The Ultimate Guide

to the **Best POS Systems for Multi-Location Restaurants**

TouchBistro®

We've done your research for you and created a quick, digestible guide to the best POS systems for multi-location restaurants.

If you're shopping for a new POS system, you've likely found the process tedious at best and completely overwhelming at worst.

The process is especially arduous if you operate multiple restaurants. Unlike single-location operators, multi-location restaurant owners have to think about how the POS will be used at each location on a day-to-day basis, as well as how the POS will help to run overall business operations. In a perfect world, you should be able to access all your data in one place and seamlessly run all of your locations from one centralized POS system.

With these particular needs in mind, finding the perfect POS system can be a complicated process to say the least.

To help you cut through the noise and find the right system for your restaurant group, chain, or franchise, we've put together an ultimate guide to the best POS systems for multi-location restaurants. In this guide, we'll dive into in-depth reviews of all the top POS providers equipped for multi-location restaurant management—including our own system. These comprehensive reviews will cover everything from features to payments, to help you narrow down the best restaurant POS for your specific business.

In each review, you'll find:

- An overview of each of the top POS systems for multi-location restaurants

- Each system's strengths and weaknesses

- Your payment processing options

- What type of restaurant each POS is best suited for

- Key takeaways

In addition to reviews of each provider, we've also included:

- A comparison chart that allows you to compare each system side by side

- A buyer's guide that highlights key considerations for decision makers

We know that no restaurant POS system is a one-size-fits-all solution—especially for multi-location operators—so you need all the information you can get in order to make an informed decision. We hope that with this guide to the best POS systems for multi-location restaurants, you'll find the answers to all your burning questions (and then some).

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TouchBistro

Overview

TouchBistro is an all-in-one POS and restaurant management system that enables operators to delight their guests, maximize profitability, and grow their businesses. Designed exclusively with restaurants in mind, TouchBistro provides the most essential front of house, back of house, and guest engagement solutions on one easy-to-use platform.

As the very first company to launch an iPad-based restaurant POS, TouchBistro has been a leader in the restaurant technology space for more than a decade and has become the POS of choice for thousands of single and multi-location restaurants. TouchBistro has even been featured as Gordon Ramsay's dedicated POS system on the hit show *Gordon Ramsay's 24 Hours to Hell and Back*.

Strengths

Running multiple restaurant locations is already complicated, which is why it's essential to use a POS system that makes things easier. TouchBistro does exactly that by bringing together everything you need to run all of your restaurants on one centralized, easy-to-use platform.

Unlike many other POS systems on the market, which rely on a complicated network of third-party integrations, TouchBistro offers in-house solutions for just about every aspect of restaurant management—from tableside ordering and menu management to reservations and gift cards.

Having all your essential tools accessible from one central system not only makes things easier from an operational perspective, but it also makes it easy to scale your business without complicating your tech stack. For instance, TouchBistro's menu management features allow you to create a menu once and share it with all your locations instantly for quick and easy setup from one centralized platform.

Best of all, TouchBistro has built all of its technology specifically for restaurateurs. TouchBistro exclusively provides solutions for restaurant businesses, which is why the company knows just how important it is to keep service moving at all times. With that in mind, TouchBistro has developed a unique, hybrid design and built-in offline mode that allows you to continue taking/closing orders, sending orders to the KDS, and taking offline payments, even when the internet is down. This level of offline functionality is not possible with many other POS systems, making it one of TouchBistro's biggest strengths and a major plus for multi-location operators who can't afford to come running every time the internet cuts out.

Beyond its robust product suite and hybrid architecture, it's also worth noting that TouchBistro offers one of the most user-friendly POS systems on the market. As mentioned, TouchBistro was built exclusively for restaurateurs by restaurant industry veterans. Consequently, the platform features a sleek, yet simple interface that is incredibly easy to learn and navigate on a day-to-day basis. For multi-location operators with dozens or even hundreds of employees, a POS that is easy to use is essential because it speeds up the onboarding and training process for new staff, while also ensuring a smooth transition process for existing staff.

Weaknesses

While TouchBistro boasts an extensive list of POS features and in-house add-on solutions, the platform supports a relatively small list of third-party integrations. Unlike some POS providers that offer integrations with dozens of different partners, TouchBistro supports integrations for a much more curated list of partners. For some multi-location operators—particularly national or international chains—fewer integration partners can be a challenge because it limits the number of tools that can be integrated with the POS. However, for most restaurant groups and smaller chains, TouchBistro's integrations with best-in-class partners like 7shifts and Deliverect should more than cover their needs.

National or international chains may also find TouchBistro somewhat limiting due to its limited enterprise functionalities. While TouchBistro is well equipped for growing multi-location businesses, it does not offer the level of customization and flexibility that restaurants with hundreds of locations will require.

Payments

When it comes to choosing a new POS system, no review would be complete without evaluating the system's payment processing options. And in the case of TouchBistro, there are some key differentiators that make it stand out from other POS providers on the market.

Perhaps the biggest difference between TouchBistro and other providers is that TouchBistro's integrated payment processing solution is powered by a trusted financial institution. This means you enjoy a fully integrated payment processing solution for your restaurant, backed by best-in-class payment processing technology, advanced security, and the support of dedicated payments experts.
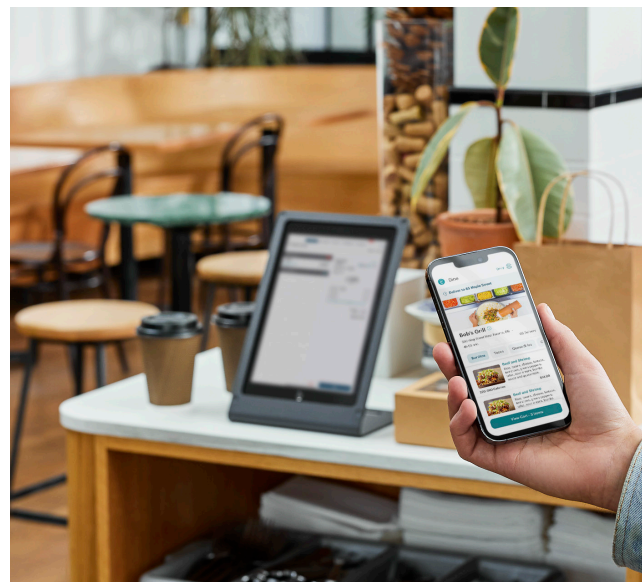
Another major benefit of TouchBistro payments is the direct integration with the POS, which is a huge plus for multi-location operators processing hundreds to thousands of payments each day. Thanks to this integrated workflow, the POS speaks directly to the payment terminals, allowing for a seamless flow of data and eliminating the need for manual entry. This direct integration reduces the risk of order errors (and subsequent chargebacks), while also ensuring a quick and easy payment process for customers.

Not only does TouchBistro Payments offer a seamless payment processing solution with multiple use cases, but it also offers some of the most competitive rates on the market. This means you can rest easy knowing you won't face any surprises on your monthly bill.

Pricing

TouchBistro is also an outlier in the POS space because of its pricing structure. TouchBistro offers a la carte pricing, rather than bundles, so you can choose the solutions that best fit your business needs. This flexible pricing model helps ensure you end up with all of the tech you need, and nothing you don't.

The Best POS For:
Growing Multi-Location Restaurants

With features specifically built to grow with your restaurant, TouchBistro is the best all-around solution for multi-location restaurants that are looking to maximize profits and scale operations. Not only does TouchBistro offer in-house solutions for the front of house, back of house, and guest engagement, but the system's reliable hybrid design and user-friendly software also make it a versatile choice for virtually any venue type—from quick service to fine dining.

And while TouchBistro can easily support restaurants with dozens of locations, it does lack some of the enterprise functionality that national and international chains may require. For restaurants in need of a high level of customization, a more bespoke POS system with built-in flexibility may be a better fit.

Ready to get started with TouchBistro?

Book a Demo

Key Takeaways
TouchBistro

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- An all-in-one POS and restaurant management system designed exclusively for restaurants

- A hybrid system that keeps working even without an internet connection

- Integrated payments with competitive pricing and the backing of a trusted institution

- 24/7, year-round technical support from a North America-based support team

- Best for multi-location restaurants that are growing and scaling

NCR Aloha

Overview

The Aloha POS has been around for quite some time and originally established a reputation as one of the top legacy POS systems on the market. Then, in 2011, Aloha's parent company Radiant Systems was acquired by NCR Corporation, (previously known as National Cash Register). Since then, NCR has made an effort to modernize the Aloha POS to compete with newer cloud-based POS solutions. Today, NCR Aloha is a popular option for major enterprise restaurant chains such as Firehouse Subs, Chipotle, and Starbucks.

Strengths

There's no doubt that Aloha's biggest strength is its POS features. The Aloha POS was designed for enterprise, which means that Aloha's features come with all the bells and whistles that major restaurant brands require, and can even be customized to fit your exact needs. Aloha's inventory management tools for multi-location restaurants is a particular standout, with the option to see store-by-store inventory comparisons, and tools for consolidated ordering and prep. Beyond its features, Aloha also comes out on top when it comes to its regional availability, which is far more extensive than just about any other POS provider. According to NCR, the Aloha POS is used in more than 180 countries around the world, which means you can find it just about anywhere. This is a major plus for any global restaurant brand looking to roll out one POS system across multiple international locations and wants the peace of mind of global support.

Weaknesses

While Aloha's features are certainly one of its biggest strengths, the downside is that all those bells and whistles come with a high price tag. Though it can be tricky to pin down Aloha's exact pricing, the system is made for enterprise, which means that it's not intended to be a cost-effective option, even for most multi-location restaurants. Not to mention some of Aloha's enterprise hardware can be pricey to repair or replace if the devices become outdated, and impossible to resell if you decide to change POS providers down the line.

Even if the price is not an issue, it's also important to consider the user experience, and the Aloha POS is not known for being the most user-friendly system on the market. In part, the system is more complicated simply because it has so many advanced features. However, some of the challenges of using the system also come down to the fact that Aloha primarily runs on Windows and Android operating systems, which come with a steeper learning curve than Apple's iOS software.

If your restaurant staff is already familiar with Aloha or have used this particular POS system in the past, the complicated user interface won't be too much of an issue. However, if you have a team that is more familiar with Apple devices, it may make the training process difficult and more time-consuming. In short, Aloha is not a simple plug-and-play system, so it's worth taking this into consideration if you operate a growing restaurant business that's constantly hiring and training new staff.

Another important consideration is Aloha's parent company NCR. NCR is an enormous company that has a long history of selling legacy POS systems. Because of this history and the sheer size of the company, ongoing research and development is often slow, which means it can take years for new products or features to get released. If you're a multi-location restaurant operator—especially one trying to scale quickly—this lack of ongoing improvement can potentially cost your business its competitive edge.

Payments

As mentioned, Aloha is owned by NCR, which is a leader in banking, ecommerce, and payments. As a result, NCR strongly encourages Aloha POS customers to use the brand's in-house integrated payment processing solution, NCR Merchant Solutions. And while it is possible to change processors, the company makes it quite difficult, as payments revenue is integral to the NCR corporation's bottom line.

Even though most Aloha users are encouraged to use the company's in-house payment processor, NCR does not reveal its payment processing rates or what payment processing pricing model it uses. Ultimately, this means you'll have to jump through a few extra hoops to get a reasonable idea of what payment processing fees will look like at each of your venues.

Pricing

Unfortunately, there is also a lack of transparency when it comes to pricing for NCR Aloha's software and hardware. NCR does not make any pricing information available publicly on its website, which means you must contact the company directly in order to get a quote for the Aloha POS system.

The idea behind this model is that without fixed pricing packages, NCR can provide each restaurant with a custom rate for its specific POS setup. However, even with a custom rate, keep in mind that the Aloha POS is designed for enterprise, so you should expect it to come with a price tag to match.

The Best POS For:
Global Restaurant Chains and Franchises

The Aloha POS is one of the most feature-rich systems on the market, making it an excellent option for enterprise restaurant chains and franchises like Starbucks and Chipotle. The POS system is especially valuable for restaurant brands with a global footprint, as NCR provides customer and technical support on an international scale.

Of course, like any enterprise system, the Aloha POS does not come cheap. Though Aloha is quite secretive about its pricing, it's widely known to be one of the most expensive POS systems on the market. And when you factor in the added cost of maintaining Aloha's proprietary hardware, cost can quickly become a deal-breaker for most restaurants, especially smaller multi-location businesses.

Key Takeaways
NCR Aloha

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- Robust, highly technical features with customizable enterprise solutions

- Legacy POS solution with slow-moving product development

- In-house payment processing available through NCR, but little transparency when it comes to payment processing fees

- Proprietary hardware and pricey monthly software fees

- Best for international restaurant chains and franchises with very specialized needs

Oracle MICROS

Overview

The MICROS POS (formally known as the Oracle MICROS Simphony POS system), was originally created back in the 1970s as a high-tech alternative to the cash register. MICROS was eventually purchased by Oracle Corporation, which has augmented the older legacy POS system with cloud capabilities. The MICROS POS is now a popular choice for well established, global restaurant chains like Outback Steakhouse, Quiznos, and McDonald's, as well as other venue types such as stadiums, hotels, airports, cruise ships, and more.

Strengths

When it comes to features, the MICROS POS checks just about every box. Because MICROS was designed for enterprise businesses, the POS system's core features are extremely robust and go a bit beyond what you would get with other restaurant POS systems. For instance, MICROS' inventory software not only helps you track stock levels, but it also connects you with vendors and suppliers, so you can manage everything in one place. MICROS' reporting features are also advanced enough that you can view, manage, and analyze hundreds of locations at once, from any device.

And if there are features you need that the MICROS POS is not equipped with, you can fill in any gaps by choosing from more than 85 different third-party integration partners—all available from the Oracle Cloud Marketplace. This includes a number of regionally-specific partners that can carry out niche functions in different international markets. For instance, if you have locations in Scandinavia, you can use the Swedish loyalty solution Pej. And if you have locations in China, you can use the self-serve kiosk integration by Hangzhou GreenCloud Software Co. to take contactless orders and payments.

Weaknesses

While the MICROS POS offers an incredible number of features for food and beverage businesses, it's worth noting that the MICROS POS is not designed exclusively for restaurants. In fact, the MICROS POS is also used for stadiums, arenas, airports, train stations, cruise ships, casinos, and a host of other venue types.

While it may seem like a plus that the MICROS POS can support so many different venue types, it's actually a drawback for most operators. The majority of restaurants—aside from some international chains and franchises— don't actually need a POS system that's also equipped with niche stadium and casino capabilities. In fact, the sheer number of features available through the MICROS POS system actually makes the system quite complicated and more difficult for staff to carry out basic tasks on a day-to-day basis. Not to mention, a system this robust and powerful also comes with a pretty big price tag for a laundry list of features that most restaurateurs will never actually use.

And speaking of price, this is another major drawback of the MICROS POS. Oracle isn't very transparent with its pricing and promises a custom quote for each customer. However, the MICROS POS is designed for major global restaurant brands, which means that you should expect a major price tag to match. Additionally, the MICROS POS system also requires the purchase of proprietary hardware, which means you have to consider the cost of outfitting all your locations with entirely new POS terminals and other hardware.

Lastly, there is the issue of the user experience. MICROS began as a legacy POS system, which means it's modeled on the old, hardwired POS systems that were common in the 1990s and early 2000s. Though Oracle has given its POS system a major update to compete with newer, cloud-based solutions, many operators will still find the MICROS POS interface and user experience to be largely outdated. Not only is the setup process more complicated than most cloud POS systems, but it also

requires more training. And if you're trying to train dozens, or even hundreds, of staff on your POS, the last thing you need is complicated, tricky-to-navigate software slowing you down.

Payments

Unlike many other POS providers, Oracle does offer some flexibility when it comes to payment processing. In the past, Oracle has worked with Heartland Payment Systems to create a seamless integration between its credit card processing and the MICROS POS.

However, MICROS doesn't currently require customers to use any one particular processor. This means that you have the freedom to choose from a wide variety of integrated payment processing partners and can shop around to find the best rate for your business.

Pricing

As mentioned, Oracle is not very transparent when it comes to its pricing and requires anyone interested in the MICROS POS system to call in to receive a custom quote. The problem with this process is that restaurateurs have no baseline to decide whether Oracle will be in their price range in the first place. This means that many will call in only to find out that the POS system is way out of their budget. And for busy multi-location operators, time is money.

Even if the MICROS POS does fit your budget, it's worth considering the added expenses that might appear down the line. Both the MICROS POS software and hardware are based on older technology, which requires a lot of costly maintenance. In fact, pricing for the MICROS POS includes added costs associated with software updates, support, and hosting. If you operate multiple restaurants, it's worth considering that you could be spending a lot of extra money each month simply maintaining the POS system at each of your venues.

The Best POS For:
Global Hospitality Brands

As one of the more powerful systems on the market, there's no question that the MICROS POS is a great option for well established, global restaurant chains with hundreds, if not thousands, of locations around the world. The MICROS POS not only comes with a robust feature set, but also extensive add-ons and integrations. Not to mention, the system also supports multiple languages and currencies, which is something that's essential to any global enterprise.

Of course, most restaurant operations don't actually need a system this powerful. Most single and multi-location operators will find that MICROS' robust features are more than they need to run their operation, and the price tag may be too high for features they won't actually end up using. Not to mention, the time and expense of maintaining a system this comprehensive is an added burden for most restaurateurs.

Key Takeaways
Oracle MICROS
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- Robust, enterprise POS features and add-on solutions

- Runs on a Windows operating system and uses proprietary Oracle MICROS tablets

- Lengthy and complicated setup process

- Expensive system with high hardware, software, and maintenance costs

- Best for global hospitality brands, such as international restaurant chains and franchises

Toast

Overview

Toast is one of the most widely used cloud-based POS systems for restaurants in the U.S., and a handful of other countries. Unlike many other providers, Toast's all-in-one POS system is built on the Android operating system and requires the use of proprietary Android technology. Beyond its core POS system, Toast also offers an integrated payments solution, which has become a key area of focus since the company went public in September of 2021.

Strengths

Toast bills itself as an all-in-one system, which means the company offers a fairly robust product suite. These products cover almost every aspect of restaurant operations, from the back office to the front of house. Toast also provides some unique POS features for niche restaurant concepts, such as pizzerias and hotel restaurants.

As extensive as Toast's features are, it's worth noting that the majority of these products are only available in the U.S., which means restaurants in Canada and other countries will not have access to certain add-on solutions like online ordering, or the brand's multi-location management features—something to take note of if you're not based in the U.S. or plan to expand outside of the U.S.

However, if there are any gaps in the Toast system due to regional availability, you can often find a third-party integration to fulfill that function. Toast works with dozens of best-in-class partners to deliver specialized solutions for restaurants, and even allows operators to build and customize their integrations using Toast APIs. For multi-location restaurant owners—especially those who operate more niche concepts—access to such a wide range of integrations allows for a more bespoke POS setup.

Weaknesses

According to the 2023 State of Restaurants Reports, operators cited a lack of transparency as their number one frustration with payment processors. And on this front, Toast is a major offender. In June of 2023, Toast announced it would be introducing a 99-cent fee paid by guests on orders of $10 or higher placed through Toast's online ordering channels. This charge was implemented as a hidden "junk" fee on consumers' bills, which many operators viewed as sneaky and underhanded. And while Toast later reversed course on its decision, it's clear that the company has no qualms about adjusting its payment processing terms on a dime, simply to squeeze a little more out of restaurants and their customers. For multi-location operators, this is an important consideration as these kinds of changes can have a massive impact.

Another major drawback to Toast is that the system runs on an Android operating system. Though Android offers a level of flexibility and customization that multi-location operators may appreciate, Android POS systems are less common in the restaurant industry because they come with a steep learning curve

and updates are often fragmented due to the variances in available hardware. Additionally, Android systems are the primary target of malware, meaning they are at a higher risk of security breaches—something that is an even bigger concern for restaurateurs with multiple venues.

Toast's system also requires the use of proprietary Android hardware. Proprietary hardware is a challenge for many multi-location restaurant operators because the supply chain is less secure than that of a major hardware supplier like Apple. As a result, fixing and replacing proprietary Android hardware can be extremely time consuming, and delays are not uncommon.

But perhaps an even bigger drawback is the cost of implementing proprietary hardware in the first place. Purchasing hardware that can only be used with Toast's software requires you to make a major upfront investment and purchase an entirely new set of Android hardware for all your restaurants. And then if you choose to switch POS providers down the line, you will not be able to use that hardware with other POS software.

Lastly, there is the issue of Toast's customer support. Though Toast does offer 24/7

support, the level of support customers receive may not be entirely consistent. The rapid growth that led up to Toast's IPO means the company's support resources have been tested in recent years and Toast has accumulated a number of [complaints to the Better Business Bureau](#). Though this may not be an issue for all operators, multi-location restaurateurs should consider just how important reliable, high-quality support is to their business needs.

Payments

Toast offers integrated payments with all of its POS packages, which means you enjoy a direct integration between your POS and payment processor. However, Toast is not compatible with any other payment processors, so you are essentially required to Toast Payments if you want to use the Toast POS. Though this may not be an issue for most operators, it's worth taking into consideration when evaluating Toast as a potential POS and payments partner.

As mentioned, it's also worth considering that Toast has a reputation for making major changes to its payments pricing structure – as evidenced by its introduction of the 99-cent fee – with little regard for the impact on operators.

Pricing

While Toast does not offer a ton of flexibility when it comes to payments, you do have a bit of choice when it comes to software pricing. Toast offers both bundles and a la carte pricing options. This means you can choose a bundle that gives you access to several solutions for one monthly software fee, or you can choose to build your own bundle and mix-and-match various solutions from the Toast product suite.

The Best POS For:
Niche Restaurant Concepts

With its Android technology, extensive third-party partnerships, and open API, the Toast POS is particularly well suited to niche restaurant concepts in need of a more bespoke and flexible solution. For instance, operators of multi-location pizzerias, ice cream shops, and even hotel restaurants will all benefit from the option to customize their POS and add the exact integrations needed for their specific restaurant concept.

But while Toast offers some big benefits for niche concepts, most growing multi-location restaurants will likely find that Toast's offering misses the mark. With its proprietary hardware requirements and higher payment processing fees, growing restaurant businesses that want to scale quickly may find their profit margins squeezed by all the added fees that come with using Toast.

Key Takeaways
Toast
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- A restaurant-specific POS solution

- Limited product availability in some regions

- Runs on an Android operating system and Toast's proprietary Android hardware

- Opaque payment processing terms

- Best for niche multi-location restaurant concepts in need of a more customized solution

Square for Restaurants

Overview

Square for Restaurants is a restaurant-specific solution from the popular mobile payment company Square. Like the company's other products, Square for Restaurants is designed for simplicity, combining an iOS-based POS system with Square's signature payment processing services. Though Square itself is available in many countries, Square for Restaurants is only available in the U.S., Canada, Ireland, and Spain.

Strengths

Square's biggest strength has always been—and continues to be—that its products are very easy to use and quick to learn. Square's POS setup consists of Apple iPads and proprietary hardware like the Square Terminal, which are all ready to use right out of the box. This hardware combo not only makes for a quick setup process, but the devices are also intuitive enough for virtually any staff member to pick up and learn. For most restaurant staff, this makes Square one of the more user-friendly POS options available.

Another unique benefit of using Square for Restaurants is that you gain access to some really valuable financial products. Square is first-and-foremost a payment processor, and as a result, the company has developed some unique products that help its customers tackle the financial side of running a business. For instance, Square Business allows you

to sync your payments, business banking accounts, and cash flow with your Square system. This means that when you take payments and bank through Square, everything is connected—you can watch sales flow directly into your bank account. Plus, you can more quickly and easily access funds for business purposes.

Additionally, using Square's payment processing solution automatically makes you eligible for Square Loans. These small business loans are customized based on your card sales through Square and you can repay them automatically with a percentage of your daily card sales through Square. In short, it's a very accessible funding option that can easily be managed alongside the rest of your restaurant operations—a perk for many operators.

Weaknesses

While Square's simple setup and user experience is one of its biggest strengths, the trade off is that you get a much more basic system with far less comprehensive features. For instance, Square offers no item/inventory cost reporting, no option to start a tab for customers, and no in-house reservations solution. Even if you spring for Square's brand-new Square for Franchises platform, you may still find yourself missing some crucial multi-location features because Square for Franchises has been built on GoParrot, which is merely a digital ordering and marketing platform Square [acquired in 2022](#)—not a dedicated multi-location management solution.

For small restaurant operations—Square's bread and butter—a more basic POS system like Square may be enough. However, multi-location operators may quickly feel constrained by the platform's limited feature set and even see their growth potential limited.

Part of the reason Square for Restaurants is more limited in its capabilities is

that the company's primary focus lies elsewhere. Retail makes up a significant portion of Square's customer base, alongside professional services like beauty salons, barbershops, and fitness studios. As a result, Square's resources are spread extremely thin across the organization and ongoing product development for restaurants is less extensive than you can expect from a restaurant-specific POS provider.

The other reason Square's attention is divided is because the company is laser focused on driving payments revenue. Everything from Square's pricing models to its terms of service have been designed with the sole purpose of growing the company's payment processing revenue. While this may seem to come with certain perks, such as lower software fees, operators are forced to give up pricing stability and payments flexibility in return—something that can leave operators feeling handcuffed to their POS provider.

Payments

As noted, Square's primary focus is driving payments revenue and this starts by requiring operators to use Square's in-house payment processing solution. Not only does this prevent operators from using their preferred payment processor, but it also forces them to pay some of the highest payment processing rates in the industry. And for multi-location operators processing hundreds to thousands of transactions per day, this can be a major expense.

Pricing

When it comes to pricing,
Square is generally seen as
one of the more affordable
options on the market. However,
if you're a multi-location
restaurant operator, you will
probably need to use the
Square for Franchises platform,
which is priced differently and
requires going through the
Square sales team in order
to secure a custom quote.

The Best POS For:
Small, Single-Location Restaurants

Square made a name for itself catering
to small business owners and it
continues to provide a great product
for anyone looking to start their
entrepreneurial journey. Square for
Restaurants is especially well suited to
small, single-location operations due
to its quick setup, easy onboarding
process, and intuitive technology.

However, Square's simplicity is
precisely the reason why multi-location
operators might find themselves
limited by the platform. Not only are
Square's core POS features more
basic than other POS systems on
the market, but its multi-location
management tools are also incredibly
new and have not yet benefited from
lengthy customer use and feedback.
And with Square's primary focus
on generating payments revenue,
ongoing developments may not be
as swift as operators would like.

Key Takeaways
Square for Restaurants

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- Not a restaurant-specific solution

- Quick setup and onboarding process

- More basic POS features and limited add-on solutions

- High payment processing fees

- Best for small, single-location venues like cafes and bakeries

Revel

Overview

Revel is an iPad-based POS system that's used across North America, and in a number of countries in Europe and Asia. Revel is best known for its robust POS features and its extensive add-on solutions for QSRs. The POS system is particularly popular among major fast food and fast casual chains in the U.S., including The Halal Guys and Fat Brands (the entity behind franchises like Fatburger and Round Table Pizza).

Strengths

Revel is used by some major fast food and fast casual brands, and that's largely because Revel offers an impressive range of QSR-friendly solutions. For instance, Revel offers a dedicated drive-thru solution, a self-service kiosk, and a customer-facing display—all of which are integrated directly with the POS. Not to mention, Revel also offers other products that are essential for major QSR brands, including an enterprise loyalty solution and a powerful CRM. All of these in-house add-on solutions make it easier to manage multi-location QSR brands from one platform, which is a major plus for any operator.

Revel's other major strength is its hardware and software setup. Unlike many of the other major multi-location POS systems, Revel runs on the iOS operating system and uses Apple iPads as its primary hardware. The biggest benefit of iOS is that it's a closed platform, meaning it's less virus-prone than Android systems and updates are rolled out seamlessly across devices. The user-experience is also much more intuitive with iOS, which is a major plus when you're rolling out a new system to dozens of staff members.

And, of course, there's the many benefits that come with using Apple hardware as well. Apple devices are some of the most technologically advanced solutions on the market and Apple is constantly innovating to make these products better. As a result, it means you enjoy cutting-edge hardware that only continues to get faster and more powerful. Not to mention, Apple products are incredibly easy to source, repair, and replace—if you use Revel and its Apple hardware, you won't be subject to the supply chain issues that plague many other POS companies that rely on proprietary hardware solutions.

Weaknesses

While the Revel POS certainly offers a lot of benefits for multi-location QSRs, one of the biggest downsides of the system is that it's not as beneficial for multi-location FSRs. Perhaps the biggest oversight is that Revel does not offer an in-house reservations solution. The only reservations feature that Revel does have is essentially its floor plan management feature, which can be used exclusively for table bookings and not online bookings. In other words, the product has incredibly limited use when it comes to reservations management. Plus, Revel does not even offer an integration with any other reservations software, which means there's no real solution available if you want to offer reservations at any of your venues.

This lack of investment in FSR-friendly solutions may be partially due to the fact that Revel's attention is split between restaurants and retail businesses. The lack of focus is best seen in Revel's recent signing of Buff City Soaps as a customer, which is now using the Revel POS at more than 200 retail locations. This major customer win for Revel was quickly followed by the debut of Revel Guard XT, which is an enterprise solution that allows for the close monitoring of all devices in a store or chain of stores. Both of these developments signal the company's increasing focus on the retail sector, which likely means less time and resources will be dedicated to restaurants as the company seeks to satisfy both sectors.

But perhaps the biggest drawback to the Revel POS is the high price tag. Revel is largely designed for enterprise, which means it comes with a price tag that generally only big name restaurant brands can afford. And not only are Revel's monthly fees already more expensive than most restaurant POS systems on the market, but you also need to account for the added cost of installation, specialized hardware, add-on services, integrated credit card processing, and more. All of these fees add up to make Revel one of the more costly restaurants POS solutions out there.

Payments

If you want to use the Revel POS system, you also need to use the company's integrated payment processing solution, Revel Advantage. While this may not be a problem for most operators, the tricky part is that Revel also requires a three-year-long commitment to using Revel Advantage.

Three years is a long time in the restaurant industry, especially if you're operating a growing multi-location business. This major upfront commitment can create a somewhat restrictive situation for operators, because you could end up stuck with a payment processor that doesn't meet your changing needs.

Pricing

As noted, Revel is one of the more expensive POS solutions on the market and you can only secure a reasonably monthly fee if you're willing to make the three-year commitment to use Revel Advantage for payment processing— something that may make sense for established restaurant brands, but not for growing multi-location operations.

The Best POS For:
Established Multi-Location QSR Chains

With big names like Fatburger, Cinnabon, and Auntie Anne's using Revel, it's clear that the Revel POS is a popular choice among big-name QSR businesses with locations that span the country. QSR brands of this size will especially benefit from Revel's robust QSR solutions, including drive-thru technology and a dedicated self-service kiosk solution.

However, FSR brands are likely to find themselves restricted by Revel's limited FSR capabilities, including its total lack of any in-house or integrated reservations solution. Not to mention, smaller QSR and FSR brands alike are likely to find that Revel's expensive software, restrictive contracts, and expensive payment processing fees may also make the solution a poor fit for growing multi-location businesses that need the free cash flow and flexibility to grow and scale quickly.

Key Takeaways
Revel
–

- Runs on an iOS operating system and Apple hardware

- Extensive in-house solutions for QSRs, including a drive-thru system

- Not a restaurant-specific solution

- High fees for integrated payment processing and inflexible, long-term contracts

- Best for established QSR chains

When it comes to choosing a POS system, **ease of use, affordability, and reliability** are the top 3 considerations for today's restaurateurs.

Compare Your Options

	TouchBistro	NCR Aloha	Oracle MICROS
POS System	Hybrid cloud and POS-based	Locally-installed with a cloud-based app	Locally-installed with a cloud-based app
Availability	U.S., CA, and more	U.S., CA, and more	Worldwide
Operating System	iOS	**Desktop:** Windows and Android **Mobile:** iOS and Android	Windows
Hardware	iPads	NCR Orderman and NCR 7779 Tablet, or iPad or iPhone	Proprietary Oracle MICROS tablets

Core POS Features

	TouchBistro	NCR Aloha	Oracle MICROS
Menu Management	✅	✅	✅
Staff Management	✅	✅	✅
Inventory Management	✅ (Add-on)	✅	✅
Floor Plan Management	✅	✅	✅
Tableside Ordering	✅	✅	✅
Reporting	✅	✅	✅
1:1 Onboarding	✅	✅	N/A
Customer Support	24/7/365	8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. (CST)	24/7/365

Multi-Location Management Features

	TouchBistro	NCR Aloha	Oracle MICROS
Menu Management	✅	✅	✅
Staff Management	✅	❌	✅
Inventory Management	✅	✅	✅
Payroll	❌	✅ (Add-on)	❌
Roll-Up Reporting	✅	✅	✅
Custom Reporting	❌	✅	✅

Add-On Features

	TouchBistro	NCR Aloha	Oracle MICROS
Integrated Payments	✅	✅	❌
Online Ordering	✅	✅	✅
Integrated Delivery	✅	✅	✅
Inventory & Back Office Management	✅	✅	✅
Integrated Reservations	✅	❌	✅
Gift Cards	✅	✅	✅
Marketing	✅	✅	✅
Loyalty and Customer Relationship Management	✅	✅	✅
Self-Serve Kiosks	❌	✅	✅
Kitchen Display System	✅	✅	✅
Customer Facing Display	✅	✅	✅
Digital Menu Board	❌	✅	✅

	Toast	Square for Restaurants	Revel
POS System	Cloud-based	Cloud-based	Hybrid cloud and POS-based
Availability	U.S., CA, U.K., Ireland	U.S., CA, Ireland, Spain	U.S., CA, U.K., AU, SG, HK, SA, KW, U.A.E., and more
Operating System	Android	iOS	iOS
Hardware	Proprietary Android tablets	iPads	iPads

Core POS Features

	Toast	Square for Restaurants	Revel
Menu Management	✅	✅	✅
Staff Management	✅	✅	✅
Inventory Management	✅	✅ (Limited)	✅
Floor Plan Management	✅	✅	✅
Tableside Ordering	✅	✅	✅
Reporting	✅	✅	✅
1:1 Onboarding	✅	✅	✅
Customer Support	24/7/365	24/7 (with Plus and Premium plans)	24/7/365

Multi-Location Management Features

	Toast	Square for Restaurants	Revel
Menu Management	✅	✅	✅
Staff Management	✅ (Add-on)	✅ (Add-on)	✅ (Limited)
Inventory Management	✅	❌	✅
Payroll	✅	✅	❌
Roll-Up Reporting	✅	❌	✅
Custom Reporting	✅	✅	❌

Add-On Features

	Toast	Square for Restaurants	Revel
Integrated Payments	✅	✅	✅
Online Ordering	✅	✅	✅
Integrated Delivery	✅	✅	✅
Inventory & Back Office Management	✅	❌	❌
Integrated Reservations	✅	❌	❌
Gift Cards	✅	✅	✅
Marketing	✅	✅	❌
Loyalty and Customer Relationship Management	✅	✅	✅
Self-Serve Kiosks	✅	❌	✅
Kitchen Display System	✅	✅	✅
Customer Facing Display	✅	✅	✅
Digital Menu Board	❌	❌	✅

Integration Partners	TouchBistro	NCR Aloha	Oracle MICROS
Online Ordering and Delivery	✓	✓	✓
Reservations	✗ (In-house solution)	✓	✓
Customer Relationship Management and Loyalty	✗ (In-house solution)	✓	✓
Staff Management, HR, and Payroll	✓	✓	✓
Inventory Management	✓	✓	✓
Accounting	✓	✓	✗ (In-house solution)
Reporting and Analytics	✓	✓	✓
Ecommerce	✗	✓	✗

Payments

	TouchBistro	NCR Aloha	Oracle MICROS
Payments Pricing Model	Cost plus (interchange plus) pricing	Not publicly available	Varies based on payment processor
Payment Processing Fees	TouchBistro Payments (U.S. only): Interchange + processing fee Integrated Payments for Online Ordering: 2.9% + $0.30/transaction (CAD) Competitive card-not-present processing fees (U.S.)	Not publicly available	Varies based on payment processor

Pricing

	TouchBistro	NCR Aloha	Oracle MICROS
Software Pricing	A la carte	Pricing only available with quote	Pricing only available with quote

Integration Partners	Toast	Square for Restaurants	Revel
Online Ordering and Delivery	✅	✅	✅
Reservations	✅	✅	❌
Customer Relationship Management and Loyalty	✅	✅	✅
Staff Management, HR, and Payroll	✅	✅	✅
Inventory Management	✅	✅	✅
Accounting	✅	✅	✅
Reporting and Analytics	✅	✅	✅
Ecommerce	❌	✅	✅

Payments

	Toast	Square for Restaurants	Revel
Payments Pricing Model	Fixed rate and cost plus (interchange plus) pricing	Fixed rate pricing	Fixed rate pricing
Payment Processing Fees	**Toast Payments:** Fees vary based on software plan	**Square Payments:** 2.6% + $0.10/transaction (swiped) 3.5% + $0.15/transaction (key-in) 2.9% + $0.30/transaction (card-not-present—online ordering)	**Revel Advantage:** 2.49% + $0.15/transaction **3rd Party Payments:** Pricing varies based on partner chosen

Pricing

	Toast	Square for Restaurants	Revel
Software Pricing	Tiered	Tiered	A la carte

Buyer's Guide

To ensure you end up with the perfect POS system for your multi-location restaurant, make sure to consider the following before you pull the trigger:

What's your budget?

Don't just budget for monthly software fees. Think about all of the costs involved in purchasing a new restaurant POS, including set up, installation, payment processing, and all the necessary hardware. This is an especially important consideration if you have to purchase brand-new, proprietary hardware for all of your locations—a major upfront expense.

Are you quick service, full service, or something else?

Different POS systems work better for different types of restaurants. Whether you're a fine dining restaurant or a brewery and bottle shop, the type of business you run will dictate the features you need, your hardware setup, and more.
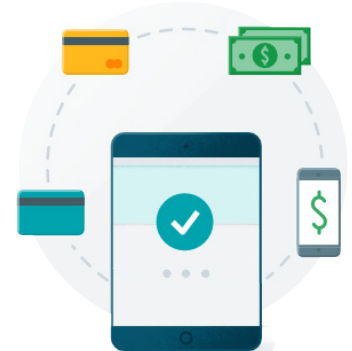
What are your payment processing needs?

Not every POS system will integrate with every payment processor. Make sure you understand which processors work with the POS system you're purchasing. And if you're using a provider's integrated payments solution, make sure you know how the fees are structured and the exact terms of the contract.

What can you expect in terms of implementation, customer support, and ROI?

Beyond the nuts and bolts, you should consider the people behind the POS system you're buying and what you can expect in terms of support. Consider not only where the support team is located, but also what hours they are available. You don't work 9 to 5 so you need a support team that will be there at all hours.

ROI is also important because you should be thinking of your POS system as a way to streamline and optimize operations in a way that will ultimately have a measurable impact on your restaurant's bottom line. Multi-location operators have to account for a lot of different expenses, so you need to make sure your POS system won't put you in the red each month.

What are your long-term business goals?

Your POS system should not only support your current needs, but also your future goals. Consider your long-term business plan and make sure you're choosing a POS that will be able to scale with you.

It's also worth considering your plans for expansion. Launching an international brand means looking for a POS system that can support your global ambitions, while a more basic POS may be all you need for regional expansion.

Why Choose TouchBistro?

TouchBistro is so much more than a point of sale (POS). TouchBistro is an all-in-one POS and restaurant management system that enables operators to take care of their guests and grow their businesses.

Designed exclusively with restaurant and hospitality businesses in mind, TouchBistro provides the most essential front of house, back of house, and guest engagement solutions on one easy-to-use platform.

16,000+
restaurants powered

100+
countries

$14 BILLION
processed annually
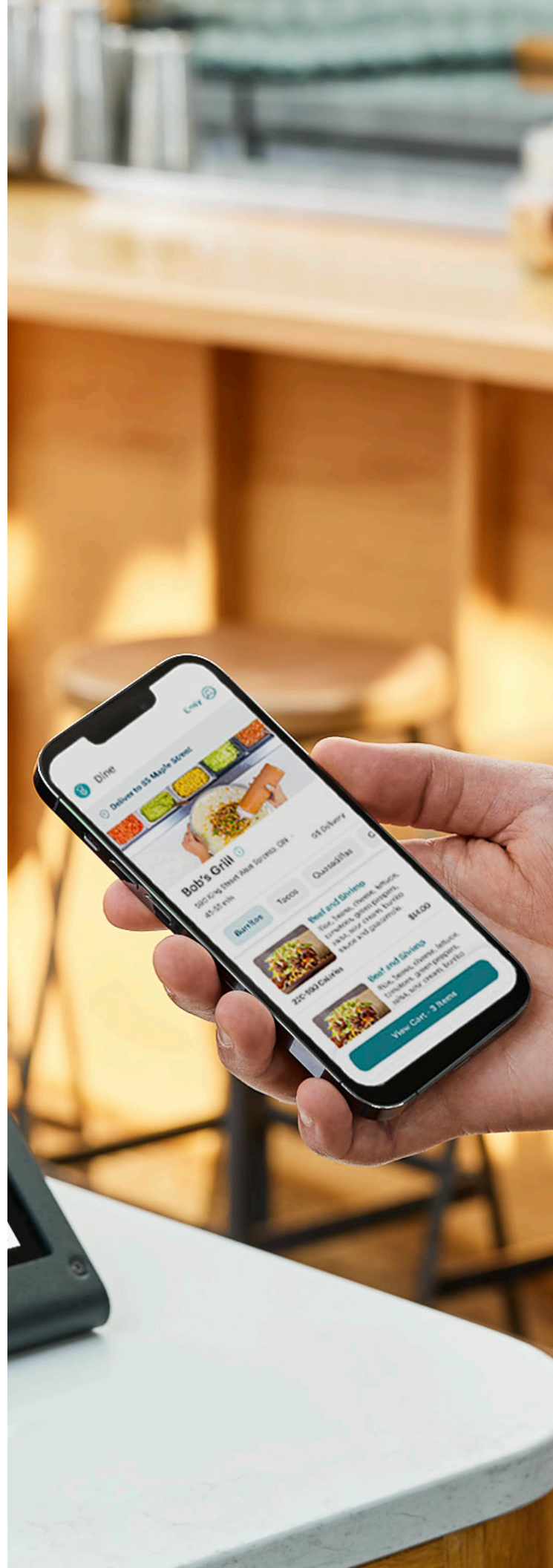
Why Restaurants Love TouchBistro

Expert and Peer-Recommended

TouchBistro is consistently rated 4.5+ stars out of 5 by G2, Merchant Maverick, Capterra, and more.

Real-Time Cloud Reporting

Equipped with more than 50 cloud-based reports, TouchBistro gives you instant access to the insights you need.

Zero Downtime

Our offline mode allows your devices to continue talking to each other, even when your internet goes down, so service is never interrupted.

Round-the-Clock Support

Get up and running quickly with our one-box POS solution and enjoy the peace of mind of 24/7 locally-based support, available 365 days of the year.

"I've worked in the industry for many years, with countless other POS systems, but TouchBistro beats them all. The constant improvements and great customer support make them come out on top."

Christopher Pittsley
Owner
Salsa Salsa Smithtown
Kings Park, NY

Want to see TouchBistro in action?

Book a Demo