

MEASURE · IMPROVE · REALIZE

Hawkins & Hayes

OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFICATION

CASE STUDY

CLIENT BACKGROUND

The client produces artisanal sauces and condiments sold through both retail and food-service channels. While growth had been steady, profitability lagged peer averages due to SKU proliferation, seasonal inefficiency, and under-utilized production assets. With succession on the horizon, the ownership team needed objective guidance on *where to invest, divest, or redesign* before entering sale discussions with investors or strategic buyers.

OUTCOMES AND DELIVERABLES

Hawkins & Hayes translated opportunity insight into a clear execution plan and valuation framework:

- **Opportunity Blueprint** detailing sequenced actions, responsible owners, and projected ROI.
- **Identified $2.4M–$3.1M in incremental EBITDA** within an 18-month window.
- **Immediate Quick Wins** (SKU rationalization and line consolidation) launched during the engagement.
- **Investor-ready narrative** quantifying strategic upside to support sale positioning.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A $22 million family-owned specialty food manufacturer faced stagnant margins and inconsistent product profitability despite strong brand loyalty. Preparing for potential succession, the owners sought to pinpoint which operational and market levers would most effectively increase enterprise value. Over five weeks, Hawkins & Hayes translated prior diagnostic insights into a quantified *Opportunity Blueprint*—a roadmap of high-impact initiatives projected to add $2.4 million to $3.1 million in EBITDA within 18 months.

THE CHALLENGE

Previous baseline and diagnostic phases revealed cost leakage and pricing inconsistency but did not specify *which actions would yield the greatest return*.

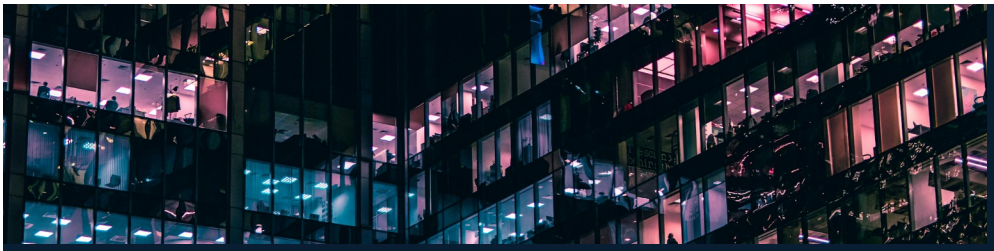
- Too many low-margin SKUs diluted focus and production efficiency.
- Asset utilization was uneven across two legacy lines.
- Growth opportunities existed, but without quantified risk or ROI.

The leadership team required a prioritized, evidence-based plan that balanced operational discipline with strategic expansion potential.

HAWKINS AND HAYES APPROACH

The *Opportunity Identification* phase connected data insight to strategic potential. Our consultants facilitated a structured, cross-functional value-mapping process that combined analytics with leadership alignment:

- **Value Driver Matrix:** Ranked over 30 improvement initiatives by EBITDA impact and implementation feasibility.



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WHY DIAGNOSTICS MATTER

Understanding *why* performance varies is the bridge between visibility and control. Hawkins & Hayes' diagnostic methodology converts disconnected information into strategic clarity. For owners preparing to scale, restructure, or exit, this process transforms data into an asset class — quantifying efficiency, accountability, and enterprise resilience. The ability to isolate cause and effect empowers leaders to make confident, data-backed decisions that protect margin and sustain competitive advantage.

CLIENT REFLECTION

"This was the moment we stopped talking about problems and started seeing possibilities. The Hawkins & Hayes process gave us clarity — and a plan we could actually execute."

HAWKINS AND HAYES APPROACH CONTINUED

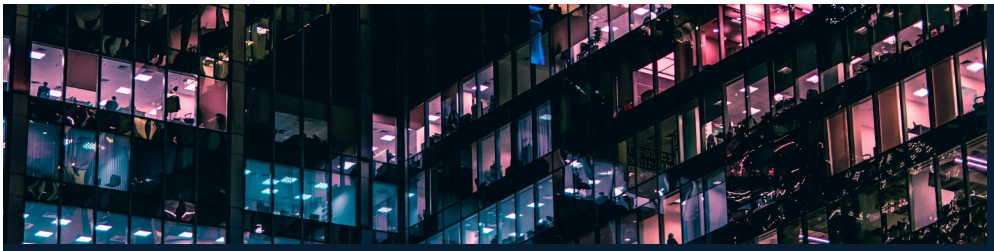
- **Scenario Modeling:** Developed three-year forecasts for "status quo," "efficiency optimization," and "growth acceleration" cases, quantifying enterprise value under each.
- **Market Benchmarking:** Assessed SKU mix, gross margin by channel, and capacity utilization against industry top-quartile performers.
- **Leadership Workshops:** Facilitated collaboration between ownership and management to align risk appetite, timing, and succession objectives.

KEY FINDINGS

Insight	Description	Outcome
Production Consolidation	Closing two under-utilized lines to reduce overhead and maintenance load.	$600k annual savings in fixed costs.
SKU Rationalization	Removing 25% of low-margin products to streamline throughput and pricing clarity	+2.8 p.p. increase in EBITDA margin
Private-Label Expansion	Partnering with two regional grocers for white-label production with minimal capex.	$4 million incremental revenue
Incentive Realignment	Linking management bonuses to operating cash flow rather than top-line growth.	Improved alignment and capital discipline.

LEARNINGS & NEXT STEPS

This engagement demonstrated how data-driven prioritization can convert diagnostic insight into enterprise value. By ranking actions through both financial and organizational lenses, leadership could pursue quick returns without compromising succession objectives. The next phase ("Improve") will focus on embedding accountability and capability to sustain these gains through transition.



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TIMELINE & WORKING WITH HAWKINS & HAYES

WEEK

1-2 · Week 1–2 · Orientation & Alignment
We begin with clarity — defining objectives, stakeholders, and value metrics. A kick-off workshop establishes scope, data access, and cadence of communication.

3-6 · Week 3–6 · Discovery & Diagnostics
Our team maps current-state performance through data analysis, stakeholder interviews, and benchmark comparisons. Early findings highlight where value is created, lost, or hidden.

11-14 · Week 7–10 · Design & Recommendation
Insights become solutions. We develop targeted initiatives — operational, financial, and leadership — prioritized by impact and feasibility.

7-10 · Week 11–14 · Implementation & Enablement
Change is embedded, not imposed. We standardize workflows, train teams, and integrate dashboards for visibility and accountability.

15+ · Week 15+ · Realization & Ongoing Support
Once improvement is sustained, we help clients track enterprise value, communicate results to stakeholders, and prepare for strategic options such as growth, transition, or exit.

START THE CONVERSATION

Start the conversation to discover how Hawkins & Hayes helps business owners quantify, protect, and grow enterprise value — from baseline clarity to strategic realization.

Hawkins & Hayes

Transforming operational progress into measurable enterprise value.

A STRUCTURED PATH FROM INSIGHT TO ENTERPRISE VALUE

When clients engage Hawkins & Hayes, they experience a disciplined, transparent process built to convert performance improvement into measurable enterprise value. Every engagement follows a clear execution rhythm and a proven methodology — ensuring focus, alignment, and accountability from day one.

THE HAWKINS & HAYES METHODOLOGY

Measure → Improve → Realize

A continuous cycle designed to identify opportunity, build capability, and convert progress into long-term enterprise value.

Phase	Focus	Modules
MEASURE	Establish truth before change	Operational Baseline Data & Diagnostic Analysis Opportunity Identification
IMPROVE	Embed systems, structure, and scale	Process Optimization System Alignment & Automation Capability & Accountability
REALIZE	Convert progress into enterprise value	Sustain & Scale Value Tracking & Reporting Strategic Realization

OUR PRMOISE

Clarity — Independent insight revealing where and how value is created.

Discipline — Systems and structure that sustain performance beyond engagement.

Results — Tangible financial and organizational impact that enhances valuation readiness.