

# Case Study

Restaurateur finds the right recipe for managing paper overload with ScanSnap and Evernote



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## **The Great Food Group**

“Mayhem.” That’s how Patrick Albrecht sums up his typical workday—but he says it in the spirit of joie de vivre, not drudgery. Albrecht is a chef and co-owner (along with his father, chef Paul Albrecht) of the Great Food Group, the parent company of two Atlanta-based restaurants. That simple description, though, falls short of describing all that Albrecht accomplishes in a day on the job.

## Business Needs

“I’m the one who puts out fires,” he says. Not literally, of course, but the life of a restaurant owner is one non-stop to-do list of ordering food, taking some deliveries and tracking down why others never made it, paying bills, talking to the accountant, getting someone to fix a leaking pipe or broken heating, hiring and training employees—turnover in the industry is high—and, of course, getting into the kitchen when the customers are flowing through the doors.

“There are 1,000 things to do. By bedtime, I’ve maybe gotten 100 of them accomplished. I do not sleep,” Albrecht says, laughing and only half joking. “You don’t get into this business to make money. You do it because you love it. My family has been in the restaurant business for almost 300 years, going back to Europe. It’s in the blood.”

Fortunately, he loves technology almost as much as food. While picking up his cooking skills and culinary degree, Albrecht—who operates in a continual high gear—also got a degree in computer science. He is an avowed technology geek, and has put his kinetic energy to work finding ways of using technology to solve daily business tasks.

**“Payroll, invoices, desk receipts, store receipts, liquor licenses, loan information, IRS forms—it never ends,” he says. “I was storing paper in storage units, in my living room, in the garage, in the attic. I was getting swallowed alive by paper. At some point, I could not deal with it after putting in a 14-hour day.”**

He decided that this small part of the mayhem could be tamed with a good technology solution.

## Solution: Fujitsu ScanSnap S510 and iX500 scanners, Evernote service

Albrecht knew about the reputation of Fujitsu scanners. In his first attempt to deal with the paper overload, he selected a Fujitsu ScanSnap S510 for the Mac in combination with Evernote, the service used for capturing and storing notes, web pages, PDF files, and many other types of information—including scans from the ScanSnap.

At first, Albrecht started small, using the technology combination for a limited range of paper documents. And at the time, the information captured by the Fujitsu equipment and stored in Evernote resided on one of Albrecht’s computers. That quickly evolved, however, when Albrecht realized the potential that the technology held for transforming multiple aspects of the business.

**He purchased a Fujitsu ScanSnap iX500 soon after it was introduced and has plans to buy at least three more. The iX500 delivers up to 25 pages a minute for color scans, has a 50-sheet automatic document feeder, creates fast and searchable PDFs, and can send PDF or JPEG scans directly to devices such as the iPads and iPhones used by Albrecht and his colleagues.**

The company also takes advantage of the cloud-storage capabilities of Evernote, which allows Albrecht, his managers, and his accountant access and view documents online without the need to email information back and forth. To expedite document entry, there is an “office” in each of the restaurants that consists of a closet-size space with a simple table, a Fujitsu scanner, and a laptop used by Albrecht and his employees to scan paper documents into the system the moment they get them. The company uses folders inside Evernote to organize information. Optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities—part of the software that is included with the Fujitsu scanners—assists in searches for specific information.

## Benefits: Speed, Reliability, Ease of Use

The combination of the Fujitsu scanners and Evernote service has brought some organized calm to at least one part of a frenetic business. Albrecht says the speed, simplicity, and reliability of the solution are all notable.



“We accumulate many paper documents during the day, and the ability of the iX500 to gobble up everything as fast as we can load it is astonishing,” Albrecht says. In the past, he would put in a big stack of paper, hit a button, wait for all pages to scan, and for the dialogue box to appear.

“Sometimes it could take 15 minutes to process a box of paperwork,” he says. “But now I walk over to an iX500, put a big stack of paper into it, and walk away to do something else. The scanner simply pulls it all in, managing all of the pages flawlessly without jams or pages sticking together, and sends the scans to my phone over WiFi as I’m walking out the door. It’s an incredible time saver.”

In addition to speed, there is simplicity of operation. For example, if he initially sends a scanned document directly to his iPhone, it’s easy to forward the document to Evernote, where he can later move it to the right folder. The ease of operation also lets Albrecht hand over some of the paperwork management to restaurant employees, who now scan all types of paper documents the moment they arrive.

**“It’s little bits and pieces all day long, which spreads around the task of doing all of that scanning,” he says. “It’s a big saving on labor. I don’t have to do it all, and we don’t need an office person to scan or store or retrieve documents. The need for a paper-management human resource is gone.”**

Albrecht and his staff members typically choose one of two ways to scan documents into Evernote. If they are just scanning documents, these are saved directly into Evernote as PDF files. Pictures are scanned as JPEGs. “We can tweak our settings instantly to scan in color versus black and white, or at higher resolutions if we are scanning items such as restaurant blueprints or floor layouts,” Albrecht says. “These scanning options are easily found in menus as I am saving a file. Unlike other scanning software programs, I don’t have to dig down deep into system menus to make these changes.”

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Albrecht, his chef, the company’s accountant, and the company’s manager all have separate Evernote accounts. If they need to share common information among documents—for example, an employee’s performance rating or training information—then that paperwork is scanned into a shared notebook that can be accessed by the individual parties. When invoices arrive, these are emailed as PDFs directly from the ScanSnap to an address book group called “Invoices,” where specific items are sorted according to subject line content.

“This automatic sorting helps us get through the hundreds of invoices coming through our restaurants each month,” says Albrecht. “We send the invoices out in this fashion so that each party has their own copy and can sort them in any way they please.”

How does the Fujitsu hardware stand up to these marathon workouts? Albrecht says they get a big thumbs-up. “Frankly, I beat the hell out of my technology,” he says. “These scanners are getting used all day long. A more generic brand scanner from the office supply store would never last through the use and abuse that we pile on. But the ScanSnaps I bought several years ago are still running flawlessly, as does the iX500. Their reliability and the usefulness that they bring are changing the way that we run our business.”

#### Great Food Group benefit snapshot:

- **Speed of scanning helps staff process wide range of documents quickly and flawlessly each day**
- **Functionality of ScanSnap iX500 lets users press “scan” and walk away, with scans sent over WiFi to phones and other devices**
- **Scanners are extremely reliable, delivering flawless performance under constant use**
- **Scanning to Evernote provides employees and accounting firm with instant, easy-to-search access to all important documents**

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