

E-book

# The recipe for restaurant success: Tech insights and adoption trends

A National Restaurant Association Technology Survey sponsored  
by Sage.

Sage



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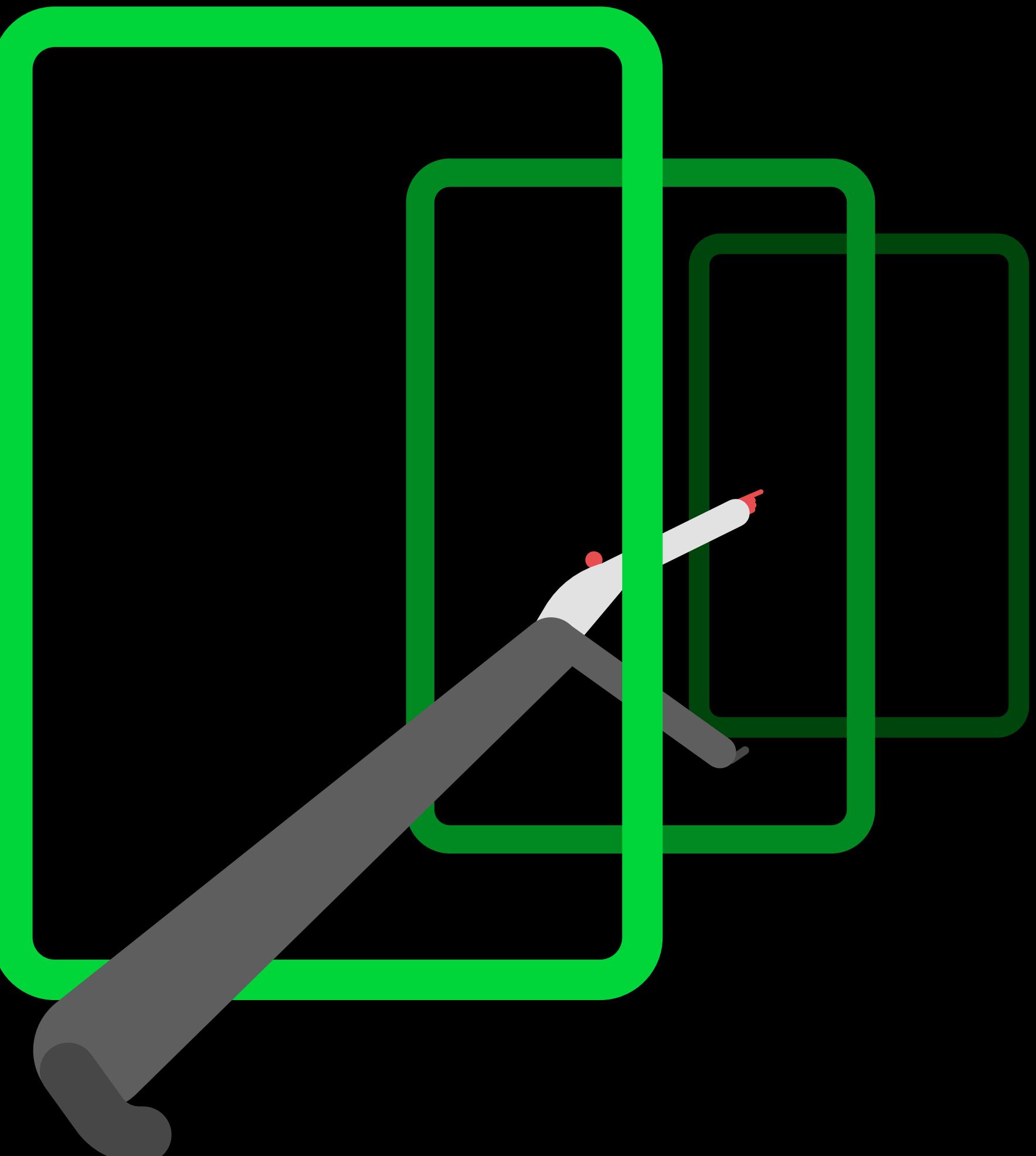
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# A taste of digital transformation

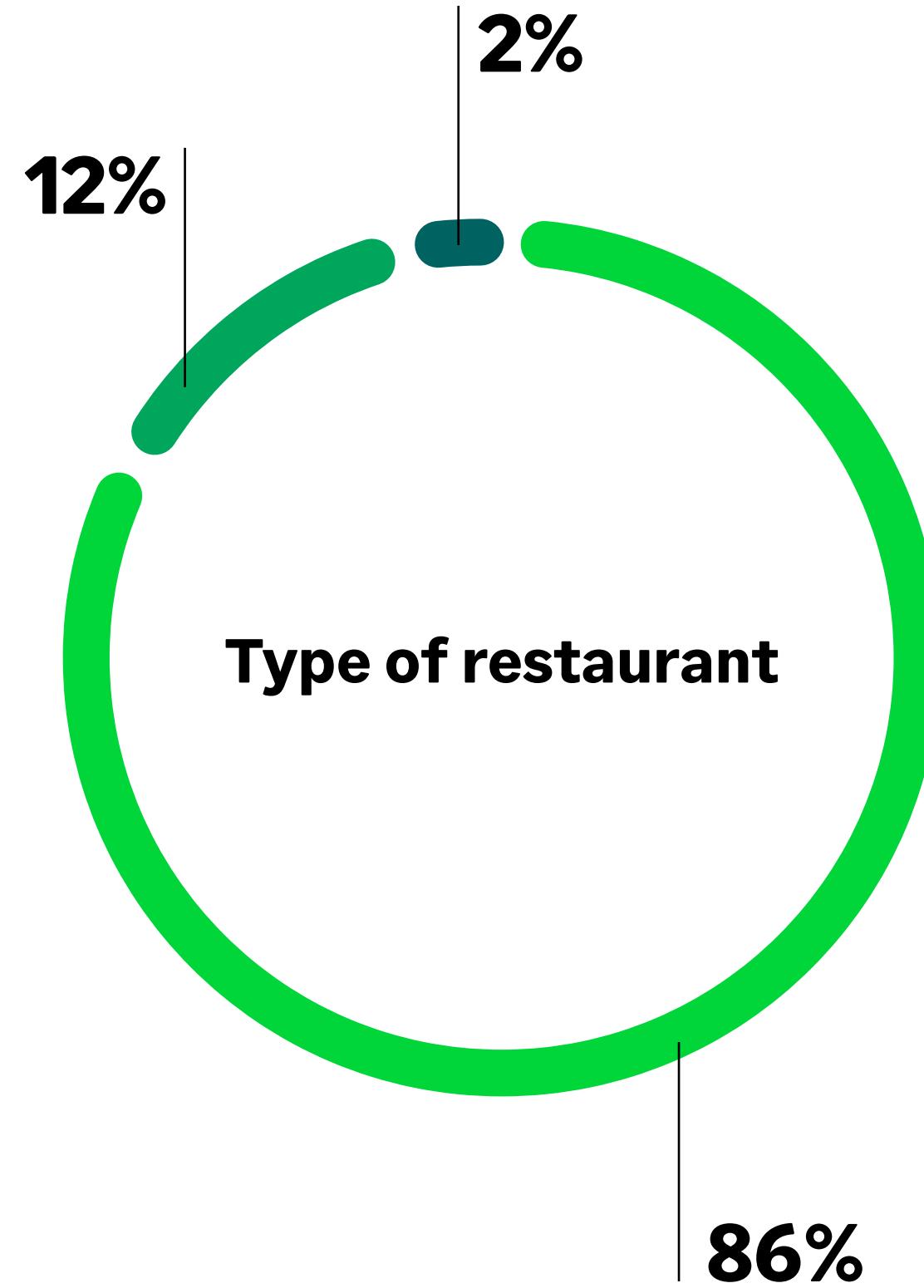
**Picture your restaurant running like a well-oiled machine, delivering unforgettable customer experiences while maximizing profits—you can make it a reality with the help of technology.**

In partnership with the National Restaurant Association, Sage surveyed restaurateurs throughout the United States to uncover how they use technology today. This e-book summarizes the key findings and is a useful guide for restaurateurs seeking to improve revenue, enhance customer experience and streamline their businesses to reduce costs.

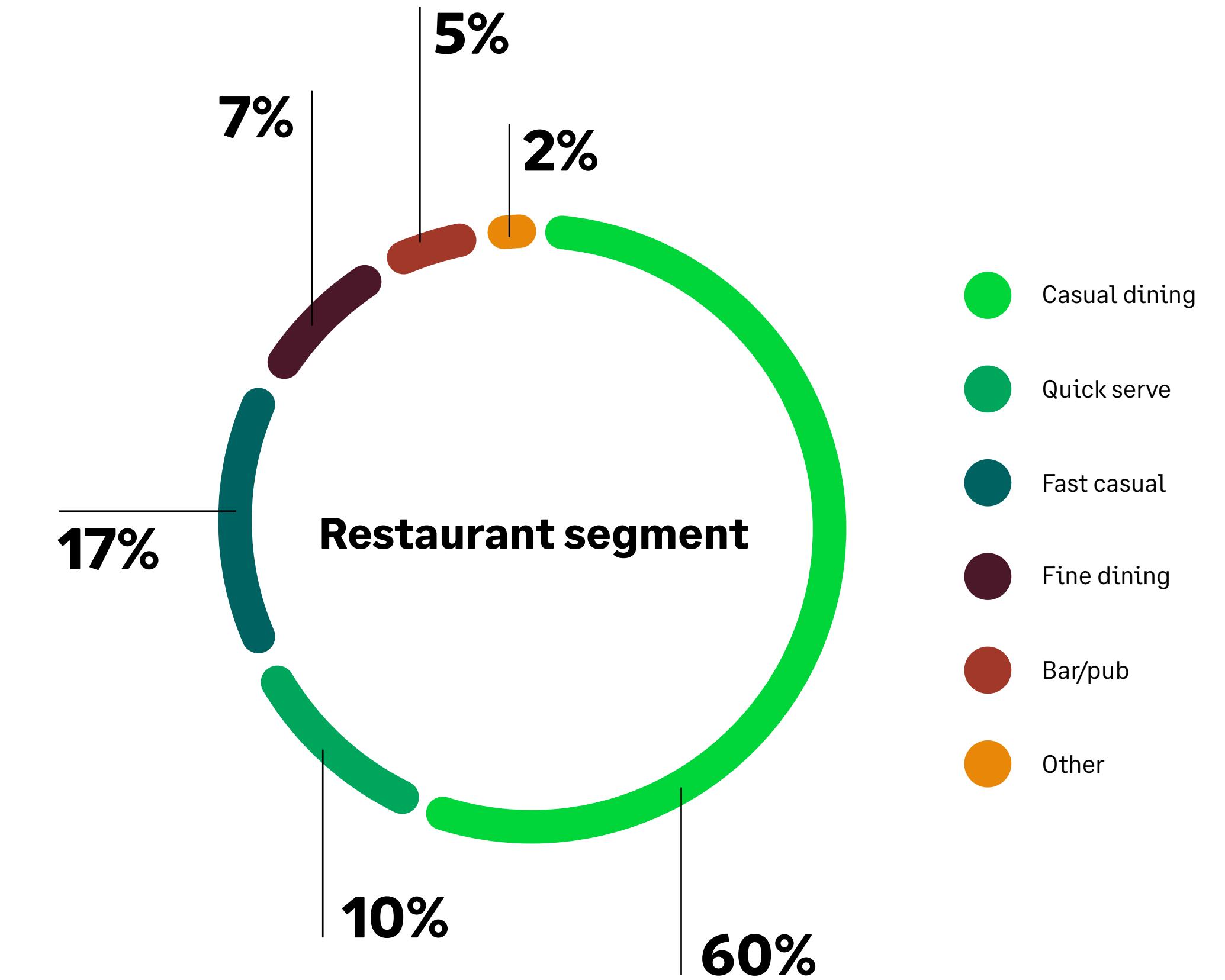
You'll discover the impact of the pandemic on restaurant technology investments, learn about current solutions and satisfaction levels with these, and uncover the plans of your peers and competitors. Seize the opportunity. Let's dive in.

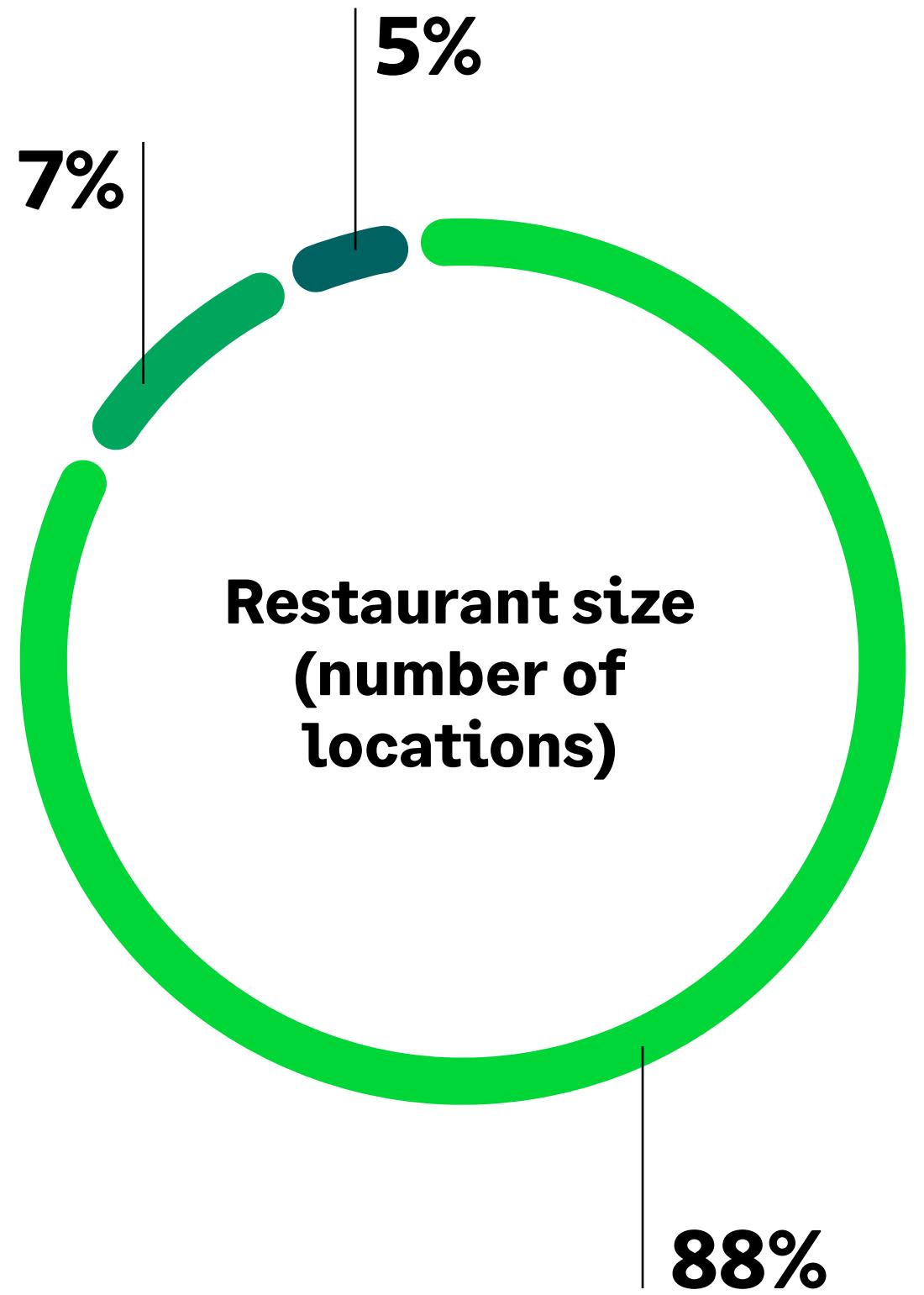
## About the respondents

The respondents represent a sample of National Restaurant Association members across the US. Their characteristics are as follows:

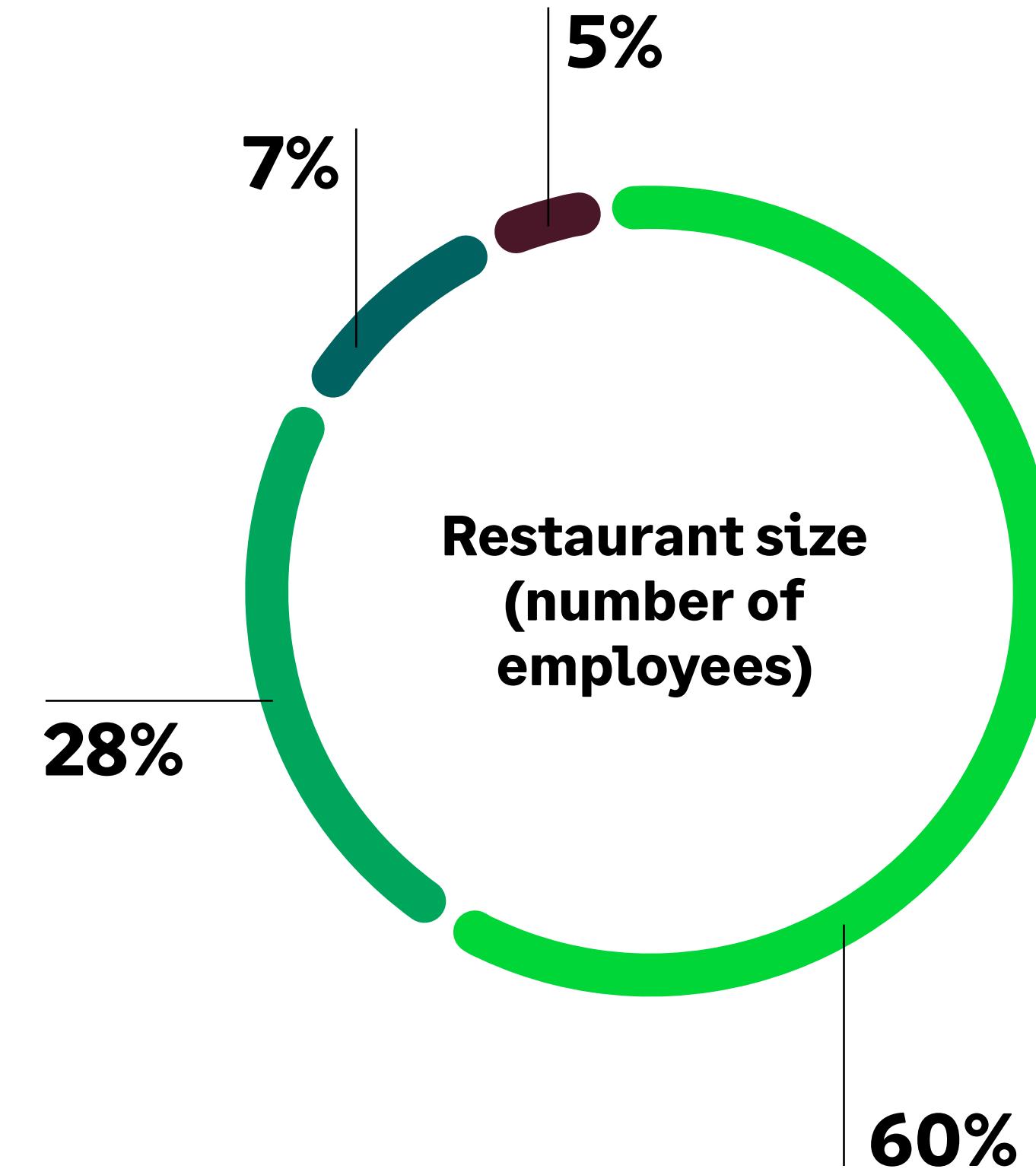


- Independent respondents
- Franchise respondents
- Franchisor respondents





Under 10  
10–50  
More than 100



# The future of dining: restaurant technology trends redefining the industry

## Investments in online ordering and technology

It's no surprise restaurant operators have been investing in online ordering and delivery technologies over the last three years. It has transformed the industry—necessary in today's digital world.

Online ordering and delivery helped restaurants adapt to the challenges brought on by coronavirus. Social distancing measures and lockdowns forced restaurants to shift focus to takeout and delivery—the transition was smoother and more efficient than expected.

More than nine-in-ten restaurateurs plan to continue these investments. This is not just a trend but a fundamental shift in the industry. These investments have proven transformative for restaurants, allowing them to reach a wider audience and increase revenue.

Online ordering and delivery technologies offer many benefits to both customers and operators. Customers can order their favorite meals from the comfort of their own homes without waiting in line or on hold. Restaurateurs, conversely, can increase their efficiency, reduce errors, and improve their bottom line.

Overall, the restaurant industry will continue to grow online ordering and delivery services. As more and more customers shift to digital platforms, restaurants that invest in these technologies will better meet customer demand and stay ahead of the competition.

## Back-of-house equipment

The restaurant industry constantly evolves, and operators always look for ways to increase productivity and efficiency. Over 40% of restaurateurs plan to ramp up back-of-the-house equipment or technology to achieve these goals.

This trend spans all types of restaurants, from family dining to casual dining, fine dining, quick service, fast casual, and coffee-and-snack operations.

## Kitchen-display systems

A key back-of-the-house investment that operators are making is in kitchen-display systems. These systems streamline the order management process, improving accuracy and increasing efficiency in the kitchen. In the last three years, 33% of respondents have already invested in a kitchen-display system, with another 33% planning to invest in one in the next 12 to 24 months.

Kitchen-display systems have many benefits for restaurant operators, such as:

- Real-time visibility into kitchen operations, allowing operators to track orders better and monitor progress.
- Better coordination between front-of-house and back-of-house staff, reducing errors and improving overall efficiency.
- Reducing waste and improving inventory management by providing better ingredient and supply tracking.

Investing in back-of-the-house equipment or technology is a smart move for restaurateurs in the long run and is positive for the industry.

By increasing productivity and efficiency, you can serve more customers, reduce wait times, and ultimately increase revenue. This is particularly important in today's competitive market, where customers have many expectations and options.

### **Accounting and financial software**

The restaurant industry is complex and fast-paced. Managing finances can be daunting. That's why it's unsurprising that more than a quarter of those surveyed plan to invest in accounting and financial software, following the 51% who have recently done so.

Modern financial management platforms are transformational, giving operators the visibility and insights they need to reduce costs, improve margins, and enhance customer experience. By providing real-time data and analytics, these solutions help you make informed decisions, identify areas for improvement, and optimize your operations.

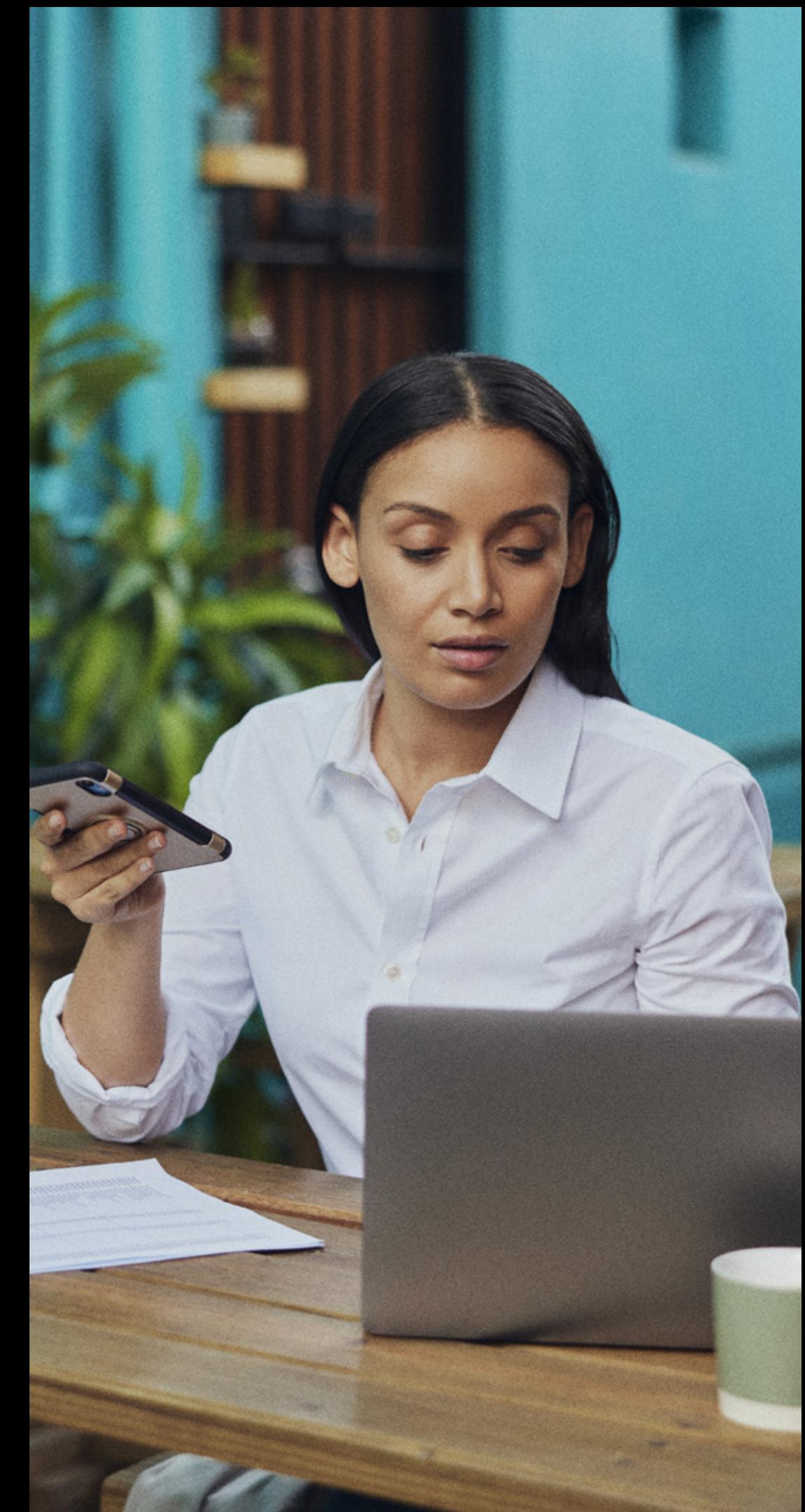
In addition, many restaurants are moving their accounting and financial management to the cloud. Cloud-based solutions have lower upfront costs and capital expenditures than traditional on-premises solutions, making them more accessible to smaller operators. They also offer faster deployment and easier administration, freeing up resources and allowing you to focus on your core business.

### **Improving the customer experience**

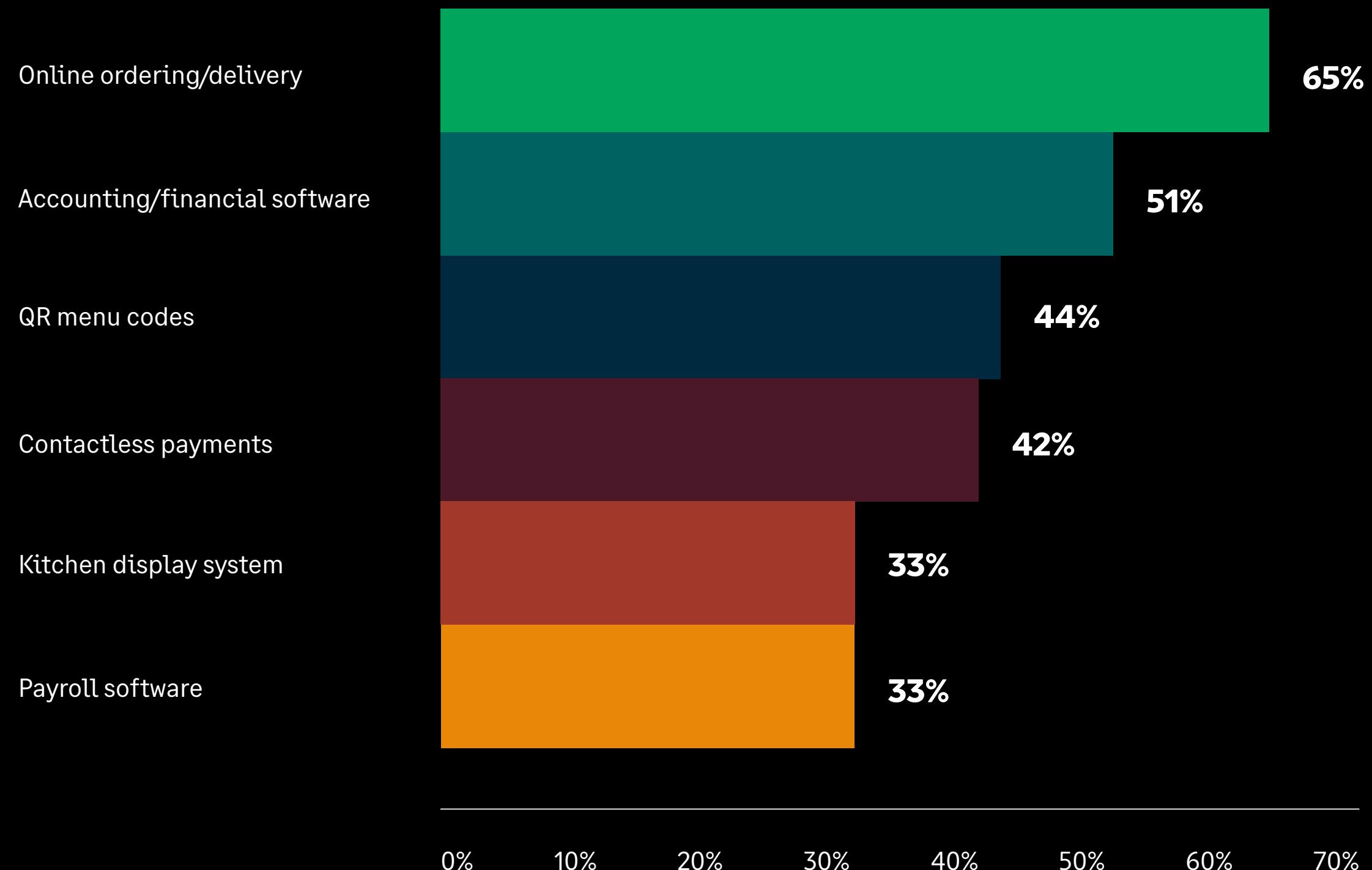
Investing in accounting and financial software is not just about reducing costs and increasing efficiency. It's also about improving the overall customer experience.

By better understanding your finances, you can make strategic decisions that benefit your customers. For example, you can invest in better ingredients, improve service, or change menu items, leading to happier customers and increased loyalty.

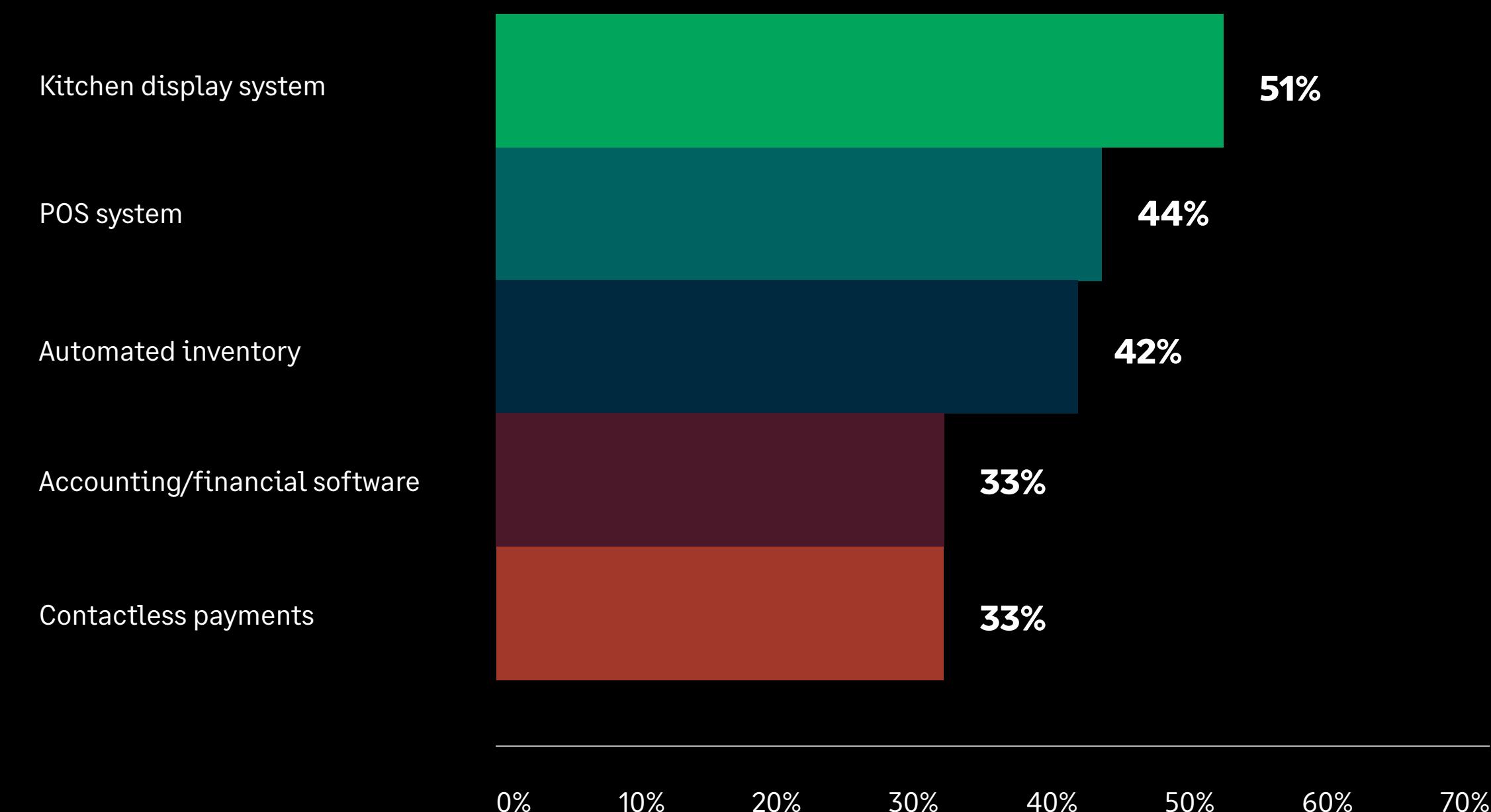
Similarly to online ordering and back-of-house investments, the trend towards investing in accounting and financial software is a positive development for the restaurant industry. Embrace these technologies to manage your finances better, improve operations, and provide excellent customer experiences.



## Top six new technologies restaurants have invested in during the last three years



## Which technologies does your restaurant plan to invest in the 12–24 months?



# Mastering restaurant finances

Did you know that over half of the respondents reported investing in new accounting and financial software in the past two years? Yet all is not well in the world of financial software. The survey also found that many of you face significant challenges and frustrations with your current system.

Problems you have with accounting software include:

- Long and grueling monthly financial closes (28%)
- Limited multiple-entity capabilities (19%)
- Outsourced financial processes (12%)
- Long closes and inadequate multiple-entity capabilities go hand in hand. These problems are especially prevalent among more than half of the survey participants, who use simple bookkeeping applications that lack a unified chart of accounts.

Timely closes are a nightmare if you do business from multiple locations, as you'll have to enter data manually into spreadsheets for inter-company eliminations. Even if you're investing in technology, the wrong system will make you add workarounds to patch up bookkeeping shortcomings.

## A lack of software functionality

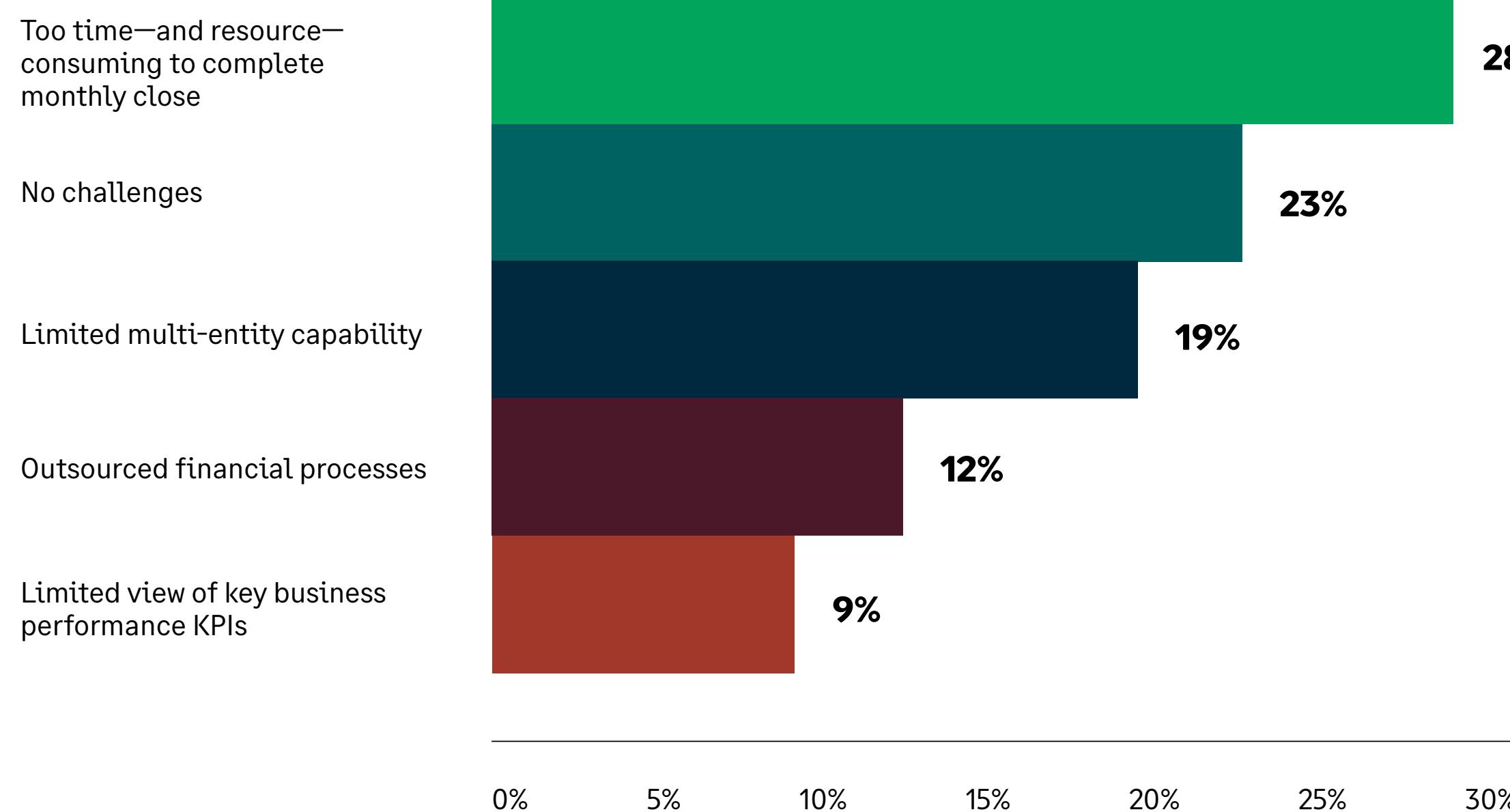
Unfortunately, this frustration extends to software functionality as well. While popular software such as QuickBooks may seem like an easy solution for bookkeeping, it struggles with fixed assets, reporting, payroll, bank reconciliations, and general ledgers. This leads to many users turning to spreadsheets to fill in the gaps, which can be error-prone and time-consuming.

## Fixed asset management headaches

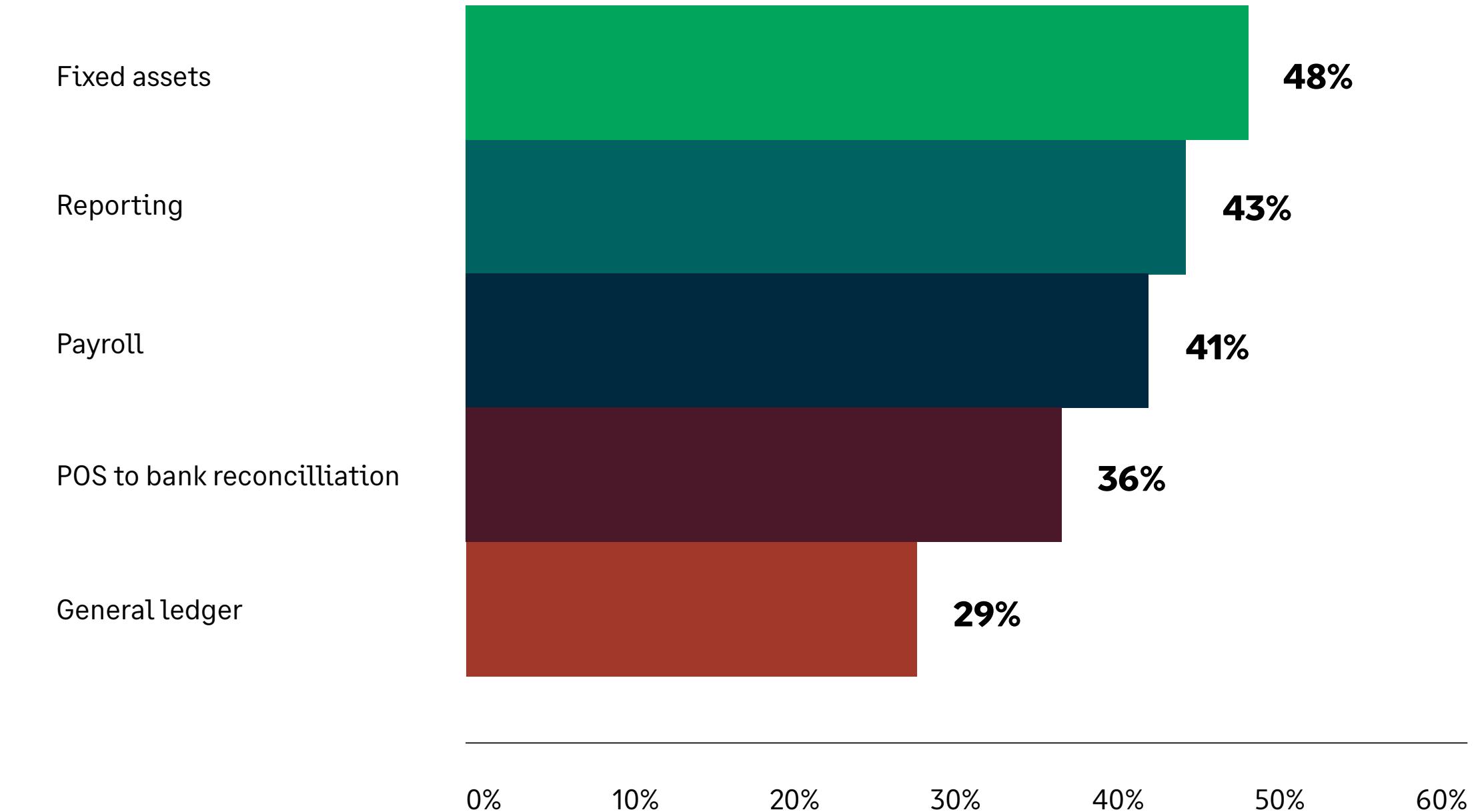
Fixed asset management, including property, plant, and equipment (PP&E), is a major headache for many operators. You may use spreadsheets if you're using QuickBooks Online (which doesn't have a fixed assets manager) or dealing with multiple entities.

Spreadsheets can lead to mistakes due to the complexity of the information and calculations involved. Since spreadsheets live outside the core financial system of record, creating assets, posting journal entries, and asset disposals are time-consuming manual processes. Given all these issues, it's no surprise that some of you aren't getting value from your tech investment.

## Top five biggest challenges with your current financial reporting software

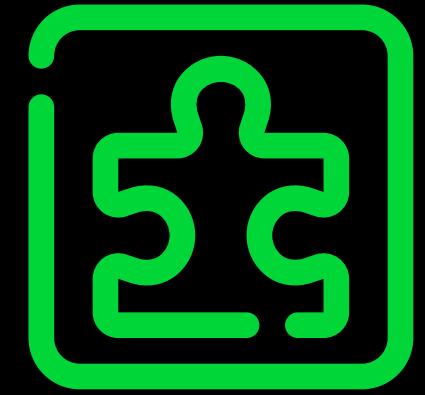


## Top five functions you are LEAST satisfied with in your current accounting software



# Recipe for success— the ideal restaurant accounting system

A great accounting system could be a game-changer, but what features should you seek? According to our survey of restaurant operators, the top three attributes are:



All-in-one integration



Customizable reports



Real-time reporting

Let's start with integration. Seamlessly merging and optimizing data and workflows between multiple software applications, you can modernize your systems and support agile business operations. This reduces costs, reveals powerful insights, and creates greater efficiencies and capabilities than independent applications.

Integrating data points from your POS or inventory management system with your accounting system gives you a complete view of your business from the top down.

Imagine having access to insights and metrics like daily sales by location, performance data by item level, or inventory by item—all in real time. From improving menu items to staffing—the possibilities are endless.

### **Why a cloud accounting system makes sense**

A cloud-native core financial platform provides easy-to-use and intuitive reports and dashboards from almost any perspective.

- Want to see revenue-per-available-seat-hour or table-turn-rate? No problem.
- Need to drill down by location or entity? You got it.

You want reports and dashboards to provide real-time insight into financial and operational data, empowering you with information you need to make decisions quickly—without spending weeks creating error-prone spreadsheet reports.

### **Cloud-native platforms:**

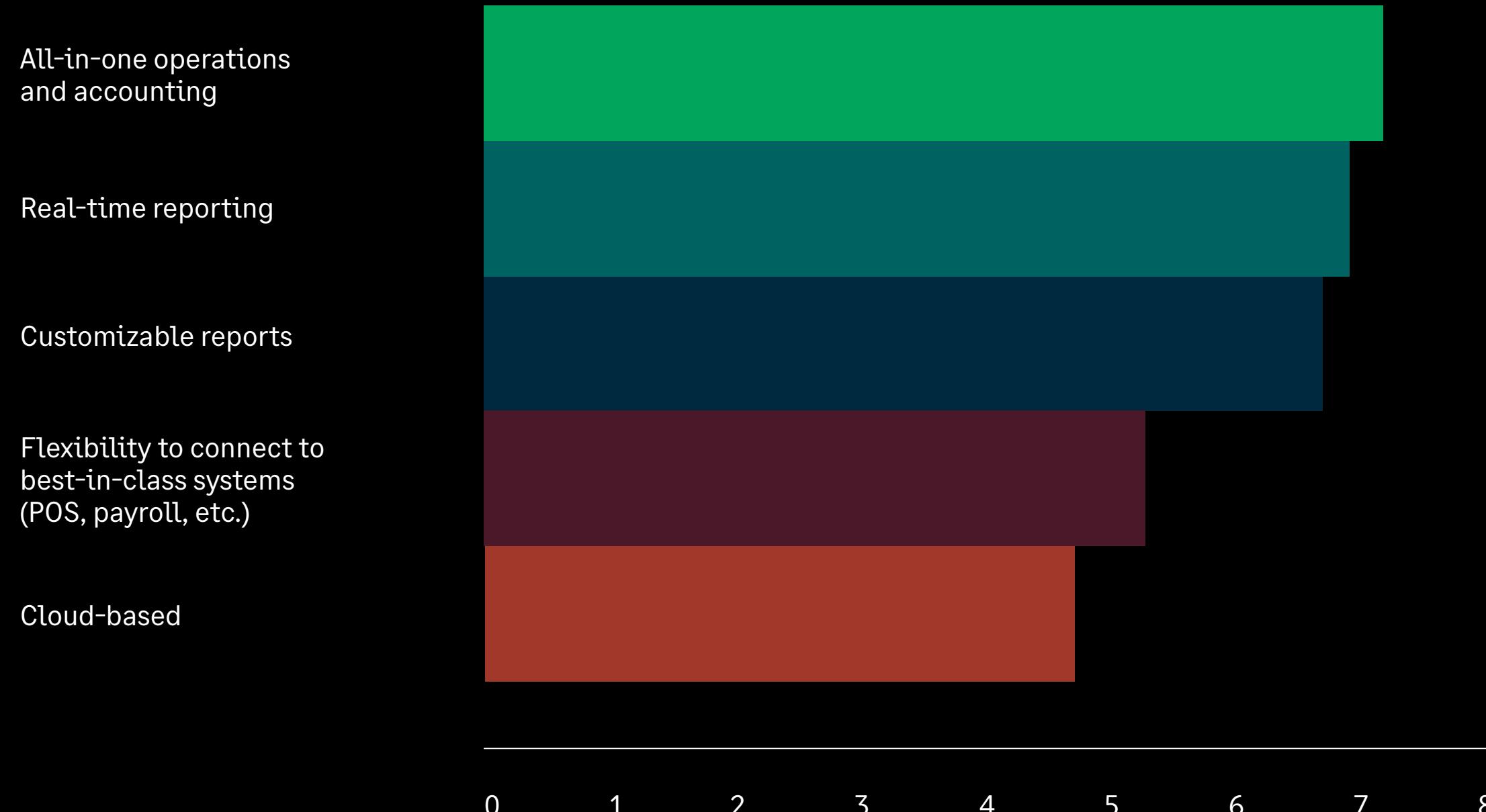
- Are a great place to store important data, add new features, and connect different applications.
- Make it easy to access tools and data without changing the main code.
- Let you share data with other decision-making tools like data warehouses and business-intelligence applications.

As a restaurateur, upgrading to an accounting system that offers all-in-one integration, real-time reporting, and customizable reports is necessary to take your business to the next level.

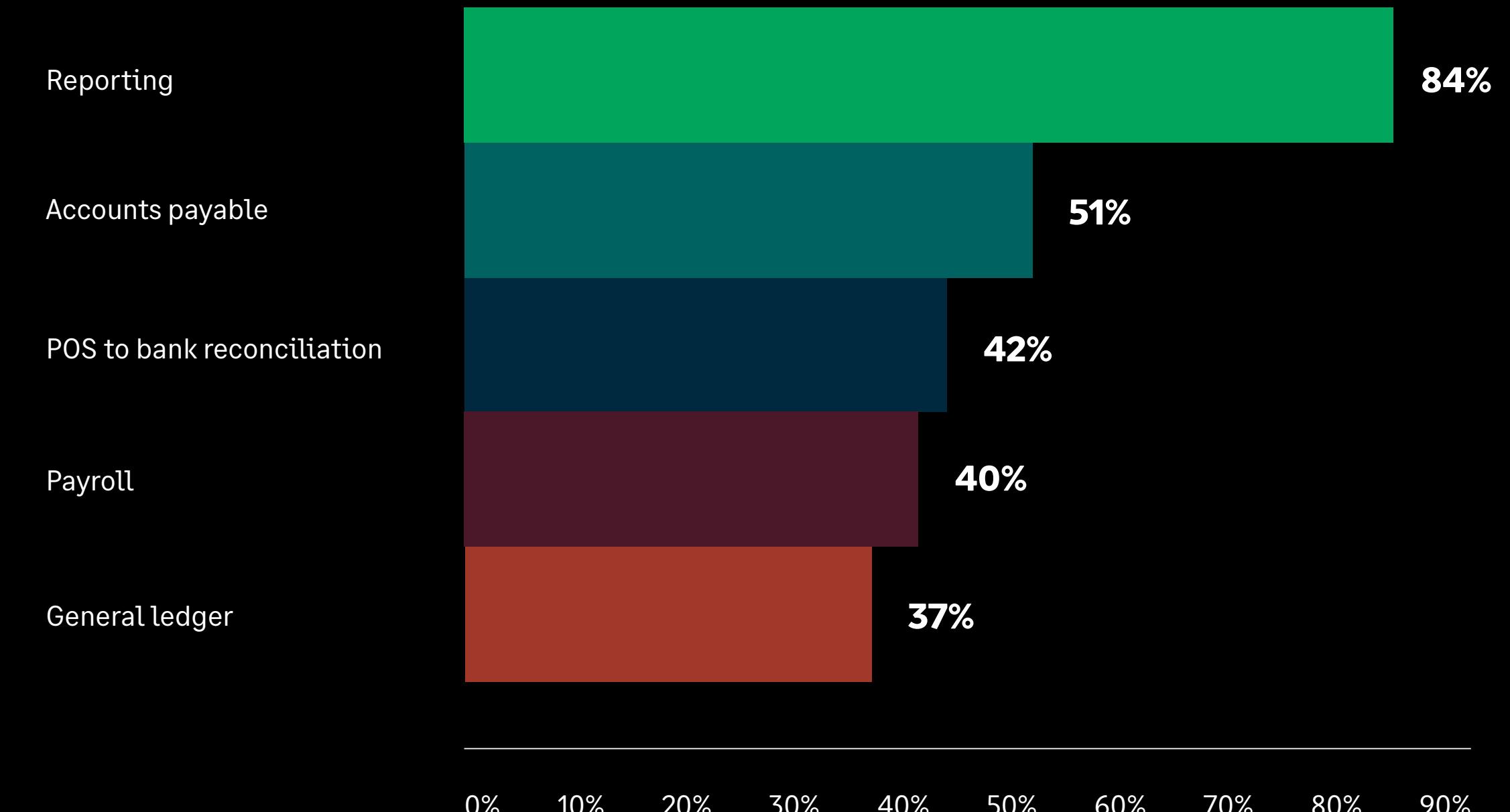
A cloud-native core financial platform gives you the power to access important data and insights quickly, empowering you to make informed decisions that will drive your business forward.



## How would you rank the top five most important attributes in an accounting system for your restaurant business?



## Most important account software functions



# What's the secret ingredient?

**Revolutionary restaurant achieves impressive 90% growth while slashing accounting overhead by 20% with Sage Intacct.**

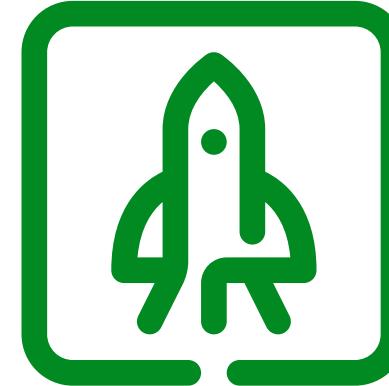
Tender Greens, a leading fine-casual dining restaurant, revolutionized its financial processes with Sage Intacct.

By implementing this cutting-edge software, Tender Greens gained unparalleled visibility into its performance, seamlessly integrated its financial processes, and automated its business operations.

As a result, Tender Greens:



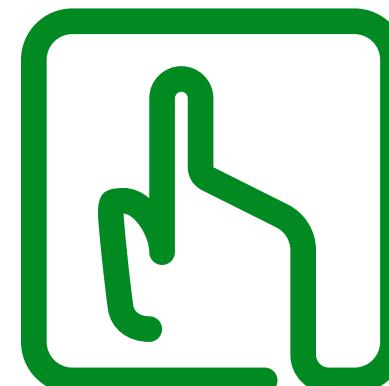
Unlocked new insights into its operations



Achieved a level of efficiency and productivity that sets it apart



Cut the time of its monthly close



Read about the case study [here](#)

# Power up your restaurant with technology

**Research from the National Restaurant Association finds that costs are going up in all categories in a turbulent restaurant industry, forcing you to raise prices, change your offering and reduce operating hours.**

The best way to get a handle on your business is by having a clear picture of what's happening. You need a system that provides real-time data, so you can make informed decisions to keep up with the ever-changing landscape of the restaurant industry.



Look for new ways to:



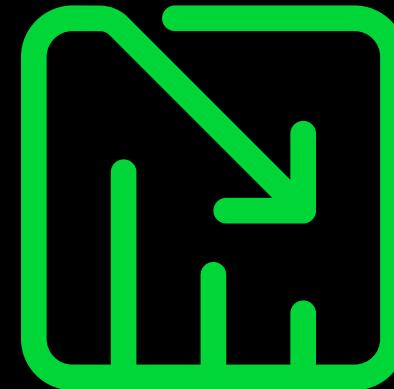
Increase revenue  
and margins



Improve efficiency



Improve working capital



Decrease costs



Enhance guest experience



## Evaluate technology solutions

When evaluating technology solutions for your restaurant, it's important to put yourself in a position of power. That means understanding each option's cost/benefit analysis and ensuring that any new technology will help you achieve your goals.

First, take some time to analyze what solutions already exist within your restaurant.

- Are they effective?
- Do they need updating?
- What could be improved?

From there, look at technologies on the market and decide whether they would be better than what's currently in place or add more complexity without providing enough benefit.

Finally, make sure that whatever solutions are adopted fit into the broader picture:

How does this piece connect with others? If one part changes drastically (like switching point-of-sale systems), how will that affect other parts (like paying employees)?

## Invest in the right technology

To make the right investment, do your research. You'll want to look at what other restaurants are doing and how they use technology.

- What works best for them?
- What can you learn from their success?
- What are some of the common mistakes they made when implementing new systems?

Once you've gathered all the information, create a timeline for implementation so everyone involved knows what needs to happen next. This will help keep things organized and prevent delays in starting your project.

Finally, we advise you to:

- Create a plan for implementation.
- Train staff on new technology and how they'll use it in the restaurant.
- Ensure data security and compliance with industry regulations.

By investing in the right technology and taking a proactive approach to your restaurant's operations, you can stay ahead of the curve and remain successful in the face of industry challenges.

With the right tools in place, you'll be able to make informed decisions and provide exceptional experiences for your guests, all while maximizing your profits and minimizing your costs.

So don't wait—start exploring your technology options today and take your restaurant to the next level!





A Sage partner

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