Leverage
BUYING GROUP

2025 Restaurateur Benchmark Guide

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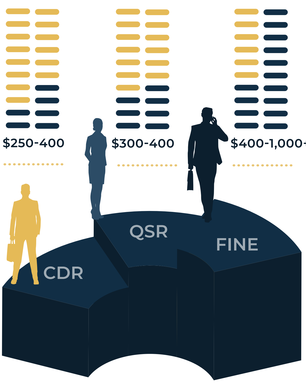
2025 RESTAURATEUR BENCHMARK GUIDE

PROFITABILITY METRICS

CASUAL DINING (CDR)

QUICK SERVICE (QSR)

FINE DINING (FINE)



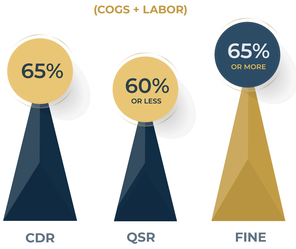
REVENUE

PER SQ. FOOT

TO BE PROFITABLE, RESTAURANTS TYPICALLY NEED TO GENERATE REVENUE GREATER THAN $200 PER SQUARE FOOT.

PRIME COST

(COGS + LABOR)



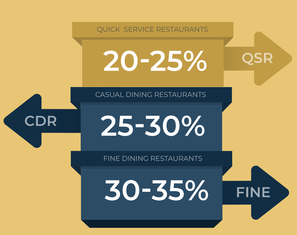
IDEALLY, PRIME COST SHOULD BE UNDER 65%. AIMING FOR A LOWER PERCENTAGE, SUCH AS 60%, CAN GIVE YOU A COMPETITIVE EDGE.

PROFIT MARGIN

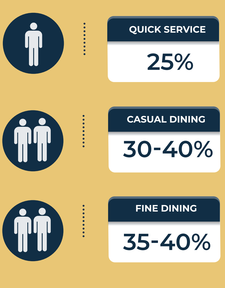
FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS
ELEVATED DINING WITH PERSONAL SERVICE AND AMBIANCE, BUT COMPLEX TO RUN.

QUICK-SERVICE RESTAURANTS
FAST, EFFICIENT, AND COST-EFFECTIVE, BUT HIGHLY COMPETITIVE.

FOOD COST



LABOR COST



WASTE

RESTAURANTS SUFFER ABOUT A TOTAL LOSS OF 5.6% OF TOTAL SALES FROM FOOD WASTE.

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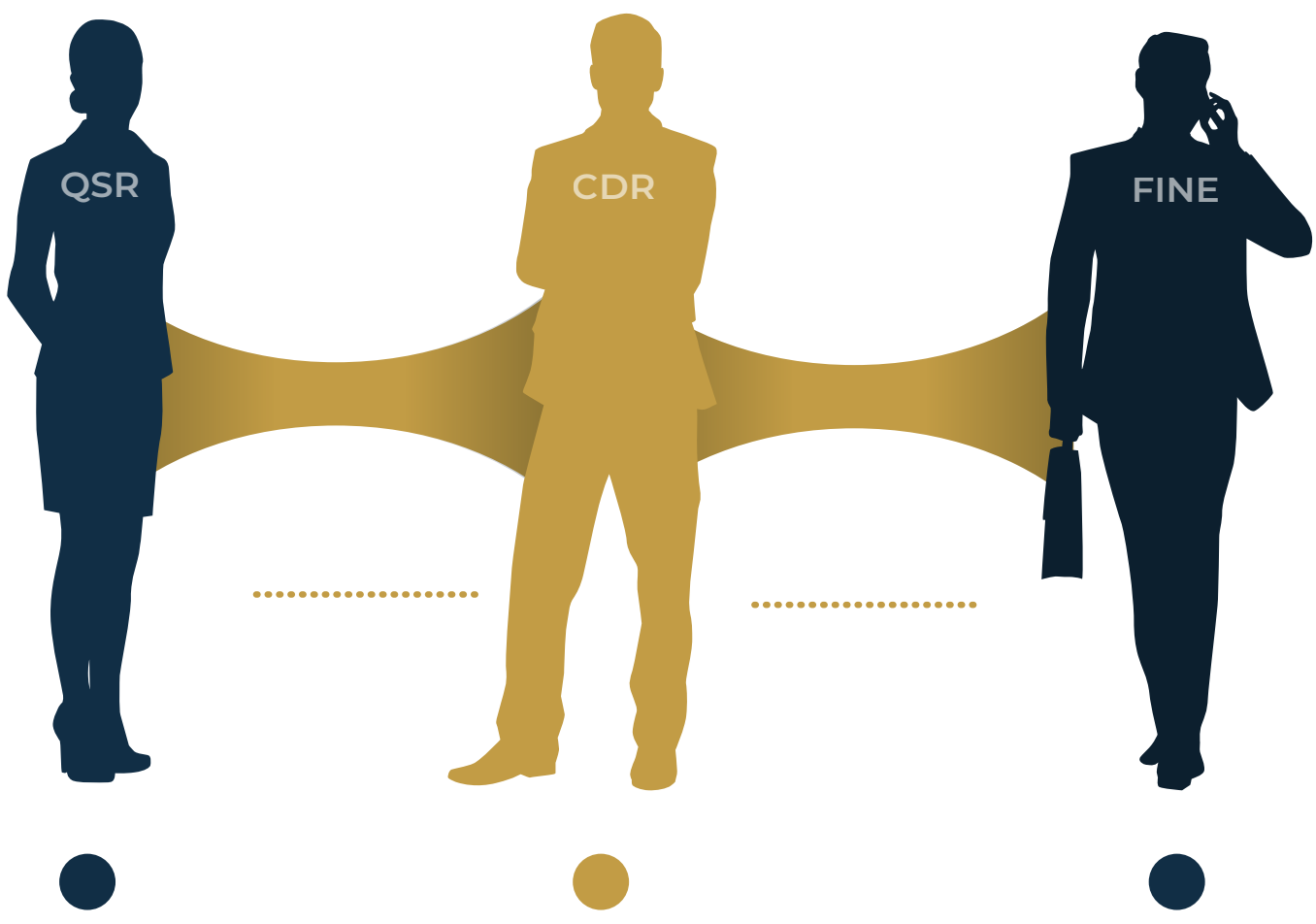
OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY METRICS

REVENUE PER SEAT HOUR | REVPASH

SEAT HOUR = # OF SEATS X OPEN HOURS

REVPASH = REVENUE / SEAT HOURS



QUICK SERVICE

Maximize throughput during peak hours; streamline service steps; align labor with hourly RevPASH.

CASUAL DINING

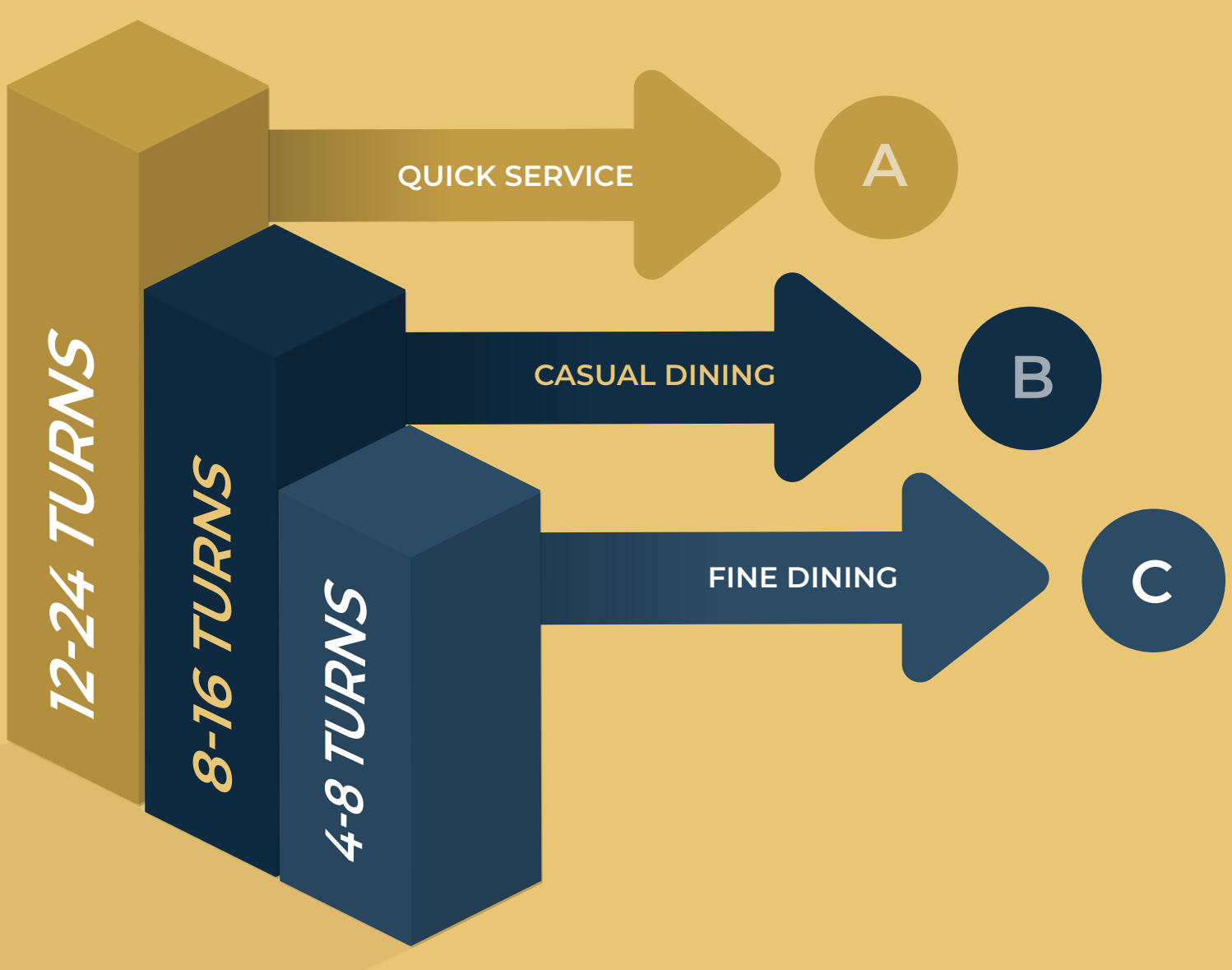
Balance guest experience with table turns; optimize table layout; smooth demand across dayparts.

FINE DINING

Maximize revenue during high-value hours; manage meal pacing without rushing guests; drive growth during slower periods.

TABLE TURNOVER RATE

TURNS IN A 12-HOUR PERIOD



INVENTORY TURNOVER RATE

TURNS IN A MONTH PERIOD

IDEAL RANGE FOR MOST RESTAURANTS.

4-8 TURNS

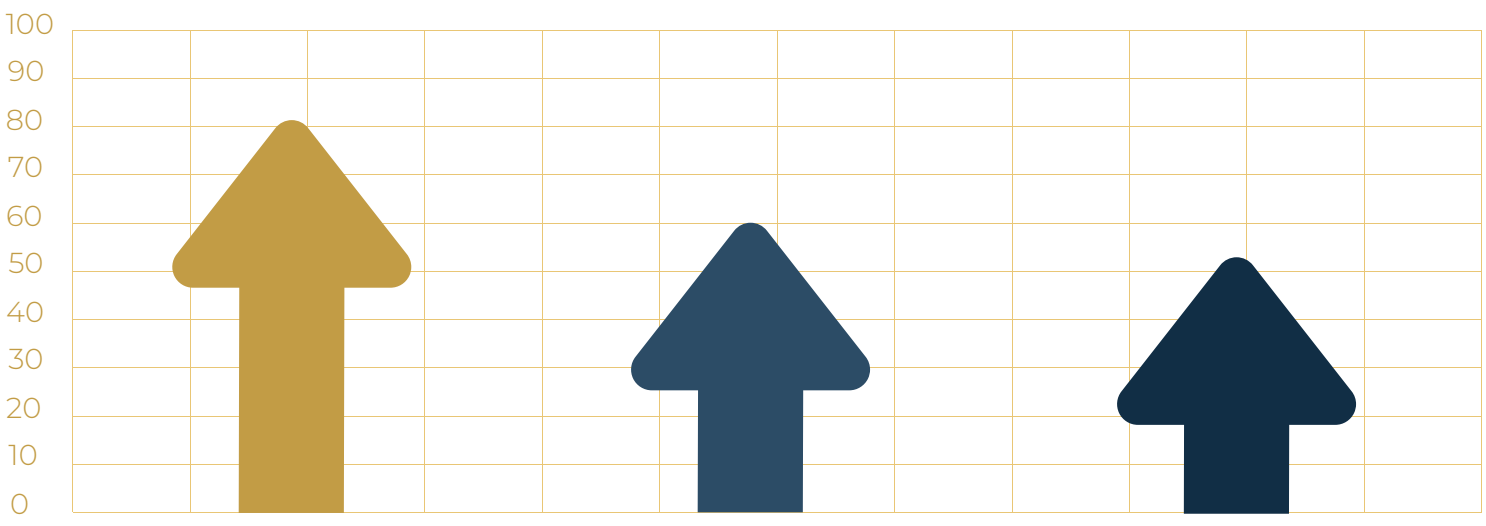
TAKE-OUT AND DELIVERY

30 MINUTES

CUSTOMERS TYPICALLY ARE WILLING TO WAIT 30 MINUTES FOR TAKE-OUT AND DELIVERY ORDERS.

CUSTOMER RETENTION METRICS

CUSTOMER RETENTION RATE



70-80%
QUICK SERVICE

60%
CASUAL DINING

50-60%
FINE DINING

HIGHER RETENTION
Due to convenience & affordability
QSR

AVERAGE RETENTION
Customers likley to try other options
CDR

LOWER RETENTION
Usually reserved for special occasions
FINE

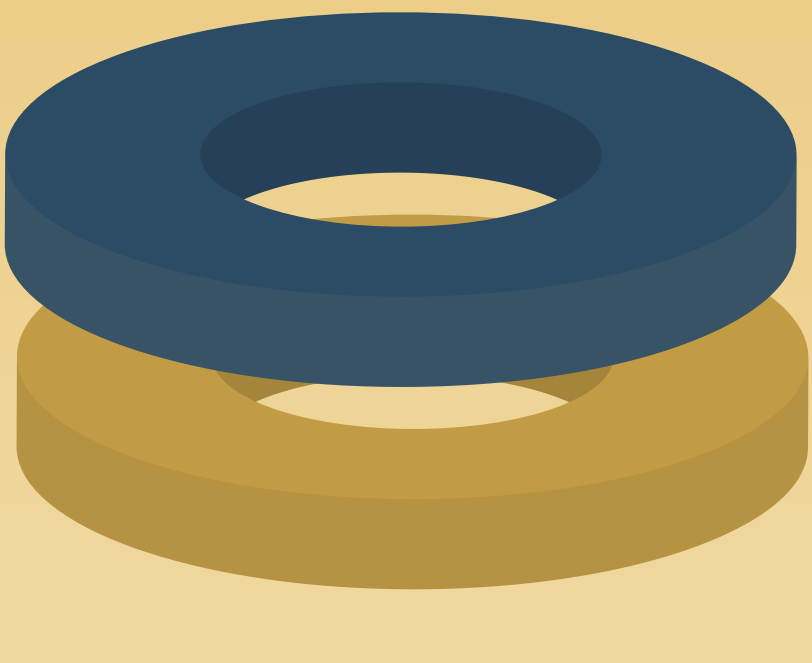
ONLINE REVIEW RATING

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK
BE PROMPT.
OFFER SOLUTIONS.
ADDRESS CONCERNS.

RESPONSE TIME

48 HOURS

AIM TO RESOLVE ISSUES ON FIRST CONTACT



RESOLUTION TIME

2025 RESTAURATEUR
BENCHMARK GUIDE

SOURCES

PROFITABILITY METRICS SOURCES

- REVENUE PER SQUARE FOOT | BAR PATROL | ZOCALOSAC
- PRIME COST | SHIFTBASE
- FOOD COST | SCULPTUREHOSPITALITY
- LABOR COST | INTEGRATEDCASHLOGISTICS
- PROFIT MARGIN | 7SHIFTS | LINEUP | UPMENU
- WASTE REDUCTION | THERESTAURANTHQ

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY METRICS SOURCES

- REVENUE PER SEAT HOUR | TOUCHBISTRO 1 | 2
- TABLE TURNOVER | 7SHIFTS
- INVENTORY TURNOVER | RESTROWORKS
- TAKE OUT AND DELIVERY | ESCOFFIER

CUSTOMER RETENTION METRICS SOURCES

- ONLINE REVIEWS | FEEDCHECK
- RESPONSE TIME AND RESOLUTION | SMALLBUSINESS | GOTAB

Best Practices

What top-performing restaurants are doing differently. Insights, tactics, and tools to help you stay ahead.

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Integrating Technology to Enhance Operations

Deploy AI-Assisted Ordering & Pricing

One-third of operators (34%) already run AI in their restaurants and another 48% say they will adopt the technology this year, using voice bots, dynamic pricing and predictive scheduling to speed service and lift margins. | **Restaurant Tech News**

Promote Direct Digital Ordering

Guests who transact through a restaurant's own site or app spend 35% more per ticket than those funneled through third-party marketplaces. Protect both margin and customer data by steering traffic in-house. | **Cake**

Keep Payments Contactless

A full 77% of diners still prefer tap-to-pay or QR-code checkout post-pandemic: equipping every table, curb-side lane, and drive-thru with mobile payment keeps queues short and customers confident. | Lightspeed

Prioritizing Sustainability Initiatives

Switch to Greener Packaging

Recyclable or compostable formats now command 45.4% of the food-service packaging market, a segment forecast to climb from $61.9B in 2024 to $83.4B by 2029. Choosing planet-friendly containers are fast becoming table-stakes. | TOWARD PACKAGING | GLOBENEWSWIRE

Slash Food Waste for Profit

Among operators with food-waste programs, 56% cite cost-savings as the #1 benefit. Tracking trim, spoilage and plate waste daily can keep losses under 5% of food cost and boost EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization). | THE RESTAURANT HQ

Set Science-Based Emission Targets

Major chains already aim to cut Scope 1-2 greenhouse emissions (GHG) 50% by 2030; independents can follow suit through high-efficiency equipment, LED retrofits and renewable-energy sourcing. | RESTAURANT BRANDS INTERNATIONAL

Effective Marketing Strategies for Customer Engagement

Gamify Loyalty & Rewards

App-based loyalty programs fueled a 77% jump in digital sales for QSR brands, and members generate 12–18% more annual revenue than non-members. Tiered perks and bonus points keep guests returning. | VOUCHERIFY | DELIVERECT

Activate Influencer Partnerships

Restaurant influencer campaigns return an average $5.78 for every $1 spent and can deliver up to 11× the ROI of banner ads. Micro-creators with tight local followings drive the highest engagement. | RESTROWORKS | SOCIAL SHEPHERD

Optimize Search & Local Visibility

70% of consumers say they prefer ordering directly from restaurants. Because diners increasingly order directly, make it effortless for them to find you on Google Maps, voice assistants, and web search. Keep menus, prices, business hours, and Google Business profiles up-to-date and easy to access. | **LIGHTSPEED**

Focusing on Efficient Take-Out & Delivery

Make Mobile Your Primary Lane

7 of every 10 delivery orders now originate in mobile apps. Friction-free user experience (UX) and real-time order tracking are critical for capturing and keeping this demand. | **DELIVERECT**

Test Ghost-Kitchen Concepts

The U.S. now hosts 7,606 ghost-kitchen businesses, giving operators a low-overhead sandbox to trial new menus or expand into untapped neighborhoods without brick-and-mortar build-outs. | **IBISWORLD**

Quality with Eco-Smart Packaging

With almost 45% of food-service packaging now recyclable or compostable, choose heat-retaining, leak-resistant containers that preserve temperature, presentation, and leakage to significantly reduce delivery-related complaints.
| **TOWARDS PACKAGING**

Plant-Forward Menu Innovation

01 Expand Plant-Based Offerings

Mintel's data show plant-based meat menu penetration rose from 27% of U.S. restaurant menus in 2019 to 32% in 2022: nearly 50% of fast-casual menus and roughly one-third of full-service menus now list at least one plant-based entrée. Maintain a balanced mix of meat, vegetarian, and vegan dishes to appeal to vegans, vegetarians, flexitarians, and meat-eaters alike, including Gen Z diners. | **GOOD FOOD INSTITUTE**

02 Spotlight Produce-Driven Specials

Customer orders featuring plant-based protein jumped from 1.9% to 6% year-over-year, proving demand when veggie-centric dishes are promoted prominently. | **NATION'S RESTAURANT NEWS**

Operations and Staff Training for Better Customer Experience

FOOD & WINE | The 2024 Chatmeter QSR Reputation Ranking report reveals pervasive customer dissatisfaction stemming from several key operational and service failures within quick-service restaurants. Specifically, the report notes increases in reviews mentioning:

> Reviews mentioning **"mistakes" increased by 6.9%**.
>
> References to "**staff attitudes" in reviews rose by 21.8%.**
>
> Negative mentions of managers increased, often citing **"poor customer service skills"** and inappropriate handling of **"staff issues in front of customers."**
>
> Customers frequently reported **"inattentive staff."**
>
> **"Wait time-related reviews"** saw an 8.5% increase, with mentions of orders taking a "long time" up by 34.7%.
>
> Reviews of "mobile orders" grew by 52%, often complaining they were **"not ready when promised or deprioritized over walk-in orders."**
>
> "Pricing-related reviews" describing restaurants as **"overpriced" surged by 43.2%**, alongside comments on "price discrepancies between menu prices and checkout prices."

“For QSR operators, this means that passive monitoring of service quality is no longer viable.”

The Chatmeter 2024 QSR Reputation Ranking highlights a sharp and widespread decline in customer satisfaction across the quick-service restaurant industry, driven by compounding operational and service-related issues. The data shows measurable year-over-year increases in negative reviews related to staff behavior, managerial conduct, order accuracy, wait times, mobile order execution, and pricing.

This suggests that QSRs are struggling to keep up with the evolving expectations of customers who now expect seamless digital integration, fast and accurate service, and consistently fair pricing. Reviews frequently mention inattentive staff, unprofessional manager behavior, and mobile orders being deprioritized or unfulfilled—issues that reflect breakdowns in training, oversight, and internal systems.

The report reinforces that customers are no longer passive about poor service. They’re using their mobile phones to post immediate feedback while still in-store or in the drive-thru. This creates an environment where brand reputation can be rapidly eroded in real-time.

For QSR operators, this means that passive monitoring of service quality is no longer viable. A shift toward proactive, real-time responsiveness to customer feedback is essential. Operational workflows must be tightened, staff retrained, and mobile order logistics reengineered to prevent delays and mismanagement. Pricing transparency must also be addressed to reduce perceptions of unfairness and rebuild trust.

Industry Events in 2025

New York Restaurant

Date: March 23-25, 2025
Location: Javits Convention Center, New York City, New York
Overview: This event combines world-class education with industry demonstrations, offering practical and relevant content for today's food service professionals. | SOLINK

International Pizza Expo

Date: March 25-27, 2025
Location: Las Vegas, Nevada
Overview: The largest pizza show in the world, offering educational seminars, cooking demonstrations, and competitions, attracting pizzeria owners and operators globally. | SOLINK

Bar & Restaurant Expo

Date: March 25-26, 2025
Location: Las Vegas, Nevada
Overview: A dynamic event where over 13,000 food and beverage professionals convene to explore new products, attend educational sessions, and network with industry leaders. | BARANDRESTAURANT

Restaurant Leadership Conference

Date: April 13-16, 2025
Location: Phoenix, Arizona
Overview: An exclusive gathering of top executives, the conference delves into leadership, financial strategies, and emerging trends shaping the future of the restaurant industry. | RESTAURANTDIVE

World Tea Expo

Date: May 6-8, 2025
Location: Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nevada
Overview: An event dedicated to premium teas and related products, offering educational sessions, tastings, and networking opportunities for tea professionals. | EXPONENTS

National Restaurant Association Show

Date: May 17-20, 2025
Location: Chicago, Illinois
Overview: This premier event gathers foodservice professionals from around the globe, offering insights into the latest innovations, products, and strategies in the restaurant industry. | NATIONALRESTAURANTSHOW

Food & Wine Classic in Aspen

Date: June 20-22, 2025
Location: Aspen, Colorado
Overview: Celebrating its 42nd year, this premier culinary event features celebrity chefs and wine experts offering culinary demonstrations, wine tastings, and educational seminars. Notable participants include Padma Lakshmi, Kristen Kish, Tyler Florence, and Andrew Zimmern. | FOODANDWINE

America International Food & Beverage Expo (IFOB 2025)

Date: June 26-28, 2025
Location: Washington, D.C.
Overview: A platform connecting industry buyers with specialty food and beverage products from across America, featuring exhibitions and networking opportunities. | EVENTBRITE

The Family Reunion

Date: August 14-17, 2025
Location: Middleburg, Virginia
Overview: Hosted at the Salamander Middleburg resort, this festival honors Black and Brown excellence in hospitality. The event includes panels, Legacy Dinners, and culinary celebrations featuring chefs like Mashama Bailey, Erick Williams, and Tiffany Derry. | FOODANDWINE

FSTEC

Date: September 22-24, 2025
Location: Dallas, Texas
Overview: FSTEC explores the latest advancements in foodservice technology, providing a platform for operators to discover innovative solutions to enhance efficiency and customer engagement. | RESTAURANTDIVE

Restaurant Finance & Development Conference

Date: November 10-12, 2025
Location: Las Vegas, Nevada
Overview: This conference centers on financial and development aspects of the restaurant business, offering insights into investment, growth strategies, and economic forecasts. | RESTAURANTDIVE

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