



# ADTHEORENT<sup>®</sup>

## DINING TRENDS REPORT



### **How can dining brands reach consumers in meaningful ways and maintain a competitive edge?**

AdTheorent commissioned a consumer survey to uncover key dining trends and determine how Americans interact with quick service (QSR) and fast casual restaurants (FCR). We examined what's driving the food purchasing journey, visitation, menu trends and the importance of elevating the customer experience whether it's in-store, at home or on-the-go.

# THE ROLE OF MOBILE

Consumers are increasingly making dining decisions using their mobile device.

 **70%** of consumers use their mobile devices on their food purchasing journey

They turn to their mobile devices to:



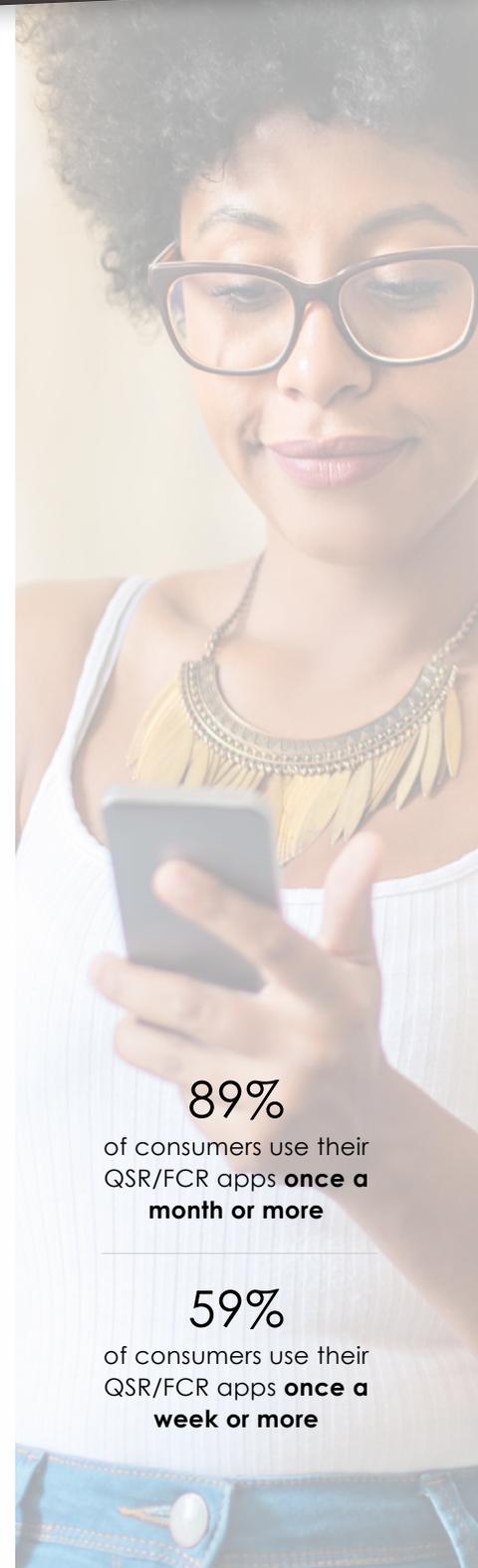
 **App usage is on the rise**

**56%** OF CONSUMERS said that the ability to place food orders online via a mobile app would make them order more frequently from a restaurant

**57%** OF CONSUMERS have a QSR or FCR app

- **52%** have a QSR app (18% have 3+)
- **36%** have an FCR app (11% have 3+)
- **44%** have a food delivery service app such as Uber eats, Grubhub, etc (11% have 3+)

**43%** OF CONSUMERS were motivated to download a QSR/FCR app due to a digital ad, while only 22% were motivated by a TV ad and 7% by a billboard ad



**89%**  
of consumers use their QSR/FCR apps **once a month or more**

**59%**  
of consumers use their QSR/FCR apps **once a week or more**

# DRIVING VISITATION

Digital advertising, especially on mobile, is essential for driving visits to restaurant locations and an effective messaging strategy is key.

## Top motivators for consumers to visit a QSR/FCR

01. **Mobile ads (48%)**
02. Computer ads (32%)
03. Launch of new menu item (31%)
04. Email from restaurant (28%)
05. Billboard ad (13%)

## The top digital (mobile and desktop) ads that motivate them are:

- Ad featuring a SPECIAL OFFER
- Ad with a LOCATION-BASED COUPON
- Ad featuring a FOOD ITEM
- Ad that is PERSONALIZED
- Ad that is EYE CATCHING/UNIQUE

COMPETITIVE CONQUESTING IS AN EFFECTIVE TACTIC:

**1/4 of consumers said they would go to a competitor's restaurant instead if they received a competitor's ad while on the way to a QSR/FCR.**

# PERSONALIZED AND RELEVANT ADS

Customization is key for a positive brand experience.



**71% of consumers said that receiving an ad that is relevant or tailored to them**

from a QSR/FCR brand would cause them to have a more favorable opinion of that brand



**Nearly half of consumers said that receiving a random advertisement that is not relevant**

to them would cause them to have a less favorable opinion of that brand

**Consumers would be more likely to visit a QSR/FCR if they received a personalized ad based on:**



Past orders (70%)



Their location (66%)

## PAYMENT

Cash is no longer king. Credit card and mobile wallet payments are increasing.



**49%** of consumers would prefer to pay with a mobile wallet app or credit card instead of cash

### QSRs

2 years ago, 40% paid for QSR food using a credit card; and currently, 43% use a credit card  
- Use of a credit card via mobile wallet app increased from 11% to 19% this year

### FCRs

2 years ago, 43% paid for FCR food using a credit card; and currently, 45% using a credit card  
- Use of a credit card via mobile wallet app increased from 12% to 18% this year

# MENU TRENDS

More options equate to more orders.

## WHAT CONSUMERS WANT TO SEE ON THE MENU

01. Larger variety of meal options (41%)
02. Healthier alternatives (37%)
03. Low calorie options (30%)
04. Locally sourced ingredients (25%)
05. Plant-based options (18%)
06. Vegetarian options (16%)
07. Vegan options (11%)
08. CBD-infused options (11%)

IF GOING TO GET FOOD FROM A RESTAURANT,  
**64% of consumers would choose one that had healthy meal options**  
OVER ONE THAT DID NOT.

# ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY & ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Consumers are amenable.

**71%** of consumers would be open to QSRs/FCRs incorporating AI into their businesses

Drove down menu item costs (43%)

Sped up ordering process (42%)

Improved customer service (43%)

Sped up food preparation process (34%)

Offered personalized food recommendations based on previous orders (22%)

CONSUMERS ARE INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING AI TECHNOLOGIES:

**55%**

Using a personalized ordering screen (i.e., a digital ordering system that suggests menu items based on different variables, like time of day, current or past orders)

**42%**

Using a voice assisted ordering system (i.e., speaking your order to a machine versus a human)

**37%**

Having food order delivered by a drone

**31%**

Having robots/machines prepare your food

## TAKEOUT AND DELIVERY

More consumers are eating at home or on-the-go and prefer to order online.

**50%** say they place more takeout and delivery orders online now compared to two years ago

**26%** say they place less takeout and delivery orders via phone

### Preferred methods for takeout and delivery orders

#### TAKEOUT:

50% prefer to order online

- 34% via a mobile device

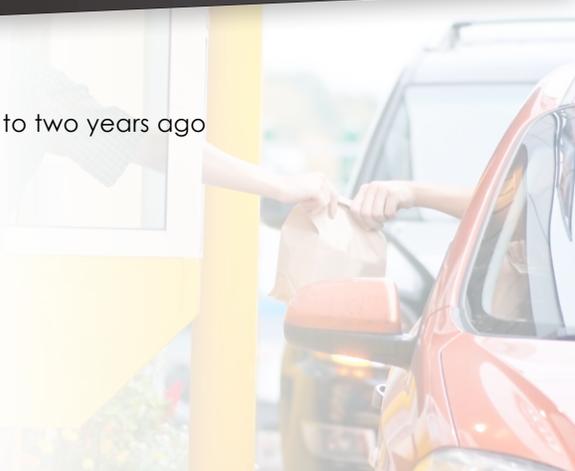
- 16% via a computer

#### DELIVERY:

52% prefer to order online

- 35% via a mobile device

- 17% via a computer





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THE RESULTS SHOW THAT MOBILE ADVERTISING is a key driver of customer visitation and a majority of Americans use their device and restaurant specific apps throughout their dining journey. Personalization seems to be a key factor in building positive brand associations and driving repeat visitation, and AI may be the solution to provide it. Finally, we are seeing a trend around increased usage of credit cards and mobile wallets for payment as well as a desire for healthier plant-based menu items and locally-sourced ingredients.

AdTheorent uses advanced machine learning technology and solutions to deliver real-world value for advertisers and marketers. AdTheorent has a proven track record of delivering value for QSR/FCR brands. In the past year AdTheorent successfully executed dining campaigns delivering an average visitation lift which outperformed industry benchmark by 8X and yielded an average rich media engagement rate 33% higher than industry average. AdTheorent's suite of machine learning (ML) solutions for Dining and Restaurant brands and marketers drive measurable business outcomes and are designed for specific campaign goals from increasing foot traffic and visitation, to acquiring new customers and increasing sales. For more information visit [adtheorent.com](http://adtheorent.com).

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### **Survey Methodology:**

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of AdTheorent between September 18-20, 2019 among 2,050 adults ages 18+. Results were weighted for age within gender, region, race/ethnicity, household income, education, and size of household where necessary to align them with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

### **About The Harris Poll:**

The Harris Poll is one of the longest running surveys in the U.S. tracking public opinion, motivations and social sentiment since 1963 that is now part of Harris Insights & Analytics, a global consulting and market research firm that delivers social intelligence for transformational times. We work with clients in three primary areas; building twenty-first-century corporate reputation, crafting brand strategy and performance tracking, and earning organic media through public relations research. Our mission is to provide insights and advisory to help leaders make the best decisions possible. To learn more, please visit [www.theharrispoll.com](http://www.theharrispoll.com)

*Source: AdTheorent's Dining Trends Report, 2019, conducted by The Harris Poll*