

Industry Insights

A roundup of noteworthy foodservice findings
for the week of Jan. 13, 2025

Image Source: Shutterstock



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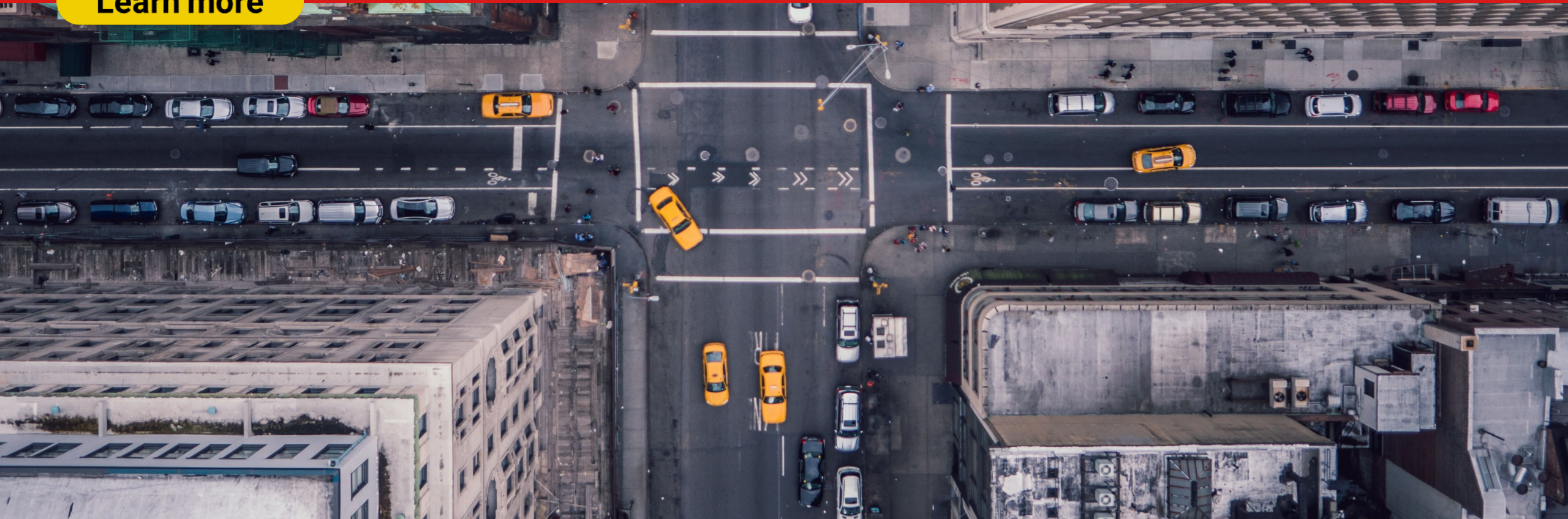
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How many chain restaurants changed ownership in 2024?

A total of 27 brands in Technomic's top 1,500 chain restaurant ranking underwent a change in ownership in 2024, outpacing the number of merger and acquisition deals observed during the prior year.

At rank #30, Jersey Mike's Subs was the largest brand involved in an acquisition deal during the year followed by Tropical Smoothie Cafe at rank #51. Both chains were acquired by investment firm Blackstone.

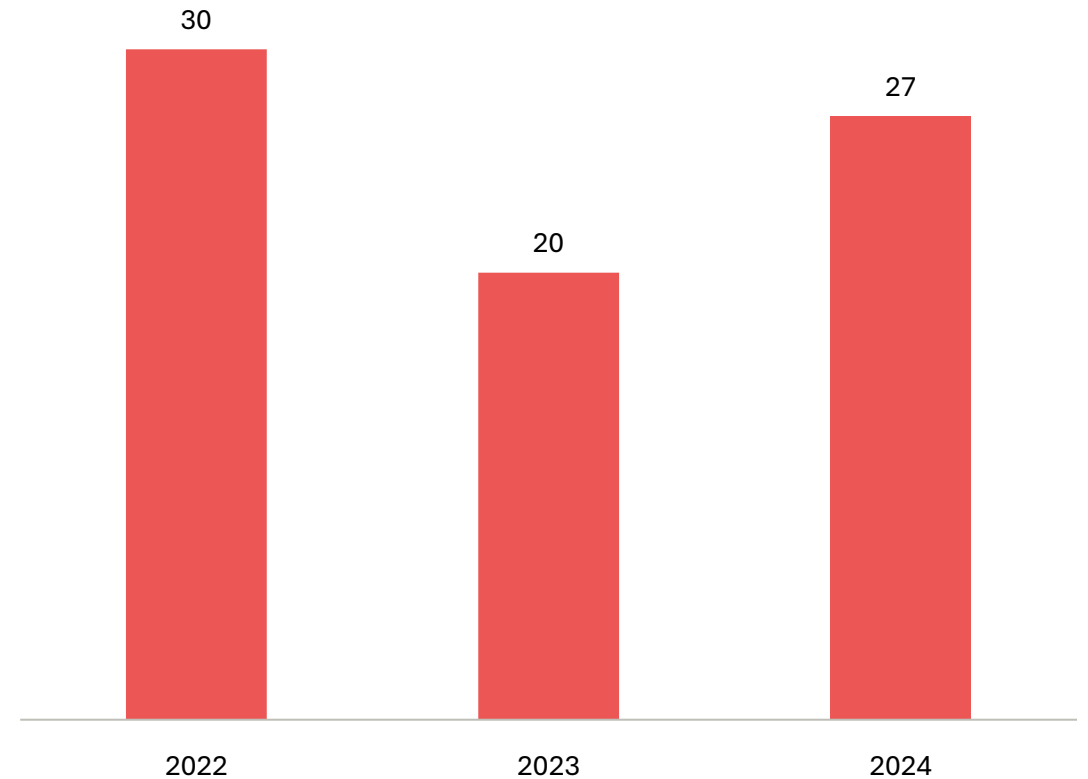
Bankruptcies prompted several ownership changes in 2024, as struggling brands like Red Lobster, BurgerFi and Tijuana Flats were acquired out of bankruptcy proceedings.

Check out Technomic's *Same-Store Sales and Acquisition Tracker* on Ignite for a comprehensive list of chain merger and acquisition deals.

[Ignite Company clients: Click here for more](#)

Source: Technomic Ignite Company

MERGER & ACQUISITION DEALS BY YEAR
TOP 1,500 U.S. CHAIN RESTAURANTS



Ignite Menu

Three emerging menu trends to watch

This quarter's *Emerging Eats* report spotlights three key themes to watch.

Amped-Up Water

Apple water, birch water and tomato water all popped up in this quarter's report. Although they're each produced differently, these items all speak to the desire to excite the classic as a feature in both dishes and drinks.

Nostalgic Snacks

Food and drinks featuring snacks that prompt childhood reminiscence—from cereal-inspired beverages and upscaled Jell-O shots to popcorn innovations and Pop Rocks garnishes—were prominent this quarter.

Reinvented Comfort Classics

Independent restaurants are redesigning comfort classic fare. Operators are transforming eggs Benedicts into afternoon-friendly iterations, creating pizzas inspired by crab rangoon, bringing a premium spin to tuna casserole and swapping beef with other proteins in Wellingtons.

[Ignite Menu clients: Click here for more](#)

Source: Technomic Ignite Menu
Image Source: Shutterstock



Ignite Consumer

The importance of kids in the dining decision

The industry has spent years focused on understanding and catering to millennials and Gen Zers. Among other trends, digital capabilities and tech, off-premise activity and “seamless transactions” have garnered most of the press regarding courting these younger diners.

However, one potentially overlooked decision driver may prove simpler and easier to attain for operators fighting for share of traffic. The importance of kid-friendliness and kids menus is significantly above average among Gen Zers and millennials. This goes beyond anecdotal trends regarding adults

ordering off the kids menu to save cash or eat less.

Operators have the ability to appeal to both kids and parents in many ways, allowing for a differentiated approach that uniquely suits their concept. For example, kid-friendliness may range from menu transparency regarding food allergies, such as Nothing Bundt Cakes’ popular gluten-free options, all the way to Dave & Buster’s massive gaming operation.

[Ignite Consumer clients: Click here for more](#)

Base: Varies; Approx. 5,000 consumers 18+ per attribute shown
Source: Technomic Ignite Consumer, Q4 2023-Q3 2024

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE IMPORTANCE OF ____ WHEN DECIDING WHICH RESTAURANT YOU WILL VISIT? TOP-TWO BOX=% IMPORTANT/VERY IMPORTANT

Limited Service	Gen Zers	Millennials	Consumer Average
It's kid-friendly	59%	66%	52%
Kids menu has a variety of options	55%	63%	48%
Kids menu has healthy options	49%	60%	46%
Full Service	Gen Zers	Millennials	Consumer Average
It's kid-friendly	63%	69%	55%
Kids menu has a variety of options	58%	65%	51%
Kids menu has healthy options	59%	63%	50%

Where is pizza most likely to grow?

As part of the upcoming [Global Pizza Category Report](#), Technomic surveyed consumers in 25 markets to gain insight into their pizza preferences and ordering habits, including whether restaurant-goers order it at least once every 90 days and whether they plan to change their order frequency. Below are a few highlights:

While 60% of all respondents indicated that they expect to order pizza as often as they do now over the next six months, this number varied strongly by region and market. Although just 20% of consumers in Asia plan to order pizza more frequently during this period, this number jumps to 41% in India, the highest in the world.

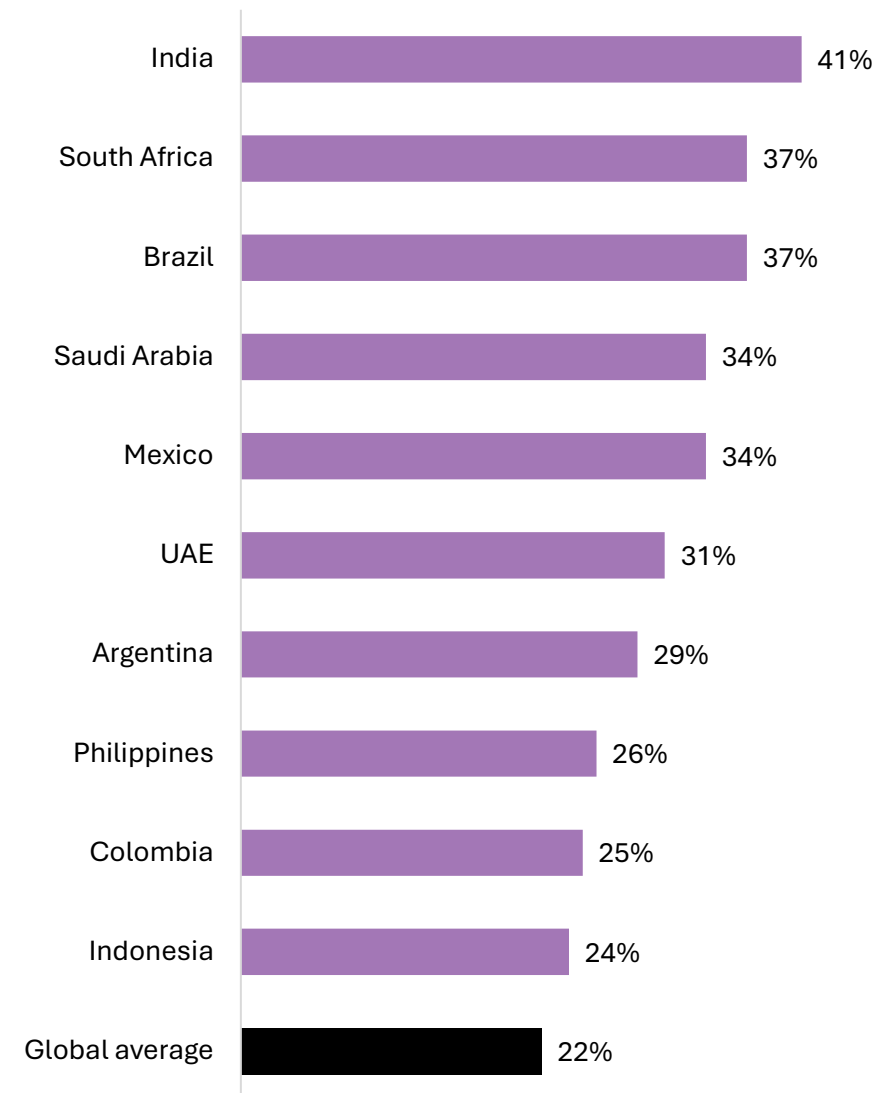
Europe and North America consumers noted that, by and large, they were unlikely to order pizza more often. However, the U.S. was a bright spot, with nearly a quarter of respondents foreseeing increased pizza orders.

By contrast, Middle East (33%) and Latin America (28%) consumers were disproportionately likely to plan to order more pizza, with six of the top 10 global markets found in these two regions. With the exception of Puerto Rico, at least 20% of consumers in each market in these regions foresaw more frequent pizza orders, with four of these markets breaking the 30% mark as well (i.e., Brazil, Mexico, Saudi Arabia and the UAE).

[Global Navigator clients: Click here for more](#)

Source: Technomic Global Foodservice Navigator Program

% OF CONSUMERS MORE LIKELY TO ORDER PIZZA OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS



Consumer Trend Reports

Health views around breakfast are shifting

Consumer breakfast habits have remained consistent compared to 2021, with many continuing to skip breakfast and only one in four consumers saying they never skip breakfast during the week. Among those who do skip breakfast, consumers report it is due to factors such as not being hungry in the morning, consuming a beverage or snack as a meal replacement and simply lacking time to eat breakfast.

Further, fewer people now than in 2021 believe that skipping breakfast is unhealthy. So, while behavior has largely

remained the same across the last few years, health as a motivating factor for having breakfast has begun to fade.

Get more data-driven insights on the retail foodservice space, including consumer attitudes, behaviors and perspectives with the *Breakfast Consumer Trend Report*.

[Learn more about Consumer Trend Reports](#)

Source: Technomic 2024 Breakfast Consumer Trend Report
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