



Digital Essentials: 6 Pieces of Restaurant Technology

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Advancements in restaurant technologies have had a huge impact on the restaurant industry. Restaurateurs in all kinds of restaurants — from quick-service restaurants (QSRs) and fast-food eateries like McDonald's to fine-dining establishments and full-service restaurants — have been looking for [methods of automation](#) that will simplify their restaurant operations.

Embracing digital transformation by bringing technology into your restaurant business can be a great way to cut down on the amount of time your staff members spend on operations. If you're saving time on any of your business processes, you'll see an increase in operational efficiency and maybe even your budget.

Using restaurant technology could also improve your customer experience, as new technology can streamline ordering and help back-of-house staff cook faster without sacrificing food quality.

If you're a restaurant owner, restaurateur, or entrepreneur who wants to learn more about new restaurant technology trends, you've come to the right place. Here is a brief guide to some essential restaurant technologies that could help you improve your food service and simplify your operations.

1. Online Reservation Systems



Food delivery apps like DoorDash and Uber Eats have seen an explosion in popularity since the start of the pandemic three long years ago. An equally transformative but less talked about piece of restaurant technology is the shift toward online reservation systems.

As a restaurant owner, you can attract more clientele by using reservation apps. Consumers appreciate the advantages of setting a reservation without the need for lengthy human interactions. Let your customers set their preferred time with the click of a button.

Not only does this make things easier for the customer, but it will save you on labor costs. A fully automated online reservation system can improve restaurant efficiency by letting your wait staff focus on other tasks.

The efficiency gains continue with digital menus. Pairing digital menus with online reservations systems cuts down on wait times, and increases the number of customers that you can quickly get in and out of your restaurant.

2. Self-Ordering Kiosks

[Self-service kiosks](#) are the next step up from a QR code menu, and they're another easy way to bring restaurant technology into your business. You certainly don't need to be a fully self-service restaurant to benefit from order-taking kiosks.

Self-service became more popular in restaurants during the pandemic because it was an easy way to implement a contactless ordering system, minimizing interactions between customers and staff.

But contactless payments and orders aren't the only reason to implement a self-service ordering system. Kiosks like this can also be an easy way to simplify your ordering process while also creating a positive guest experience, slashing labor costs, and improving order accuracy.

Customers go to the kiosk and view a digital menu. They then place their orders directly at the device. The system links up with your restaurant's [point-of-sale system](#) (or POS system), so customers can pay at the device too. Payment options can vary. Many systems only work with debit or credit cards, but you can also let customers pay with points from your loyalty program or even with cash to create a stellar dining experience.

Self-ordering machines are another form of restaurant technology that give you the opportunity to upsell, as you can program your kiosk software to suggest extras. Some customers are more likely to engage with upselling through digital ordering due to the relaxed pace of the transaction.

Best of all, many self-serve systems don't require much in the way of fancy equipment. The KioskBuddy can be downloaded directly onto a tablet. Place that tablet on the [Square Stand Mount](#) and hook it up to a card reader for a complete self-serve kiosk system.

Order accuracy also increases since order-taking is done through artificial intelligence.

3. Automatic Cooking Oil Management

Restaurant technology can also optimize your back-of-house operations to improve efficiency and safety. For example, consider the advantages of digitizing your fryer oil management.

There are total oil management systems available for commercial kitchens that let you use automatic sensors to dispose of waste oil and automatically order fresh frying oil. Restaurant technologies like this are ideal for use in fast-food restaurants or fast-casual eateries where you might serve a lot of fried food.

But how does an automatic oil management solution work?

Oil tank providers like [Restaurant Technologies, Inc.](#) and [Kiesel](#) provide two tanks to store in your back-of-house area: One will be for fresh, unused oil, and the other will be for waste oil. With automatic controls in your fryers, your kitchen staff will be able to add or dispose of oil quickly and easily.

When your waste tank is full, a truck will arrive to take your waste oil back to a depot, where it will be recycled into biodiesel. Initiatives like this are a great way for restaurant owners and restaurant management to bring tech into their business while improving

their sustainability credentials.

4. Automatic Inventory Management



Food ordering and inventory management are essential parts of any restaurant owner's job. It's crucial to make sure you're ordering the right amount of every ingredient you need for your digital menu.

Order too little, and you'll be unable to serve a particular dish which can create a negative guest experience.

But order too much, and you could find yourself throwing away huge quantities of food at the end of every week. Food waste is a huge problem in the restaurant industry. In fact, [restaurants throw out 15% of their food](#) on average, but an automated inventory management system could stop this from being an issue.

The right inventory management solution can mitigate the challenges associated with ordering menu items by helping kitchen staff determine what they need and when they need it. It's possible to combine an inventory management app with your check-out and POS systems.

Each time a customer places an order, this piece of restaurant technology will automatically update your stock levels of the ingredients or other components that make up that order in real time. Some software can even place orders for you, allowing you a totally fuss-free method of keeping your cupboards fully stocked.

5. Kitchen Display Systems

A [kitchen display system](#) (or KDS) is a screen used in many parts of the hospitality industry in place of printers and paper tickets. It's a great way to bring restaurant technology into your back-of-house operations.

A KDS acts as a crucial bridge between front-of-house staff taking orders from customers and the kitchen, routing food orders from the POS system directly into the kitchen. Big companies like [McDonald's](#) have long since embraced this piece of restaurant technology. Newer innovations and lower pricing mean smaller companies can get in on the action as well.

The best KDS is designed to enhance communication between customers and back-of-house staff, eliminating human error and helping teams get orders out quickly and accurately.

The screens are generally available in a range of sizes. They're designed to withstand high temperatures, so they can be mounted anywhere in the kitchen. The machines also integrate easily with contactless payment and online ordering systems. Sounds like a win-win to us!

6. Bluetooth Temperature Sensors

Above all else, restaurants aim to deliver a safe and delicious culinary experience. Preventing foodborne illness is always top of mind — and this often boils down to making sure back-of-house staff are storing ingredients and cooking meals properly.

Yet, over 85% of restaurants [lose money](#) and compromise guest safety for reasons relating to time and temperature. Restaurants may lose power overnight, at which point their freezers and refrigeration systems rise to temperatures above the “safe zone.” In other cases, team members might accidentally mess up their workflow by leaving a cooling drawer open. With older restaurant tech, that could easily lead to spoilage.

This is where Bluetooth temperature sensors can help. Monitoring and recording food temperature in real-time for compliance is critical to delivering a solid food safety experience. The small sensors work by notifying the back-of-house staff each time any piece of temperature-related restaurant technology is out of range. And with these digital tools in your arsenal, you’ll be on track to better protect your customers and inventory in no time.

Getting Started With Restaurant Technologies

Restaurant operators and entrepreneurs should always be on the lookout for [new restaurant trends](#) and new technology to use in their businesses. From implementing online reservation systems to automating the disposal of your frying oil, there are so many simple ways that businesses within the foodservice industry can embrace restaurant technologies.

Businesses can really do so much to stay modern — and we think self-service kiosks are an ideal place to start. With KioskBuddy, you can transform your tablet into an easy-to-use self-ordering kiosk. It provides an efficient way for customers to place and pay for their own orders while also enhancing customer loyalty through loyalty programs. The restaurant POS is easy to set up, and it doesn’t cost the earth.

[Start your 30-day trial](#) with KioskBuddy today and introduce seamless self-ordering technology to your restaurant.

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