The Future of Foodservice Technology in Convenience Retail

What to adopt, and what to avoid

WHERE THINGS STAND

26%
of restaurant operators use AI-related tools; just 6% use AI to take orders
National Restaurant Association (2026)

9 in 10
small c-store and grocery operators are experimenting with AI
Toast (2026)

57%
of c-store shoppers would trust AI to suggest offers based on their purchases
PAR (2026)

50%
of Americans are more concerned than excited about AI in daily life
Pew Research Center (2025)

WHAT'S COMING TO THE FOOD COUNTER

Forecasting
Make the right amount, cut waste

Personalization
Offers tied to what customers buy

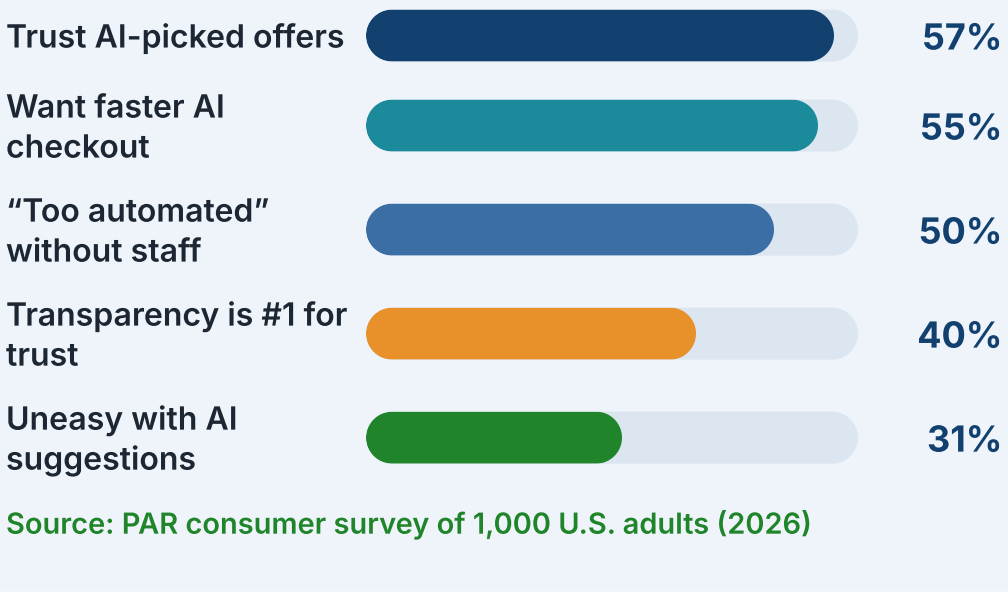
Voice & AI Ordering
Promising, but still early

Unified Platforms
Ordering, payment, kitchen in one

In-the-Moment Help
AI guidance for store teams

How c-store shoppers see AI

Share of shoppers agreeing with each statement



Source: PAR consumer survey of 1,000 U.S. adults (2026)

Ready to adopt

- Fresh-food demand forecasting
- One connected ordering platform
- Opt-in, purchase-based offers

Approach with care

- Voice and AI order-taking
- Offers using data not knowingly shared
- Tools without a clear problem to solve

HOW TO PREPARE

Start with a problem
Not with a feature

Pilot first
Measure before you scale

Protect the data
Clear, opt-in, and lawful

Keep a person in reach
Technology supports, people serve

Sources: National Restaurant Association 2026 State of the Industry via Restaurant Dive (February 2026); Toast, 2026 Voice of the Retail Industry Survey (September 2026); PAR consumer report via NACS and C-Store Dive (October 2026); Pew Research Center (September 2025). Prepared by It's All Goods.