

# Protect profits and accelerate growth with exceptional customer experiences

Managed solutions can help lower costs, expedite innovation and secure your quick-service restaurant's brand



## Ignite growth with a fully supported, high-performance network

Learn how working with a single managed services partner can help you cut costs, focus on your business rather than technology and improve your restaurant's bottom line.



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# The demands faced by quick-service restaurants

Quick-service restaurants (QSRs) are dealing with more digital challenges than ever before. From growing in-store technology expectations to integrating consumer apps to introducing AI, franchisees feel the daily pressure to keep up with rapidly evolving technology solutions in a hypercompetitive marketplace.

## Types of technologies currently used by U.S. restaurants by percentage of respondents, November 2023<sup>1</sup>

51%	Online ordering and delivery platforms
27%	Point-of-sale (POS) systems
27%	Mobile apps for order and loyalty programs
24%	Customer feedback and review management systems
23%	Employee scheduling and management software
20%	Inventory and supply chain management software
19%	Digital menu boards or kiosks
17%	Digital payment and e-wallet solutions

In the National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Technology Landscape Report for 2024, 76% of operators said that technology gives them a competitive edge — but only 13% felt their restaurants were on the leading edge compared to their peers.<sup>2</sup> The need to pursue

new solutions to enhance the customer experience, such as emerging cloud applications, only adds to the pressures already being felt by time- and resource-strapped IT teams. Franchisees need a consistent, higher-performing technology solution across the business. Such innovation does come at a cost that many QSRs struggle to manage.

Enhancing existing technologies offers another route to improved operations. The move brings challenges, including managing multiple vendors and solutions, optimizing the data and improving security in the face of increasing threats. Such demands add more layers of cost and complexity, which can also undermine the QSR's ability to efficiently adapt and scale to meet new market opportunities and deliver a memorable experience for customers.

Franchisees' challenges do not end with technology. Contributing to the headwinds are other operational considerations including rising food and labor costs, inflation, supply chain disruptions and ever-shifting consumer preferences. Franchisees must maintain a balance between responding to these issues and managing the limitations enforced by today's strict operating budgets and shrinking margins.

A good first step toward overcoming these obstacles is to identify and take advantage of the right opportunities to modernize and streamline your systems. This move can deliver benefits from increased efficiency to greater revenue. It starts with developing a deep understanding of your customers and building a plan that enables you to deliver a differentiating dining experience.

# Make technology investments that pay off



Understanding your customers’ preferences is a key ingredient for determining which technology investments are likely to yield the best results for your business. For example, a recent study revealed that 70% of customers said they would place a food order using a smartphone app.<sup>3</sup> Does your restaurant provide an intuitive, reliable app-based order option? What about a loyalty program? More than half of those surveyed participate in rewards programs offered by their favorite brands.<sup>4</sup>

Contactless payment alternatives represent another important offering that can help attract and retain customers. Today’s technology-savvy consumers want the speed, convenience and safety offered by kiosks and other self-service resources.

The same is true for personalized interactions. Both in-store and online, your customers look for offers, options and benefits tailored to their preferences. Gen Z has grown up with personalization, from their music to their social media. They expect the same when dining. According to a recent study, 86% of Gen Z adults experience menu anxiety and decision fatigue with static, one-size-fits-all dining options.<sup>5</sup>

Preferred method for ordering fast food among U.S. adults, by age, May 2023<sup>6</sup>

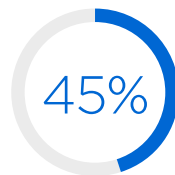
Age range	In-store	Drive-thru	Using website/app and picking up	Food delivery app
18-24	16%	37%	29%	18%
25-34	19%	42%	26%	13%
35-54	25%	59%	13%	3%
55+	32%	60%	6%	2%
General population	25%	53%	15%	7%



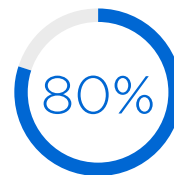


The proliferation of AI helps support and accelerate the move toward greater personalization within QSRs. AI-powered innovations can already be seen in areas as diverse as just-in-time supply chains, consumer trend predictions and new tools that help relieve staff amid today's tight labor market. Advances in AI also offer powerful data analytics able to unearth new and deeper insights into customer behaviors and your overall operations. Employ this intelligence to create unique offers, products and upsell opportunities. Use it to reduce costs by improving inventory management, more accurately forecasting demand and optimizing your supply chain. Integrating AI solutions with omnichannel POS systems can transform your customer interactions and sharpen your operational efficiency.

From contactless ordering to personalization, data analytics and technologies like AI contribute to a better overall customer experience. The upside for franchisees can include greater loyalty, growth and revenue for the brand and business.



**of restaurant operators need more employees to meet customer demand.<sup>7</sup>**

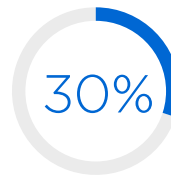


**of consumers say they're likely to engage with a personalized offer or message that's tailored to them.<sup>8</sup>**

# How franchisees can improve their bottom line

In an industry like quick-service dining that often contends with tight margins, the right technology can unlock new paths and opportunities for sales growth. Network modernization provides a powerful engine for generating revenue. Updating systems and solutions helps reduce operational friction for you, and purchasing friction for your customers. Upgrading your network positions you to stay ahead of consumer trends by streamlining integration with your franchisor headquarters, the cloud, loyalty programs and app orders.

Taking a managed solutions approach can also add to your bottom line. Working with a trusted, experienced solutions partner means avoiding the upfront capital costs of purchasing your own technology. You save by offloading installation, maintenance and management to your partner, relieving your overburdened IT staff to concentrate on increasing efficiency and enhancing the customer experience. You can also benefit from automatic updates and equipment refreshes. This frees you from the time and cost of staying current with emerging technology.



**The average transaction increase resulting from an effective drive-thru experience.<sup>9</sup>**

Franchise managed network services effectively enable you to augment your IT staff by drawing on a pool of professionals with years of experience across a variety of technologies. They become an extension of your IT team, which saves you from the burden of attracting and retaining potentially expensive network specialists. These services also offer a predictable, fixed monthly cost, simplifying your budgeting. Cyber and physical security solutions minimize the likelihood of falling prey to bad actors — and the associated cost. Finally, tailored managed services help automate kitchen and ordering processes to enable additional savings related to labor costs, order errors and food waste.



# Optimize your customers' in-store experience



Your customers want ease, speed and seamlessness when they enter your restaurant. At a time of rising prices, diminishing operating hours and staff shortfalls, customer expectations have only grown. They will not tolerate long wait times or lines. At drive-thrus, more than half of customers admit to becoming annoyed if they must wait more than five minutes — 20% will wait only two minutes.<sup>10</sup>

Customers at the counter demand fast service too, underlining the importance of reliable, high-performance connected systems, such as at the POS. It is more important than ever to process orders quickly, decrease table turn time and shorten customers' time in line. POS solutions and kiosks are typically connected with cloud-based analytics and similar systems that interface with customers. Optimizing kiosks and POS systems requires an increasing amount of bandwidth on both internal networks and internet connections. For the system to deliver for your customer and your restaurant, it must work without fail or interruption.

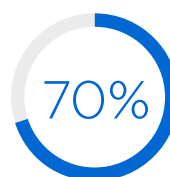
The front-of-house customer experience is vital to creating return visitors, but the kitchen is just as important. To lessen wait time, reduce errors and improve quality control, do not overlook the kitchen in your IT modernization planning and execution. Kitchen staff must be able to integrate data from the POS, drive-thru and even online orders to improve efficiency and effectiveness and deliver the streamlined experience sought by customers. Access to inventory data, environmental food storage status and customer traffic trends can all help kitchen personnel better plan and turn out meals quickly while maintaining quality.

Connectivity is central to your aim of creating loyal, repeat customers. Access to franchisor networks is an important part of that mission. A cloud-based architecture makes it possible, enabling you to nimbly

adapt to changing demands and IT requirements, such as coordinating the transfer of critical customer data. In addition, you can achieve lower-cost connectivity for your POS systems and connections between locations via fiber internet, broadband or Ethernet. Realize greater bandwidth flexibility as well, especially during seasonal peaks in business, as dedicated fiber internet services can easily be ramped up or down.

If you plan to incorporate AI, you will need high-performance network connectivity to gather and analyze large data sets. An investment in dedicated fiber internet and Ethernet connections with speeds up to 100 Gbps and direct, secure cloud connectivity can provide the performance and scalability your restaurant must have to handle massive amounts of customer data.

Reliable, secure WiFi is another absolute requirement for the in-store experience at QSRs. Your customers expect WiFi availability as a means for quickly and easily ordering from their devices. As the number of transactions completed via mobile devices grows, WiFi will only become more fundamental to your customer experience and success. Ensure the best results by optimizing your WiFi to perform across your building's footprint and adopt a fully managed approach to delivering reliable, uninterrupted connectivity.

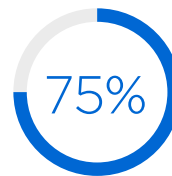


**of consumers want technologies such as AI voice assistants, personalized menus and smartphone apps to make up for lengthening drive-thru wait times.<sup>11</sup>**

# The importance of operational safety and security

A thriving restaurant is built on more than just the deliciousness of your food. Creating devoted brand advocates also means ensuring food safety and physical security for your customers. In a margin-sensitive business, it is crucial to minimize disruptions in service or risk losing customers and revenue.

It only takes one news story about a foodborne illness at a restaurant to understand that the damage can be serious and lasting. Technology helps you protect your business against such events. With modern sensors, you can keep an eye on a range of important environmental variables to prevent problems before they happen. Automatically monitor the storage temperatures of refrigerated goods. Inspect air quality and areas of your restaurant sensitive to moisture. Check energy use across the restaurant. In each case, the sensors will alert you to potentially dangerous issues, including water leaks and temperature fluctuations. Spotting problems early enables you to better prevent spoilage, costly food loss and, most importantly, the consumption of tainted food by your customers.



**of restaurant inventory losses and 4% of restaurant sales are due to internal employee theft.<sup>12</sup>**

The physical security of your business is equally vital. Today's connected smart cameras equip you to easily monitor your public spaces, registers and back-of-house. In addition to providing a comprehensive view of your property, the cameras integrate with a web-based portal that offers advanced analytics, heat maps and other features for stronger security. The analytics also offer the added benefit of capturing in-store trends and behaviors you can use to optimize traffic flow and enhance the customer experience. Further boost security by incorporating door sensors that send warnings about entries and exits as well as alerts about propped-open doors.



# Protect your restaurant against cybersecurity threats

In a world of escalating digital threats, ensuring cybersecurity protection ranks high on every restaurateur's priority list. Even a small breach or distributed denial of service (DDoS) attack on your apps or website can do significant damage to your reputation and bottom line. In-store WiFi networks must protect customers from those who would compromise their personal information or identity. Employees deserve similar protection. Both on-site and remote workers require secure access to your network resources.

Meanwhile, if you use your network solution for credit card transactions, you are required to meet the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard to prevent fraud. Protection for stored data is also a must. This includes personal and financial information in data centers, clouds and all the properties associated with your franchise. Cybersecurity threats like malware and ransomware are constantly changing and growing more sophisticated. It is critical that your safeguards keep up. The same is true if you are migrating to the cloud and offering more data-based personalization to customers. Both open new vulnerabilities you will want to address quickly.

## \$3M

**The cost of the average hospitality industry data breach in 2022.<sup>13</sup>**

Managed services can help you strengthen your security to meet your ever-evolving threat landscape and risk profile. With the right managed solutions partner, you enjoy greater peace of mind by continually monitoring threats and applying advanced cybersecurity updates as needed automatically. Ensure your restaurant's security is always up to date by incorporating integrated security solutions such as advanced firewalls, malware protection and content filtering. Prevent data theft associated with e-commerce and digital payments. You can also more easily control access to your network across users, devices and franchisee locations. Managed security services help you protect your reputation and build trust among your customers while freeing your team to concentrate on creating a dining experience that sets you apart.

## The advantages of working with Spectrum Enterprise®

You have big plans for your business. Aligning with a single and experienced managed solutions partner, like Spectrum Enterprise, can help fast-track your restaurant's evolution. You can streamline the replacement of legacy equipment with modern franchise technology to improve competitiveness, unlock efficiencies and deliver a next-level customer experience. Simplify the process by relying on one set of solutions, one point of contact and expert assistance across multiple technologies. By taking advantage of franchise managed network solutions, you avoid self-managed options that require more knowledge, expense and administrative resources.

Spectrum Enterprise works with QSR franchisees nationwide to help them secure and modernize their networks to make them faster, more reliable and easier to manage. Drive profitability and enhanced customer experiences with technology and services spanning connectivity, networking, voice and collaboration, communication, security and TV.

Learn how Spectrum Enterprise can tailor solutions to your restaurant's current and future needs, all backed by our exceptional service, powerful service-level agreements (SLAs) that include a 100% uptime guarantee\* and 100%, 24/7/365 U.S.-based support.

\*100% uptime SLA guarantee applies only to Fiber Internet Access, Ethernet Services, Cloud Connect and Enterprise Trunking.

Learn more

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6. Sara Shriber, ["QSR Consumer Insights: Majority Prefer Drive-Throughs, Gen Z Leads Way for Online Ordering,"](#) CivicScience, May 30, 2023.
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## About Spectrum Enterprise

Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving many of America's largest businesses and communications service providers. The broad Spectrum Enterprise portfolio includes [networking and managed services solutions: Internet access, Ethernet access and networks, Voice and TV solutions](#). The Spectrum Enterprise team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs. For more information, visit [enterprise.spectrum.com](https://enterprise.spectrum.com).

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