

THE ROI PLAYBOOK

How Modern POS Solutions Drive Profitability

Serve Smarter with a Unified Commerce Platform

The fast casual and QSR markets anticipate continued growth over the next seven years, primarily due to the rise of digital ordering and delivery platforms.[1,2] To prepare most efficiently for the heightened demand and opportunity, restaurants have been racing to unify, modernize, and drive efficiency across their technology ecosystem.

The goal: deliver one consistent in-store and digital experience while ensuring profitability and healthy growth for owned and franchisee locations. But growth doesn't always equal profitability. Brands must retain and grow the bottom line, top line, and overall profitability. To do that, they need better ways to calculate the ROI of their technology.

In fact, many restaurant operators say their tech stack hinders them from creating scalable efficiencies and value-driving experiences. Until now, restaurant operators have recognized the challenges with their ordering platforms but have lacked the tools to effectively assess their value and calculate actual return on investment (ROI).

For multi-unit operators, challenges arise when it's time for their various best-in-breed solutions to work together. Integrations often prove clunky, data is difficult to extract and clean, and the overall process becomes cumbersome.



With all seven brands under a uniform point-of-sale system and tech stack, GoTo Foods is journeying toward becoming a unified digital and physical space, with individual brands that have the same customer experience standards.

– Kieran Donahue, Chief Commercial Officer, GoTo Foods



40%

Nearly 40% of fast casual and QSR brands still use client-server or first-gen cloud point of sale (POS) systems.

Outdated POS systems stand in the way

As many as 40% of fast casual and QSR brands still use client-server or first-gen cloud point of sale (POS) systems.[3] When restaurants' needs evolved, they added new technologies around or on top of the POS, but the POS remained stagnant. Today, many restaurants have a tech stack that inhibits innovation, efficiency and speed of restaurant operations.

This report examines why and how restaurant owners should re-evaluate the ROI of their POS and omni-channel ordering solutions. Once armed with this critical information, they can re-examine their full technology stack – especially outdated POS systems – and determine how best to cost-effectively meet current and upcoming demands.

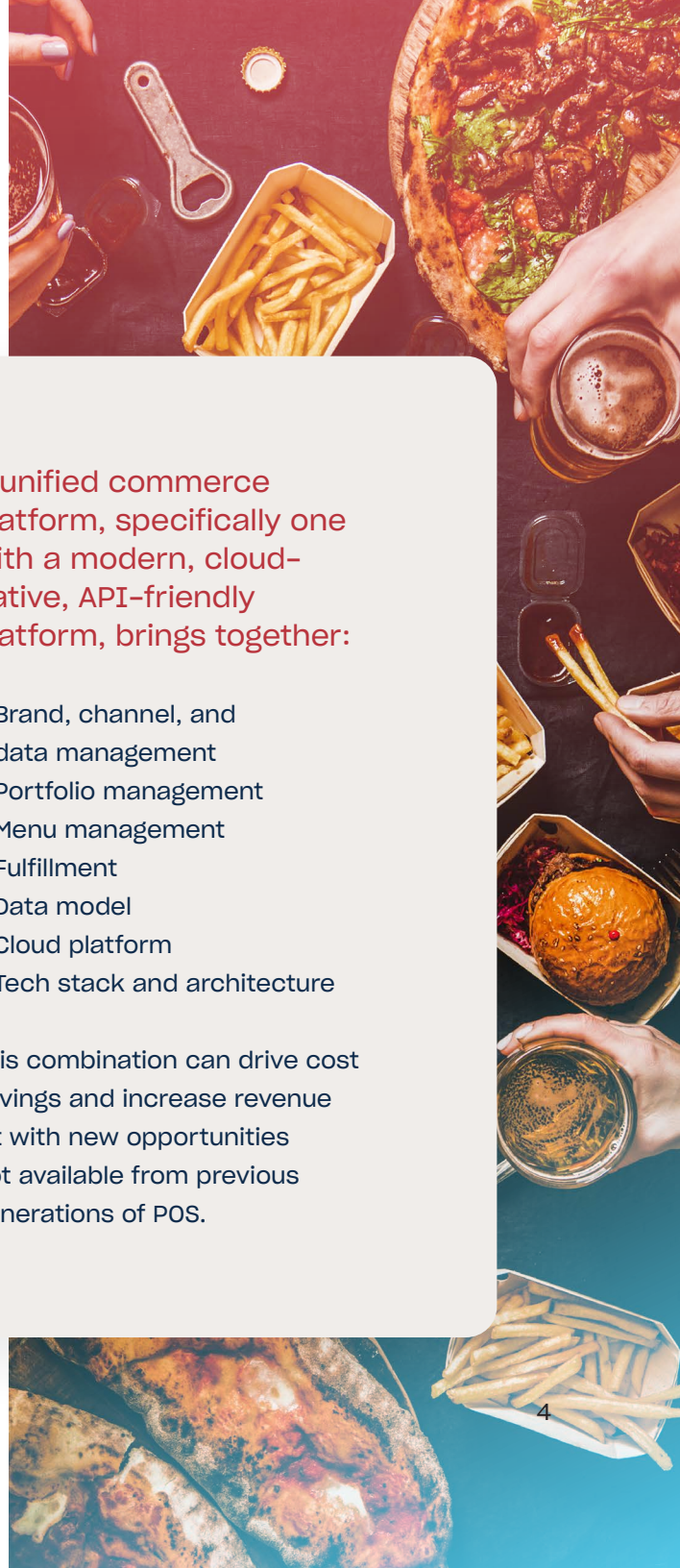
Value of modern ordering platforms:

POS is only one piece of the puzzle of a unified commerce platform

Although most fast casual and QSR brands use client-server and first-gen cloud POS, many do not view POS as a “value adder” but instead as a necessary evil. Yet, the thought of upgrading or changing a POS seems overwhelming because it connects to multiple other systems, and there’s the worry that significant time and resources will be required, with little return on investment.

However, with restaurants at an inflection point, this change is imperative, according to Amir Hudda, CEO of Qu, the company that created the industry’s first unified omni-channel ordering and commerce platform.

During the pandemic, businesses hastily assembled various technologies to meet the new needs of online delivery and expanded drive-thru ordering, Hudda said. “Now, we can step back and ask, ‘Are we fundamentally built on the right architecture and foundation?’ In many cases, the answer is no.” Gaps in order accuracy and guest satisfaction scores are signs a change is needed, he added.



A unified commerce platform, specifically one with a modern, cloud-native, API-friendly platform, brings together:

- Brand, channel, and data management
- Portfolio management
- Menu management
- Fulfillment
- Data model
- Cloud platform
- Tech stack and architecture

This combination can drive cost savings and increase revenue lift with new opportunities not available from previous generations of POS.



It's my job to support our business with technology that can scale rapidly and respond to the next opportunity. The answer has to be hours and days, now. That means a different approach. That's the rise of Unified Commerce and Qu.

– Doug Cook, Chief Technology Officer, Jack in the Box

A key area for improvement is achieved by upgrading to a modern POS system that is part of a larger unified commerce platform–natively connecting all the ordering channels, menus, and data from one stable foundation. These modern ordering platforms, such as Qu POS, have cutting-edge, cloud-native, and API-friendly capabilities. With this foundation, quick-serve restaurant chains can drive significant cost savings and labor efficiencies while increasing the revenue lift that previous generations of POS systems could not deliver.

With these platforms, restaurants can streamline omnichannel and multi-brand ordering with fewer systems to scale and the flexibility to change as needed. The unification speeds insight with real-time data from every ordering channel, giving restaurants access to all the data throughout the guest's order journey. The result is time and resource savings, increased repeat guests, frequency, reach, and acquisition.

Updating your POS system:

Debunking commonly held myths

Even if restaurants suspect their POS system needs upgrading, transitioning can feel daunting when operators can't accurately gauge how well their current POS systems serve them. Without that insight, it may feel easier to stand firm than to shift.

That hesitancy to replace POS systems is often rooted in three outdated myths about how costly, disruptive and effective a new POS can be.

01

MYTH ONE

POS solutions are exorbitantly expensive

02

MYTH TWO

Changing to a new POS is disruptive

03

MYTH THREE

POS systems are all the same



Myth One: POS solutions are exorbitantly expensive

The cost is a factor. Fees for a new POS can be higher for those who currently only pay maintenance fees for a legacy model. The cost difference of updating also varies if outdated hardware components also require replacement. Hudda said that some vendors allow customers to amortize the cost throughout the contract, making the cost a little lower.

Consider more than the price tag of the POS, Hudda expanded. “Look at the cost of not doing it. When you start to analyze the impact to your restaurant of not acting, it is significantly higher than what you might spend on doing it.”

Sticking with an outdated POS system can directly affect both guest experience and operational efficiency. During a busy lunchtime rush, a legacy POS that struggles to process orders quickly can lead to long wait times and customer frustration. These delays not only result in missed orders but also increase the risk of guests choosing a competitor with faster, more efficient service. Over the course of a month, these lost sales can add up, leading to significant revenue loss–far exceeding the cost of updating the system.

Myth Two: Changing to a new POS is disruptive

While many often view changing to a new POS as a “heart replacement,” the current process is much easier.

Chris Demery, Chief Technology Officer of Blaze Pizza, said his company began rolling out Qu as its POS five months ago and currently uses it in 115 locations. “Our previous platform wouldn’t allow us to innovate and accommodate change,” he added. Demery knew he wanted to focus first on improving the speed of service of the POS. Qu decreased disruption and gave him more flexibility, Demery said.

FAST-FIRE’D BLAZE PIZZA

Millennial Restaurant Group (MRG), one of the largest Blaze Pizza franchisees, wanted to reduce the restaurant’s high volume of voids and deletes, which represented lost revenue. Using Qu, a unified commerce platform, MRG eliminated voids and deletes completely, recovering 0.6% (or 60 basis points) of lost revenue.

With this savings, the new system paid for itself in four months.

Replacing a POS system is no small feat, and choosing the right partner is critical. Qu's POS equipped us to tackle new challenges, drive revenue growth, improve technology serviceability, and most importantly, enhance customer experience.

– Neil Pierce, Chief Information Officer, Bobby Cox

Myth Three: POS systems are all the same

Hudda said that today's cloud-native POS systems and platforms are changing the game for restaurants looking to improve speed, efficiency, scale, and future innovation, including AI, machine learning, ChatGPT, and voice ordering.

When restaurants execute cloud-native POS as part of a unified data-driven platform, they can drive revenue lift and cost savings. "Besides saving time and resources, the right platform or POS could provide new ways to drive repeat guests, frequency, reach, and acquisition, indicating higher guest satisfaction," he added.

For example, a modern POS system with integrated loyalty features can drive repeat business by automatically tracking guest preferences and rewarding them for frequent visits. Personalized offers, like discounts on favorite items or birthday rewards, increase guest satisfaction and encourage more frequent visits – creating experiences that boost both guest retention and acquisition.





How to assess the economic impact of your POS system

Qu's ROI calculator is a unique and proprietary tool that helps restaurants see the effectiveness of their POS performance and its role in creating cost savings and revenue-driving activities.

With the ROI calculator and Qu's POS, Qu's customers have realized how a modern, cloud-based, integrated platform helps restaurants drive revenue, use labor more efficiently, streamline operations.

CASE STUDY

25% decrease in drive-thru wait times

+15% total order volume

1.5 minute reduction per transaction



It's the holy grail — one platform, one umbrella. It lets us analyze data, optimize strategies, and fine-tune targeting to drive meaningful sales.

– Heather Neary, President & CEO, Taco John's

The ROI calculator delves into three major economic impact categories: (1) Cost savings, (2) labor & resource time savings, and (3) revenue lift. For example:

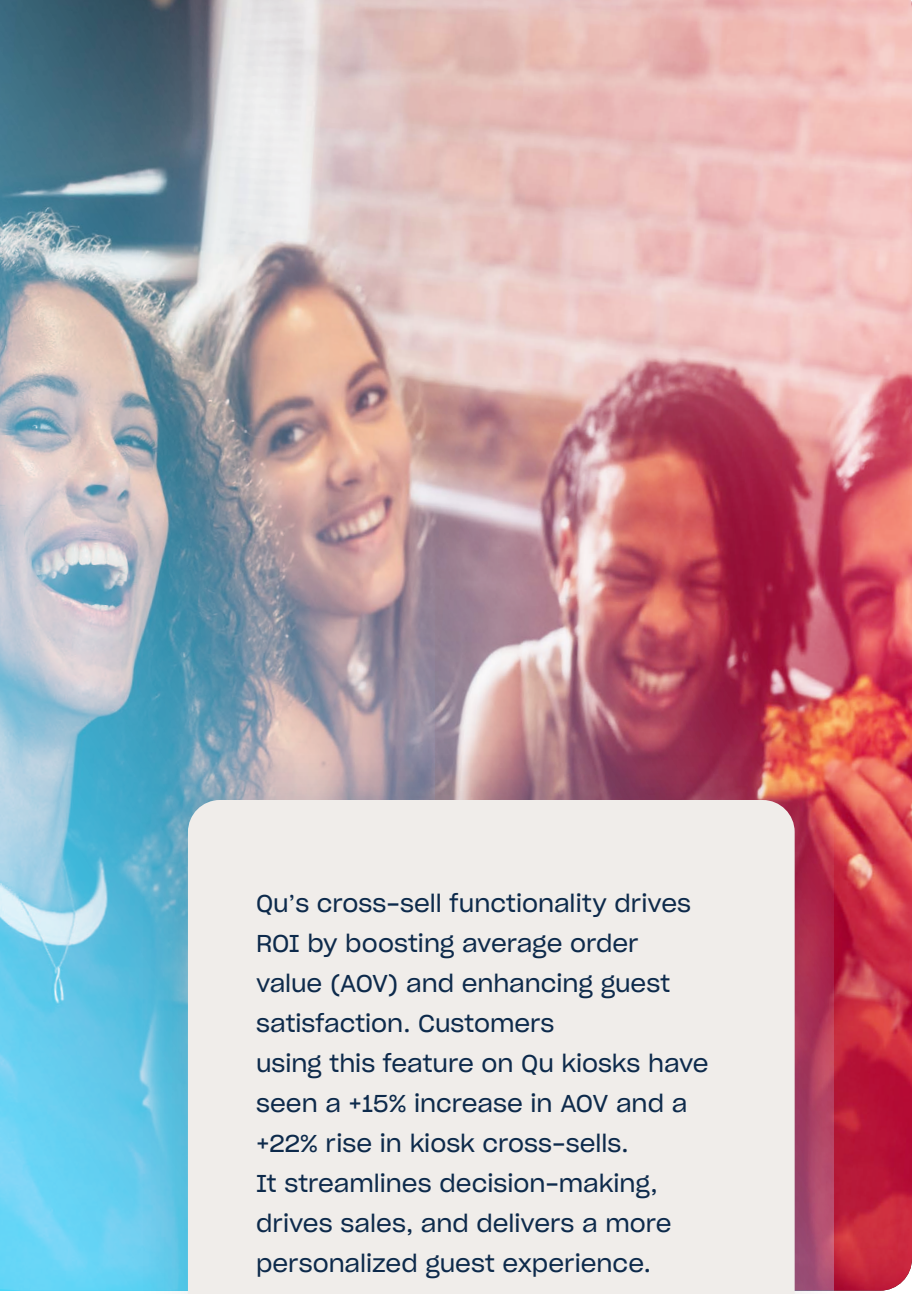
1. Cost Savings (hard and soft)

Come from removing the need for middleware systems to connect third-party delivery applications and the associated time savings from not needing manual inputs into the POS.

Customers report a reduced number of support calls, indicating that team members' time is better spent with customers. They also report improved system availability for fewer outages and higher uptime, which translates to reduced order-taking interruptions.

2. Labor & Resource Time Savings

- **Training** - intuitive UI translates into an 80% reduction in training time, reducing onboarding burdens significantly.
- **Menu Management** - a single menu management system with original menu data and single items created one time at the native data creation layer across all ordering channels makes it easier/quicker to update or create new menus.
- **Flex Kiosk** - the kiosk can be a cashier- or guest-facing, based on store traffic and labor needs.
- **LTO Creation** - this process is faster and easier to create and roll out, saving time.



Qu's cross-sell functionality drives ROI by boosting average order value (AOV) and enhancing guest satisfaction. Customers using this feature on Qu kiosks have seen a +15% increase in AOV and a +22% rise in kiosk cross-sells. It streamlines decision-making, drives sales, and delivers a more personalized guest experience.

3. Revenue lift

Includes the opportunity to unlock revenue lift via better financial controls, augmented by actual customer results:

- **Digital Orders** – near total reduction of failure rates, including 97% for Freebirds, and significant improvement in order accuracy.[4]
- **Void & Deletes Reduction** – 100% improvement in financial controls for Blaze franchisee MRG, including data, tracking and order accuracy, theft reduction, insight into voids/deletes and removal, and loss prevention/mitigation. These improvements resulted in a significant revenue lift.[5]
- **Speed of Drive-Thru** – faster order taking and production with a unified system increased fulfillment speed with unified kitchen and ordering. This led to a 15% increase in order volume, reflecting higher customer satisfaction.[6]
- **LTOs** – increased velocity due to the ease and speed of creating new LTOs, saving hours of labor.
- **Kiosk** – using Qu Flex's ability to change from staff to customer-facing drives labor efficiency and increases check sizes.

Here are some brief examples of the Qu POS ROI calculator:

The ROI calculator provides the economic impact for areas such as training time, menu management, and revenue lift. To create baseline projections, the customer inputs their operational, labor, and sales data.

Qu customers experienced labor savings through faster training times with modern gesture-based UI and conversational ordering, which takes 10 minutes to learn. Likewise, menu management through Qu is faster and simpler, reducing labor resources needed.

ROI CALCULATOR

Typical Benefits of Installing Qu at 100 stores

Labor Savings: **Training**		Labor Savings: **Menu Management**	
$3,375 ANNUAL STORE	$337,500 ANNUAL BRAND	$18,000 ANNUAL STORE	$180,000 ANNUAL BRAND
New Employees Hired Per Year	18	Average Menu Update Frequency	4x year
Current Cost of New Employee Training	$3,600	Current Labor Cost to Update Each Menu	$9,000 (50 hrs)
Qu Cost of New Employee Training	$225	Annual Menu Update Costs	$36,000
Annual Labor Savings at One Store per Employee	$3,375	Qu Cost to Update Each Menu	$4,500 (25 hrs)
Annual Labor Savings at All Stores	$337,500	Qu Annual Menu Update Cost	$18,000

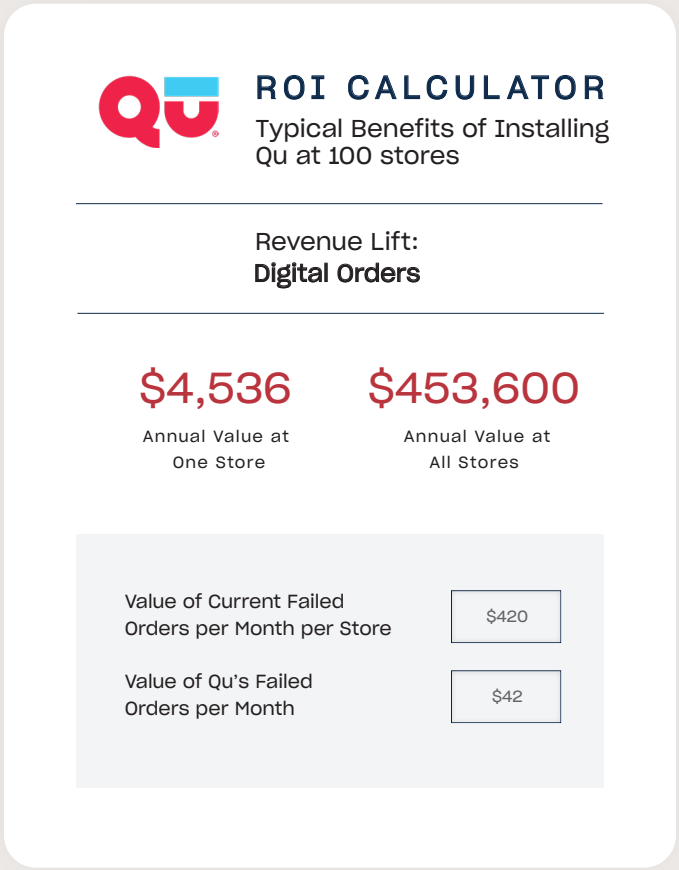
CASE STUDY

95% reduction in failed online orders

Within months of going live on Qu's unified ordering and kitchen suite for its 33 locations, eegee's drastically reduced ordering failures and processed transactions faster.

We've increased our sales revenue 5–7%
since switching from our legacy POS provider to Qu.

– Large Enterprise QSR Chain



ROI calculator: quantifying Qu's impact on revenue and labor savings

The ROI calculator provides the logic to calculate revenue lift for digital orders on the left.

This lets restaurants increase the number of orders received when using a unified system, reducing errors and improving speed. Restaurants can realize hard savings because no middleware is needed, which means decreased rejected and inaccurate orders.



Tying it together:

Using the ROI calculator to assess the economic impact of the modern ordering platform

Research shows that companies using unified omni-channel orders with effective integrations increases restaurant performance by 9%.[7] Business owners said this approach improved customer experience, increased sales, and customer loyalty.

Hudda added that Qu customers have many positive results with a unified commerce platform, tracked by using the Qu ROI calculator. For example:

- **Digital order improvement.** When fast casual restaurant Freebirds replaced their 25-year-old architecture and 10-year-old systems with a unified commerce platform, the chain saw a 97% drop in online ordering deactivations.[8]

- **Reduction of voids and deletes.** Blaze Pizza franchisee MRG implemented Qu and eliminated voids and deletes, recovering 60 basis points of lost revenue.[9]

- **Reduced training time.** For employees of eegee's, the legacy POS was challenging to integrate into other systems, making new employee training lengthy. After integrating the unified commerce platform, new employees took 10 minutes to learn the system instead of 45 - a 78% time savings.[10]

- **Improved menu management.** Luke's Lobster reduced menu management time requirements by 85%, making it much easier to update one menu, one place, one time.

Qu's ROI calculator helped Freebirds, Blaze, eegee, and others assess the economic impact of their next-gen POS and unified commerce platforms. This data helped businesses determine how to drive revenue, use labor efficiently, streamline operations.

We've built a single, unified tech stack — the WOW Tech Stack — centered around Qu and a few key partners. This strategy supports all our brands and future acquisitions with shared services, a single database. Having a single point of truth for all of our brands has been major.

– Kyle Mark, Chief Information Officer, WOWorks

Changing the mindset about POS Systems

When do restaurant leaders know they've reached the breaking point and must change their POS system or risk falling behind? For Demery, it happened when the current system didn't provide the data he needed. "With my older point of sales solution, I could not measure the speed of service. With Qu, I've started measuring the speed of service from when an order starts to when it gets bumped off of the make line to when it gets into the hands of a guest. If you can't measure it, you can't change it."

Hudda highlighted several signs that can trigger restaurants to make a change, such as a drop in guest satisfaction scores, employee frustration with outdated processes, or concerns that a POS won't work offline.

But restaurant owners shouldn't wait for a sign before changing their minds about modern POS systems, Hudda added. "Digital transformation of restaurants is here and restaurants must be ready."

When restaurant owners know the myths and truths about upgrading POS systems and have an ROI calculator to assess how much a new system can drive sales, they understand that although change may be hard, it is necessary and worthwhile.

"Once you consider this economic impact, the way forward is clear," Hudda said. "A unified commerce platform, with a next-gen POS, gives tangible financial benefits and adds new opportunities to help QSR and fast casual restaurants future-proof their business."

For more information on ROI calculations, request an ROI consultation with Qu.



Sources

1. TechNavio – Sample report. (n.d.). https://www.technavio.com/thankyou?report=IRTNTR45339&type=Request%20Free%20Sample&rfs=epd&src=report&pdfversion=2&freedemo=821901

2. Future, M. R. (2023, May 15). Quick Service Restaurants (QSR) market to capture a CAGR of 3.65% between 2022 and 2030 while touching approximately USD 603.3 billion by 2030-End - report by Market Research Future (MRFR). GlobeNewswire News Room. https://www.globenewswire.com/en/news-release/2023/05/15/2668447/0/en/Quick-Service-Restaurants-QSR-Market-to-Capture-a-CAGR-of-3-65-Between-2022-and-2030-While-Touching-Approximately-USD-603-3-Billion-by-2030-End-Report-by-Market-Research-Future-MRF.html

3. Qu. (2025). 6th Annual State of Digital for Enterprise QSR & Fast Casual Brands. Qu, Enterprise Restaurant Unified Commerce Platform. https://www.qubeyond.com/2025-state-of-digital-restaurant-report/

4. Qu, Enterprise Restaurant Unified Commerce Platform. (2023b, August 3). FreeBirds Case Study. https://www.qubeyond.com/customers/case-study-freebirds/

5. Qu, Enterprise Restaurant Unified Commerce Platform. (2023e, August 10). Blaze Pizza Case Study. https://www.qubeyond.com/customers/case-study-blaze-pizza/

6. Qu, Enterprise Restaurant Unified Commerce Platform. (2023b, August 2). Church's Chicken Case Study. https://www.qubeyond.com/customers/case-study-churchs-chicken/

7. Adyen. (n.d.). Retail report 2022. Adyen. https://www.adyen.com/reports/retail-report-2022

8. Qu, Enterprise Restaurant Unified Commerce Platform. (2023b, August 3). FreeBirds Case Study. https://www.qubeyond.com/customers/case-study-freebirds/

9. Qu, Enterprise Restaurant Unified Commerce Platform. (2023b, August 10). Blaze Pizza Case Study. https://www.qubeyond.com/customers/case-study-blaze-pizza/

10. Qu, Enterprise Restaurant Unified Commerce Platform. (2023b, August 16). Eegees Case Study. https://www.qubeyond.com/customers/case-study-eegees/



Qu is evolving restaurant POS, responsibly, by going beyond fragmented systems into a more stable, powerful tech ecosystem that makes exceptional experiences possible.

Exclusively focused on fast casual and quick service restaurants, our industry-leading Unified Commerce Platform connects the ordering, operations, and loyalty functions–providing the foundation and tools needed to accelerate brand growth.

Above all else, Qu prides itself on transparent, responsible partnerships rooted in financial and moral stewardship for the restaurant industry.

LEARN MORE