



A Restaurateur's Guide to Order and Pay at the Table



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Every smart restaurant operator knows they're selling more than food. Of course, you have to serve dishes, sides, and beverages that customers crave. But your restaurant also has to provide the experiences consumers want. People want convenience. They don't want to spend time waiting, and they definitely don't want to deal with mistakes with their orders. Order- and pay-at-the-table solutions give you tools that can make dining in your restaurant as appealing to your customers as the tasty food on the menu.

This guide provides a quick overview of order- and pay-at-the-table solutions. It gives you the basics you need to make a decision on whether this technology is right for your restaurant, including:

- ▶ **How order and pay at the table help you improve operations**
- ▶ **How to use these solutions to make your restaurant stand out**
- ▶ **How your restaurant will benefit in dollars and cents and happier customers**





Streamline Getting Orders from the Front to Back of the House

The first thing you need to know about order- and pay-at-the-table solutions is that they allow you to change processes for the better. Think about ordering, for example. Your servers have to take multiple steps to get an order to the kitchen, starting by writing the order on a pad or sometimes trying to memorize it. Then, your server has to walk to a shared point of sale (POS) terminal and enter the order, sometimes having to wait in line to use it. And your entire staff keeps their fingers crossed that the server doesn't enter the order with any mistakes.

On the other hand, with an order-at-the-table, customers at the table tell the server what they want, and the server enters it on the spot with an intuitive handheld device. There's no delay while the server waits for a turn to use a terminal, and there's no scribbled handwriting that can lead to mistakes.

But the benefits of tableside ordering systems aren't only in the front of the house. As soon as the server enters orders on the mobile device, a kitchen printer or kitchen display system (KDS) lets staff in your food prep areas know what they need to work on. Drink orders can also quickly transmit to the bar, which speeds up service and lets you give revenue a little boost by giving customers more opportunity to order refills or additional drinks before they're finished with their meals.

All in all, ordering, food prep, and service are faster, which means you can turn tables quicker and serve more customers. Order-at-the-table technology can be a game-changer, particularly on busy Friday nights or after local events when the more people you can seat, the more revenue you take in.

Enhance Dining Experiences and Build Relationships

There's one more thing to think about with tableside ordering processes: servers can be more friendly. They don't have to be nose-down, writing orders on paper. They can scroll through your menu on a mobile device, find the items your customers want, easily add modifiers, create combos, or find the perfect pairings, all by tapping a touchscreen.

Servers can make eye contact with customers and combine taking orders with friendly conversation. Ordering doesn't have to be just a quick, impersonal process. Tableside ordering solutions can help your servers do their part to create great experiences and help your customers decide to make your restaurant their favorite place to dine. The friendly, personalized service your staff provides may even lead to more positive reviews on social media.

Another thing conversational ordering can do is help servers upsell. When they are paying attention to a customer's body language and facial expressions, they can see when suggestions are on target or missing the mark. They can also see when a customer is concerned about dishes that might trigger allergies or contain ingredients they just don't like. Giving servers an order-at-the-table device and the freedom to pay attention lets them make sure customers are getting exactly what they want. It means happier customers but also less food waste from orders that servers have to take back to the kitchen.





Take the Pain Out of Settling the Check

While order-at-the-table solutions let your customers start off their meals with fast, friendly service, pay-at-the-table technology lets them end it on a positive note.

The time it takes for restaurant payments is a common challenge. A YouGov study found that customers hate waiting to pay the bill, which is about 12 minutes on average. And most customers perceive that wait time to be 36% longer than it actually is. Think about it: First, the server drops the check at the table. Then, the customer waits for the server to come back. If the customer pays with a credit or debit card, the server has to go to a terminal to run the card. Then the server brings the payment card slip to the table so the customer can sign it and add a tip. It's back and forth, a lot of waiting, and a lot of interruptions if customers are chatting at the table.

Pay-at-the-table technology transforms the process into one easy step. The server brings a mobile device to the table, calling in the open check from the POS system. The customer uses the device to enter a payment card and add a tip from automatic suggestions that do the math and can lead to higher tip amounts. The device also allows customers to pay with cash or even make contactless or mobile wallet payments.

The pay-at-the-table process can also help customers feel better about their account security. Because cards never leave their sight, they know their payment card data is secure. That extra sense of security can also bump your restaurant to the top of the list when a customer is deciding where to dine tonight.



Traditional Restaurant Payments vs. Pay at the Table

Traditional restaurant payments

- The server prints the check and takes it to the table.
- The server leaves the check for the customer to pay.
- If the customer uses a payment card, the server takes the check to the terminal.
- There is no option for contactless payment.
- Customers have no visibility into where the card goes, creating security concerns.
- The server returns with the credit card receipt and leaves again.
- The customer adds a tip and signs the slip.
- The server takes the credit card slip back to the terminal to complete the transaction.

Pay at the table

- The server takes the pay-at-the-table device to the table.
- The server recalls the check from the POS system.
- The customer approves the amount and inserts a payment card.
- The customer enters a tip or chooses a suggested amount.
- The device can accept contactless payments, debit, credit, or cash payments.
- Payment cards are never out of the customer's sight, increasing trust.
- The device can print or email a receipt.
- Servers handle payments in one easy step.



How Your Restaurant Benefits

When you think about how order- and pay-at-the-table solutions work, you can see how you can use them to run your restaurant more efficiently and improve customer service. But you will also be able to add up a positive impact on your bottom line.

These solutions allow you and your team to:

- Turn tables faster for more revenue per daypart, and maximize revenues when demand is high
- Allow each server to manage more tables, lowering the number of employees you schedule per shift
- Deal with fewer ordering mistakes and decrease losses from food and drink waste
- Improve the amount of revenue each server brings in with upselling and increase average tips.
- Build customer loyalty through better service.

Overall, order- and pay-at-the-table solutions help you control costs better and operate more profitably.

You'll get even more advantages if you choose to work with a provider that offers a Solution as a Service. This includes everything you need, from mobile devices to software and payments, all for one monthly price. It gives you all the advantages of order- and pay-at-the-table with minimal effort. Your provider takes care of hardware maintenance, software updates, and support.

The people coming to your restaurant are mostly digital-first consumers. They want you to use technology to enhance their experiences the way tech enhances other areas of their life. Serve them the way they want while operating more efficiently with order- and pay-at-the-table technology.



Learn More About Our Order- and Pay-at-the-Table Solution

NCC is proud to partner with Platinum Relations to offer you RTO Connections Tableside Order and Tableside Pay. **These solutions include:**

- Durable yet sleek and modern handheld devices
- Wi-Fi or 4G connectivity for use inside or outside
- Fast processing speeds and long-lasting batteries
- Integration with the kitchen printer or KDS
- Server notifications when orders are ready
- Open check recall by check or table number
- Tip suggestion or the option to enter custom amounts
- Split payments, including even splits
- Secure payment processing, including contactless
- Real-time data synchronization for up-to-date visibility
- Email or printed receipts with a built-in printer
- Valuable data and customer information for marketing
- Easy loyalty program enrollment from the device



*Contact us to learn
more about these game-
changing solutions for
your restaurant.*

About NCC

About NCC Since 1986, NCC has been delivering comprehensive software solutions to businesses in the hospitality and retail industries. Our software engineers combine years of experience in software development with a strong understanding of restaurant and retail operations to create products designed to work in a wide variety of environments. Through a world-wide network of reseller partners, NCC has installed over 50,000 POS systems in more than 35 countries. NCC products are installed in a wide range of retail and hospitality concepts including Table Service, Quick Service, Fast Casual, Bars, Night Clubs, Delis, Frozen Yogurt, Delivery and Concessions.