

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

PURCHASING A RESTAURANT POS

 TouchBistro

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INTRODUCTION

Restaurant operators often think of innovation in their industry in terms of adding new signature dishes or daily specials to their menu. But today's biggest innovations are occurring less on the menu and more in the technology that's increasing efficiency in the restaurant industry. Next-generation restaurant POS systems are having a profound impact on business operations, guest satisfaction, revenue growth and overall profitability.

While these advanced technologies include both software and hardware, the most notable has been the introduction of tablets. These specialized tablets have made it possible to put full POS terminal functionality in the palms of servers' hands. Research conducted for this guide shows more than three-quarters (78%) of restaurant operators cite mobility as the top reason to upgrade their technology capabilities.

The benefits of POS mobility aren't the only reasons countless restaurant operators are upgrading their systems. The growing need to accept new payment methods, including chip-and-pin (EMV) cards and e-wallet apps, are also top of mind for restaurateurs. The need to comply with new data security requirements is yet another reason so many restaurant operators have made the leap to these next-generation systems.

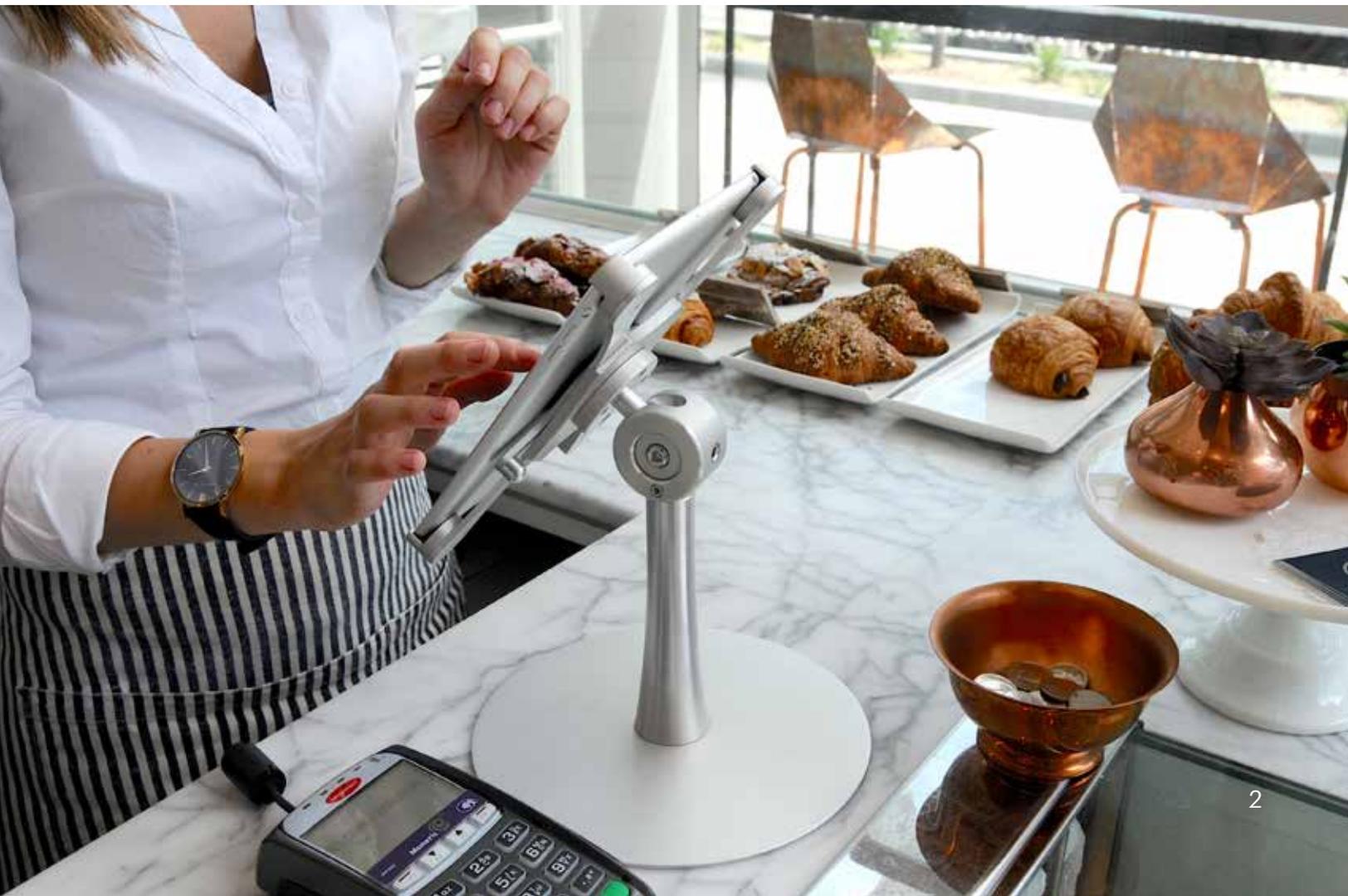
The replacement of on-site installation with cloud-based deployment, along with both the customizability and flexibility this technology offers, have quickly become the hallmark of next-generation solutions.

For some restaurant operators, the biggest selling points are improvements in features and functionality, which become evident in the expanded ordering and payment processing capabilities, as well as the built-in inventory control and labor management capabilities.

In some cases, marketing, guest relationship management, and loyalty program management capabilities are the strongest selling points. In other cases, the robust data analysis and performance reporting capabilities that many solutions now offer strike the strongest chord with restaurant operators as they seek to better manage their operations and identify more opportunities for improvement.

There's no shortage of reasons restaurant operators today want to migrate from a legacy system, lacking in multiple areas, to a state-of-the-art system, designed to meet their needs now and into the future.

This Ultimate Guide to Purchasing a POS offers a roadmap to success for both new and existing businesses. It includes insights for evaluating different solutions and practical guidance for making the right selection based on their individual priorities and requirements. It also includes pointers for maximizing the value of the investment once the system is implemented.



CHAPTER 1:

TOPIC OVERVIEW & KEY CONCEPTS

Up until the last few years, advances in POS technology tended to have little to no impact on the issues keeping so many restaurant operators up at night, like the need to drive revenue growth, to improve staff and process efficiencies, or to reduce slow table turnover rates. No wonder many restaurant operators may have felt hard-pressed to justify the investment in a new system.

That's all changed with the rise of next-generation point of sale systems. Restaurant operations are undergoing a massive shift in terms of enabling greater staff productivity, operational efficiency, and overall guest satisfaction. Research conducted for this guide shows that 73% of full-service restaurants, and 57% of quick service and fast casual restaurants, have seen “significant” or “dramatic” improvement in their operations and revenue performance, after welcoming a next-generation system with open arms.

With all this “tech talk” in mind, restaurant operators should have two main objectives when it comes to any technology investment:

First, streamline your operations. Here, your goal is to increase both employee productivity and process efficiency, both of which will make for significant cost savings.

Second, enhance the quality of the guest experience. This will help increase satisfaction, loyalty, advocacy, online ratings, and, of course, revenue growth.

Luckily for you, next-generation POS systems can help you meet these objectives far more efficiently than the systems they succeed.



Quick Tips:

- The food and services industry as a whole is undergoing a massive shift in terms of enabling greater staff productivity, operational efficiency and overall guest satisfaction.
- Solution providers are moving fast & furiously to not only maintain a competitive edge, but to also meet restaurant operators’ expectations of new technology.

Today, most restaurant operators can easily make a strong business case for upgrading their technology. The return on investment is clear with the increase in both staff and operational efficiencies, but most importantly sales. Thanks to improved guest satisfaction, faster table turn times, and the ability to serve a larger number of guests simultaneously, your revenue will undoubtedly be on the rise. To further justify the investment, your improved financial performance, aided by advanced inventory and labor management tools, along with better performance reporting, will likely do the trick.



- Reduce costs
- Increase revenue



- Reduce payment processing time
- Reduce food order placement time
- Improve staff productivity



- Improve customer satisfaction and loyalty
- Improve staff management and inventory controls
- Gain business intelligence
- Meet payment compliancy

What are the biggest benefits one can expect to gain with the right Restaurant Management and POS System?



There are a number of things restaurant operators should be keeping top of mind when researching today's restaurant POS solutions. Below we've provided you with a better understanding of these different considerations.

POS Mobility

Research for this guide showed that 63% of restaurants currently host their POS systems in the cloud, with an additional 31% planning to do so. The benefits? Faster speed, greater scalability and lower maintenance costs. The benefits also include the ability to use mobile POS devices for order and payment processing, which is key to increasing revenue, as well as reducing overhead costs in some restaurant categories.

Consider the advantages that table service restaurants enjoy when servers can send an order directly from the tablet, to the kitchen or display printer, instead of a stationary terminal located in a land far far away. Rather than waiting in line to punch orders into a terminal, servers can spend that time interacting with guests and attending to other duties that can help enhance their dining experience. Faster order placement, pay-at-table processing along with more payment options, removes majority of the common barriers to guest satisfaction.

Best of all, these capabilities also give your restaurant the power to turn tables considerably faster than before and, in some environments, reach and serve more guests simultaneously.

Data Intelligence

Which dishes are the most popular? Which are the most profitable? Which servers are the least productive? The answers to these and many other questions can be all be found within an intuitive POS system's data.



Quick Tips:

- Faster order placement and pay-at-table processing, as well as more payment options, can remove some of the most common barriers to guest satisfaction.
- Many next-generation POS systems have built-in capabilities that make it possible to readily generate all types of actionable insights, oftentimes on an ad hoc basis.

Previously, mining data to extract meaningful insights tended to be an onerous and a time-consuming proposition. Today, POS systems, have built-in capabilities that make it possible to readily generate all types of actionable insights, oftentimes on an ad hoc basis. This gives restaurant operators the ability to make more informed decisions about all aspects of the business. These alerts can notify a manager when inventory is running low and needs to be restocked, or when high-cost or high-risk food items like liquor are going out the door unaccounted for, indicating the possibility of theft.

POS intelligence, generally referring to multiple aspects of a restaurant's operations, is key to maintaining a competitive edge and driving performance improvement on an ongoing basis.

Employee Management

Many POS systems are equipped with a host of integrated employee scheduling tools. These tools make it easy to not only perform basic tasks like tracking and monitoring employee hours, but, in some cases, to also predict sales and staffing needs. Thanks to data-driven sales forecasting, managers can plan for the volume of business that is expected on a daily and hourly basis based on historic information and other factors.

By accurately meeting labor targets, and by also understanding which servers are the most productive, restaurants can better control payroll costs and maximize workforce efficiency. A smart restaurant POS system will make these statistics easy to measure, while also having a dramatic impact on your bottom line. For example, labor costing reports allow you to identify your highest, and lowest, performing employees.



Quick Tips:

- Using guest management capabilities that enable carefully tailored communications and promotions, operators can launch targeted promotional campaigns and rewards programs.
- Inventory control capabilities make it easier for restaurant operators to track ingredients while minimizing food waste, spoilage, theft, and over-production.

Inventory Control

Managing inventory in the food and beverage services industry generally requires a great deal of diligence. Restaurant operators need to do everything possible to minimize food waste, spoilage, theft, and over-production. They need to understand how adjustments to menus and recipes flow down to ingredients. They need to track the variances between physical inventory and POS data to determine if there may be theft or portion measurement issues.

The good news is that inventory management capabilities are becoming increasingly sophisticated and also a standard integrated component of next-generation restaurant POS systems.

Restaurant operators can track inventory depletion in a real-time manner to help reduce food waste, monitor inventory levels and increase profitability. They can track raw materials from the time the kitchen receives a shipment through ongoing ingredient usage based on menu item orders. Some solutions offer automatic purchase order generation based on par levels and minimum order quantities. Some solutions even offer multi-unit restaurant features that include resource sharing around food inventory management.

Mobile Payment Processing

By now, most restaurant operators have upgraded their restaurant POS systems to be able to accept EMV payment processing capabilities and meet the compliancy requirements that went into effect at the end of last year. Many operators are also now purchasing hardware that can accommodate NFC payments for mobile.

Until recently, it was difficult to make a strong case for mobile payments, but now the benefits are clear. Now, more restaurant POS solution providers are investing heavily in contactless payments and support for the popular NFC mobile technologies, which provide the same security as EMV processing, but at a much faster speed.

You should be aware of the potential costs to not adopting EMV payment processing at your business; you could be on the hook for any future fraudulent chip card transactions. In the past, if a customer came into your venue and racked up a hefty bill using a fraudulent card, the bank would absorb the cost. However, with the new EMV mandate, if you, as a merchant, are not EMV compliant with a chip card reader, you will be liable for the losses from fraudulent charges and will be required to pay out of pocket.

Guest Management

Having the capacity to capture an enormous amount of valuable customer information from POS transactions as well as from other data sources, including guest feedback solicited through survey and reward programs, enables restaurant operators to take a more guest-centric approach to managing their businesses.

By creating meaningful segmentation schemes, and by gaining an understanding of the various characteristics and commonalities that exist amongst guests in terms of their geo-demographic and psychographic makeup, restaurant operators can improve the value of their guest relationships. Using guest management capabilities that enable carefully tailored communications and promotions, they can launch targeted promotional campaigns. They can build customized loyalty and rewards programs. They can refine their menus and adjust other drivers of guest satisfaction. And they can engage in a host of other activities that increase loyalty, generate positive word of mouth, and increase revenue.



Quick Tips:

- While mobile payment processing & EMV are taking off at the same time, it seems clear that mobile will become the preferred payment method over time.
- Using guest management capabilities that enable carefully tailored communications and promotions, operators can launch targeted promotional campaigns and rewards programs.



CHAPTER 2:

BUYING CONSIDERATIONS & EVALUATION

Increasing revenue and margins, by even a few percentage points, can make a world of difference for food service businesses, often to the point of success and failure. It's no wonder, then, that so many restaurant operators are looking to technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Research shows, almost 24% of restaurant operators who have not purchased a new restaurant POS System within the past 3 years are planning to do so in the next 12 months.

While selecting a new POS system, buying considerations differ depending on each restaurant's specific category and size, as well as its differing strategic priorities. For example, a full service restaurant may be most concerned with increasing staff efficiency and customer service, while a quick service or fast-casual restaurant, may be more focused on maximizing the number of guests they can serve during the busiest times of the day.

Restaurants are also bound to have a number of requirements in common — like the need to ensure secure payment processing, and to analyze POS data and to gain actionable insights into business performance. This chapter includes descriptions of these and other key considerations for buyers to keep in mind as they do their research and evaluate their options for upgrading their technology capabilities.

Performance Reporting Capabilities

Now more than ever, having visibility into all of the key drivers of your restaurant's performance isn't just an operational necessity, but a strategic imperative.

Every food and beverage services organization is sitting on a mountain of data related to inventory, menus, guests, employees and other operational and financial aspects of the business. Systematically mining and analyzing the data can generate a continuous flow of actionable insights. These insights can pave the way to more informed business decisions, resulting in reduced costs and increased revenue and profitability. But in order to generate these insights, you need the right data mining, analysis and reporting tools.

Increasingly, these tools are being integrated as a core component of next-generation restaurant POS solutions. The tools are becoming increasingly flexible, and sophisticated, making it easier for you to track and monitor any number of key performance indicators (KPIs) in a user-defined manner. The reporting functionality of these systems have become increasingly comprehensive, intuitive, and not to mention visually appealing. Some systems even include notification features that can trigger a timely response – for example: “Alert me when voids are greater than 10% of sales.”

Every restaurant operator needs to track basic financial metrics, such as net sales to be able to, for example, compare current performance to past performance. But how many track such metrics as average table turn rates, occupancy rates, guest spending or other metrics that impact revenue? Whether looking at menu item profitability, table seating configuration, server productivity or any other metric, operators need to know to what extent a system will let them make ad hoc queries, generate reports and refresh dashboards using any number of relevant data sets, over any time period, to get the answers they need.

Usability

Your new restaurant POS system should be easy to use. The interface should be attractive and intuitive. Screens should be laid out in a logical and easy-to-understand format, whether they relate to placing orders and processing payments or any of the back-office functions, such as accounting, reporting and employee management. For both servers and management, as well as guests, the overall quality of the user experience should be kept top of mind throughout the purchasing process. The ability to train staff quickly is also a critical point of consideration. Old and clunky POS systems require expensive training sessions, and a sunk cost for a staff member with an attrition rate of six months.



Quick Tips:

- Every restaurant is sitting on an ever-growing mountain of data related to inventory, menus, guests, employees and other operational and financial aspects of the business.
- Eliminating the need for servers to travel back and forth between tables and a stationary terminal to place orders and process payments can dramatically boost staff efficiency.

Customization and Flexibility

Every restaurant operator has their own set of needs, wants, and preferences, and not to mention personality. Some buyers may be looking for a certain degree of customization with their POS system to reflect their venue's unique personality.

They may want to configure some screens in a way that may be somewhat unconventional. They may want to be able to generate non-standard reports. They may want to be able to integrate with third-party software modules and/or hardware components. Determining the extent to which a POS system allows for customization, as well as its relative limitations, can rank as critical buying considerations for some restaurant operators.

Ordering and Payment Capabilities

We know you know; food and beverage services operations need to be able to accept major credit cards and cash. But if you want your restaurant to be welcomed into the 21st century, you should be accepting gift cards and mobile payment options, the use of which has skyrocketed.

Beyond secure payment processing, restaurant operators increasingly want to be able to accept payments, as well as process orders directly at the table. Eliminating the need for servers to travel back and forth between tables and a stationary terminal to place orders and process payments, can dramatically boost staff efficiency as well as table turn times.

It can also help increase guest satisfaction, since the majority of customers prefer tableside bill signing over waiting for paper checks and then waiting again for terminal credit card processing. Servers should be able to enter orders using any number of modifiers. Most next-generation POS systems facilitate routine tasks, like check-splitting by item or number of guests. Most of these POS's preset tip percentage options, which even non-math-challenged guests can appreciate — while also working to the benefit of servers in terms of their earnings.

Data Security Capabilities

For many restaurant operators, EMV compliance requirements for processing chip and pin transactions, and the imminent liability shift, was the main pressure point for them to get on the restaurant technology upgrading train.

Now, if a restaurant isn't EMV compliant, it can be held liable for fraudulent charges. Compliancy protects against merchant liability, provides better fraud detection, and accommodates guest preferences with the shift to EMV-enabled payment options. Most importantly: transaction data collected by POS systems need to be well-protected at all times. This means securely encrypting cardholder data the very instant a guest's magnetic strip is swiped or chip is read. And it means keeping that data encrypted until the transaction is actually processed. Some systems store data on cloud-based servers, others on on-premise servers.

Either way, the systems must be equipped to safeguard against risks of data breaches by complying with Payment Application Data Security Standards (PA-DSS) and Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS). Some systems go so far as to monitor transmittal activity and send an alert if there's even the slightest suspicion of rogue access points.

Along with safeguarding cardholder data against potential outside theft, the systems also need to protect against the possibility of employee theft. One way to do this: automatically track all the cash that servers collect. Some systems offer "blind closeout" capabilities, which requires servers to reconcile all cash across all drawers at the end of each shift, without them knowing the precise amount they are expected to collectively turn over. Apart from ensuring employee accountability, this approach will help make your end-of-day tasks quick and painless.



Quick Tips:

- Compliancy protects against merchant liability, provides better fraud detection, and accommodates guest preferences as they shift to EMV-enabled payment options.
- Buyers should keep in mind that selecting a new restaurant management and POS solution means entering into a potentially long-term relationship with a solution provider.

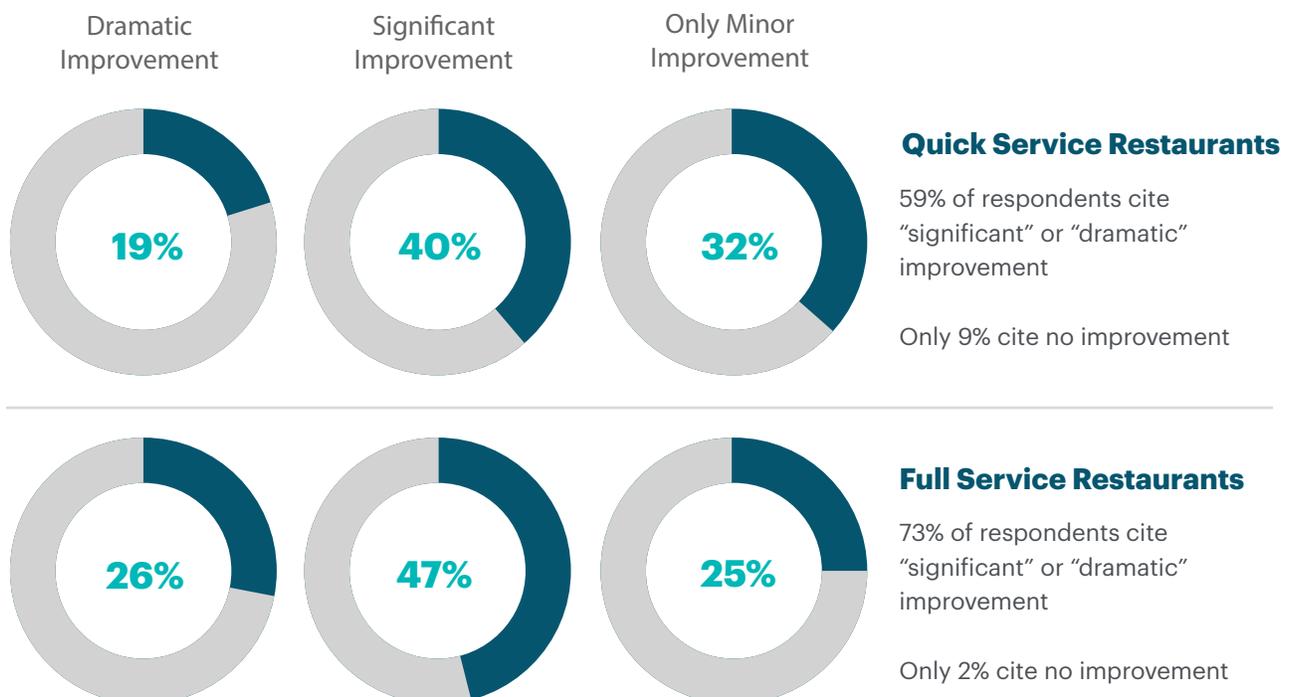
Setup, Support and Training

Purchasing a new restaurant POS system means entering into a potentially long-term relationship with a solution provider. With that in mind, buyers should go with a company that offers a sufficiently high level of customer support, from implementation, to addressing any day-to-day operational issues that may arise down the road, (even including ones related to data analysis and reporting).

Most reputable solution providers will help you through the setup process, along with overseeing any required customization — helping, for example, to optimize the system according to the restaurant’s physical floor plan. Along with ensuring the availability of reliable support, preferably 24/7, buyers should make a point of ensuring that their employees will be able to receive the training required to use the new system effectively. Self support will also be your key to success. While phone, chat and email are obviously important, so too are self-help videos and articles that are available at any hour, no waiting necessary. A great POS provider will have these various resources available to you.

We asked...

“To what extent has upgrading your POS system (within the past 3 years) enabled your restaurant to improve overall performance and business results?”



Evaluation Checklist

Use this Evaluation Checklist as a framework for conducting an apples-to-apples comparison of restaurant POS systems, based on the buying considerations previously mentioned. Other key considerations can be added based on individual buyer priorities. Relative weightings can be assigned on a Scale of 1 to 10: 1 being, "This buying consideration has no bearing on our purchase decision" and 10 being, "This buying consideration is a very important factor in our purchase decision".

Buying Consideration	Weighting	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
1. Performance Reporting Capabilities				
2. Usability/Client Satisfaction				
3. Customization & Flexibility				
4. Ordering & Payment Capabilities				
5. Data Security Capabilities				
6. Setup, Training & Support				
7. Costs & Expected ROI				
8. Overall Features & Functionality				
A. Marketing, Loyalty & Rewards Programs				
B. Inventory Management				
C. Labor Management				
D. Cash Drawer Management				
E. Table Management				
F. Other _____				
Overall Rankings	N/A			

Vendor name:

Vendor name:

Vendor name:

CHAPTER 3:

MUST-ASK QUESTIONS

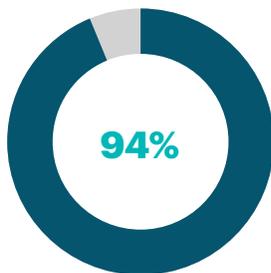
With restaurant POS systems making up for the largest percentage of restaurant’s budget for IT investments, there’s no shortage of solution providers trying to win the hearts (and wallets) of restaurateurs. By asking the right questions, restaurant operators can quickly rule out some options, to narrow the selection process down to the top providers.

Just as the buying considerations will likely differ depending on restaurant size and category, as well as each operator’s strategic priorities, so will the “must-ask questions”.

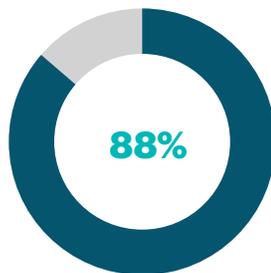
Below are a few of the broader questions (relevant to all restaurant types) that prospective buyers may wish to explore with restaurant POS solution providers.

Research Finding

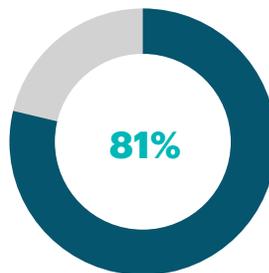
The percentage of restaurateurs who view each of the following success factors as “important” or “very important”.



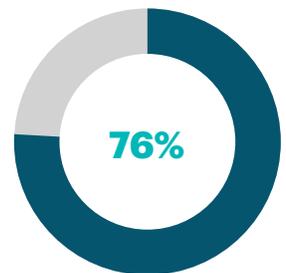
Driving increased staff productivity & operational efficiency



Accommodating guests’ ordering & payment preferences



Generating actionable insights from POS (& other) data into guests, operations, menu, staff, etc.



Using guest profile information for targeted promotions & loyalty & rewards programs



What is the total cost of ownership? Are there any “hidden expenses”?

While hardware and software costs vary, as do the requirements of different restaurant operators, next-generation restaurant POS systems on average, are significantly less expensive and require less up-front investment than their legacy technology predecessors. There are many reasons for the shift to increased affordability, such as less complex installation and less expensive hardware than that of even a decade ago. In addition, you have the option to store your POS data in the cloud, reducing the need for on-premise servers. With this option, be mindful of potential hidden fees for data backup. Most cloud-based POS systems also have subscription pricing, which provides a commitment around service and software updates for as long as you're a customer. It's important to confirm which software features and modules, as well as which hardware components (if any) are included in the base (recurring) quoted price to avoid any unpleasant surprises down the road.

What is the solution provider's track record for stability and reliability?

When evaluating solution providers consider both their reputation and record of customer satisfaction. You don't want invest in a POS system that's known to fall short of expectations, whether they lack in stability, reliability, or promised benefits. Do some digging; check out how often the solution provider releases updates. Software always have bugs, but good solution providers work diligently to fix them, while adding useful new features. For a cloud-based POS system, look into what warranties around uptime are provided. If the Internet goes down, are you compensated? A great POS system will include an offline mode to ensure your business won't go down, even if your Internet does. Also be sure to check out your potential provider's social platforms, or review sites, to get a better understanding of what their current customers have to say about their solution. Regardless of how long they've been on the POS solution scene, a potential provider should have a sizable roster of customers that can attest to the reliability and performance of their solution.



Quick Tips:

- Ask if all associated installation, licensing, maintenance and ongoing service and support fees are included in the pricing. Also, check that the solution comes with a warrantee to protect against hardware or software malfunction, what specific replacement or repair costs are covered, and for what period of time.
- Seek information about what performance issues may arise through conversations with existing clients, preferably ones in the same restaurant category.

Does the solution offer flexibility in functionality, including data access and performance reporting?

The degree of visibility offered by today's restaurant POS systems has ushered in a whole new level of management control. However, some restaurant operators have certain software configurations or customization needs that are top priority during implementation. For those individuals, they might want to confirm with their prospective solution providers that these needs and preferences can be met. For example, one restaurant operator may wish to input a large variety of menu modifiers, while another may want to access sales, revenue and labor reports on their day-to-day performance. In both scenarios, you can see how important it is for buyers to come prepared with the right questions, to see which POS solution providers have the right answers. With 81% of restaurant operators ranking the need to gain access to POS data and business insights as an "important" or "very important" success factor, it only stands to reason that they would also want to ensure that any solution under consideration is able to meet these expectations in terms of POS data analysis and reporting capabilities.

What type of customer support is offered? At what cost? How quickly will questions be answered and issues be resolved?

Buyers should have clear expectations in mind when it comes to customer support and problem resolution, along with the necessary training to get all staff up to speed on the new solution. More than 73% of survey respondents agree that adequate user training ranks as a key success factor. Does the solution provider offer an online training program? Is it equipped to offer online troubleshooting and diagnostic techniques, should technical issues arise? Are there local, in-person support options? Knowing problems will be resolved fully, and in a timely manner, is critical for a restaurant operation that needs to run with minimal interruption, seeing as even a 30-second delay in payment processing is enough to put a damper on the guest experience. Buyers need to understand what to expect, should they ever require immediate attention.



Quick Tips:

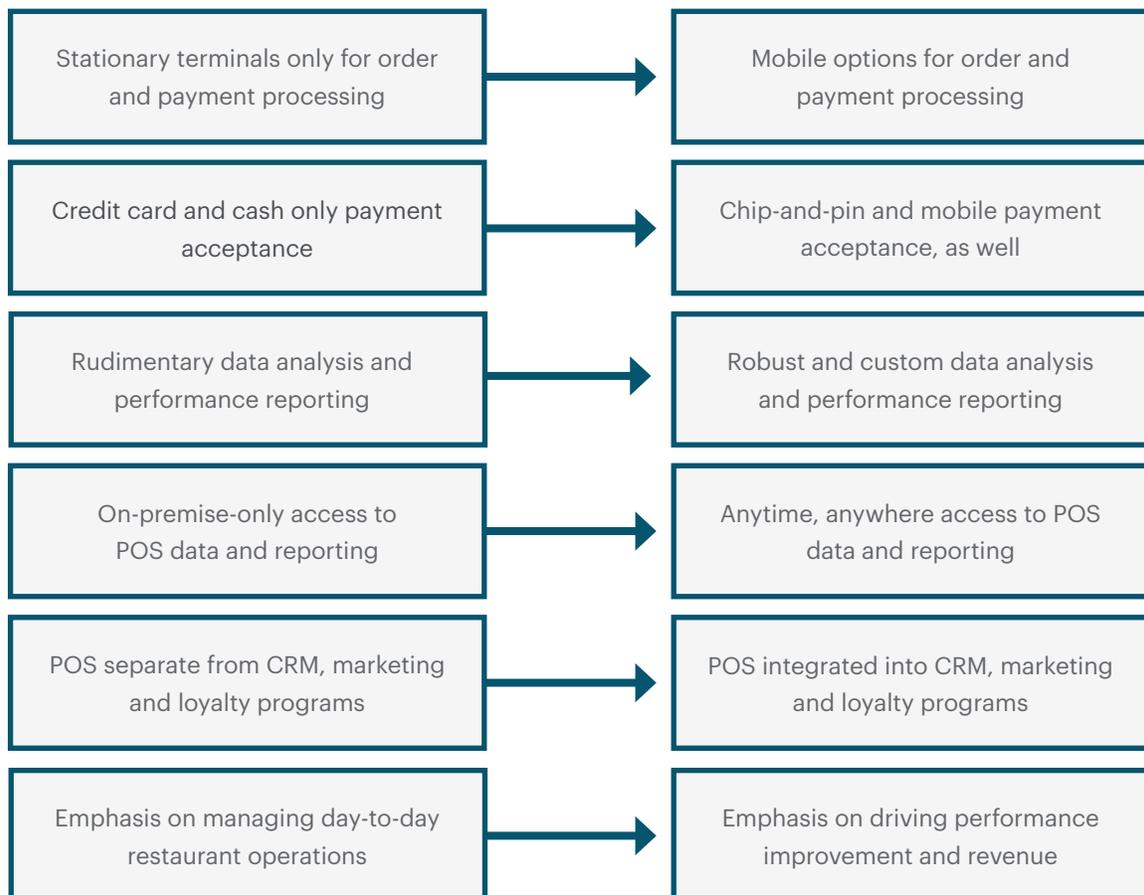
- Confirm that the solution is flexible in terms of key areas of functionality, including custom report generation, and verify the solution provider's claims, if possible, by getting in touch with existing clients.
- Ensure that resources are available to address training and support needs, and resolve issues in a timely manner. The best solution providers guarantee specific response and resolution times.

CHAPTER 4:

ROADMAP & RECOMMENDATIONS

The restaurant industry is teeming with technology innovation. Solution providers are not only adding a host of new software features and functionality to their platform capabilities, but many of them have also started introducing new kitchen display systems, customer-facing kiosks, menu apps - the list of innovations goes on. With the never ending technology development we're witnessing today, the task of selecting a next-generation restaurant POS system can feel a little overwhelming for some.

No need to worry! Most technological innovation is headed in the same general direction. The Roadmap Diagram below highlights some of the key trends and sheds some light on the different aspects of the migration path in restaurant technology capabilities.



The rise of mobile devices and new payment options, access to never ending customer data, advances in analytic capabilities, increases in processing power, along with constantly evolving expectations of restaurant operators and guests alike, have all conspired to usher in a new era of restaurant technology.

Next-generation restaurant POS systems have evolved from being little more than payment processing and ordering platforms to becoming the be all and end all of day-to-day operations and strategic decision-making. The following are a few recommendations to not only keep in mind along your prospecting and purchase journey, but also after implementing your new technology.

Know Thyself

While every buyer needs to be able to make sure that prospective POS providers are able to cover all the basics (food ordering, secure payment processing, etc.), every restaurant has it's own unique requirements when it comes to features and functionality. For example, a full service restaurant may require a bill splitting option, while a food truck would require a POS system that doesn't rely on the Internet to run. Every restaurant operator evaluating a POS system should have a clear understanding of their own requirements and priorities early on and weigh them accordingly (see the Evaluation Checklist in Chapter 2).

Provide Adequate Training and Practice

While a tech-savvy manager or server can be a pro on your new POS in no time, others may need some hand-holding. To avoid this "digital dilemma", make sure the solution providers you're evaluating offer adequate training support, and that sufficient time is allotted for servers to become comfortable with the new system before being set loose on paying guests.

Check Client References

We know... this recommendation might seem obvious, but it's one of the most important. No input will be more valuable to your POS decision process than that of a potential providers existing clientele. The best providers will be more than happy to provide you with one or more client references - even better if the reference shares commonalities with your business, whether in size, typography or existing technology infrastructure. Written client testimonials or success stories can also be valuable sources of intel.

Focus on Building the Guest Database

Restaurant operators can capture an enormous amount of valuable customer information from POS transactions, as well as additional interactions, such as surveys and rewards programs. By enhancing guest profiles with additional data and understanding their commonalities, you can create useful segmentation schemes to help maximize the value of guest relationships at your restaurant. The goal: provide carefully tailored services, communications and promotions, while minimizing the cost of resources otherwise spent to build, maintain and increase the value of those relationships. Capturing and storing individual guest information in a centralized data repository, and acting upon that information to the benefit of both guests and the business, should become a vital aspect of every restaurant's operations.



CHAPTER 5:

INDUSTRY VOICES & ADVICE

From restaurant operators, owners, managers and staff, or anyone who's had first-hand experience with these next-generation restaurant POS systems are very vocal about the topic. Below are a few perspectives gathered from individuals who participated in the survey that produced the research to compile this extensive guide:

“ **Figure out exactly what your operation needs before you start exploring POS technology options. Some new features are awesome and can have a real impact. But some solutions offer a lot of capabilities that may not help you achieve your goals. The bells and whistles may actually be a distraction to your servers and other staff.** ”

- Manager, full service restaurant

“ **Last year, we made the decision to upgrade. The main drivers were EMV compliance and POS mobility. What we weren't expecting was the positive response we got from guests who appreciate the shorter wait times and better service experience.** ”

- Senior Executive, fast casual restaurant

“ The most important thing to consider, aside from payment processing needs, is guest satisfaction. Will the new solution turn the dial on guest satisfaction? Will it improve the experience people are having with the restaurant? Will it leave guests feeling happier? If the answer is “yes,” then upgrading makes a lot of sense. Any technology that improves guest satisfaction and gets them coming back more often is money well spent. ”

- Owner, full service restaurant

To provide you with a wide range of industry perspectives, below is additional feedback from industry observers, including trade magazine editors and leading research analysts, with insights into next-generation restaurant POS systems.

“ We hear all the time that choosing a POS system feels like a very overwhelming process. With all the different options on the market today, there can be a lot of pressure to select the ‘right one that will work for the front-of-house and back-of-house staff. It’s an important decision to make because much of the way a restaurant runs will likely depend on the functionalities of the chosen POS system. ”

- Justin Guinn, Market Research Associate, Software Advice

“ For restaurant operations, the right POS system can be a make-or-break decision. During the most critical times for your business... the POS system needs to perform in just the right way. A slow user interface can mean fewer meals sold and unhappy customers, but a feature-anemic system can cause back-end accounting problems or even drop essentials such as credit card processing. ”

- Evan Schuman, PC Magazine

“ [An] advanced point of sale (POS) system...that mimics systems of insight and systems of engagement will improve customer experience, empower employees, and increase the efficiency and performance of operations. ”

- Forrester Research, Study: Step Up The In-Person Experience

“ A restaurant’s choice of POS can impact and dictate a majority of other tech choices for it. The reasons are varied, from rich packages that include multiple features to limited integration options with other products. ”

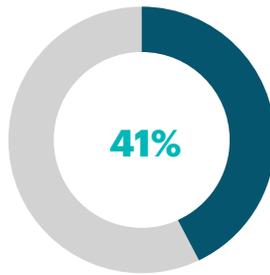
- Chris Caliz, TechCrunch

APPENDIX: RESEARCH NOTES

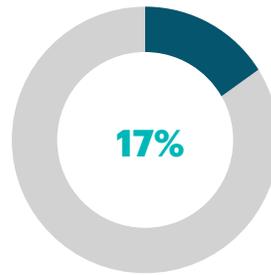
The following is some basic information about the 162 qualified survey respondents who participated in the survey that founded the research for this guide.



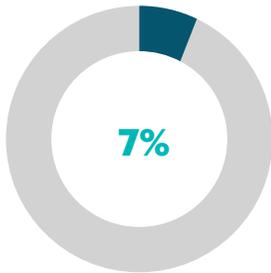
Servers &
other staff



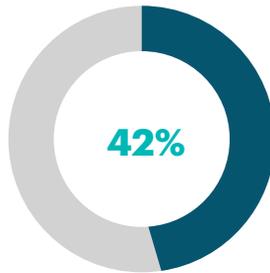
Managers &
other leadership



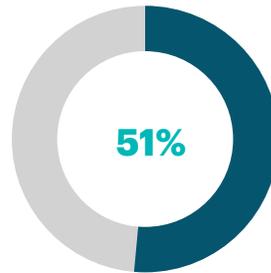
Owners



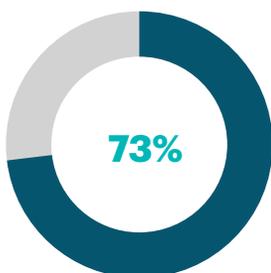
Bars & Nightclubs



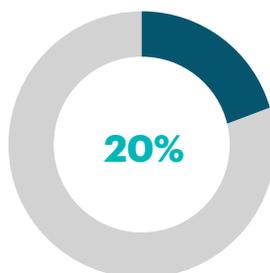
Quick service & fast
casual restaurants



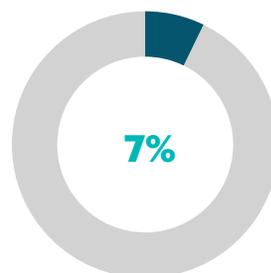
Full service restaurants



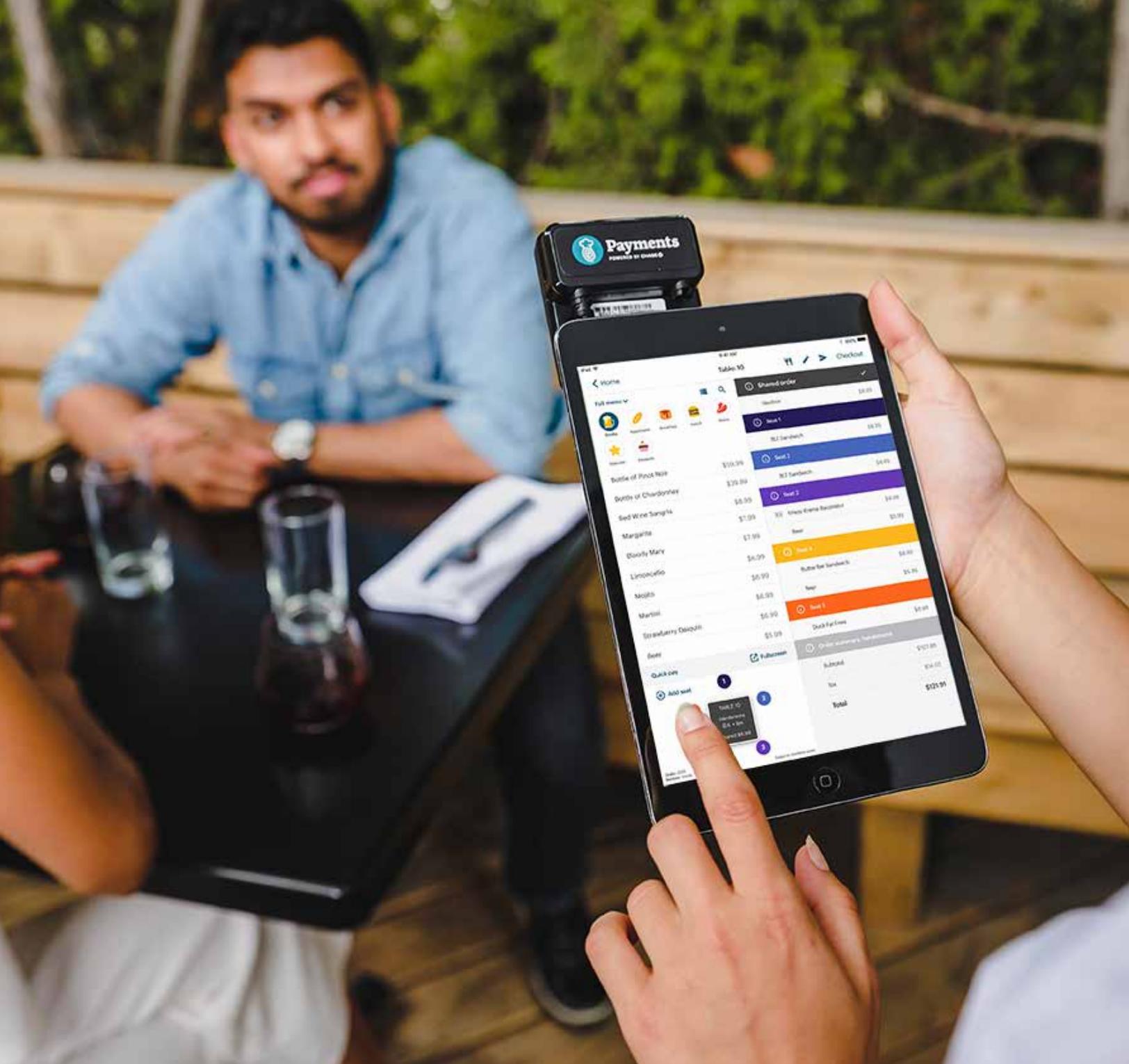
North America



Europe



Other



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