



ORDER To Eat TRACKER

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ORDER
To Eat TRACKER

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Acknowledgment

The Order To Eat Tracker is done in collaboration with Paytronix, and PYMNTS is grateful for the company's support and insight. PYMNTS.com retains full editorial control over the following findings, methodology and data analysis.





WHAT'S
INSIDE

Customers who are hankering for their favorite foods have access to many options that allow them to eat in at restaurants or have meals delivered, regardless of whether they are seeking burgers, pizza, sandwiches, tacos or other fare.

Quick-service restaurants (QSRs) and fast-casual establishments are realizing that embracing technological innovations and meeting their customers' increasingly high expectations are key to staying relevant in the \$273 billion [market](#). They must use loyalty programs that reward customers for patronizing their establishments and embrace new technologies that make both in-store and delivery processes as seamless as possible.

Many restaurants are realizing that frictionless mobile ordering experiences are crucial to keeping customers happy. The volume of orders made via [mobile app](#) rose 130 percent between 2016 and 2018, and the overall mobile order market value is on track to reach \$38 billion by 2020.

Voice technology adoption is also soaring and is changing the ways consumers engage with their preferred fast-casual and QSR brands. Recent PYMNTS findings [revealed](#) that 27 percent of all United States consumers owned a voice-activated device in 2018, up from 14 percent the previous year. Among those consumers, 27 percent reported using their devices to make purchases during the week prior to the study.

Consumers are using voice technology behind the wheel in addition to doing so from the comfort of their homes. A separate [report](#) noted that approximately 16.5 million U.S. commuters now have voice assistants integrated into their vehicles, and 14 percent of those who do use them to order food for delivery during their treks. Some commuters are not even leaving their vehicles to get their orders. The same report found that commuters ordered coffee for pick-up from drive-thru windows 65 times per year on average.

Delivering ordering experiences that leverage consumers' preferred channels is just one piece of the puzzle for QSRs and fast-casual restaurants, however. Many establishments are turning to loyalty and rewards programs to bolster their customer relationship management (CRM) efforts and win over and retain consumers. Such programs

enable QSRs and other restaurants to build databases that track customers' ordering habits and preferred digital channels, as well as analyze data to better understand their preferences.

These programs are popular with customers, with 57 percent [indicating](#) in a recent survey that they are more likely to eat at restaurants that offer them. Restaurants have been slow to implement these features despite their popularity, though, with just 30 percent having done so. This means many are missing out on significant opportunities to retain customers.

Recent technological innovations are also playing increasingly central roles in helping QSRs and fast-casual restaurants stay connected with customers. The QSR market must continuously evaluate whether it is successfully meeting customers' expectations as new technologies emerge and preferences shift.

The new Order To Eat Tracker, a PYMNTS and Paytronix collaboration, examines this evolving space and highlights how businesses are working with aggregated delivery services — like DoorDash, Grubhub and Uber Eats — loyalty providers and other partner services to enhance customer relationships and deliver experiences that are as seamless and frictionless as possible. Each edition of the Tracker will include a breakdown of notable restaurant space developments that could change how QSRs and fast-casual chains engage with their customer bases.

THE LATEST HEADLINES IN THE SPACE

Asian fusion QSR Teriyaki Madness recently [launched](#) a new loyalty program aimed at boosting customer retention. The offering allows participants to accrue points that can be redeemed for free drinks, sides and bowls, and it will eventually allow customers to donate points toward their chosen charities. Teriyaki Madness' new loyalty program follows the release of its mobile app last year.

Coffee giant Dunkin' introduced an [update](#) to its existing loyalty program, DD Perks. The revamped offering simplifies the enrollment process by allowing guests to sign on in a single step, a move that Dunkin' claims has resulted in

one million new members joining the program. The coffee chain also released a multitender feature on its app that enables users to earn points on purchases regardless of their chosen payment methods.

Panera Bread's latest innovation was recently cleared for takeoff. The QSR is planning to [bring](#) its digital ordering experience to two U.S. airports in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Salt Lake City, Utah, by 2020. The Panera facilities will offer digital kiosk ordering systems and rapid pickup services, enabling travelers to quickly order and collect their food between flights.

Learn more about how the restaurant industry is embracing loyalty programs and new ordering solutions in the Tracker's News and Trends section (p. 13).

DOMINO'S ADDS TECHNOLOGY TO THE MENU TO DELIVER ON CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS

Restaurants that want to stand out in a crowded field must meet their customers' needs by enabling ordering experiences through their preferred technologies. Some food chains, like pizza giant [Domino's](#), have fully embraced this goal by enabling consumers to place orders using voice-activated technologies, mobile apps and social media. It is even testing an autonomous vehicle delivery service. For this Tracker's Feature Story (p. 9), Christopher Thomas-Moore, vice president of digital commerce and eMarketing for Domino's, explains how new digital technologies are changing the ways customers interact with brands and how the company is leveraging its loyalty program to improve consumers' journeys.

DEEP DIVE: QSRs HEAR THE CALL OF VOICE TECHNOLOGY

More than one-quarter of all U.S. consumers who own voice-activated devices have used them to order food. These consumers commonly rely on technologies such as Amazon Echo or Google Home to either have food delivered or place grocery orders, for example, and a significant share also utilize voice-based searches to find restaurant information. Given consumers' interest in using such solutions for their ordering experiences, the restaurant market

stands to capitalize on their growing adoption of voice technology to win business. The inaugural Order To Eat Tracker includes a Deep Dive (p. 18) highlighting how voice technology could change the ways restaurants and consumers connect.

Executive INSIGHT

Recent data indicates that just 30 percent of restaurants offer loyalty programs. Why aren't such offerings more widely utilized?

"There is a real opportunity among the other 70 percent of restaurants to drive incremental visits with customer spend through loyalty engagement. Many things ... can go right with loyalty programs. First, good technology can give a fantastic guest, operations and merchant experience. Second, it takes experienced database marketers to design and run a loyalty program so that ... financial returns are in line with the organization's goals. When both the technology and the people are right, the program makes money for the organization. However, some restaurant brands have had less than stellar experiences with loyalty programs. When it's not working for operations, franchisees and executives, they find the fastest way to 86 the program, disappointing customers across the board.

It boils down to three tenets that ensure a productive program:

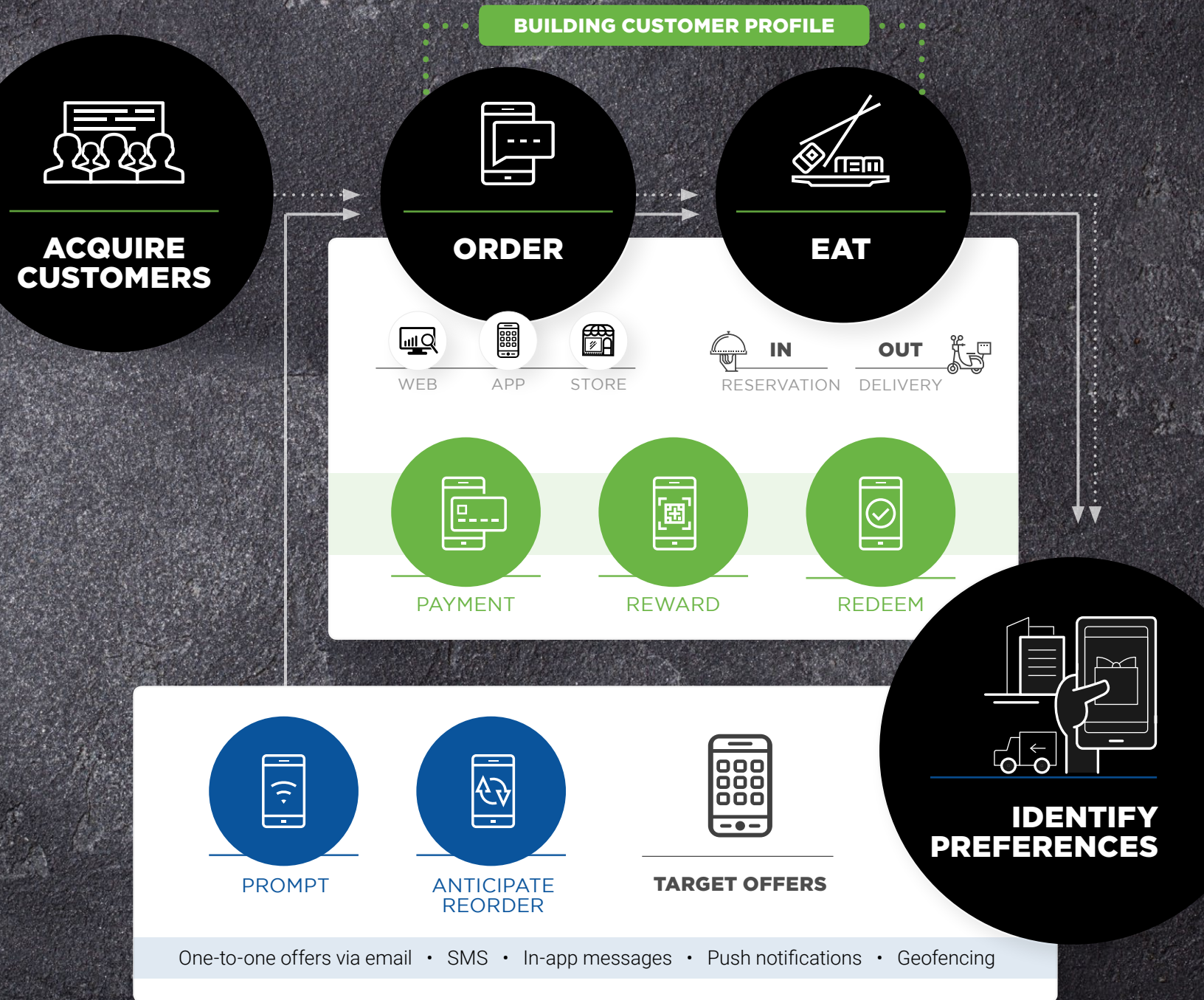
One: An exceptional technology partner. The loyalty platform needs to be up and running all the time, have the ability to seamlessly plug into the brand's ecosystem and include features that make it easy for customers to join and stay actively engaged.

Two: Executive buy in. The executive team should understand the program model and how, when and to what degree it will produce financial results.

Three: Operational buy in. Programs either succeed or fail in the front of the house. This tenet is impacted heavily by the previous two. When the program is easy to understand, the technology works and store managers or franchisees understand the financial return, all systems will be go. They will gladly recruit new members, who are the lifeblood of a successful program."

MICHELLE TEMPESTA,
head of strategy at [Paytronix](#)

ECOSYSTEM



\$273B

Estimated value of 2019 restaurant revenue from QSRs, fast food eateries, drive-thrus, deliveries and more



23%

Projected share of U.S. smartphone users who will utilize food delivery apps by 2023



90%

Share of consumers who are unwilling to wait longer than 10 minutes for food ordered via mobile app



\$62B

Projected value of online restaurant delivery sales by 2022, compared to \$25 billion today



60%

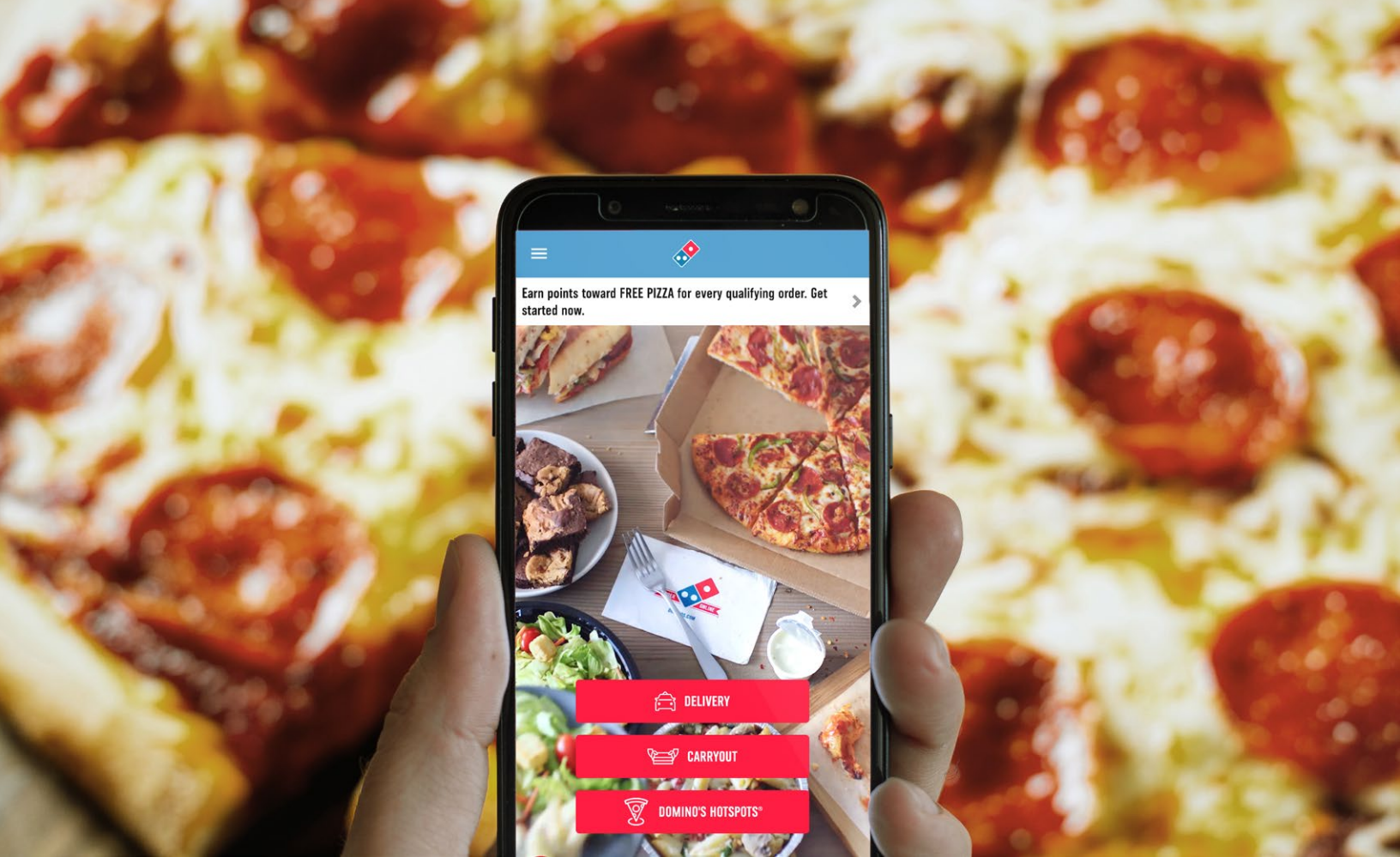
Estimated share of customers who want order-tracking capabilities for their food deliveries



FIVE FAST FACTS



FEATURE STORY



How Domino's Works To Deliver On Customer Loyalty

A significant challenge for both fast-casual and QSR establishments is converting first-time patrons into long-term customers. If consumers' orders do not meet their expectations, their transactions could wind up becoming one-time exchanges that leave them unlikely to return to the restaurant in the future.

Many chains — including Chik-fil-A, Dunkin', Sonic, Starbucks and Taco Bell — have launched customer loyalty programs to encourage future engagement beyond just initial orders. These offerings can enable customers to collect reward points over time and cash them in for discounts or free menu items. They have also proven to be highly popular, with 57 percent of consumers [indicating](#) they are more likely to patronize restaurants that offer such programs.

Christopher Thomas-Moore, [Domino's](#) vice president of digital commerce and eMarketing, explained that the availability of these programs can go a long way toward building a company's brand in the eyes of consumers. Such offerings can demonstrate tangible benefits to customers by rewarding them for deciding to eat or drink at certain establishments.

"These loyalty programs mean so much to customers," he said. "I think that, in the current atmosphere, consumers across all industries really value the acknowledgment and direct appreciation that companies can provide."

Thomas-Moore spoke to PYMNTS about how loyalty programs can elevate relationships between consumers and

restaurant brands, and how the pizza chain's decision to embrace several different digital technologies is changing the ways consumers engage with it.

HOW LOYALTY PROGRAMS ELEVATE CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

Domino's Piece of the Pie Rewards loyalty program launched in 2015. The company released a Points for Pies offering earlier this year, allowing members to earn 10 points for any pizza they purchase, including those that are not from Domino's. Customers who earn 60 points receive a free medium pizza with two toppings.

Thomas-Moore said the program allows Domino's to more effectively engage with customers who have proven to be more "loyal" to the brand. The availability of such a program, he said, helps "provide reasoning" as to why they should continue ordering pizza from the company.

"Customers want to see value," he said. "They want to see it's reciprocal and that, [with] the commitment and the dollars they are investing into our brand, they feel like they are getting some value outside of what they're purchasing."

Domino's can also tap the loyalty program for data-related insights into customers' perceptions and feedback. Among the most significant insights gleaned is that customers who participate in the loyalty program expect rewarding experiences, such as an ordering process that is distinctive from what most customers encounter.

"Exclusivity is part of that relationship," Thomas-Moore said. "They've gone the extra mile to sign up ... and they expect a different experience than [what] everyone else is getting."

Insights such as these can help Domino's better meet customers' expectations, understand how they engage with the company and pinpoint opportunities for improvement.

"We're a data-driven organization, and we're constantly learning [about] all aspects of our business," he said. "Our loyalty program is no different."

EXTENDING LOYALTY TO MOBILE APPS

The initial point of contact between a brand and the customer is key to building a long-term relationship. This experience — positive or negative — could influence whether a customer decides to download the Domino's mobile app, which could be a significant step toward greater brand engagement.

"The majority of app downloads have not come from us being in front of people and blasting those messages," Thomas-Moore said. "It happens from the organic development of a relationship."

He said downloading the company's mobile app is "a big milestone on the road to loyalty" for a customer. This action indicates that the consumer wants a convenient way to interact with the brand and further raises the bar for Domino's to deliver on that experience.

"The actual downloading of an app is, in itself, a loyalty play," Thomas-Moore said. "It's a level of commitment for an individual to dedicate real estate on their personal device to your brand."

Customers will not be willing to demonstrate that commitment if they have unpleasant experiences when placing their initial orders, however. They must be given seamless experiences whether they order from their mobile devices, computers or at physical stores.

"Downloading an app and dedicating that real estate to a brand you had a horrible experience with or really did not enjoy ... is really unlikely," he said. "We're building strong relationships with the brand and our customers, and they're taking that next step of commitment."

ADDING TECHNOLOGY TO THE MENU

Mobile apps are only one part of Domino's technology-focused agenda to connect with consumers. Consumers can place orders from a wide range of connected devices, including smart speakers, like Amazon

Echo and Google Home, or smartwatches. The company also enables orders through social platforms like Twitter and Slack.

Being accessible through a broad range of digital channels is key to Domino's strategy. In fact, the chain now generates 65 percent of its sales through those channels.

"It's about meeting the customers where they are and where they're comfortable," Thomas-Moore said. "There is something to being on Twitter and being on Alexa and Slack and finding customers when they're doing the things that they do every day, ... making the ability to order and track their pizza that much easier."

The company recently [invested](#) in a 33,000-square-foot Innovation Garage based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, that will be used to test new technologies such as ordering kiosks, delivery tracking and an autonomous delivery vehicle initiative. These initiatives will help the company demonstrate that it wants to use the technologies consumers are using, Thomas-Moore said. Becoming an early tester in autonomous vehicles enables Domino's to stay ahead of emerging solutions, for example, rather than catching up to them after they become mainstream.

"I think ... our autonomous vehicle program is continuing that message that we've promoted for a number of years of being innovative and challenging the space on how we develop and cultivate these experiences," he said.

Restaurants and QSRs in a crowded landscape need all the advantages they can secure to establish long-term relationships with their customers. While customer loyalty begins with positive initial experiences, providing seamless experiences across many digital channels can help restaurant brands gain a larger slice of the market.

Under The HOOD

Christopher Thomas-Moore, vice president of digital commerce and eMarketing at Domino's, explains the company's efforts to retain consumers in a highly competitive market.

"We have to focus on good experiences regardless of where the customer is and what that relationship is. Our only great experience can't be tied to our loyalty program or tied to our app. We have to have a strong eCommerce engine that's effective, works for everyone and provides a great experience in ordering pizzas.

So, we're dedicated to that. One of the [areas on which I have focused] is our domestic eCommerce arm, which is an entire group of individuals who focus on nothing but testing. They are finding ways to ensure that all of our channels are optimized and [offer] the best experiences possible. They're working on tweaking elements of those experiences to find the most enriching [ones] when possible.

We can't isolate good experiences for only certain customers — we have to have good experiences for all of our customers. That, in turn, will foster a relationship that turns into an app download, that turns into signing up for our loyalty program. It's all about having good experiences from the very beginning."



NEWS & TRENDS

Change heats up at coffee chains

DUNKIN' CONTINUES ITS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Quick-serve coffee giant Dunkin' recently enjoyed a strong quarter, generating \$360.2 million in revenue in Q2 2019 following the [release](#) of a new mobile app that provides a simplified ordering experience based on customers' feedback. The company also updated its DD Perks loyalty program by simplifying enrollment and allowing guests to sign up in just one step. The move has been well received, with one million new members enrolling in the program, bringing the total membership to approximately 11.7 million. The company also launched an app-enabled multitender feature at more than 1,000 Dunkin' locations earlier this year, allowing guests to earn points on their purchases regardless of which payment methods they use. Dunkin' said this feature is driving further enrollment in DD Perks, and it plans to release the offering nationwide later this year.

STARBUCKS, BRIGHTLOOM TO COLLABORATE ON DIGITAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Dunkin' competitor Starbucks is brewing up its own innovation strategy, [announcing](#) last month that it plans to work with automated restaurant technology provider Brightloom to develop new digital customer experiences for the restaurant industry. Brightloom, formerly known as eatsa, said the final result will be a platform that simplifies the entire guest journey, from the moment an order is placed and paid for all the way to providing digital rewards and offers after pickup.

The agreement will see Starbucks license its technology to Brightloom, take an equity stake and hold a seat on its board of directors. Brightloom will merge its existing technologies – including its mobile and loyalty offerings – with those of Starbucks to develop a cloud-based software solution that can connect customers to their preferred restaurant brands.

New store experiences

NEW STARBUCKS NOW STORE MODEL INTEGRATES MOBILE, DELIVERY ORDERS

Starbucks is also adding to its innovation itinerary overseas, [opening](#) a new Starbucks Now store in Beijing that will offer both delivery and mobile ordering services. The store's layout follows the chain's typical format by allowing in-store visitors to place food and beverage orders with baristas. It also features a new Starbucks Delivers section designed specifically to accommodate orders that will be delivered by scooter. The shop relies on an in-wall system that can be accessed through a designated pickup portal to secure orders.

A Starbucks [news release](#) states that the store will also be used as a centralized dispatch center for delivery orders within a certain radius, enabling baristas at nearby locations to focus on serving in-store customers. The integrated store's launch follows the company's May rollout of mobile ordering at 300 retail store locations in Beijing and Shanghai.

PANERA BRINGS DIGITAL ORDERING EXPERIENCE TO AIRPORTS

Fast-casual restaurant chain Panera Bread recently [signed](#) an agreement with food service technology provider HMSHost to expand its presence across airports and travel centers in the U.S. The company will open two new airport locations in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Salt Lake City, Utah, in 2020 under the partnership, with additional locations planned for the future. The restaurants will offer access to Panera's digital kiosk ordering system and Rapid Pick-Up service, allowing customers to order salads, sandwiches and soups, among other items. The company aims to use its mobile and kiosk ordering channels to target on-the-go airport travelers rushing to catch their flights. Panera's move comes after the fast-casual restaurant

sector [saw](#) an 8 percent increase in sales during the past year, a slight drop from the 9.8 percent combined annual growth rate (CAGR) for the previous five-year period.

Enhanced apps and loyalty programs

TERIYAKI MADNESS DEBUTS NEW LOYALTY PROGRAM

Asian fusion QSR Teriyaki Madness has [launched](#) a new loyalty program that enables customers to accrue points that can be redeemed for free drinks, sides and bowls. Each new user earns a free bowl and two drinks when signing up, and Teriyaki Madness also plans to introduce a donation feature that allows customers to donate their points to charities that can provide meals for others.

Teriyaki Madness' loyalty program comes as the QSR market is on track to reach \$16.5 billion by 2024, and it follows last year's release of its mobile app. Jodi Boyce, Teriyaki Madness' vice president of marketing, said that the program was designed to "build stronger relationships with [the company's] customers through the type of mobile convenience they expect [from] their favorite restaurants today."

HALO BURGER LAUNCHES REWARDS PROGRAM

Grand Blanc, Michigan-based burger chain Halo Burger recently [announced](#) the launch of its own loyalty program, Halo Rewards, which provides participants with special offers including free food and other perks. Each transaction allows guests to collect stars that can be cashed in for a complimentary burger after their first visit, for example. The program also offers referral bonuses, promising a free QP Burger for each new enrollee who spends \$5 or more. The program also includes a breakfast club that gives members a free breakfast sandwich after six orders.

PINCHO AND BY CHLOE. TAP THANK FOR APP OVERHAULS

QSRs PINCHO and by CHLOE. recently [selected](#) customer engagement solution provider Thanx to improve their mobile app engagement and ordering experiences. The former is a Miami, Florida-based chain that serves Latin American-inspired food, and the latter is a New York-based vegan restaurant chain with several U.S. and international locations. Thanx's new app experiences provide more personalized marketing, promotions and native online ordering capabilities to both brands' customers. PINCHO's new app design was developed in partnership with mobile and online ordering platform Olo to enable a seamless experience, allowing customers to review menus, redeem rewards and quickly check out. Thanx was tasked with helping by CHLOE. provide a more engaging rewards program and CRM capabilities. The redesigned apps aim to boost customer engagement efforts by enabling them to provide self-service targeted campaigns, real-time private channel feedback and automated and flexible loyalty programs. The move comes as the value of digital food orders is estimated to reach \$35 billion by 2020.

GREAT HARVEST BREAD CO. BRINGS ONLINE ORDERING, DELIVERY TO APP

Food service establishment Great Harvest Bread Company of Dillon, Montana, is taking its first step into the mobile app market. The company recently [debuted](#) its mobile app, which offers online ordering capabilities and an updated loyalty rewards program that is now available at several locations. The company plans to roll out the offering at an additional 70 stores in the coming months. The new loyalty program aims to engage repeat customers more actively through its app, which sends them both mobile and email notifications. Great Harvest is also offering delivery services in several cities as well as allowing customers to place catering orders through the app.

QSR news

QSRs EXPAND THEIR DIGITAL DELIVERY OFFERINGS

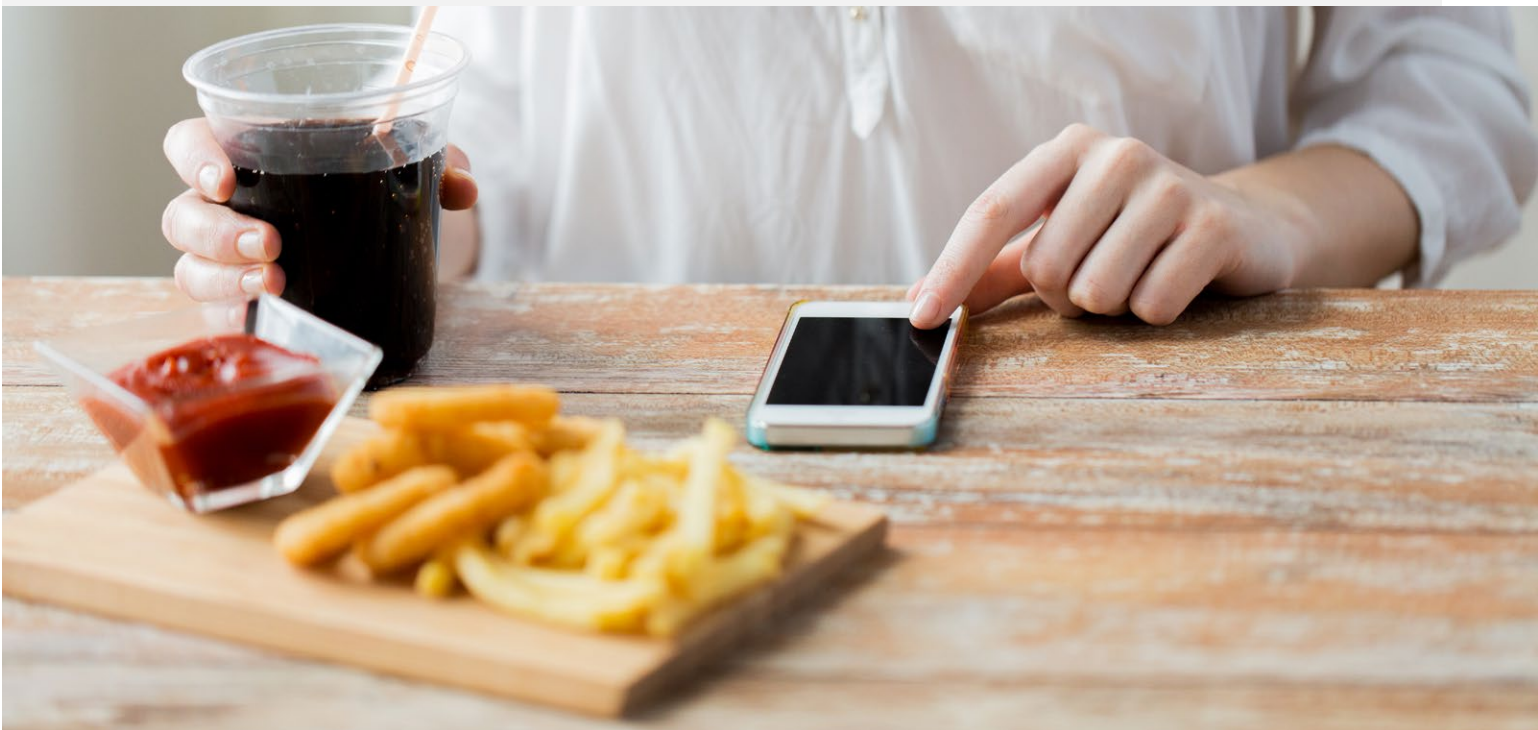
Several QSRs stepped up their investments in online ordering and delivery services in the most recent quarter. Among the most active businesses in Q2 was Starbucks, which expanded on its delivery service in partnership with Uber Eats. The company now offers delivery at 2,700 store locations in 11 markets and is also working on developing its own delivery program.

Starbucks is not the only company that has [expanded](#) its delivery capabilities. McDonald's overhauled its aggregator options by ending a partnership with Uber Eats and making deliveries available through DoorDash. The new arrangement allows those who subscribe to DoorDash's Door Pass service to access McDonald's offerings. The fast food giant is also experimenting with automated kitchen equipment and is enabling voice-activated ordering capabilities

at its drive-thru locations. McDonalds joins a growing list of fast food, fast-casual and QSR establishments that are forming partnerships with delivery services like DoorDash, GrubHub and Uber Eats to stand out from competitors. Providers like Allset and ItsaCheckmate are integrating with point-of-sale (POS) systems to enable more seamless ordering from third-party delivery services under such partnerships. This comes as 23 percent of U.S. smartphone users are on track to use [food delivery apps](#) by 2023, while 60 percent of customers want order-tracking [capabilities](#) for their food deliveries.

THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY'S REVOLVING DOOR PROBLEM

While restaurants invest in delivery partnerships and digital technologies to win over consumers, such changes can come with their own challenges in terms of employee training. Restaurants must quickly train staff members on how POS systems and delivery processes work – a tall order



considering the average turnover rate for fast-food restaurants is 150 percent, according to a recent [report](#). Improper staff training may cause customers to experience problems with their orders and vent their grievances on Yelp and other social media outlets.

There are several best practices restaurants can use to get ahead of these challenges as they face high staff turnover. First, it's recommended that restaurants use POS technology that is easy to learn and does not require frequent rebooting. Second, staff should be trained to handle mobile orders, and the restaurant should designate a specific space them. Finally, the adoption of cloud-based services can spare many workers and managers from having to understand on-site technologies and instead focus on customer-facing services.

GOOGLE RELEASES NEW WAITLIST FEATURE FOR RESTAURANT DINING

A new service from Google and kitchen automation management solution provider QSR Automations [aims](#) to make it easier for consumers to join restaurant table waitlists. The collaboration, Reserve with Google, allows QSR Automations' restaurant clients to offer customers online dinner reservation capabilities. The service provides customers with wait times based on current conditions at restaurants and enables them to join waitlists via Google Search or Google Maps.

The partnership between Google and QSR Automations comes as technology has shifted consumer attitudes regarding restaurants. A recent survey found nearly 90 percent of consumers are unwilling to wait 10 minutes or longer for any food they order via apps. The move also comes a few months after the [release](#) of Google's Duplex service for restaurant reservations. The AI-based tool enables Pixel phone users in 43 states to call restaurants to make reservations while the devices confirm the reservation in the background.

Delivery digest

PANERA FORMS NEW DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS

Panera Bread is significantly [expanding](#) its delivery operations thanks to a series of new partnerships with several delivery aggregators. The fast-casual chain is now working with DoorDash, Grubhub and Uber Eats to broaden its reach to 1,600 locations. Panera also offers its own in-house delivery service, and claims that it sees room for growth as it has made more than 28 million deliveries to date. The market for third-party aggregators is on track see significant expansion, with recent projections indicating that sales from online restaurant deliveries will reach \$62 billion by 2022, more than double today's rate of \$25 billion.

FIVE GUYS, POSTMATES PARTNER ON DELIVERY

Fast-casual restaurant chain Five Guys has formed a delivery [partnership](#) of its own. It recently announced that it will work with on-demand delivery service Postmates to provide delivery services nationwide. Postmates users can now find nearby Five Guys locations integrated into the service's feed, allowing them to view menu items and place orders for delivery.

Postmates is continuing to expand its offerings into the restaurant space. The company currently provides on-demand delivery services for 500,000 restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores and other traditional retailers, and it offers free order delivery for those who subscribe to its Unlimited service. The Five Guys partnership also includes an integration with third-party delivery platform ItsaCheckmate.



DEEP
DIVE

QSRs Find Their Voices

The market value from QSRs, fast food chains, drive-thru establishments and deliveries is [estimated](#) to be worth \$273 billion. Technology plays a critical role in keeping this market thriving by connecting consumers with their preferred fast-casual, fast food and QSR restaurants. Many eateries are actively working to meet consumers where they are by offering more ordering solutions and addressing their patrons' increased appetites for speedy and convenient tech-enabled experiences.

Voice-based technology is among the latest digital channels through which QSR customers are placing orders. The [PYMNTS 2018 Remote Payments Report](#) found that 28 percent of all consumers now own voice-activated devices such as Amazon Echo or Google Home smart speakers. Among those device owners, 27 percent indicated using their devices to make purchases the week prior to the survey.

This means voice-activated technology presents a significant opportunity to change how restaurants connect with their customers. It also comes with its unique set of challenges, however. The following Deep Dive explores what QSRs need to understand about what consumers expect from voice-based systems.

HOW CONSUMERS USE VOICE TECHNOLOGY FOR RESTAURANTS

Voice technology has already become a cornerstone of consumers' search activities, with some accounts [estimating](#) that one billion voice searches are performed each month. It is predicted that nearly half of all searches will be voice-based by next year.

Consumers are not limiting their voice-based searches to just home-integrated systems like Amazon Echo or Google

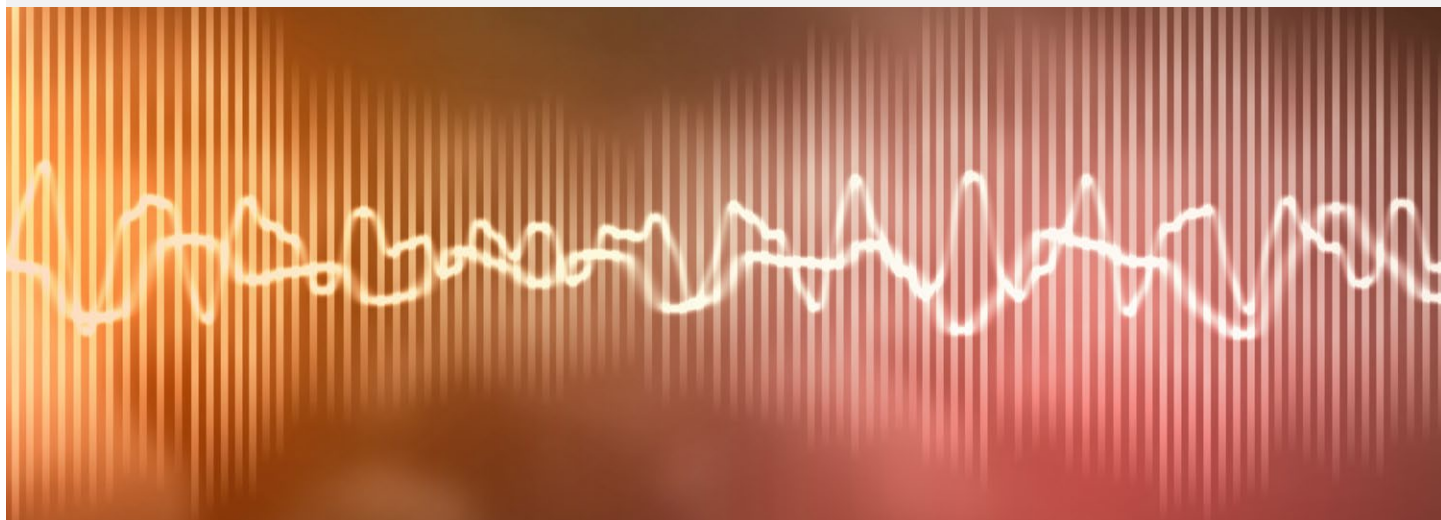
Home, either. They are also using the technology behind the wheel during their daily commutes, meaning a significant opportunity could be found among those who drive to work each day. According to [PYMNTS Digital Drive Report](#), 53.3 percent of commuters use voice assistants on their smartphones while they drive. The report also found that an increasing share utilize voice capabilities during their trips, with nearly 17 percent of commuters using vehicle-integrated voice assistants to connect to the internet while they drive. Ordering food and finding restaurants are key parts of these commuters' routines, and 14 percent used voice assistants to order meals for delivery while they were driving.

Consumers are most likely to use voice technology to [seek out](#) restaurant information, with 53 percent indicating they would like to use such solutions to search for restaurants based on menu information. Forty-nine percent use voice offerings to find information about specific restaurants, and 44 percent use it to find restaurants based on their cravings.

Voice-ordering technology is particularly popular among younger consumers, with an [estimated](#) 25 percent of 16- to 24-year-olds using such tools during web searches on their mobile devices. Considering the popularity of voice search and consumers' overall inclination to use different tools and channels to place orders, restaurants are under pressure to up their digital antes and meet consumers' expectations.

RESTAURANTS ADD VOICE TECHNOLOGY TO THE MENU

Several restaurants are [acknowledging](#) the role that voice technology will play in the coming years and are working



to make it more seamless for customers. Among them are well-known chains like Domino's, KFC, Pizza Hut and Wingstop. Many of these players have enabled their customers to use in-app voice-activated ordering, while others have [integrated](#) with major virtual assistants – such as Cortana, Alexa or Google Assistant – to accomplish that task.

Voice-activated ordering often requires consumers to build guest profiles to complete orders. They can then place orders by speaking commands aloud. A customer craving pizza, for example, could place an order by stating, “Alexa, order my usual from Domino’s.”

Customers using voice commands to place orders will still want access to certain features, like loyalty programs. This means restaurants will have to enable these offerings across different channels, including voice, mobile, web, social media and email, to meet customers’ expectations. These integrations will allow restaurants to more effectively communicate offers and collect data to better understand what their patrons expect from their interactions.

VOICE ADOPTION HURDLES

Voice technology is poised to play a big role in the restaurant ordering experience, but there are still several barriers

to its adoption. Unlike online- or mobile-ordering channels that are visual in nature, voice-ordering systems often lack screens that allow customers to review their orders, which can lead to frustrations if orders are misunderstood and expectations are not met.

The technology could also struggle with being able to process customers’ distinct voices or dialects. Texas-based Buffalo wings chain Wingstop worked with Amazon to thwart just such a potential issue, ensuring that its customers – who often speak in a distinct Southern dialect – could easily place orders that Alexa could understand.

Additionally, rewards and loyalty programs must be made accessible through the voice-ordering process. Restaurants will need to partner with artificial intelligence (AI) solution providers to help make their voice technology-ordering experiences more seamless. Such automated systems could enable customers to place voice orders that arrive via the same channels as online and mobile ones.

Consumers have spoken in terms of voice technology’s potential. It now falls to restaurants to listen to their expectations for ordering and to move forward by adding the technology to their menus.

ABOUT

PYMNTS.com

PYMNTS.com is where the best minds and the best content meet on the web to learn about “What’s Next” in payments and commerce. Our interactive platform is reinventing the way companies in payments share relevant information about the initiatives that make news and shape the future of this dynamic sector. Our data and analytics team includes economists, data scientists and industry analysts who work with companies to measure and quantify the innovations at the cutting edge of this new world.

PAYTRONIX

Paytronix provides software-as-a-service (SaaS) customer experience management (CXM) services for restaurants. Its portfolio includes loyalty, gift and email solutions for fast-casual, fast food and QSR restaurants. Once implemented, these can be used to help establishments elevate their brand profiles. Its offerings can also be used to generate data insights to help restaurants pinpoint opportunities to improve their operations and customer engagements. The company’s platform can integrate with many widely used restaurant POS systems. For more information, visit <https://www.paytronix.com>.

We are interested in your feedback on this report. If you have questions, comments or would like to subscribe to this report, please email us at OrderToEatTracker@pymnts.com.

ORDER To Eat TRACKER

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