollout**:

1. **Start with the tech-forward groups**, prove ease-of-use, then expand.
2. **Bring along the holdouts** who preferred calling or emailing orders, showing them how Pepper on the phone is often *easier* than a laptop.
3. **Reinforce with visuals** adding images to nearly all SKUs to boost confidence and accuracy.

Results

From Good to Great: Growth, Accuracy, and Stickiness

The transformation was immediate. Customers loved the new experience, as did the sales team.

Order accuracy improved dramatically thanks to an easy UX and cleaner navigation. Off-order guide purchases became a new source of revenue growth, with Pepper's data pointing to previously hidden opportunities.

Pepper also made it easier to win new business. Many incoming prospects now ask one simple question before switching: *"Do you have Pepper?"* The familiar interface makes onboarding seamless and reduces friction for both the buyer and the distributor.

"We call it a **sticky experience**," said Billy. "Once customers start ordering through Pepper, they don't want to leave."

On the back end, monthly success check-ins and a fast-moving product roadmap keep Willie Itule Produce at the forefront of innovation. New features roll out regularly, and Pepper's team works

"The speed of innovation is unmatched," Billy added. "Even if a feature isn't built for us directly, it keeps us excited and confident we're aligned with a partner that's always improving."

Looking Ahead

Willie Itule Produce plans to expand its use of the platform, adopting more products in its 2026 roadmap to further simplify transactions and gain smarter insights.

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