



Boost order throughput and the customer experience with Zebra's scanning solutions for QSR

The Challenge: Keeping up with customer demands

New consumer trends, heightened safety concerns and changing demographics are driving a rapid pace of change in the Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) industry. Convenience has always been the key to QSR success, but now more than ever, consumers want to get good food on their own terms — in the fastest, safest and most convenient way possible. Amid significant competition and sales pressure, the customer experience is paramount. Restaurants must innovate and adapt new strategies, including a focus on drive-thru and curbside options along with digital channels, to compete in this evolving environment.

The Solution: Enhance checkout convenience and speed with flexible point of sale scanning solutions from Zebra

Zebra's point of sale scanning solutions enable QSR operators to nimbly adapt to the fulfillment trends of today and tomorrow. This family of versatile scanners brings the point of sale to wherever your customers need it most — at the counter, drive-thru or parking lot. Industry-leading scanning performance lets you boost order throughput, reducing wait times and creating a more positive customer experience. Hands-free scanners create the perfect contactless checkout experience; enhanced working ranges ensure flawless scanning out the drive-thru window; and cordless scanners enable queue busting when lines get long. No matter which Zebra scanner you choose, you can count on the performance, reliability and ease-of-use that are synonymous with the Zebra Technologies name.

Digital ordering and loyalty: maximize your success with Zebra

Today's consumers are seeking frictionless digital experiences. In a 2024 Ipsos study, 65% of QSR visitors reported using an order-ahead app, including nearly 90% of those aged 18-24.¹ Ordering ahead via a mobile app reduces bottlenecks in the drive-thru lane and at the counter, increasing throughput and lowering customer wait times. Digital ordering options also make it easy for QSRs to deliver a highly personalized experience, encourage upsell options and promote new menu offerings.

Whether customers choose to come inside to place an order, go through the drive-thru lane or park for curbside service, a QSR needs to be ready to capture mobile coupons, loyalty cards, gift cards and order confirmation barcodes. Zebra's advanced scanning technology ensures that the barcode displayed on a customer's mobile phone can be accurately captured in a split second — even if the screen is cracked, the display is dimly lit, or bright sunlight creates a glare off the highly reflective display. With Zebra, your associates and customers can count on a successful scan the first time, every time — providing a seamless digital experience from start to finish.



Streamlined transactions at every touchpoint

At the counter



By installing a hands-free barcode scanner at each register, customers can easily redeem loyalty rewards, use an in-app offer, pay using their gift card balance and more — all contact-free. A customer simply holds up their phone or paper coupon to the scanner, streamlining the overall transaction and reducing physical touch. And the ability to capture and parse driver's license information can automate age verification for age-restricted items or streamline new account applications.

Scanner considerations: A minimal footprint fits the most space-constrained counters and leaves plenty of room for food orders, promotions or impulse buy items. A wide field of view makes scanning easier for customers as less precision is required when positioning the barcode. And spill-proof designs with IP52 sealing and elevated circuitry prevent downtime caused by an inevitable spill on the counter.

In the drive-thru lane



By deploying a scanner in the drive-thru, employees can scan order items, as well as capture information on a customer's loyalty card, mobile coupon, order confirmation barcode and more without having to touch the customer's personal item or slow down the transaction by manually keying in information. A hands-free scanner lets employees pass items in front of the scanner window for split-second scanning, while a handheld scanner can be used to reach out the drive-thru window to capture data on a customer's smartphone or coupon.

Scanner considerations: A hybrid handheld/hands-free scanner provides the ultimate flexibility at the drive-thru: when the employee picks up the hybrid scanner, it automatically adjusts for longer range handheld scanning. An enhanced scanning range makes it easy to reach a customer's phone with minimal stretching. Some QSRs prefer corded operation to help prevent a scanner from falling out the window or into the customer's car, while others prefer the added range and flexibility of cordless operation.

Lastly, scanners at the drive-thru need to contend with challenging light conditions. Advanced optics improve barcode capture at night, while a deeply recessed exit window helps minimize stray light, making it easier to read mobile barcodes in bright sunlight. In fact, in third party testing, Zebra handheld scanners consistently outperformed the competition in a simulated drive up scenario at night and in bright sunlight.²

Drive-thru line busting



When lines start to back up, QSRs can implement line busting by positioning an employee outside to input customer orders directly into a tablet or other mobile device. Equipped with a Zebra cordless scanner, employees can scan a customer's loyalty card, mobile coupon and more — providing a complete POS experience from anywhere in the line. Line busting gives customers a sense of speed and upgraded service. And the faster you can move customers through the drive-thru, the more people you can serve.

Scanner considerations: Line busting applications require a scanner that's easy to carry or wear and can survive outdoor conditions. For example, a companion scanner can be worn on a lanyard or tucked in a pocket, and pairs with a tablet or other mobile device.

Curbside pickup



Curbside pickup makes it easy for customers to order in advance and pick up their order without getting out of their vehicle. Curbside service enables contactless pickup for restaurants without a drive-thru lane. It also can alleviate pressure on existing drive-thru lanes and give customers more options. Equipping curbside attendants with a cordless barcode scanner improves order accuracy — a quick scan of a barcode on the order receipt and on the customer's phone ensures that the right order is being delivered to the right car.

Scanner considerations: Just like in the drive-thru line busting scenario, curbside applications require a cordless scanner that's easy to wear or slip into a pocket, can hold up to inclement weather and survive an accidental drop.

Delivery pickup



Food delivery services are becoming increasingly popular as they make everyday life easier for people with busy schedules — 70% of over 1,500 U.S. consumers surveyed had ordered food delivery in the past month.³ Whether a delivery is fulfilled via a third-party service or an in-house driver, order accuracy is critical as customers can't return to the counter if there's a problem with their order. Fortunately, QSRs can implement accuracy checks, including scanning the order as it's handed off to the delivery driver, to ensure that the right order is going to the right driver.

Scanner considerations: Delivery drivers may pick up a customer order at the counter, drive-thru, curbside or dedicated pickup area. No matter the touchpoint, the right scanner can ensure a fast and trouble-free transaction to keep customers happy and help protect the delivery driver's ratings. For example, a hands-free scanner with a wide field of view can make it easy for drivers to scan their own confirmation barcode or a handheld scanner with an extended scanning range speeds up pickups in the drive-thru.

Added versatility and value throughout the restaurant

Self-ordering kiosks



Self-ordering kiosks are becoming increasingly popular in QSRs, especially among younger consumers, and are contributing to higher average spending per customer. One study found that 41% of the overall population, 58% of millennials and 67% of Gen Zers preferred ordering from a kiosk.⁴ Another study found that kiosk orders led to an average spend increase of 8% in QSRs and 15% in fast-casual restaurants.⁵

Kiosk considerations: When the self-ordering kiosk includes a barcode scanner, customers can easily scan their mobile coupon, in-app QR code or mobile loyalty card — there's no need to manually input a coupon code or account number. QSRs can purchase a complete self-service kiosk solution that includes a multi-touch display, integrated barcode scanner and voice support for times when a customer requires additional assistance. Or, a fixed mount barcode scanner can be added to an existing self-service kiosk.

Inventory and receiving




The same Zebra scanners used at the point of sale can perform double duty in inventory and receiving tasks. Employees can scan a barcode on an incoming shipment or on the bill of lading to automatically reconcile received items with the original order for faster processing and more accurate inventory.

Scanner considerations: Cordless scanners can be used for receiving and inventory. Zebra's Label Parse+ tool streamlines operations by capturing all the required barcodes on a label with a single press of the scan trigger. This makes it easy for employees to capture more data including lot numbers, manufacturing location and expiration date for better inventory management. And if you are using RFID in your supply chain or for item level tracking purposes, choose a scanner that supports RFID to easily capture RFID-tagged items at the point of sale.

Recommended Zebra Imagers for QSR


Hybrid Handheld/Hands-free 1D/2D Imagers


DS9900 Series		Corded	Cordless	MFI (Made for iOS)	Driver's License Parsing	Longer Range for Drive Thru	EAS Deactivation	Image Capture	RFID	Fixed
	Premium scanning performance in a hybrid design that's purpose built for both handheld and hands-free; fast seamless switching between modes and the scan range automatically adjusts as needed.	●		● *	●	● *	●			


Hands-free 1D/2D Imagers

DS9300 Series		Corded	Cordless	MFI (Made for iOS)	Driver's License Parsing	Longer Range for Drive Thru	EAS Deactivation	Image Capture	RFID	Fixed
	Compact presentation scanner with big functionality fits congested QSR counters.	●		● *		● *	●			


Handheld 1D/2D Imagers

DS2200 Series		Corded	Cordless	MFI (Made for iOS)	Driver's License Parsing	Longer Range for Drive Thru	EAS Deactivation	Image Capture	RFID	Fixed
	Value pricing to meet the most budget-conscious requirements — without compromising on the performance and features required in quick service restaurants.	●	●							


DS4600 Series		Corded	Cordless	MFI (Made for iOS)	Driver's License Parsing	Longer Range for Drive Thru	EAS Deactivation	Image Capture	RFID	Fixed
	Feature-rich versatility combines with a 28-inch range for scanning across the counter or out the drive-thru window.	●	●	● *	●	● *	●			

DS8100 Series		Corded	Cordless	MFI (Made for iOS)	Driver's License Parsing	Longer Range for Drive Thru	EAS Deactivation	Image Capture	RFID	Fixed
	Delivers the very best in scanning performance and functionality to increase transactions and reduce customer wait time in the busiest, scan-intensive environments.	●	●	● *	●	● *	●			

Fixed Mount 1D/2D Imagers

DS55 Series		Corded	Cordless	MFI (Made for iOS)	Driver's License Parsing	Longer Range for Drive Thru	EAS Deactivation	Image Capture	RFID	Fixed
	Compact corded scanner fits in the smallest of spaces with a tiny footprint and 3-in-1 mount accessory; easy integration into self-service kiosks.	●		● *			●			●

Companion 1D/2D Imagers

CS60		Corded	Cordless	MFI (Made for iOS)	Driver's License Parsing	Longer Range for Drive Thru	EAS Deactivation	Image Capture	RFID	Fixed
	Ultra-versatile scanner that easily converts between corded and cordless, handheld and hands-free; compact scanning for the checkout counter, self-service kiosk, line busting and more.	●	●	● *			●			

Interactive Kiosks

KC50		Corded	Cordless	MFI (Made for iOS)	Driver's License Parsing	Longer Range for Drive Thru	EAS Deactivation	Image Capture	RFID	Fixed
	Modern and elegant Android kiosk computers give customers convenient self-service capabilities; flexible solution available in 15 in and 22 in models, placed in portrait or landscape mode; can be mounted on a wall, floor or counter.									●

APPLICATION BRIEF

QSR POINT OF SALE SCANNERS

1. [2024 QSR/Fast Casual Digital Ordering Performance Study](#), Ipsos.
2. Study by US Ergonomics, August 2021
3. [2024 Restaurant & Alcohol Online Ordering Trends report](#), DoorDash. August 2024.
4. 2023 Study from Revenue Management Consultants LLC, cited in "QSR ordering: Millennials, Gen Zers prefer kiosks over in-person," Kiosk Marketplace, February 3, 2023
5. Technomic Ignite Consumer report cited in "[Taking the Risk Out of Restaurant Technology](#)," Restaurant Technology, April 9, 2025



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