DOORDASH | SevenRooms

THE 2026 RESTAURANT INDUSTRY TRENDS REPORT

A 360° view of the modern diner across delivery and dine-in powered by DoorDash and SevenRooms

US EDITION

OPERATORS DESERVE A BETTER VIEW OF THEIR CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Operating a restaurant today means so much more than running a storefront or dining room.

Now you have to juggle a growing list of channels: Delivery, dine-in, pickup, reservations, and direct ordering. More channels should mean more access to customers, and more data to grow your business. In reality, that data lives in disparate systems, making growth harder to see and to control.

Operators are left asking

- Why do sales look healthy, but profitability feels out of reach?
- What turns first-time customers into long-term relationships?
- How do I grow revenue without adding complexity?

MOST RESTAURANT PLATFORMS DON'T SHOW THE FULL PICTURE. WE DO.

Together, DoorDash and SevenRooms power millions of interactions across delivery, reservations, and in-person dining. That helps give us a clear view into the guest journey from discovery to repeat visits.

This unique, 360-degree perspective is what makes this report different.

Inside, you'll find the trends shaping restaurants in 2026, grounded in insights from over 3,000 consumers, 500 operators, and platform data across the U.S., with actionable ways to drive discovery, convert demand into sales, and build loyalty — no matter which channels you're balancing.

IN THIS REPORT

See which channels get you discovered

51% of consumers find restaurants through Google, while 37% discover them on delivery apps.

Learn how your menu impacts sales

93% of consumers say detailed menu descriptions affected what they ordered in the past six months.

Understand how customers move between delivery and dine-in

74% of dine-in consumers later order delivery from the same restaurant, and 62% of delivery consumers later dine in.

Prioritize high-growth revenue streams

When dining in, consumers would pay more for special-occasion packages (30%), preferred seating (25%), and limited-time experiences (24%).

THE 360° GUEST JOURNEY

Today's restaurant customers move fluidly between channels.
Here's where DoorDash and SevenRooms give you visibility at every stage.

DISCOVER

Get found via web search, social media, word of mouth, AI tools, and reservation/ delivery marketplaces

Marketplace

CHOOSE

Menus, photos, videos, reviews, and reservation availability turn browsers into customers

Pickup | Reservations

EXPERIENCE

Dine-in, delivery, and pickup — often the same guest across all three

Direct online-ordering | Dine-in

RETURN

Loyalty rewards, personalized offers, and remembered preferences bring them back

Branded app

Loyalty program

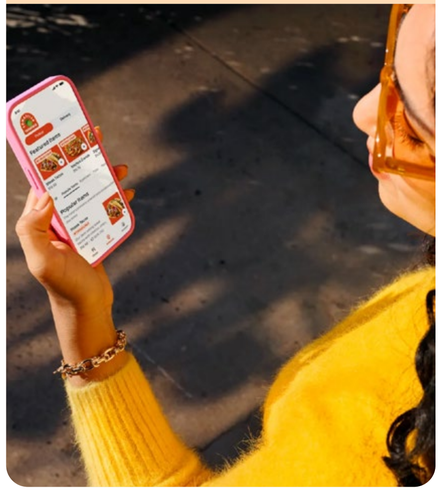
*The data in this report is based on survey results, unless otherwise specified.

SETTING THE TABLE

05

GET DISCOVERED

If you're not showing up in high-intent channels, you're not getting found



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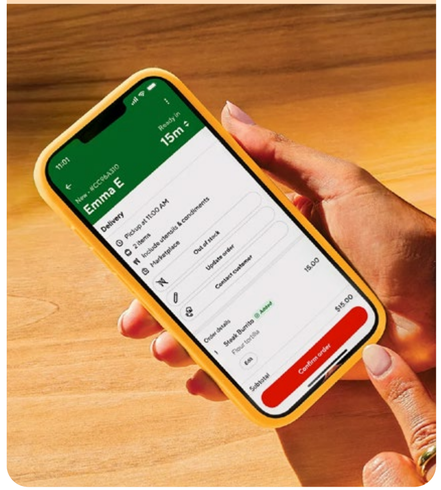
GET CHOSEN

The moment of choice: What actually gets customers to click



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GROW ACROSS CHANNELS

Customers move seamlessly between delivery and dine-in

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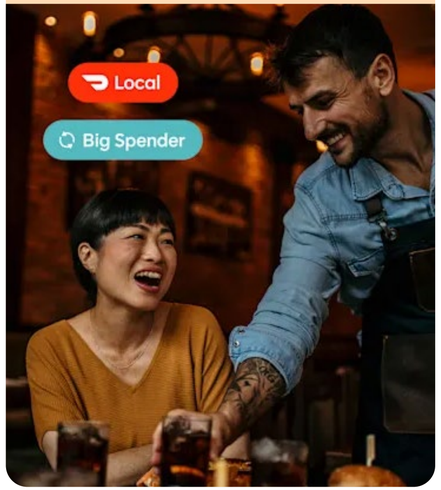
BUILD LOYALTY

Consumers crave a personal touch



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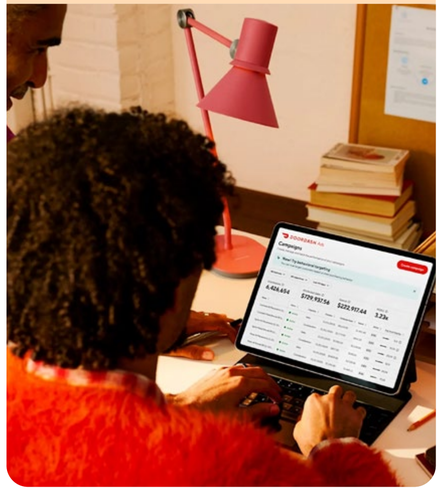
FUEL GROWTH

A 360-degree view of your customers creates a clearer path to help you grow



IF YOU'RE NOT SHOWING UP IN HIGH-INTENT CHANNELS, YOU'RE NOT GETTING CHOSEN

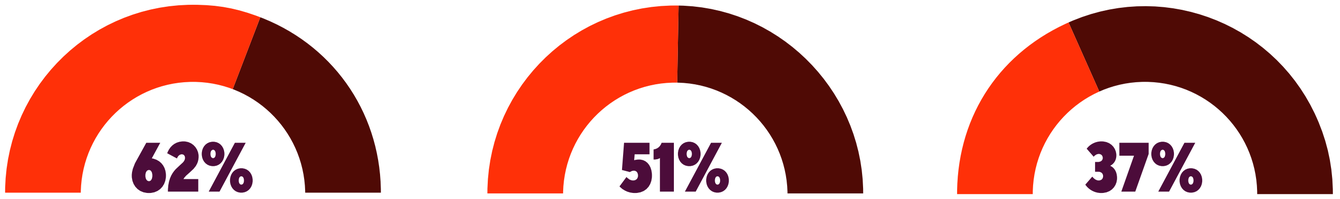
Restaurant discovery plays out on multiple channels, from word of mouth to traditional Google searches. But third-party delivery apps are a popular place for consumers to find new spots to eat.

55%+ FIRST-TIME ORDERS

at a restaurant on DoorDash were from consumers who were browsing, not looking for a specific restaurant, in 2025.*

Once consumers find restaurants and ordering experiences they like, they go back again and again. **73% say they usually stick to one app when ordering**, and **79% of delivery orders** are from restaurants they've ordered from before.

How consumers discover restaurants



TAKEAWAY

Search and word of mouth drive awareness, but marketplace apps capture high-intent moments when customers are ready to act. Your listing, menu, and reviews directly impact whether restaurant discovery turns into a first-time order.

*Based on internal DoorDash data from January 2025 - December 2025.

THE BEST DISCOVERY CHANNELS ARE ALSO YOUR BEST LOYALTY CHANNELS

Third-party delivery marketplaces support two key business goals: **acquisition and retention**.

Operators are most likely to say these are the #1 driver of new customer acquisition, followed by paid social media ads. Delivery marketplaces and loyalty programs also share the top spot for channels that bring in repeat customers.

BOTTOM LINE BOOST

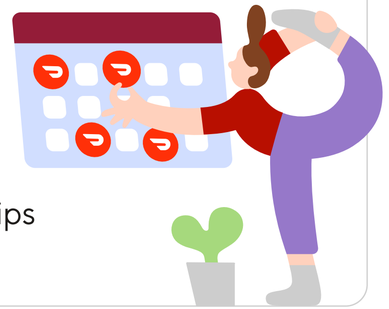
In their first month on DoorDash, new merchants received over **20% of orders** from repeat consumers. By month three, repeat consumers made up nearly **40% of orders**.*

TOP CHANNELS FOR DRIVING NEW GUESTS

1. Third-party delivery marketplaces
2. Paid social media ads
3. Local community events; sponsorships
4. Paid search ads
5. Third-party reservations platforms

TOP CHANNELS FOR DRIVING REPEAT GUESTS

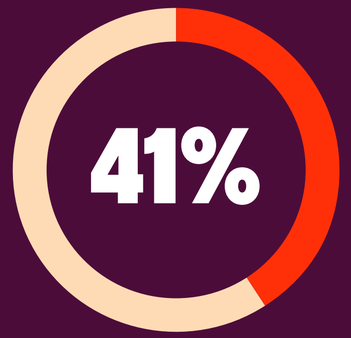
1. Third-party delivery marketplaces; loyalty or membership programs
2. In-restaurant; on-premise marketing
3. Third-party reservations platforms; email marketing
4. Paid search ads
5. Review and listing platforms; local community events or sponsorships



*Based on internal DoorDash data from Jan 2025 - December 2025.

AI SEARCH TAKES A BITE OF THE DISCOVERY PROCESS

AI is rapidly becoming part of Americans' everyday lives, **22% of consumers** have already used an AI tool like ChatGPT or Google Gemini to help choose a restaurant, making it an emerging discovery channel operators should keep an eye on.

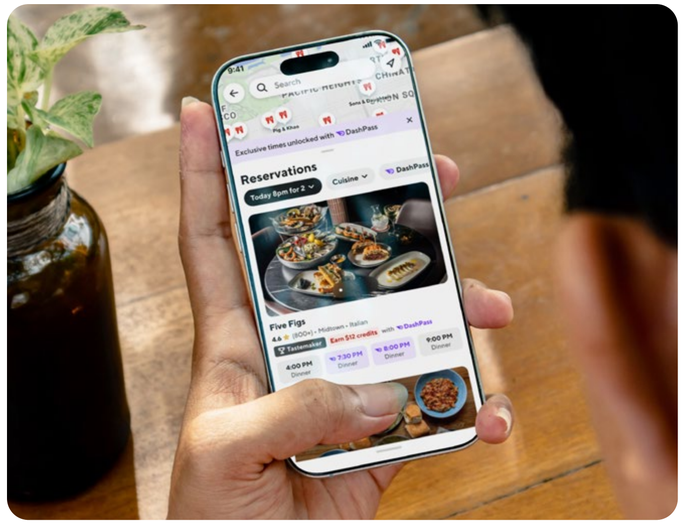


OF CITATIONS FROM AI RESTAURANT SEARCHES ARE RESTAURANT LISTING SITES LIKE DOORDASH

Yext research

When consumers turn to AI, it's most often to search for something new, find a specific type of food, locate options nearby, and find the best value. These queries are likely to lead consumers to third-party platforms. A recent study by Yext research found that restaurant listing sites like DoorDash make up over **41% of the sources** AI tools cite when recommending restaurants, followed by restaurants' own websites.

AI tools rely on multiple sources to answer consumers' prompts. Operators are already taking steps to improve their AI visibility, including updating menu information **(39%)**, managing reviews **(34%)**, and improving photo quality **(32%)**.



TAKEAWAY

To show up in today's search landscape, you need both a strong presence on high-authority platforms and an optimized website. DoorDash brings it all together with a delivery and reservations marketplace *and* direct channels like SevenRooms and DoorDash Commerce Platform, helping you drive both immediate visibility and support long-term growth.

DINERS PREFER SIMPLICITY ACROSS DELIVERY AND RESERVATIONS

64% of consumers would prefer one app for managing delivery, pickup, and reservations. DoorDash now gives restaurants a place to get discovered and booked across all three.

THE CORNER STORE ELEVATES DINING EXPERIENCES WITH DOORDASH RESERVATIONS

"People come to our restaurant because they want more than just a meal—they're looking for an experience. Partnering with DoorDash gives more guests the opportunity to enjoy our restaurant, and with SevenRooms, we can make sure that from the second they book to the moment they leave, it feels seamless and unforgettable."

Eugene Remm
Co-Founder, Catch Hospitality Group

DULAN'S ON CRENSHAW ADAPTS TO AN EVOLVING NEIGHBORHOOD WITH DOORDASH

"When customers search DoorDash looking for dining options, Dulan's is the first restaurant to pop up. Our restaurant is being introduced to a lot of new residents moving to the neighborhood, and that is driving a lot of new customers to our location, either through delivery or they're actually coming in."

Greg Dulan
Owner, Dulan's on Crenshaw

Read the story

THE MOMENT OF CHOICE: WHAT ACTUALLY GETS CUSTOMERS TO CLICK

Being found by potential customers is only step one, the real competition happens at the moment of choice. When customers are browsing, comparing, and deciding, a small set of factors determines which restaurant they choose.

MOUTHWATERING MENUS MAKE SALES

Regardless of whether consumers are booking a reservation or placing a delivery order, menus are influential. **60% of consumers** say the menu and type of food drive their decision to book a new restaurant through a reservations app.

OF CONSUMERS HAVE CHOSEN ITEMS ON DELIVERY APPS BECAUSE OF DETAILED, APPEALING MENU DESCRIPTIONS

What consumers say would make menus easier to navigate

52%
Clear information on what is included (sides, sauces, add-ons)

47%
Photos that clearly match the exact item

31%
"Most popular" or "Best sellers" clearly highlighted

28%
Ready-made combos or bundles that make it easy to choose

27%
Portion size cues (e.g., single vs shareable, feeds 2-3)

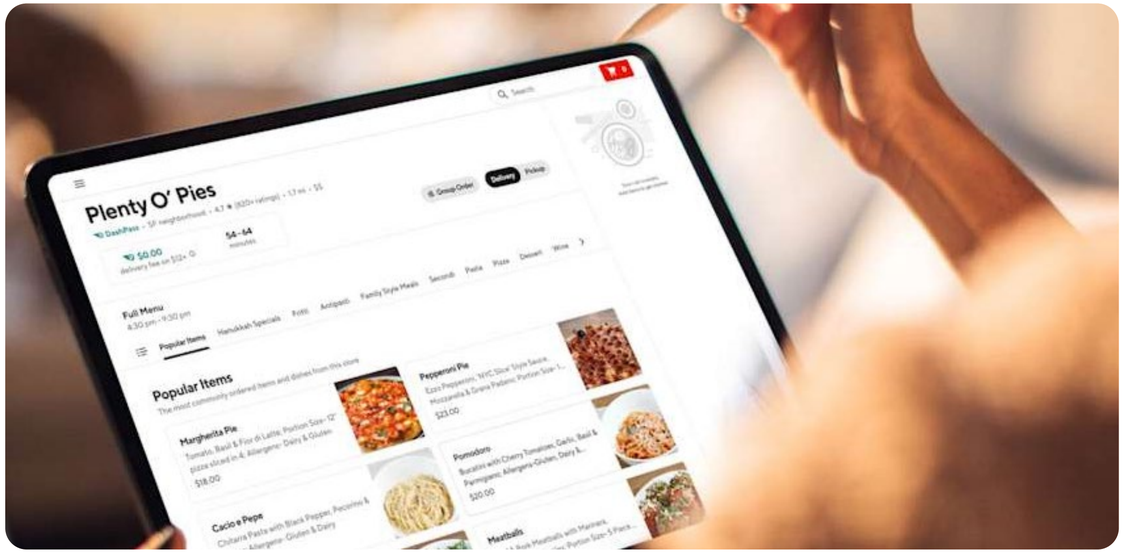
DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS DRIVE DEMAND

When it comes to menu descriptions, more is more.

59% OF CONSUMERS

actively seek out allergen or dietary information in menus or consider it a nice to have when ordering food.

According to the International Food Information Council, **more than half of U.S. adults** have a food allergy, intolerance, or sensitivity, or know or live with someone with one. Including allergens or dietary details on your menu can open up your restaurant to new guests, and give peace of mind to those with food restrictions.



BOTTOM LINE BOOST

On DoorDash, adding descriptions to at least half your menu can increase sales by **over 6%** on average. Make menu maintenance even easier with an AI-powered item description generator that creates enticing descriptions in one-click.

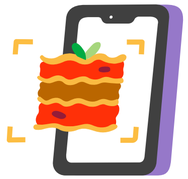
*Based on internal DoorDash analysis of SMB merchants adding merchant-written descriptions to at least 50% of menu items (2023–2025).

SEEING IS BELIEVING (THAT I HAVE TO EAT THIS...NOW)

For most consumers, the decision to order starts—and ends—with a photo.

87% OF CONSUMERS

have chosen what to eat on a delivery app based on seeing an appealing photo or video of that item. This is particularly true for Gen Z **(90%)** and Millennials **(95%)**.



91% OF CONSUMERS

say a new item they ordered had a photo at least sometimes. Visual reassurance is key to encouraging diners to consider unfamiliar options.

BOTTOM LINE BOOST

On DoorDash, reaching at least **50%** menu photo coverage can increase sales by **13%** on average.* Quickly capture and upload high-quality imagery with DoorDash's AI-powered camera and instant photo approvals.

*Based on internal DoorDash analysis of SMB merchants increasing menu photo coverage from 0% to at least 50% (2023–2025).

THE PHONE ~~EATS~~ ORDERS FIRST

Most of consumers' dining decisions play out on the small screen.
64% almost always order delivery on mobile, with another **17%** saying they usually do.

Consumer data backs up this behavior, **95% of DoorDash orders** in the past six months were placed on mobile*. An online presence optimized for on-the-go phone usage makes it easier and faster for consumers to choose you (over and over again).

FRANGOS CHICKEN FINGERS DRIVES MOBILE-FIRST GROWTH WITH COMMERCE PLATFORM

"Creating the app has given our customers another seamless way to order. It also gave us another revenue channel that we fully own. It ties everything together by making the experience truly frictionless."

Danya Hmina
Head of Marketing,
Frangos Chicken Fingers

Hear their story

TAKEAWAY

Make sure you're active on mobile-first ordering platforms, including third-party marketplaces, and reservations apps.

Review your mobile ordering flow for ease of use:
Can customers use saved payment methods, or digital cards like Apple Pay? Are fees obvious up front so there won't be a surprise later on? Then, make a plan for mobile marketing to meet customers where they're most active.

*Mobile usage data is based on the last six months of orders placed on DoorDash as of April 2026

RESERVATIONS START WITH A CALL, BUT AI IS ANSWERING

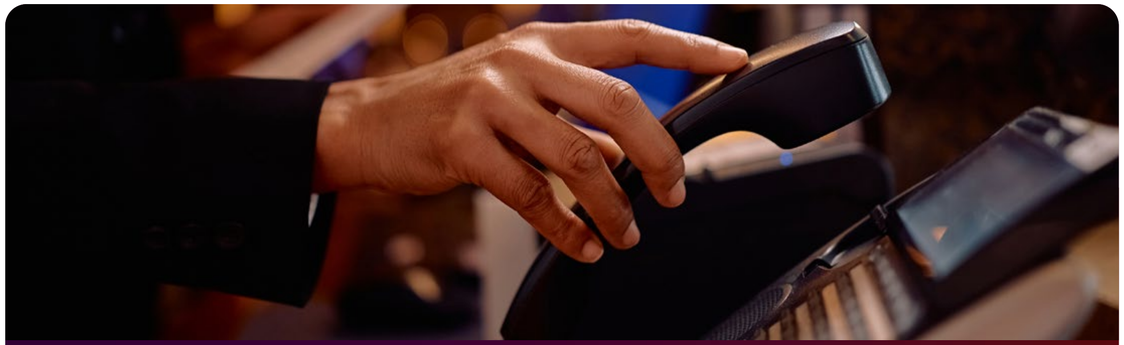
Phones are still the top way diners book reservations. **64% of diners** call the restaurant, compared to **55%** who book directly online and **41%** who use a reservations app.

But this demand for phone bookings creates a major gap: **40% of restaurant calls** go unanswered, according to NRN.

At the same time, diner expectations are evolving. 2025 SevenRooms data revealed **three-quarters of diners** are comfortable using AI for reservations, yet only **28% of operators** were using AI to manage calls and customer service.

TAKEAWAY

As long as phones drive reservations, capturing every call is critical. AI enables restaurants to do this at scale while improving operational efficiency. SevenRooms Voice AI handles reservation requests, cancellations, and guest questions, and is available 24/7, personalizing each interaction based on your guest profiles and CRM data.



CASPER HOSPITALITY SERVES RESPONSIVENESS AT SCALE

"Since switching to SevenRooms Voice AI, we've practically retired our phones at all 4 of our U.S. locations. Every guest call is handled, no missed reservations, no staff interruptions. It's freed up hours each week, letting our team focus on what really matters: our guests in the room."

David Chen
COO of Casper Hospitality

In one month with Voice AI:

3800+ calls handled

850+ covers created

28K booked revenue

CONSUMERS DON'T THINK IN CHANNELS, THEY THINK IN MOMENTS

Customers turn to different channels depending on the occasion. For celebrations and connection, customers turn to dine-in. For convenience, routine, and self-care, they choose delivery or pickup.

Top occasions for...

DINE-IN

Celebrating a birthday
86%

Date night
86%

Celebrating a holiday or special tradition
75%

Getting together with family or traveling or away from home
58%

DELIVERY

After a long or stressful work week
63%

Quick meal on a busy weekday
48%

Treating yourself just because
45%

Hanging out with close friends or casual weekend meal
27%

PICKUP

Quick meal on a busy weekday
46%

After a long or stressful work week
26%

Treating yourself
26%

Casual weekend meal
26%

TAKEAWAY

Operators who align their marketing and offers to these moments, from special-occasion experiences to weeknight ease, are better positioned to drive cross-channel engagement and repeat behavior.

CUSTOMERS MOVE SEAMLESSLY BETWEEN DELIVERY AND DINE-IN

Restaurants' highest value customers don't stick their favorite spots in a "delivery" or "dine-in" box. They engage across multiple channels, switching between each and returning to places they know and trust—**80% of dine-in visits** and **79% of orders** are with restaurants customers have tried before.

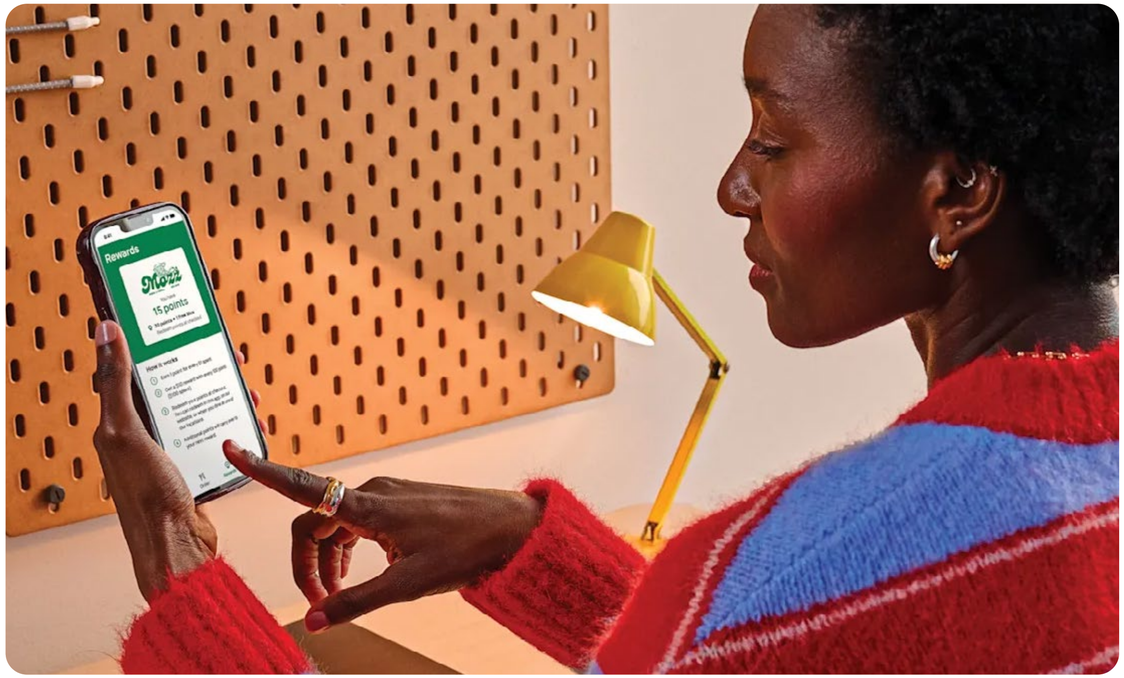
Not only do consumers return, they extend that loyalty across channels.

62% OF CONSUMERS

say ordering delivery led them to later dine-in at the same restaurant at least once in the past six months.

74% OF CONSUMERS

say a dine-in visit led them to later order delivery from that same restaurant.



TAKEAWAY

Cross-channel customers are among your most valuable. They order often, visit frequently, and are more likely to return. Restaurants that make it easy to move between delivery and dine-in, by using tools like Cross-Channel Loyalty, turn one-time transactions into long-term relationships.

RESTAURANTS ARE LEAVING CROSS-CHANNEL REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES ON THE TABLE

90% OF CONSUMERS

would use a loyalty program that spans reservations and delivery, but many restaurants have yet to fully unlock this opportunity.

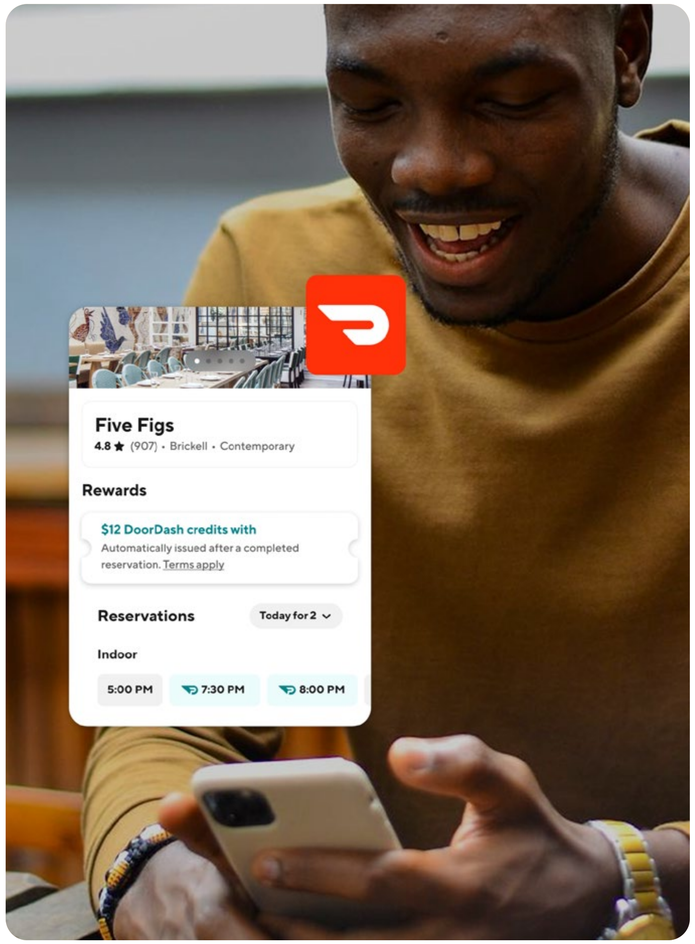
While **66% of operators** report having loyalty programs across channels today, only around half promote dine-in to delivery offers or integrated member perks. At the same time, incentives remain a proven driver of behavior:

87% OF CONSUMERS

say a credit, discount, or perk influenced them to reorder.

66% OF CONSUMERS

engage more frequently with restaurants where they're loyalty members.



TAKEAWAY

Restaurants that unify guest data and loyalty across dine-in and delivery, use targeted offers and perks to move customers between occasions (e.g., "Book a reservation and earn $12 towards delivery"). Tracking this behavior holistically can help drive more frequent visits, higher spend, and stronger long-term loyalty.

THE COST OF DISCONNECTED SYSTEMS

Most operators lack the connected technology needed to accommodate today's cross-channel dining habits. Disjointed technology is more than a minor inconvenience.

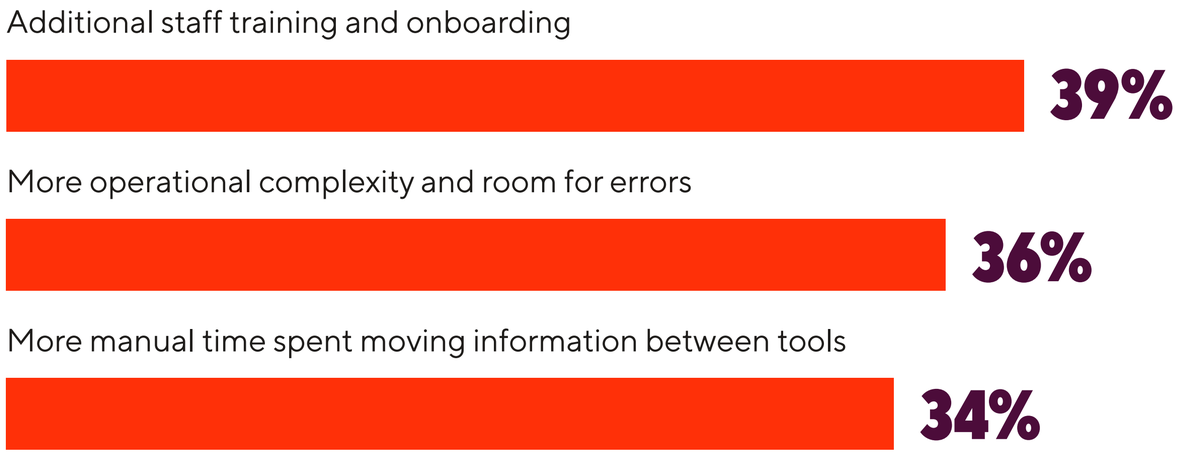
40% OF OPERATORS

use between four and five separate systems to run their core restaurant operations, but more tools doesn't mean better outcomes.

1 IN 5 OPERATORS

still can't identify the same customer across on and off-premise interactions and **nearly a third** say it's hard to connect guest data across channels.

Operators say the biggest costs of systems that don't work together are:



TAKEAWAY

Adding more tools to your tech stack won't necessarily fix gaps in your data or customer experience. If anything, it can make them worse. Evaluate the time and cost of maintaining your current systems. The right tech partners should help you build a streamlined, connected stack, that integrates with your existing channels and centralizes your data.

CONNECTED SYSTEMS LEAD TO MORE COHESIVE RESTAURANT EXPERIENCES

Better integration creates a win-win for restaurants and customers.

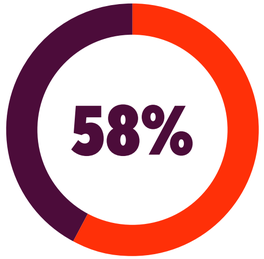
83% OF OPERATORS

believe connected systems would have a positive impact on their profitability.

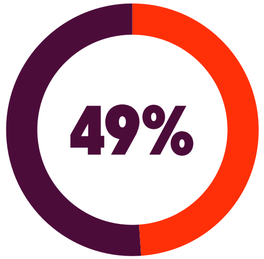
64% OF CONSUMERS

would prefer one app for managing delivery, pickup, and reservations.

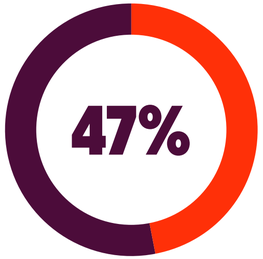
Systems operators would want to unify most:



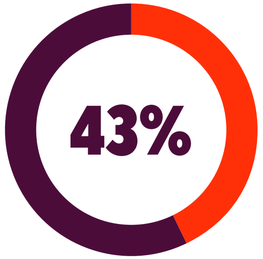
Online ordering and delivery



POS



Guest database or CRM



Reservations

TAKEAWAY

Operators' biggest integration gaps sit between transactions, channels, and customer data. When systems don't connect, it's harder to track repeat behavior, cross-channel engagement, and customer lifetime value—and harder to see what's selling. You don't need to sync everything, just prioritize the systems that matter most.

CONSUMERS CRAVE A PERSONAL TOUCH

Turning first-time customers into repeat fans starts with acknowledging them on a 1:1 basis.

65% OF CONSUMERS

say that a restaurant remembering their preferences (e.g., allergies, favorite dishes) would impact how often they choose that restaurant.

63% OF CONSUMERS

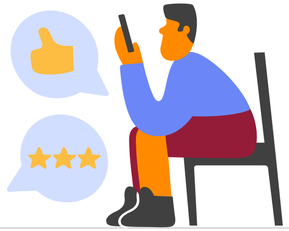
say a restaurant's specific recommendation or follow-up (e.g., a menu item suggestion or note from staff) prompted them to come back.

TAKEAWAY

The more a guest feels known, through preferences, occasions, and past behavior, the more they spend and return. SevenRooms data shows repeat diners **spend 27% more** than first-time diners.** A restaurant CRM and marketing platform that integrates with your POS gives you the data to deliver consistent personalization across both the guest experience and marketing.

CONSUMERS' TOP RANKED IN-DINING PERSONALIZATIONS*

1. Preferred seating
2. Tasting menus customized to their preferences
3. Curated appetizer platters



CONSUMERS' TOP RANKED PERSONALIZED MARKETING OFFERS*

1. Birthday or anniversary perks
2. Exclusive offers or early access to events
3. Reservation offers that match their typical dining schedule

*Personalization data is based on consumer survey results from SevenRooms 2025 US Restaurant Industry Trends Report
**SevenRooms data is based on U.S. restaurant activity on the platform from October 2025 through March 2026.

FEW OPERATORS MAKE PERSONALIZATION THE STANDARD

Operators' primary goals when running promotions are to drive repeat visits **(38%)** and increase spend per visit or order **(36%)** but there's a massive opportunity to stand out with more personalized marketing that makes customers feel seen and valued.

ONLY 30% OF OPERATORS

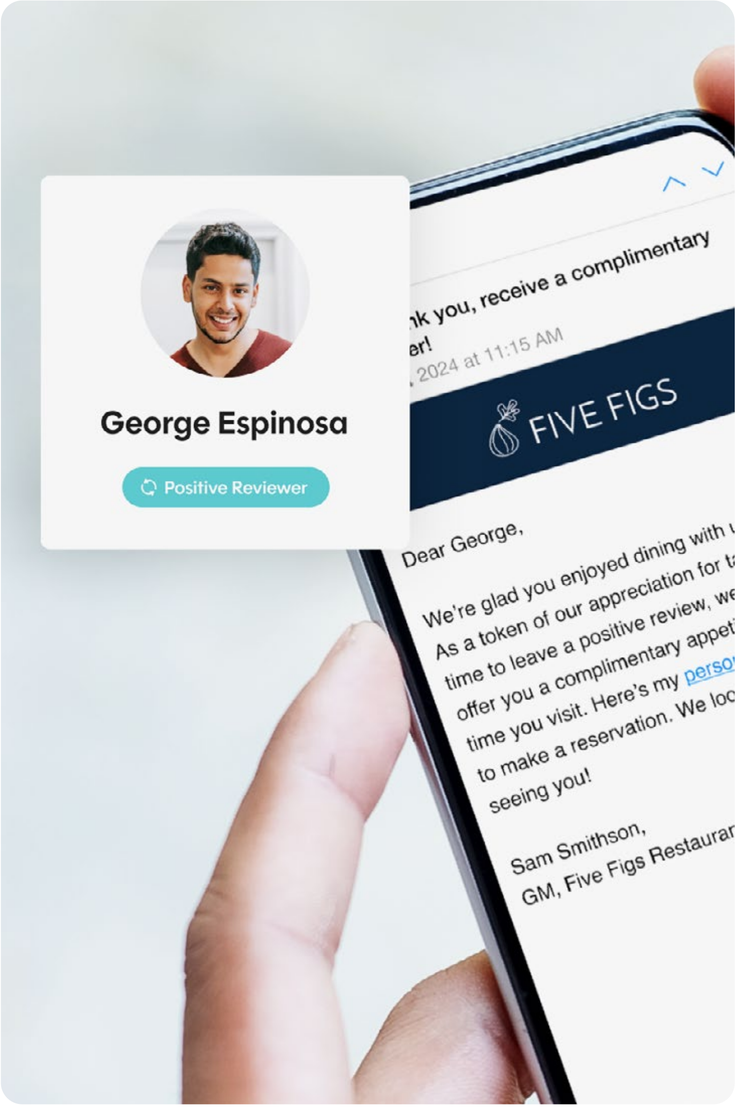
target all of their promotions to specific customer groups or behaviors.

ONLY 27% OF OPERATORS

very confidently know which of their campaigns truly led to repeat behavior.

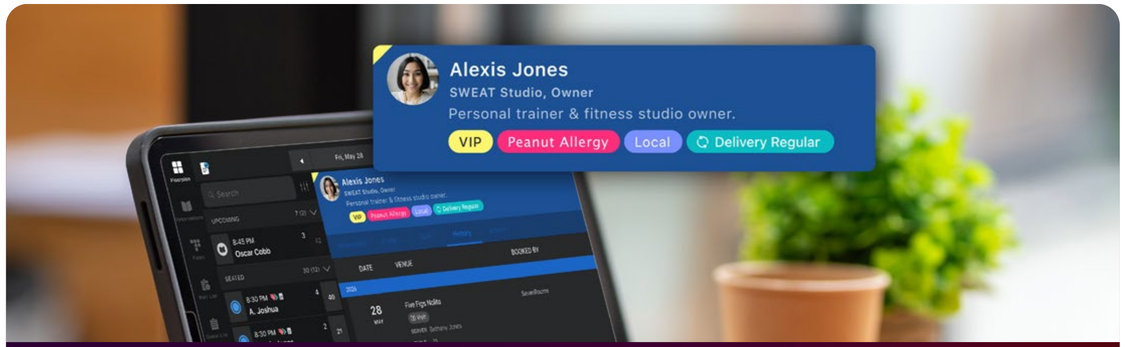
TAKEAWAY

Serving up a personal touch doesn't have to mean hours spent customizing campaigns or investing in more marketing support. With a centralized CRM and automated marketing you can target individualized offers at scale based on guest behavior across channels. SevenRooms data shows targeted, automated emails drive **16X more** revenue per email sent than mass sends.*



*SevenRooms data is based on U.S. restaurant email activity on the platform in 2025.

EARNING CUSTOMER LOYALTY WITH 1:1 EXPERIENCES



GROOT HOSPITALITY ENGAGES GUESTS WITH PRECISION MARKETING

"[With SevenRooms] Anytime we do a ticketed event or use an event widget, we create a tag and it gets linked into the database to guest profiles. We even auto-tag our DoorDash customers, it helps keep everything organized, allowing us to deliver more tailored service and personalized marketing. We've got things segmented out by first-time diners, repeat guests, 'we miss you' emails."

Gideon Amelkin
Marketing Director, Groot Hospitality

Read the story

FISHHOOK SEAFOOD SENDS SMARTER WITH COMMERCE PLATFORM

"One of the biggest advantages has been the ability to send targeted text messages and emails to our customers. Being able to communicate promotions, specials, and events directly has significantly increased traffic and order frequency. The live campaign feed with real-time results allows us to track performance instantly and adjust strategies quickly — that visibility has helped us make smarter decisions and drive measurable growth."

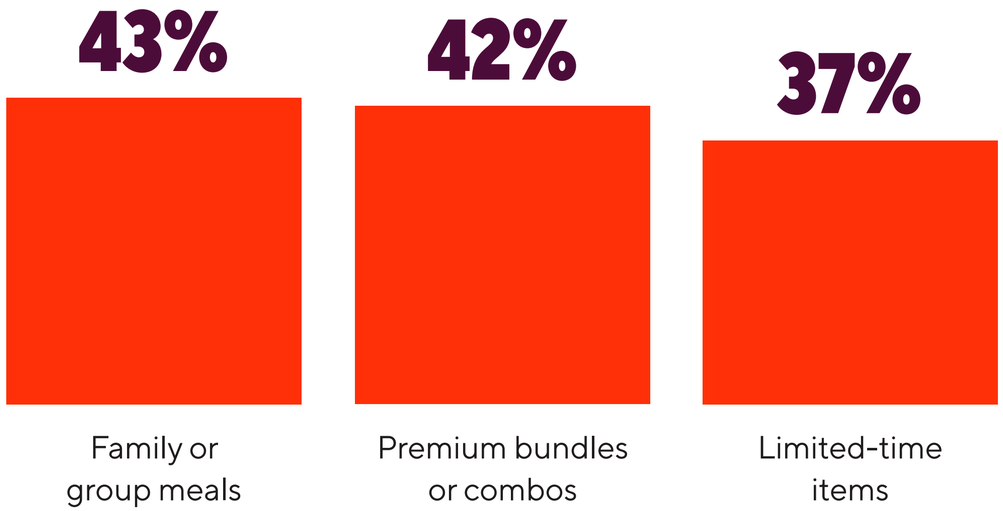
Trena Wallace
Owner, Fishhook Seafood

Hear the story

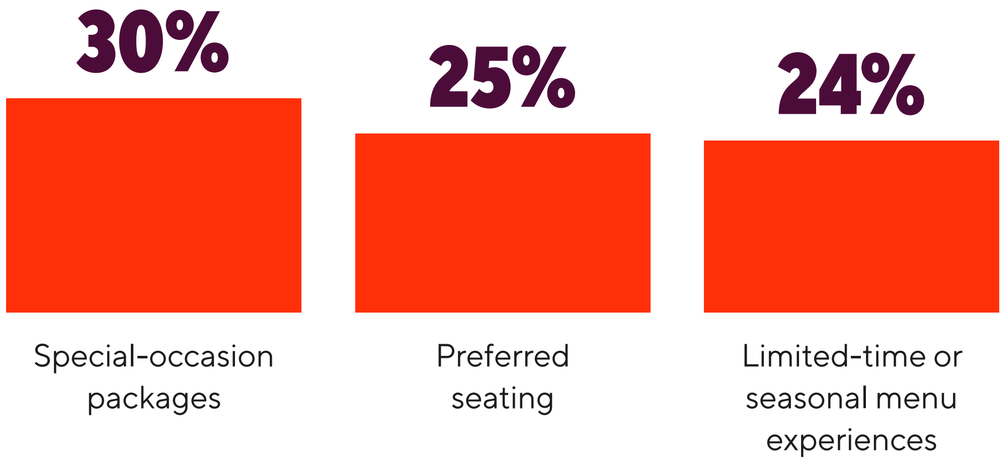
NOVEL AND VALUE-DRIVEN EXPERIENCES BOOST SPEND

Across delivery and dine-in, consumers are willing to spend more for certain perks that round out their meal or give the experience a special touch. For delivery, consumers are most interested in options that simplify their choice or make the meal feel more substantial.

Delivery upgrades consumers are willing to pay more for:



Dine-in upgrades consumers are willing to pay more for:



THE PATH TO HIGHER REVENUE STARTS AT BOOKING

Occasion-driven, curated experiences and bundled menu options help you increase check or order size without relying on discounts. Build prepaid event and experience upsells (e.g., welcome drink add-ons, chef's tasting packages) into your reservation booking flow to increase visibility earlier in the customer journey.

BOTTOM LINE BOOST

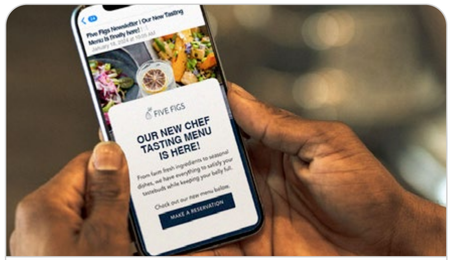
SevenRooms data shows on average, reservations with prepaid upgrades spend **16% more** per cover than those without.*

*SevenRooms data is based on U.S. restaurant activity on the platform from October 2025 through March 2026.

The top revenue-driving dine-in upgrades and experiences*

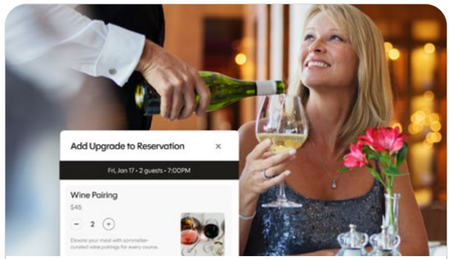
Upgrades

Food upgrades (seafood towers, wagyu, caviar)



Experiences

Omakase, chef's tasting, holiday packages, immersive dining

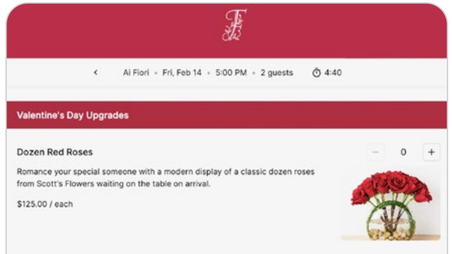


Packages

Wine pairings and beverage packages

Merch and gifts

High-frequency, low-price items (charcuterie, champagne by the glass, mini cakes)



Non-traditional standout

Floral upgrades are a consistent, repeatable revenue driver

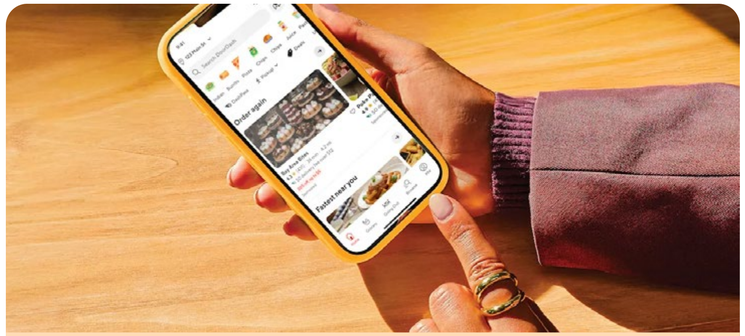
A 360-DEGREE VIEW OF YOUR CUSTOMERS CREATES A CLEARER PATH TO HELP YOU GROW

How guests discover, choose, and return to restaurants has fundamentally changed. They move fluidly between channels, often engaging with the same restaurant in different ways over time. The challenge for operators isn't keeping up with more channels, it's understanding how those interactions connect.

DoorDash and SevenRooms make that possible by bringing delivery, reservations, and direct channels into a single view of the guest, turning disconnected moments into a continuous relationship. Because when you can connect discovery to conversion, and conversion to long-term loyalty, you're not just generating demand, you're building a system to support sustained, profitable growth.

POWER YOUR GROWTH WITH DOORDASH

Whether you offer delivery, pickup, dine-in, or all three, DoorDash and SevenRooms give you the tools to reach more customers and drive more orders and visits—explore how our integrated platforms can help you grow.



DOORDASH MARKETPLACE

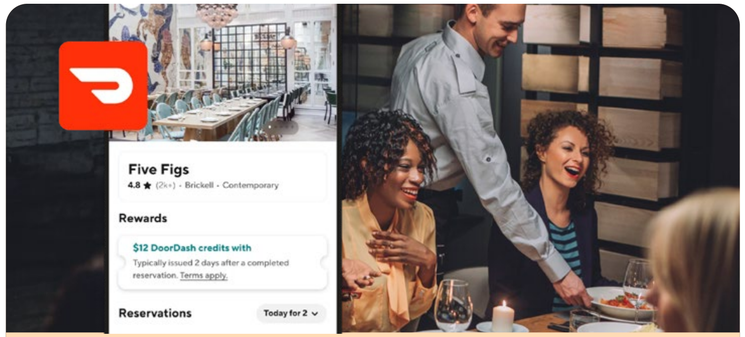
Tap into a new customer base by offering pickup and delivery through the DoorDash app. Get discovered by new customers with targeted Promotions, Sponsored Listings, and other DoorDash Marketplace solutions.

Get started

DOORDASH COMMERCE PLATFORM

Drive direct sales and repeat business by connecting your branded website, mobile app, and online orders in one place. Scale on your own channels using Online Ordering, Cross-Channel Loyalty, and other Commerce Platform solutions.

Book a demo



DOORDASH RESERVATIONS

With DoorDash Reservations powered by SevenRooms, restaurants can reach high-intent diners, fill more tables, and connect delivery, online ordering, and dine-in—driving more visits, orders, and stronger long-term loyalty.

Learn more

HOW WE SOURCED THE DATA FOR THIS REPORT

This research was based on two surveys conducted by Dynata on behalf of DoorDash in March 2026.

Our U.S. consumer respondents spanned a variety of ages, careers, and income levels. Participants were not compensated or incentivized by DoorDash. We also surveyed U.S. restaurant operators, spanning a variety of business sizes and locations.

3,001
CONSUMERS

509
OPERATORS

DOORDASH for Merchants

ABOUT DOORDASH

DoorDash (NASDAQ: DASH) is one of the world's leading local commerce platforms that helps businesses of all kinds grow and innovate, connects consumers to the best of their neighborhoods, and gives people fast, flexible ways to earn. Since its founding in 2013, DoorDash has expanded to more than 40 countries, using technology and logistics to shape the future of local commerce and broaden access to opportunity. With a growing international presence that now includes Deliveroo and Wolt, DoorDash combines global scale with local expertise to serve communities around the world.

Report created in collaboration with Datalily.