

To-Go: Capitalizing on the 'Golden Child' of the Foodservice Industry

The state of to-go and the hottest equipment innovations to support it

Rising to meet the demand

Carry-out, curbside, delivery, pick-up, drive-thru — there's hardly a foodservice establishment that isn't offering to-go dining options in one format or another. Even before the pandemic turbocharged the upward climb of these offerings, 60% of restaurant occasions were already happening off-premises.[1] And now, as foodservice operators work even harder to keep labor costs down and uphold sanitation and social distancing practices, to-go is quickly setting in as the "golden child" of consumer dining behaviors.

So what are foodservice operators to do? How can businesses capitalize on this crowd favorite by delivering the kind of to-go experience that keeps hungry customers coming back again and again?

In this guide, we'll discuss the long-term outlook for to-go as a service offering, share success factors — and dish on the hottest to-go equipment solutions on the market.

What we'll cover

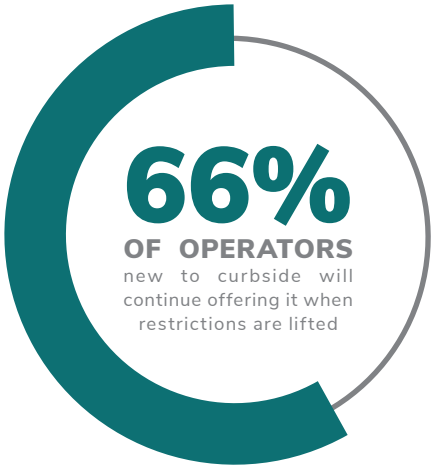
- The outlook of to-go
- Success factors
- Bloopers and missteps
- Hot innovations

1. National Restaurant Association and Technomic, Harnessing Technology to Drive Off-Premises Sales, October 2019, www.restaurant.org/off-premises-report.

Is to-go here to stay or just a fleeting trend?

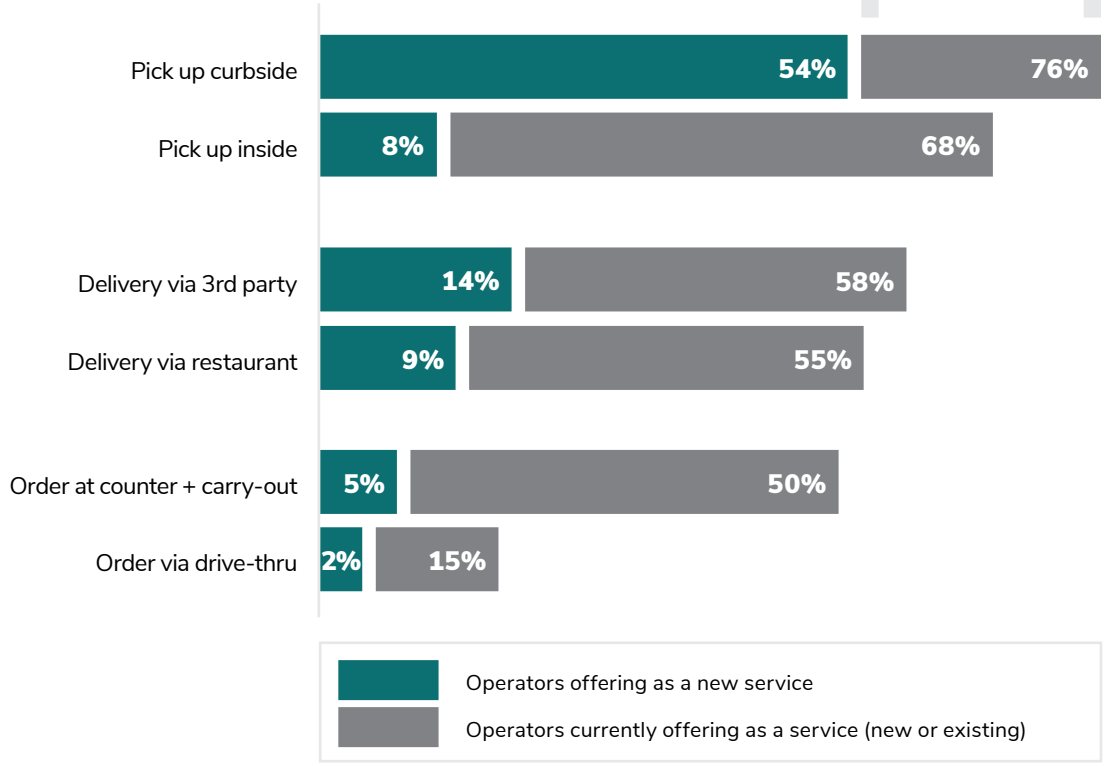
With heightened concerns around sanitation and social distancing, it's no surprise that the pandemic has increased consumer appetites for off-premise dining. But is this boost in the popularity of to-go formats short-lived?

Restaurant operators don't think so. According to a May 2020 Datassential report, 66% of operators that hadn't provided curbside services in the past, but do now, plan to continue offering them even after COVID-19 is no longer a concern.[2] This is not only a testament to the present-day safety benefits of to-go services like curbside pick-up, but also the long-term success that to-go as a category is projected to afford operators.



To-go or to-stay? That is the question.

While many types of to-go, like traditional pick-up and delivery, have been popular for quite some time, it's clear that even the newest to-go formats are here to stay.



2. Datassential, One Table: Operator Insights and the Path Forward, May 2020, https://datassential.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Datassential-ONE-TABLE-Operator-Report-F.pdf

The sticking power of off-premise

Of course if demand is there, operators aren't going to cut to-go services. And yes, COVID-19 gave off-premise dining a pretty aggressive push forward. However, pandemic or not, consumers enjoy the convenience and ease of ordering out. Many like the comfort of traditional cuisine, and still others love that many establishments are now offering creative and innovative twists on old menus.

And even after COVID-19 is a thing of the past, momentum will continue *because* of COVID. After being stuck at home for so long, people that weren't previously "to-go people" have seen (and tasted) the perks of it, and will make ordering out a more steady part of their routines. Late Gen Xers and baby boomers have overcome their hurdles with online or app ordering, and are now comfortable with the process and technology. And let's face it, consumers will continue to expect more in terms of sanitation, health protocols, and contactless solutions — all which bode well for the future and longevity of to-go.





SANITATION



HEALTH PROTOCOLS



CONTACTLESS SOLUTIONS

All to-go offerings are not created equal

Simply offering to-go services doesn’t guarantee success. In fact, with more restaurants and non-traditional takeout establishments entering the to-go space, competition is only becoming more fierce. Consumers expect more. They want the full package, the whole enchilada, the total nine yards. In other words, they want it all — and it’s up to operators to deliver. But how?

The making of a successful to-go offering

Every successful to-go offering looks a little different. And in fact, it’s often the uniqueness of an offering that gives it the competitive advantage. Creativity and uniqueness aside, every single operation must check the box on what we call the “To-Go 10” in order to have a fighting chance at making a name for themselves in the off-premise space.



To-Go 10

1. Safety
2. Sanitation
3. No/low touch
4. Convenience
5. Speed
6. Accuracy
7. Taste
8. Temperature
9. Security
10. Efficiency

Delivering on a successful to-go offering

Delivering on all of the elements needed for a successful to-go offering is easier said than done. In a May 2020 consumer survey, the majority (67%) of respondents indicated that they had less than ideal to-go experiences.[3] Grievances varied, but included common issues like long wait times, incorrect orders, compromised food, crowded pick-up areas, excessive contact, and more.

So, what's the solution? There are many steps restaurants can take to improve their to-go offering. For example, putting the right partners, an effective marketing plan, trusted staff, proper protocols, and strong management in place is necessary. However, to succeed, foodservice professionals need to look at the big picture and develop an off-premise strategy that considers every aspect of the operation and how these elements work together to fuel a successful to-go offering.

360-degree planning

A successful off-premise strategy looks at all areas of the operation, including the equipment that's needed to succeed.


Food prep


Staffing


Training


Packaging


Equipment


Inventory planning

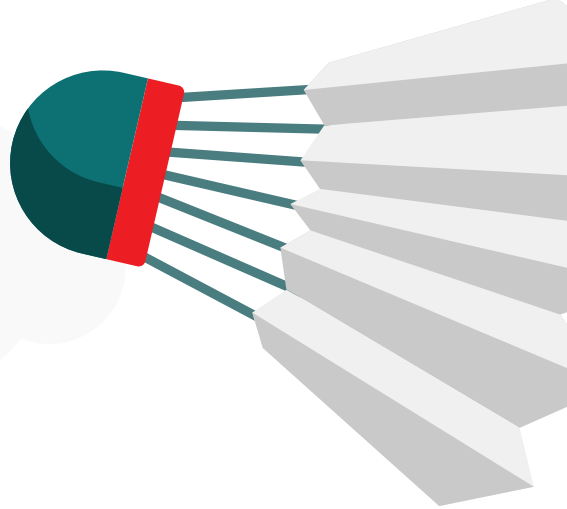

Ordering technology


Payment solutions


Automation and efficiency


Transportation and delivery

3. Datassential, One Table: Consumer Insights and the Path Forward, May 2020, https://datassential.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Datassential-ONE-TABLE-Consumer-Report-F.pdf



What do badminton players and foodservice operators have in common?

They both serve?!?! Wah wah — Good guess, but that's not exactly where we were going.

A badminton player can't compete well (or at all) without a racket and one or two of those bouncy, feathered birdies. Like badminton players, foodservice operators need the right equipment to succeed.

Top to-go equipment bloopers

Foodservice pros are a savvy bunch. They have a true gift when it comes to improvising, and they're the first ones to find creative ways to make existing equipment (or lack of equipment) work for a variety of purposes. With that said, there are a lot of common practices operators are adopting that can jeopardize their ability to deliver on the To-Go 10 and give customers a truly remarkable experience.

COMMON PRACTICE	WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
Holding hot orders in ambient conditions (i.e., near the register)	Promotes bacteria growth and impacts the integrity of the food
Stuffing orders in already overcrowded holding cabinets because there's no equipment dedicated for to-go	Leads to operational inefficiencies, lost or misplaced orders, and creates a high-touch environment for staff, delivery people and customers
Using equipment with the wrong kind of heat (i.e., humidified cabinets for packaged foods like pizza)	Results in soggy food and packaging that's unappetizing and not as tasty *(although packaging is never tasty!)*
Relying on back-of-house equipment even if it's inconveniently located	Feeds inefficient workflows, creates bottlenecks, wastes staff time, and leaves customers waiting
Holding a variety of hot menu items with equipment that cannot accommodate different temperature needs	Drys out food with excessive temperatures or does not have high or consistent enough heat to keep food hot for extended periods of time
Equipment with lots of nooks and crannies and hard-to-remove components that make cleaning and sanitizing difficult	Staff will spend more time than needed and struggle to keep up with regular sanitation protocols
Front-of-house solutions that are not secure and organized	Customers and delivery people can easily take the wrong order or spend too much time trying to find the right one

Equipped for to-go success

SOLUTION 1: Locker systems

Lockers are no longer reserved for schools and gyms. As we’ve seen for quite some time, e-commerce brands like Amazon are now leveraging locker systems to bring their customers a safe and convenient shopping experience. And now Hatco wants in — with the first of its kind foodservice locker system.



Flav-R 2-Go® Floor Mount Locker System
F2G-24-A



Flav-R 2-Go® Built-In Locker System
F2GB-22-A



Flav-R 2-Go® Countertop Locker System
F2G-3-A

Flav-R 2-Go® Locker System

To-go in 3 easy steps

1

Set

Operator selects locker number(s) and inputs order name and unique order code via the touchscreen.

2

Load

Operator places packaged order in a secure locker, shuts the door, and the holding timer starts.

3

Access

Customer or delivery person taps the name associated with the order on the touchscreen, enters the order code, and retrieves the order from the illuminated locker(s).

Visit hatcocorp.com/locker-system to learn more.

Locker considerations for the savvy buyer

At this point in time there are not a lot of foodservice locker systems on the market. However, before buyers can even think about their options (Hatco or other), it's important for them to determine which capabilities and features best align with their needs.

Visit hatcocorp.com/locker-system to learn more.

Locker systems: Criteria to assess needs

CATEGORY	CONSIDERATIONS	WHAT DOES FLAV-R TO-GO® LOCKER SYSTEM OFFER?
MOUNT/STYLE	Countertop, floor, built-in	All styles
TEMPERATURE	Hot, cold, ambient	Hot (up to 180 °F / 82 °C) with ambient
ACCESS	One-sided, pass-through	Built-in models are pass-through, and countertop and floor models are available as pass-through or one-sided
SECURITY MECHANISM	PIN code, QR/barcode, no lock	Lock/unlock via order code and name identification
TIMER	Included, not included	Holding timer (up to 45 minutes) with overtime alerts
LOOK	Colors, finish, design, branding	Modern design with 7 color options
ORDER CAPACITY	Number of individual lockers	Countertop (3, 4, 6), Built-in (3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12), Floor (8, 12)
LOCKER SIZE	Height, depth and width of each locker	Height and width (12" x 12" / 305 x 305 mm) with choice of depth (12" or 20.5" / 305 mm or 521 mm)
VISIBILITY	Glass door, metal door with no visibility, unit lighting	Glass door with LED lighting/notification in each locker
MATERIAL	Steel, plastic, other	Powder-coated steel
INTEGRATION*	Manual, point of sale (POS) system, app-based delivery platforms	Quick-start, manual order entry
WARRANTY	What's covered and for how long	One year parts and labor

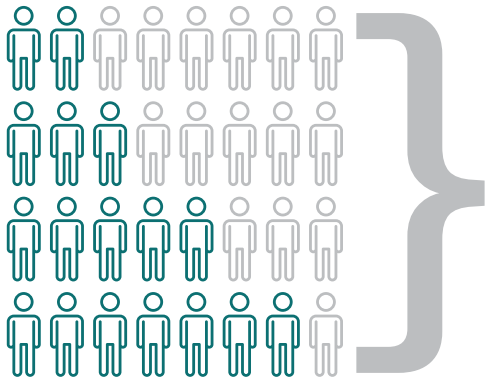
*Be aware that POS or other system integrations require significant time, testing, and investment

SOLUTION 2: Heated shelves

Heated shelves have been a staple in the foodservice world for quite some time. They come in all shapes and sizes, and are used for buffets, on-the-go catering, dine-in experiences, and more.

However, with the growing demand for off-premise dining, heated shelves designed specifically for to-go needs are becoming more important than ever. For starters, they work well in a variety of to-go spaces — kitchen expediting areas, ghost kitchens, “ready-to-eat” meal areas, back-of-house holding, and even up front with an attendant or behind a counter. They are temperature safe for hot food, facilitate frictionless loading and unloading, and can typically accommodate large volumes.

There’s a lot of things that can go wrong with to-go food — particularly hot food.



52%

OF CONSUMERS

would not use a delivery service again if their order arrived at the wrong temperature.[4]



4. NPD Group, Delivering Digital Convenience, 2018, www.npd.com/perspectives/foodsvc-delivering-digital-convenience/

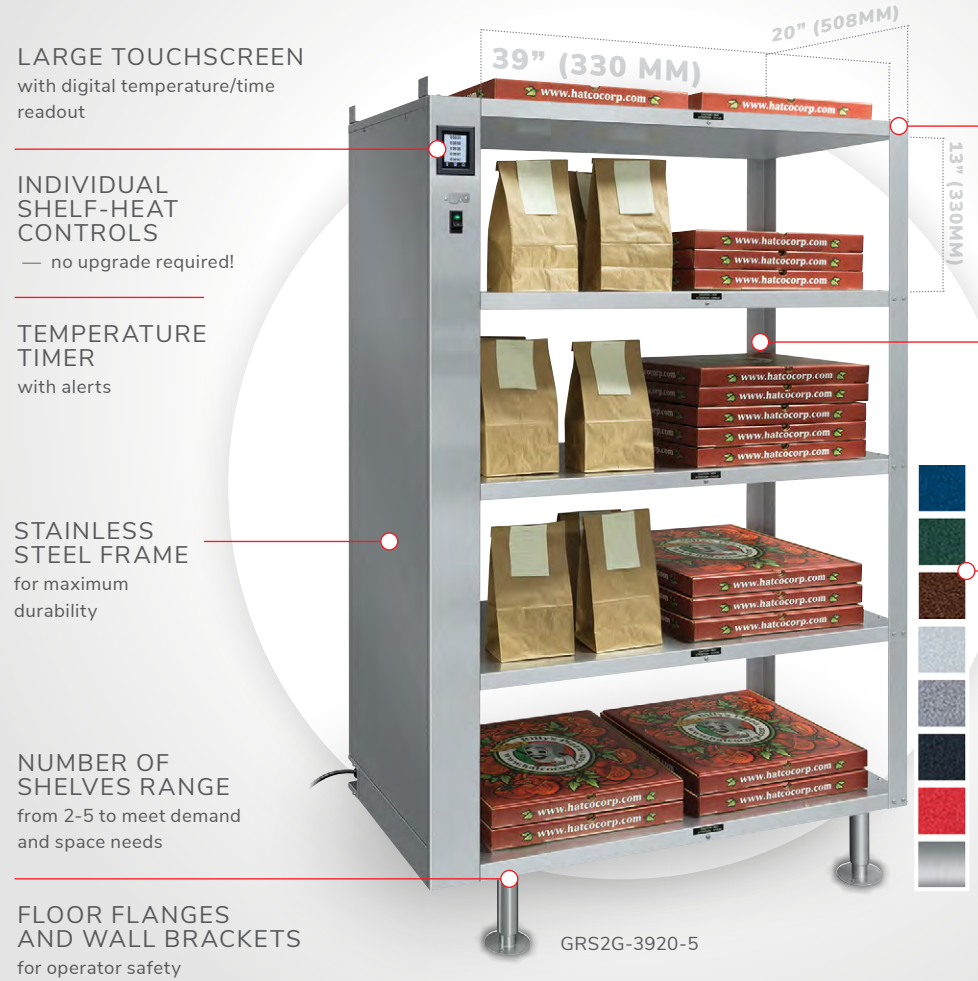
Breaking the mold on heated shelves

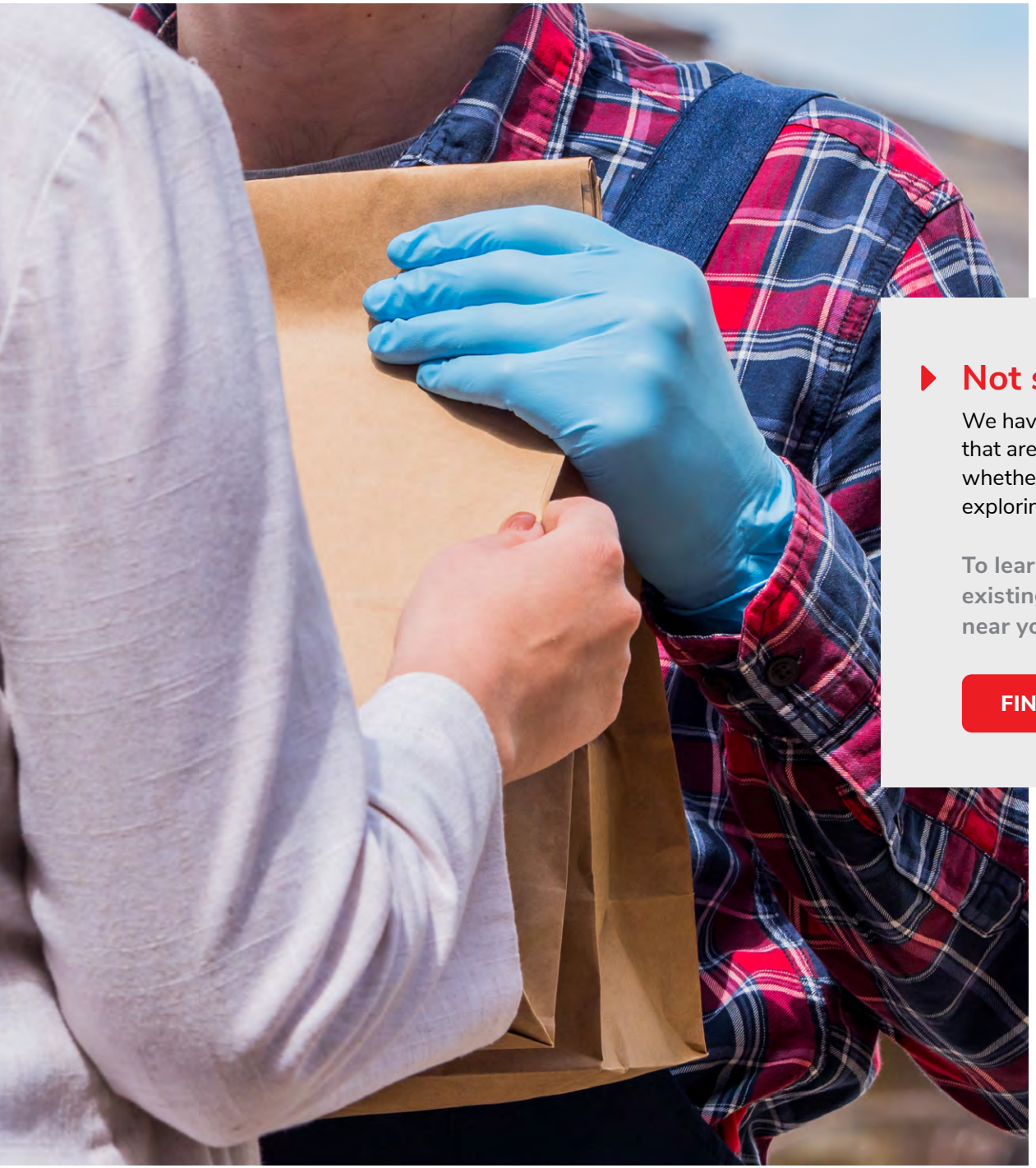
Hatco is excited to introduce the latest technology in heated shelving that's designed meticulously and specifically for to-go operations. Hatco's Glo-Ray 2-Go® Heated Shelves have unique capabilities and features that set them apart from any other heated shelving out there.

Visit hatcocorp.com/heated-shelves to learn more.

Glo-Ray 2-Go® Heated Shelves

One-of-a-kind innovation





Not sure what’s right for you?

We have foodservice equipment experts all over the globe that are eager and willing to help you navigate your options — whether that’s reimagining how you use existing equipment or exploring new solutions.

To learn more about how Hatco can help, talk to your existing Hatco contact or find a local representative near you by visiting hatcocorp.com/find-a-rep today!

FIND A HATCO REP

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