

# Foodservice Updates

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## Bringing on-premise sparkle to off-premise sales

In the past, takeout business was often a nice-to-have option for restaurants – not necessarily the centerpiece of service. But that is changing – and restaurants are finding ways to translate the success of a brand with a solid on-premise history into one that doesn't offer much of an on-premise experience. One example: Inspire Brands's Buffalo Wild Wings restaurant. As CNBC reported recently, the sports-bar chicken wing brand launched a quick-service, delivery-and-takeout-only offshoot called BWW Go four years ago – and they have opened 100 locations since then, with another 50 planned for the remainder of the year. Takeout and delivery sales for Buffalo Wild Wings are now around 33 percent of all sales, up from 15 percent pre-pandemic, according to the business. The restaurant's off-premise play seems to have worked because their customer base enjoys staying home to watch the big game, their product is not only popular and easy to customize but also travels well, and many customers know and trust the brand from their on-premise experience there. If, like many restaurants, you're experiencing a surge in off-premise sales in recent years, how comfortable are you with how your brand translates outside of your dining room? Could you offer menu items that travel better? Are you finding ways to bring the personality of your brand into people's homes with every takeout order? Are your delivery partners preserving your commitment to service – or could you incentivize customers to collect their food from you so you can strengthen face-to-face engagement? Or is your brand ripe for a Buffalo Wild Wings-style reinvention, with an off-premise offshoot that reliably provides the experience customers expect from the parent brand?





# Tech Talk

## Seeing restaurant tech as an iceberg

In a recent restaurant technology podcast from Fast Casual, participants compared restaurant technology to an iceberg: Only some of it is visible on the surface right now – the invisible majority lingers underneath. Considering how tech advancements have transformed other industries over many years, the imminent growth of restaurant tech makes sense, particularly as tech natives in Gen Y and Gen Z represent a growing portion of the workforce. And if most restaurant tech is yet to come, it's important for today's tech to leave space for what's in the pipeline. Looking at the platform you have now, how readily and smoothly can additional technology plug into it? Consider where you'd like to take your business in the next five to 10 years and how well your current system would allow you to adapt to that growth. Where do you expect to make your money? Look to integrate tech that can bring greater efficiencies around cost, labor and real estate to those areas of your business – then you will have a solid foundation from which to branch out into new channels, day parts or service models. When assessing potential providers, collect references, review case studies of the technology in practice, ensure the company has been in business long enough to have worked out kinks in its core products, and be aware of any long-term contracts that could make it difficult for you to swap out a product (or vendor) down the line if needed. When you're ready to roll out new tools, incorporate a period of time for the change to happen so your team has space to digest it and make it part of how they work. This is especially important if you have operated in a different way for a long time and your new technology represents a significant departure from that. If you can, run any new functionality in a test environment that leaves room for you to make mistakes and try new approaches as part of the tech adoption process.





## Tune up your personal hygiene policy

Even if your staff is careful about cleaning and sanitizing food preparation surfaces, poor personal hygiene can drag down your restaurant's food safety – or at least your guests' perception of it. Transferring pathogens from one's body – particularly hands – to food is the leading cause of foodborne-illness outbreaks at restaurants, according to the National Restaurant Association. Neglecting personal hygiene significantly increases the chances of transferring harmful pathogens onto food. Soiled uniforms, long hair that isn't tied back away from the face, untrimmed nails, perspiration and jewelry can all contribute to the problem. Does your employee policy adequately cover personal hygiene practices? Consider fine-tuning standards around laundering uniforms before a shift, where to store soiled items so they don't come into contact with food, how to keep long hair away from food, what jewelry is acceptable to wear while working, and where personal items should be stored during a shift. Break times that give staff an opportunity to refuel can also help ensure your team members present themselves well in front of guests – particularly in hot weather. Just make sure that any food or drink they consume is kept away from food preparation areas and equipment. And of course, reinforcing frequent and thorough handwashing practices throughout a shift and after breaks is probably the most important thing you can do to support your food safety each day.



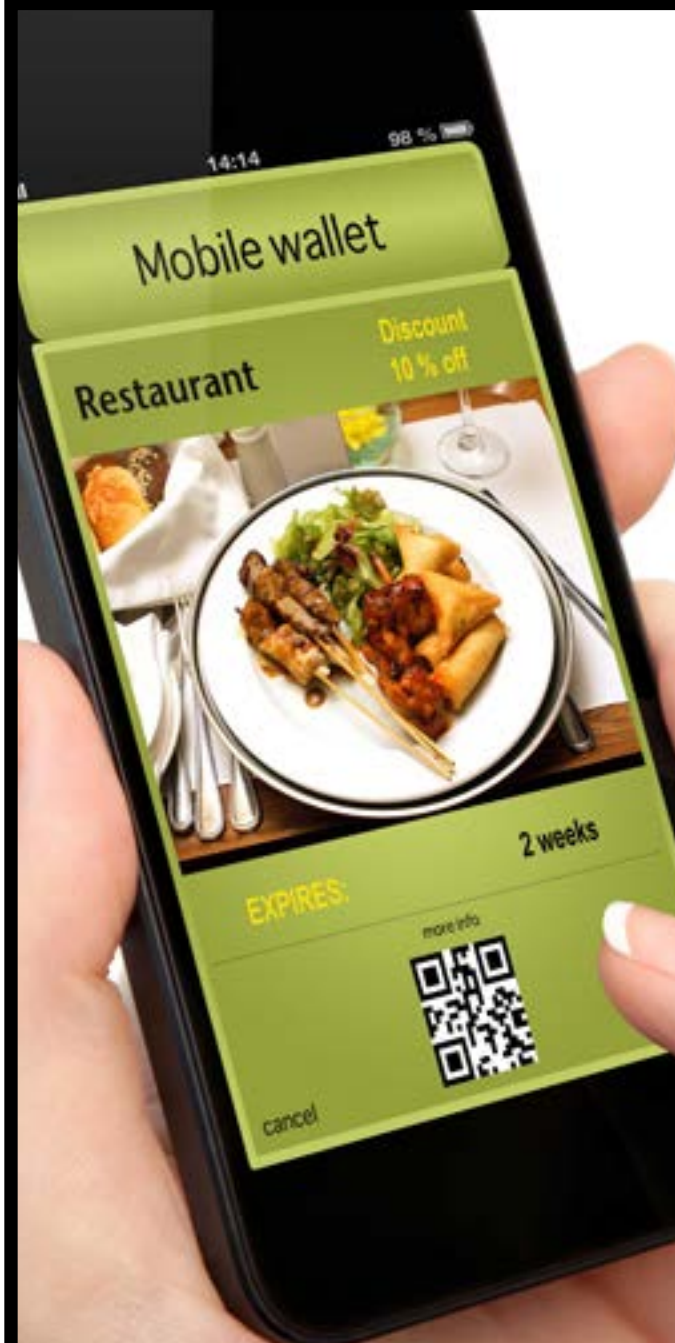
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# Foodservice CEO

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## Building the most rewarding loyalty program you can

Loyalty programs have become critical tools helping restaurants compete. Yet in an environment where these programs have become so commonplace, operators must assess them with a critical eye and adapt them to make sure they are delivering in ways that resonate with guests. You can gather clues about what might help by checking out the most successful restaurant apps – recent research found that mega brands including Starbucks, McDonald's, Dunkin', Subway and Chick-fil-A are among the most downloaded restaurant apps right now. But since loyalty programs aren't one-size-fits-all, you will get better traction by developing a program customized with rewards that suit your specific guest preferences. Consider – or test with your guests – how you want to deliver rewards and what kind of experience your guests are seeking. For example, your best guests might prefer to accumulate points, or climb progressively higher tiers that make them eligible for new rewards (this can help build engagement), or earn rewards based on the number of times they visit, or simply pay a subscription that unlocks rewards (this can give your program an air of exclusivity). Regardless, it's important to apply some rules of the road to whatever rewards you offer. Orderable advises restaurant brands maintain consistency across in-house and online channels, make sure the rewards you are offering are items that your guests actually want (you can test this with guests and adapt your program to make it more dynamic), offer a variety of rewards to suit different tastes, and make your program understandable and the rewards attainable. Nothing tarnishes a guest's opinion about a loyalty program like working toward a reward and then being denied because they didn't read the fine print.



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