Checkmate

A COMPLETE GUIDE

Scaling Your Pizza Brand With Unified Ordering Solutions

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Navigating The New Digital Frontier

The pizza industry is at a critical juncture, where traditional practices are rapidly giving way to digital innovations. While online ordering is nothing new, the landscape has changed. Maybe you have online ordering on your website, and your menu is listed on marketplaces, but now brands are facing both internal and external pressures to expand their digital reach and be everywhere their customers are. Today, pizza brands—especially mid-sized players —need to evolve fast or risk being left behind.
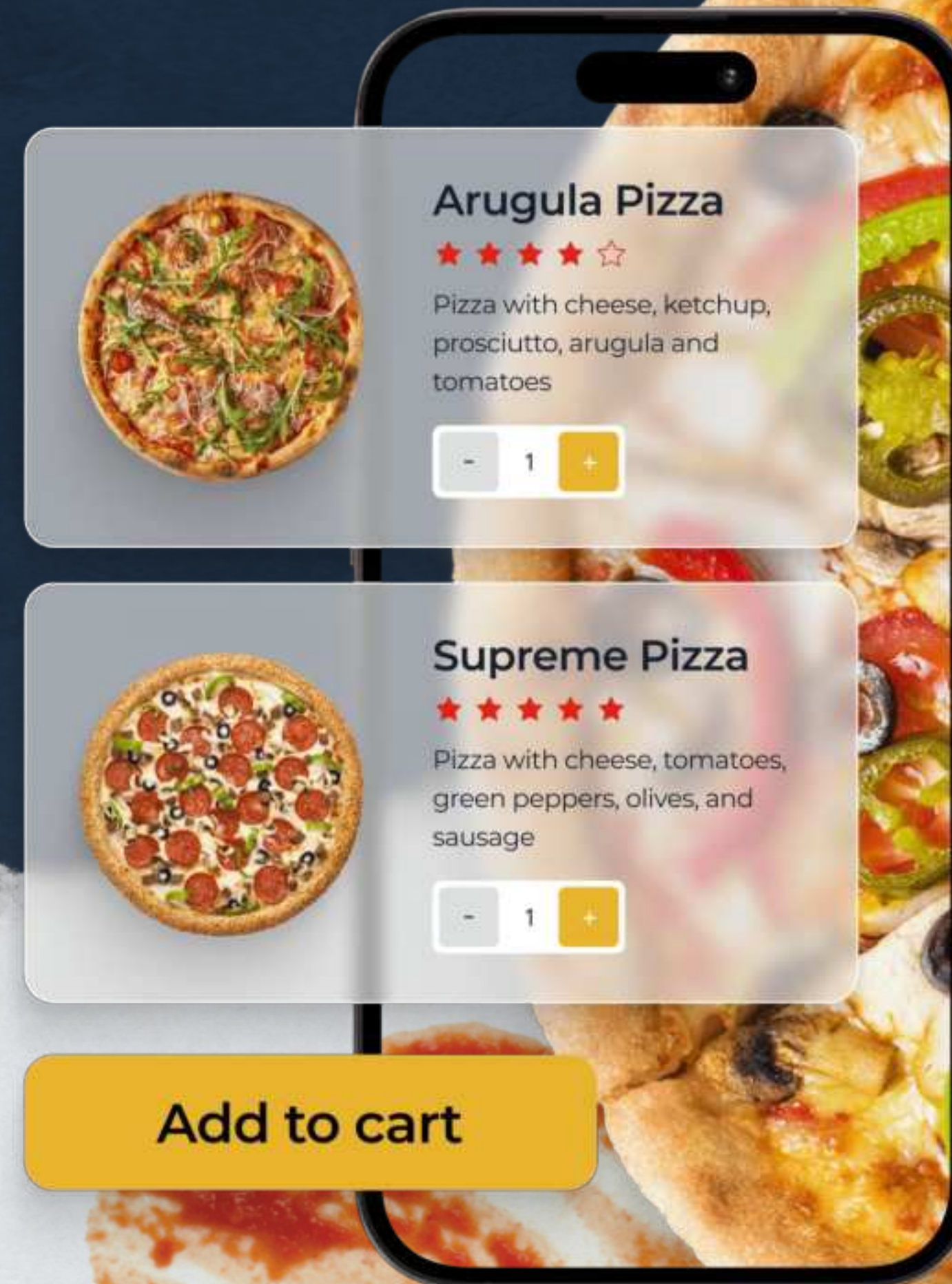
THE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

Why Digital Matters Now More Than Ever

In 2024, nearly **65% of pizza operators** expect sales to increase, with much of this growth driven by digital ordering and delivery. Domino's has seen **more than half of its global sales** come through digital channels, with mobile playing a crucial role. This shift has allowed Domino's to position itself not just as a pizza brand, but as a technology company that happens to sell pizza, setting a high bar for everyone else.

WORLDWIDE PIZZA MARKET

$159 Billion

UNITED STATES PIZZA MARKET

$47 Billion

Luna Pizzeria
★★★★☆ (4.2)
Address: 382 11th Ave N
Hours: M-F 10am-10pm
Phone: (747) 582-1934

OPEN

ORDER #1873 — 2 ITEM
1 18" Pepperoni Pizza — 16.99
Add Bacon
Add jalapeños
1 14" Marg Pizza — 13.50
No basil
Add jalapeños
Add olives

New Ubereats Order
Tap to view entire order

Pepperoni Pizza — $13.50
Bacon, Jalapeño
Subtotal — $13.50
Sales Tax — $1.75
Tip — $3.75
Total — **$19.00**

Pepproni Pizza
★★★★★
Pizza with cheese and thin pepperoni slices

Margherita Pizza
★★★★☆
Pizza with cheese, ketchup, prosciutto, arugula and tomatoes

The Opportunity for Pizza Brands

While these challenges can seem overwhelming, there are a host of opportunities for brands willing to take action. Mid-sized pizza brands are uniquely positioned to leverage digital tools and move faster than some of the larger chains. By implementing a unified online ordering system, brands can streamline operations, enhance the customer experience, and ultimately drive growth. **The key lies in adopting the right technology stack**—one that is both scalable and customized to the brand's specific needs.
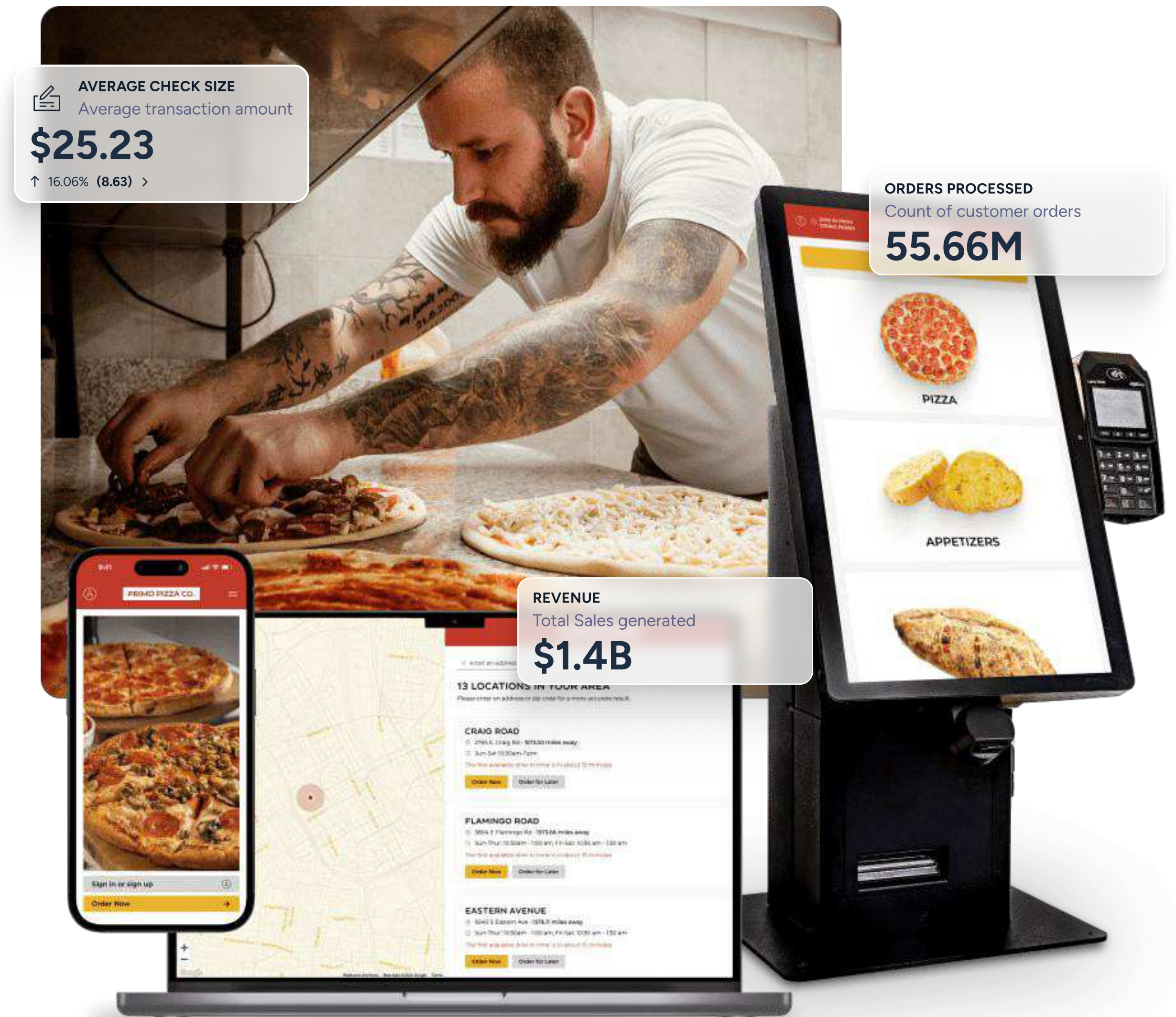
Why Read This Guide?

If you're a pizza brand leader looking to capitalize on the digital transformation currently reshaping the industry, this guide is a must-read. We'll walk you through assessing your technology stack, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing unified ordering solutions that set your brand up for success. By the time you're done reading, you'll have a clear understanding of the steps you need to take to upgrade your digital operations and drive growth across all your locations.

We'll guide you through

01   Assessing your current technology stack

02   Identifying areas for improvement

03   Implementing unified ordering solutions

AVERAGE CHECK SIZE
Average transaction amount
$25.23
↑ 16.06% (8.63) ›

ORDERS PROCESSED
Count of customer orders
55.66M

PIZZA

APPETIZERS

REVENUE
Total Sales generated
$1.4B

🛈 *Actual screenshots from Checkmate's platform*

CHAPTER ONE

Why Digital Matters Now More Than Ever

Digital ordering is reshaping customer expectations, while operational challenges are testing even the most seasoned brands. As a pizza brand leader, understanding this evolving landscape is crucial for your success now and for the foreseeable future.

PRIMO PIZZA CO.

Sign in or sign up

Order Now
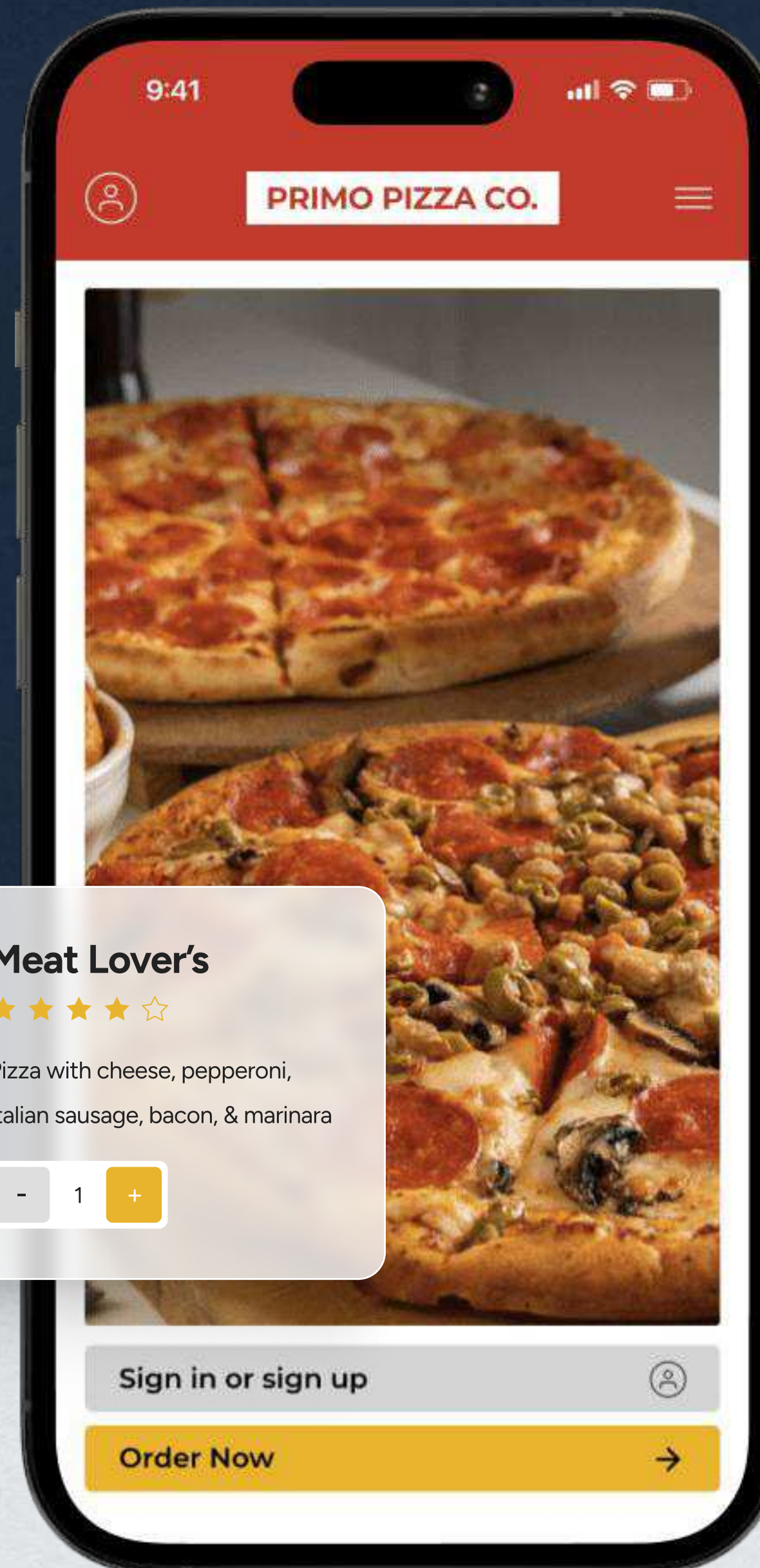
Meat Lover's
★★★★☆

Pizza with cheese, pepperoni, Italian sausage, bacon, & marinara

− 1 +

ORDER #1873   2 ITEM
1 **Large Meat Lover's**   25.00
Add Mushrooms
Add Onions
1 **Coke**   2.50
1 **Chocolate Chip Cookie**   9.50

Tax $0.25
Discount $0.00
Total $37.25

YOUR TOPPINGS

MEAT LOVER'S $31.00 ✕
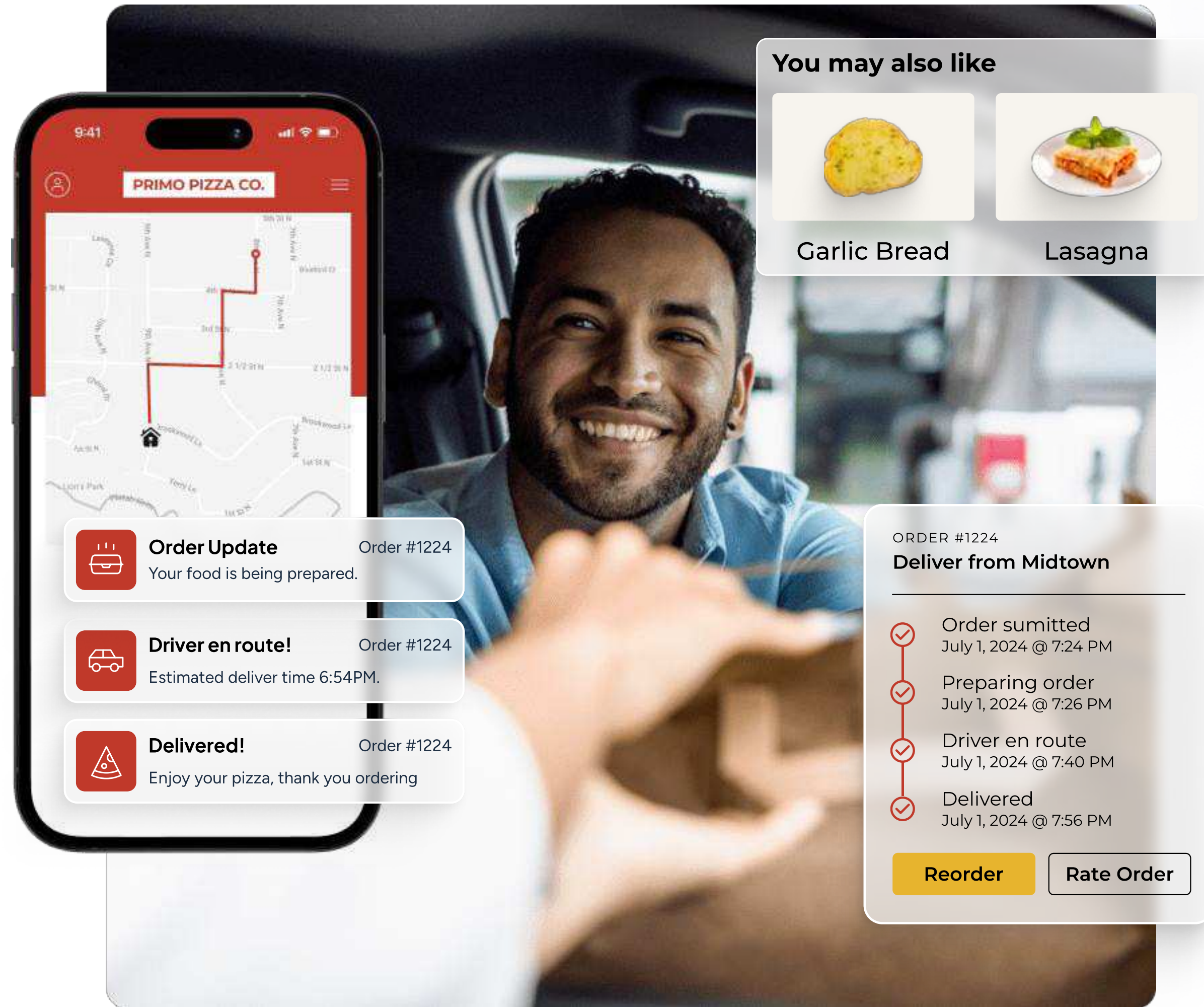
Sauce   Meats   Veggies   Cheese   Bake ✓

MEATS (3 SELECTED)

Pepperoni   **$2.00**
Light   Normal   Extra

Italian Sausage   **$2.00**
Light   Normal   Extra

Bacon   **$2.00**

✕   − 1 +   Add — $31.00

The Digital-First Customer

Today's pizza customers expect more than just great taste.

They're looking for:

Seamless digital ordering across all devices

Personalized experiences and recommendations

Flexible pickup and delivery options

Real-time order tracking and transparency

Checking all these boxes is one key to driving customer loyalty and repeat business. Brands that excel in these areas are seeing significant growth in digital sales, with industry leaders **reporting over 50% of orders coming through digital channels.**

The Operational Reality

While striving to meet these customer expectations, pizza brands often grapple with a host of challenges:

Cost Pressures

Rising ingredient and labor costs are squeezing margins, making it difficult to balance pricing with customer value.

Labor Shortages

Attracting and retaining staff is increasingly challenging, impacting service quality and operational efficiency.

Delivery Complexity

The rise of third-party delivery services is reshaping the competitive landscape, forcing brands to reevaluate their strategies.

Menu Innovation

Evolving dietary trends demand menu adaptation, but supply chain disruptions make consistency a daily challenge.

Technology Integration

Keeping pace with rapid tech advancements is essential but can be daunting, especially for multi-location operations.
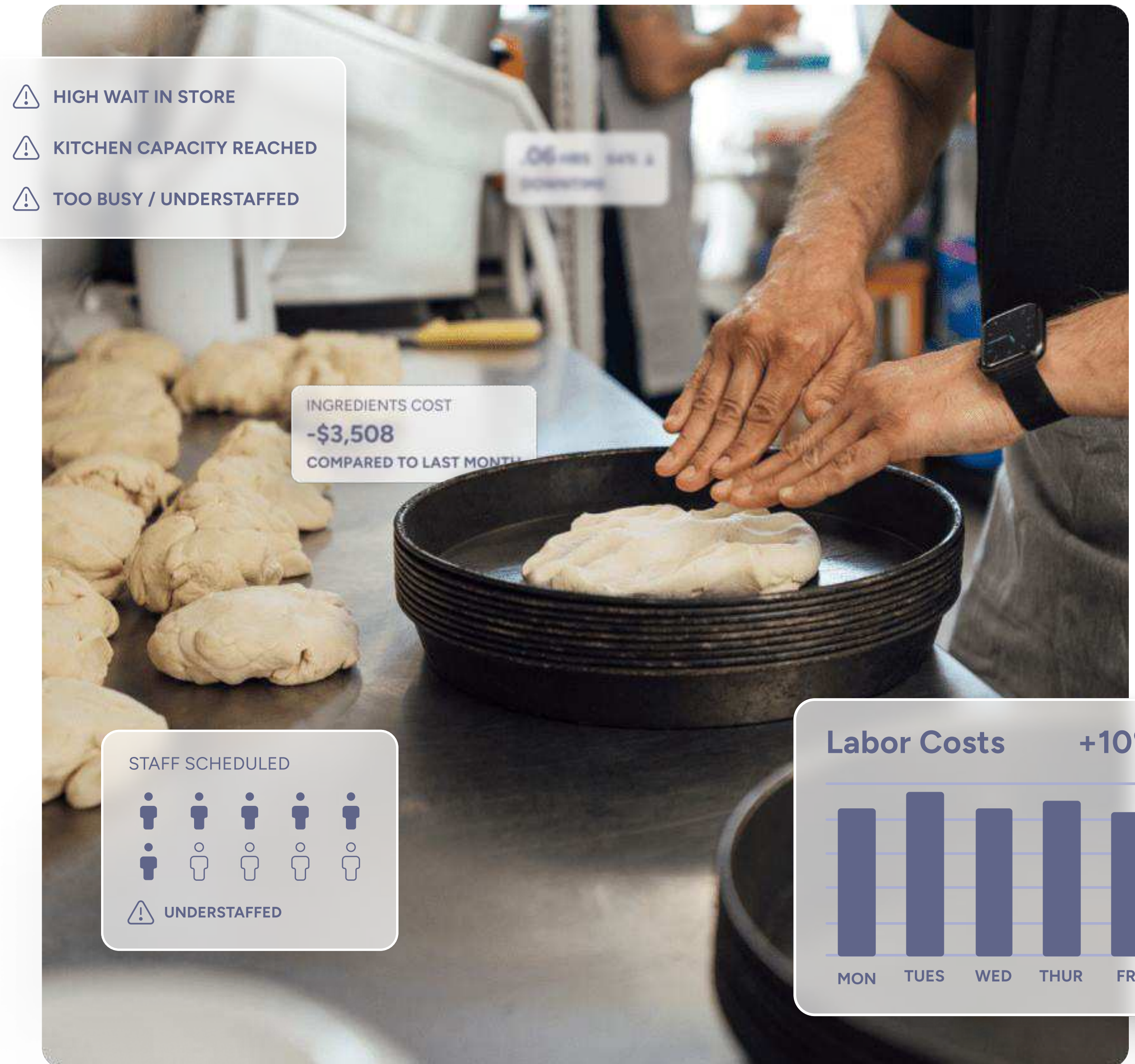
The Path Forward

These challenges are significant, but they also present opportunities for proactive brands. By leveraging constantly connected technology and sharing information between channels, your restaurants can deliver consistently exceptional experiences with less effort.

Imagine a unified system that manages ordering across all channels, optimizes kitchen operations, and provides actionable insights. This isn't a far-off dream—**it's achievable with the right approach and tools.**

For pizza brands without endless budgets or thousand-person in-house IT teams, there are still plenty of opportunities to implement the right strategies that turn challenges into competitive advantages. Let's explore how you can position your brand for success in this new digital-first pizza landscape.
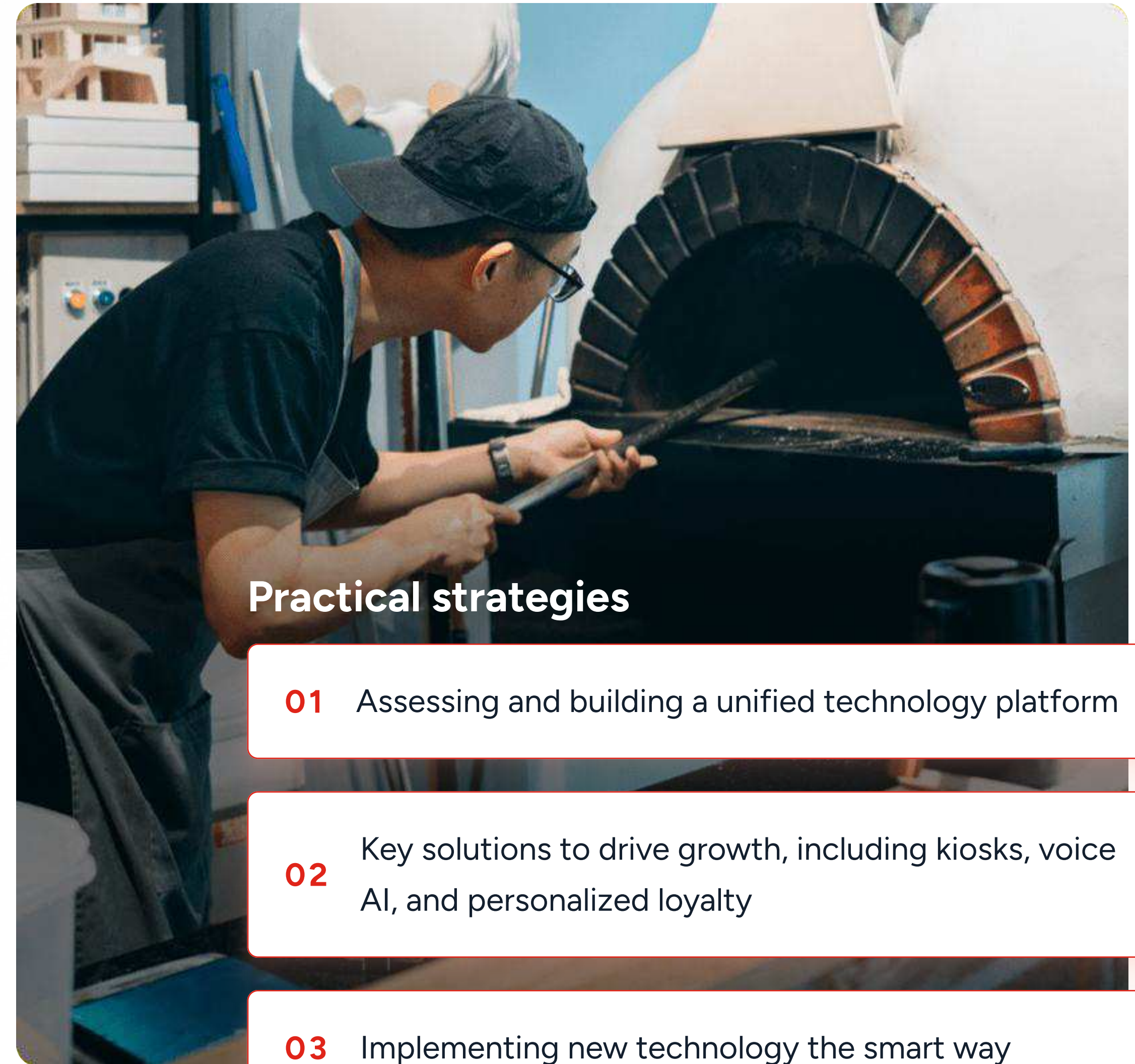
Practical strategies

01	Assessing and building a unified technology platform
02	Key solutions to drive growth, including kiosks, voice AI, and personalized loyalty
03	Implementing new technology the smart way

CHAPTER TWO

Assessing Your Current Technology Stack

Ready to make a change but not sure where to start?
Use these questions to evaluate your tech stack and understand the steps needed to make improvements.

Are we meeting customer expectations?

Can customers easily place orders, track them, and access personalized offers? If the answer is no, you may need to revamp your customer-facing technology.

Are our digital operations efficient?

Are your systems capable of handling high volumes without glitches? Limited integrations can lead to order delays and frustrated customers.

Do we have access to all our customer data?

If it's siloed or underutilized, you're likely missing opportunities for optimization.

Is our online ordering platform capable of scaling?

If you're facing challenges integrating new tools or expanding to new locations, your tech stack may not be future-proof.

Is the customer experience consistent?

Inconsistencies in the customer experience can erode brand loyalty and affect performance.

Signs your tech stack needs *improvements*

Your restaurants are using different systems at different locations

It's hard to test new features or integrate new partners

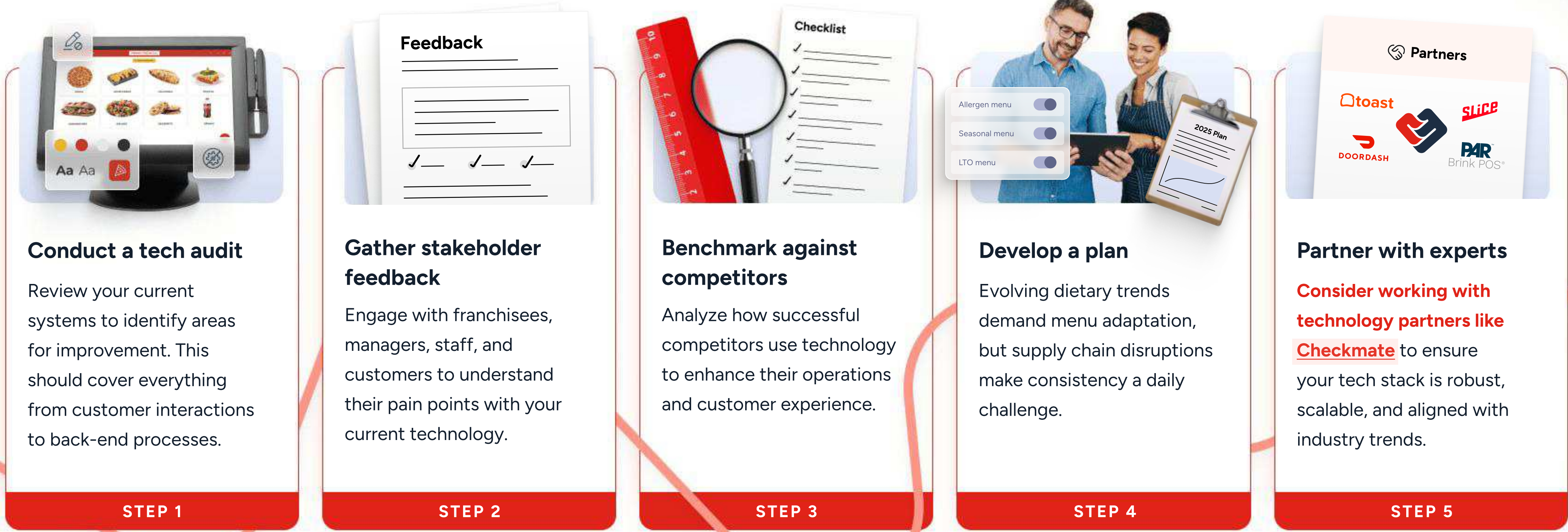Customers frequently complain about the same issues

Data silos prevent you from having a holistic view of your customers, leading to missed sales opportunities

Outdated technology frustrates your staff leading to turnover

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Steps to Get Started

Conduct a tech audit

Review your current systems to identify areas for improvement. This should cover everything from customer interactions to back-end processes.

STEP 1

Gather stakeholder feedback

Engage with franchisees, managers, staff, and customers to understand their pain points with your current technology.

STEP 2

Benchmark against competitors

Analyze how successful competitors use technology to enhance their operations and customer experience.

STEP 3

Develop a plan

Evolving dietary trends demand menu adaptation, but supply chain disruptions make consistency a daily challenge.

STEP 4

Partner with experts

Consider working with technology partners like Checkmate to ensure your tech stack is robust, scalable, and aligned with industry trends.

STEP 5

CHAPTER THREE

Building A Unified Ordering Solution

Fragmented systems can be your biggest obstacle to growth. Let's dive into why a unified ordering solution is crucial for your brand's success and how it can transform your operations.

Consistency is king
Ensure every customer has the same great experience, whether they're ordering from your app, website, or a third-party platform.
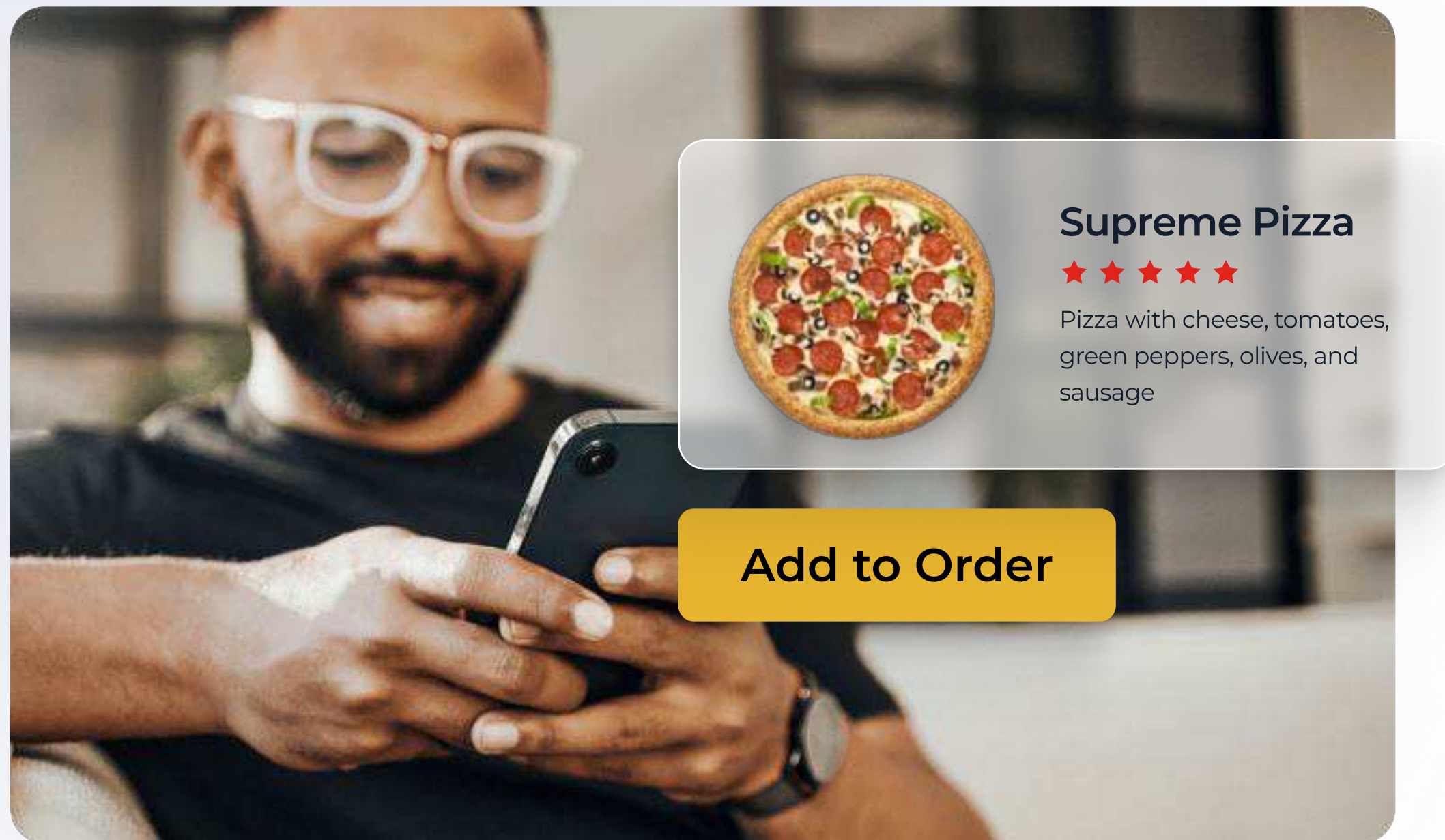
Operational simplicity
Say goodbye to juggling multiple systems and hello to streamlined operations.

Data-driven decisions
Gain a holistic view of your ordering data to make informed business decisions.

Supreme Pizza

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Pizza with cheese, tomatoes, green peppers, olives, and sausage

Add to Order
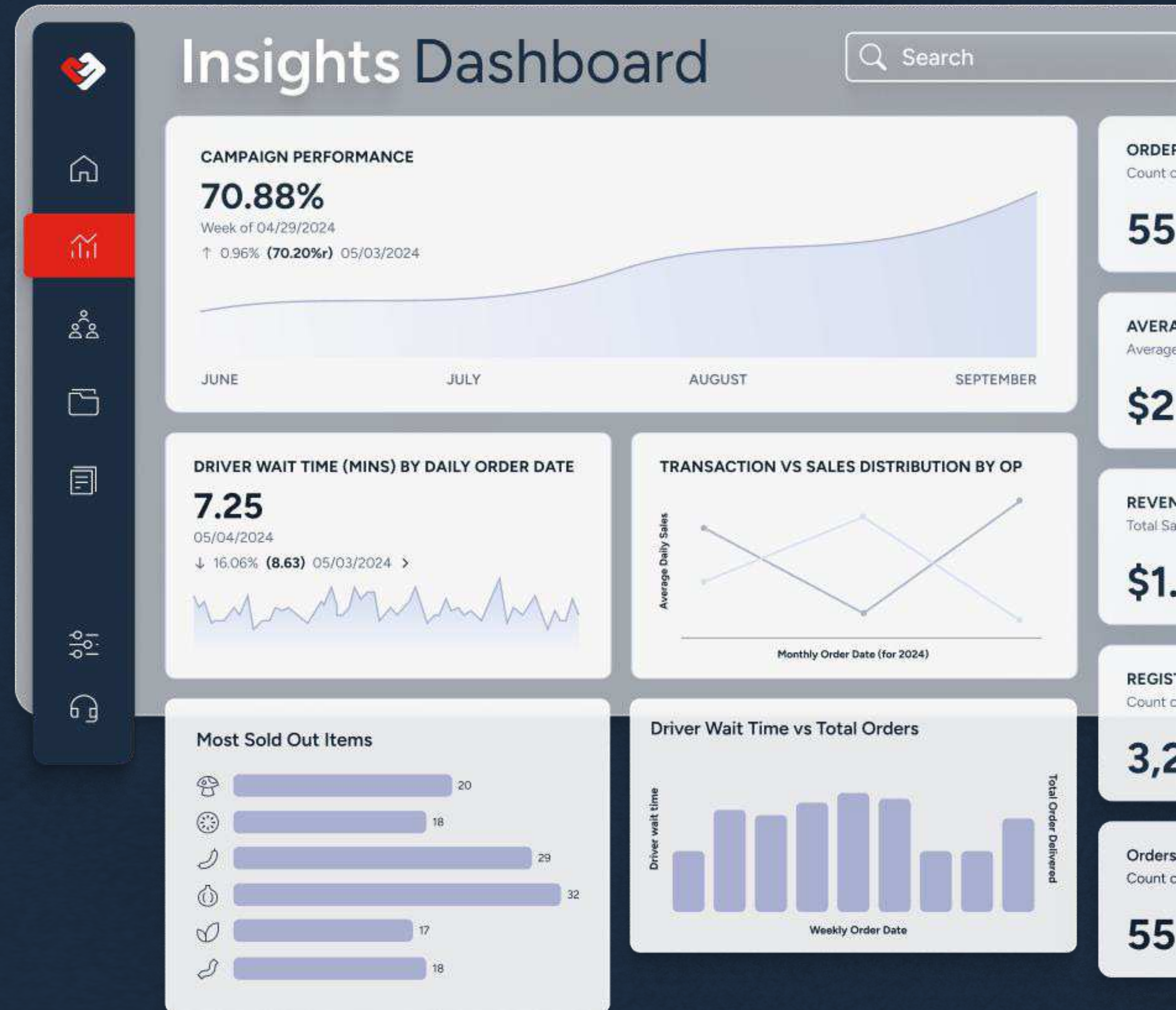
Why Build A More Unified Solution?

Managing a consistent customer experience across every location is like trying to keep all your pizza toppings evenly distributed - it's tough but essential.

Using a unified tech stack gives your restaurants the ability to streamline that ordering chaos, making it easier to scale your operations and save time while providing a more personalized experience for your customers.

Without a unified system

- Customers face inconsistent experiences, eroding brand loyalty
- Operational inefficiencies multiply with each new location
- Data becomes siloed, hindering your ability to spot trends and opportunities

With a unified approach, your brand should have

A central Dashboard
All orders funnel into one system, regardless of origin

Seamless Integrations
With your POS, kitchen management systems, and any other solutions

Real-Time Updates
Menu changes reflect instantly across all platforms

Data Insights
Gain valuable details to optimize your menu and operations

The Domino's Effect

From a traditional pizza chain to an e-commerce powerhouse, Domino's focused on three key areas to drive over 65% of orders through digital channels:

Branded Ordering

Capitalized on a shift to digital with native apps and a responsive website, ultimately laying the foundation for their growth.

Meet Customers Where They Are

Introduced "Domino's AnyWare," allowing customers to order through various devices and platforms, including voice assistants and social media, expanding their reach.

Data-Driven Personalization

Leveraged customer data and AI-driven analytics to personalize marketing campaigns, predict preferences, and optimize delivery routes.
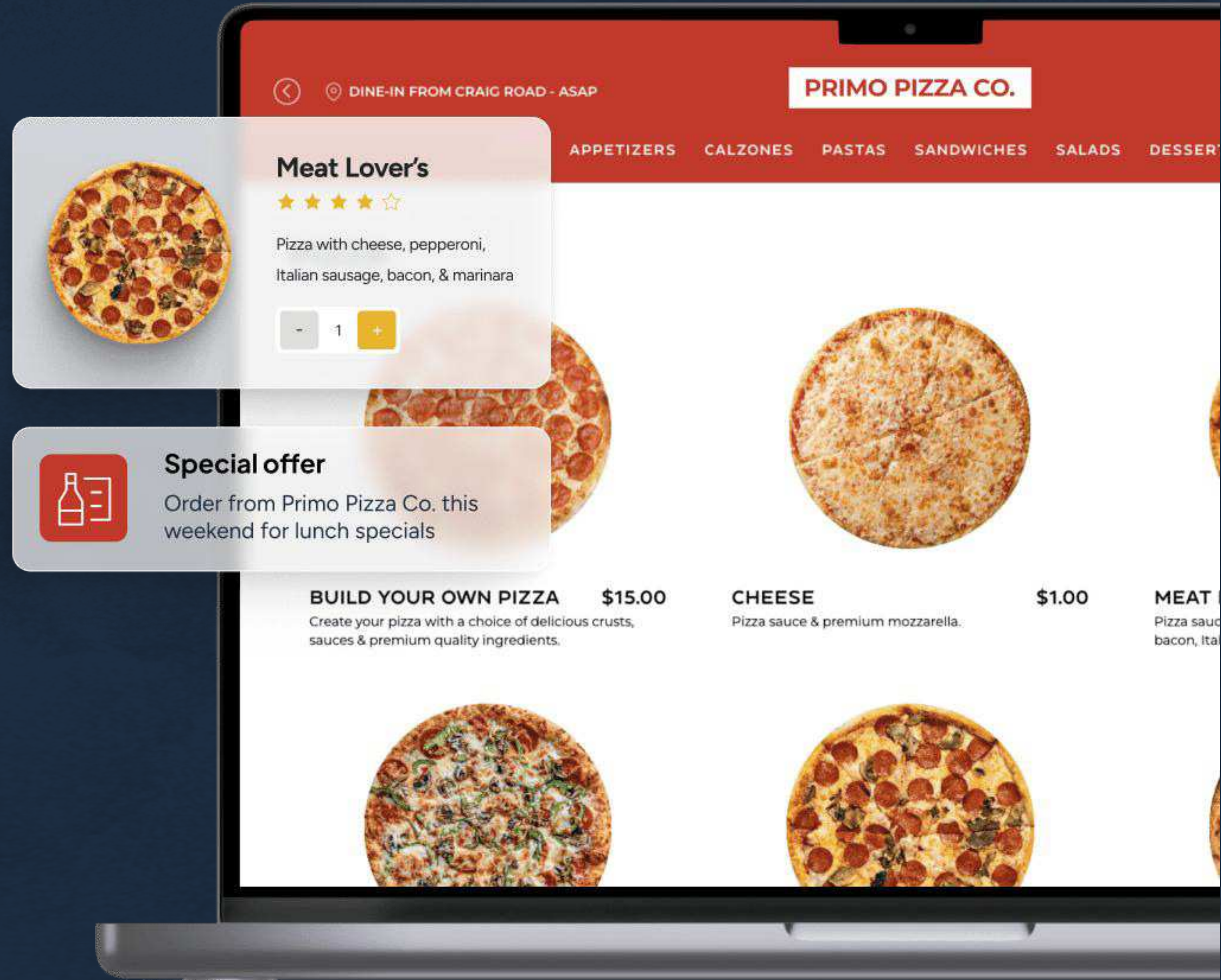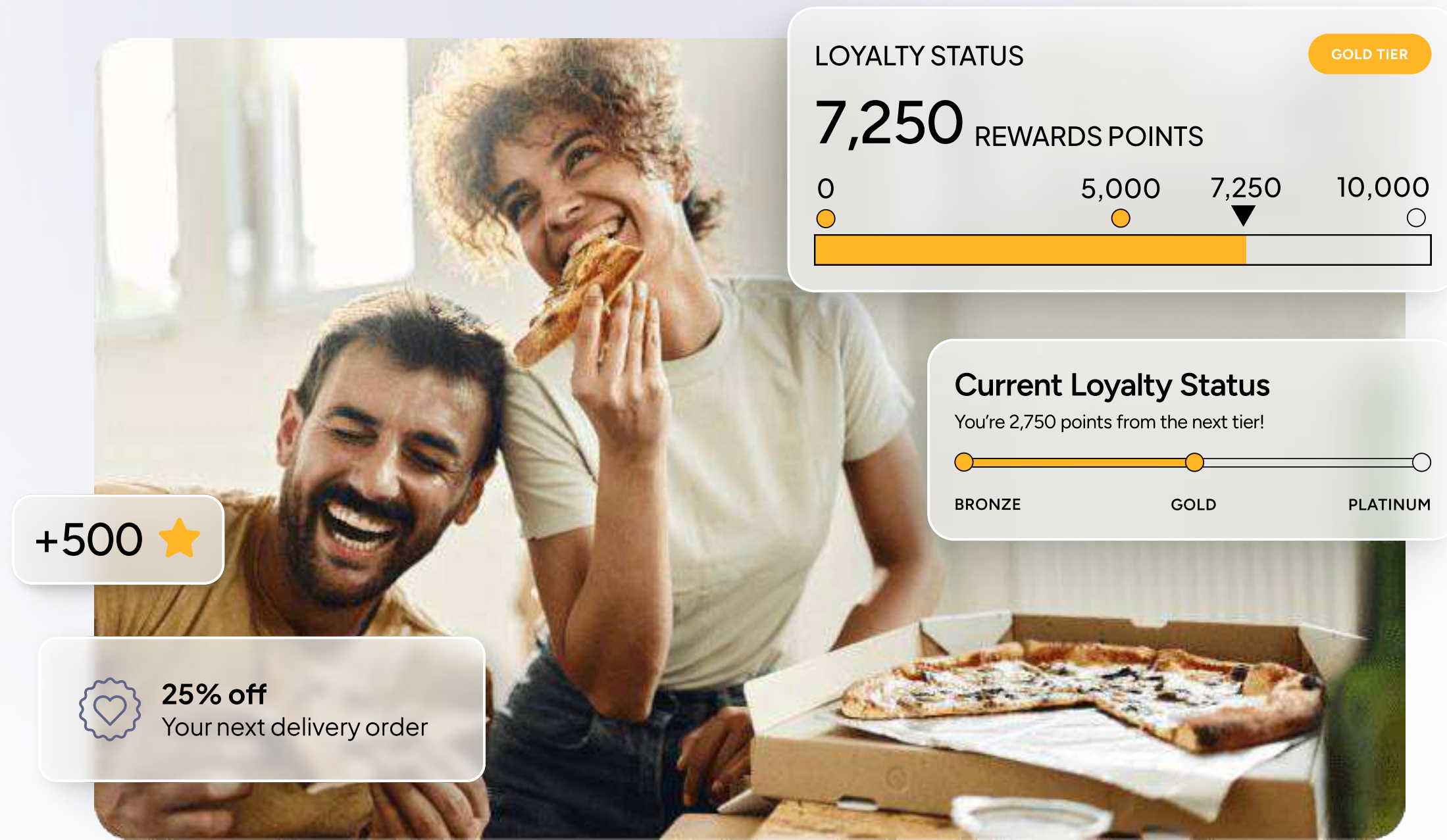
Source 1   Source 2

CHAPTER FOUR

Key Tech Features To Consider

The right technology can be the difference between attracting more customers and stagnant market share. A few key features can elevate your operations and exceed customer expectations, but it all starts with getting the basics right.

Actual screenshots from Checkmate's platform

LOYALTY STATUS   GOLD TIER

7,250 REWARDS POINTS

0   5,000   7,250   10,000

Current Loyalty Status
You're 2,750 points from the next tier!

BRONZE   GOLD   PLATINUM

+500 ⭐

25% off
Your next delivery order

First-Party Ordering & Loyalty

While third-party platforms offer expanded reach, they come at both a financial and strategic cost. The key to long-term success lies in strengthening your first-party channels.

The good news is that although 66% of consumers report using food-ordering apps monthly, 56% say they are likely to order directly from a restaurant instead of a third-party app, depending on the user experience.

Without a unified system

- Customers face inconsistent experiences, eroding brand loyalty

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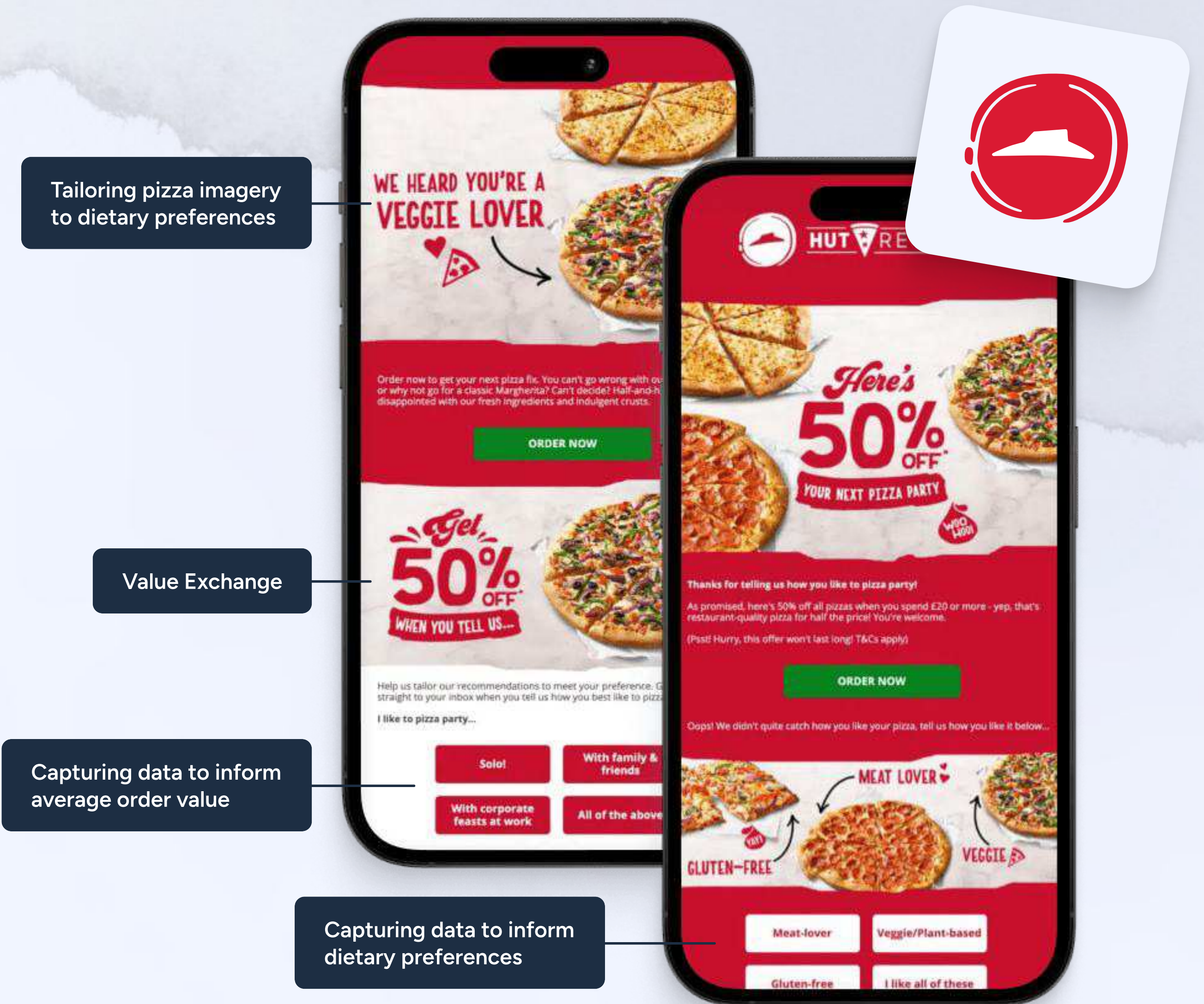Gain valuable details to optimize your menu and operations

Brand Success Story

Pizza Hut revamped its loyalty program, Hut Rewards, to drive customer engagement and increase repeat business. The program offers points for every dollar spent and provides personalized offers based on customer preferences.

Results

75% of email subscribers converted to Hut Rewards in the first 9 months

34% engagement increase from their custom loyalty program

Source 1

Tailoring pizza imagery to dietary preferences

Value Exchange

Capturing data to inform average order value

Capturing data to inform dietary preferences

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Third-Party Marketplaces

Despite the importance of a strong first-party offering, third-party platforms still offer access to a broader user base. While most brands focus on the core three (DoorDash, Grubhub, and Uber Eats), there are a host of other platforms that can help you reach a wide audience with minimal effort. **One of the best options for pizza brands is Slice.**

With over 20,000 pizzerias on **Slice's marketplace**, brands have the ability to find more hungry customers with less effort. And because Slice is built exclusively for pizza restaurants, you know you're targeting the right audience.

Checkmate makes integrations with marketplaces like Slice straightforward and easy to manage. Because the integration is already set, brands can go live in a matter of days without the need for extensive backend work.

Unified Channel Management

Adding more digital channels means more opportunities for growth however, expanding can be challenging when your team needs to manually update and monitor all these channels.

This is where **Checkmate's EveryWare** comes into play. Having one tool to update every menu, price, and promotion when you're juggling 5+ channels is essential to streamline operations and reduce manual work for your team.

💡 PRO TIP

Look for solutions that offer advanced API integrations to automate order injection and menu updates. This approach can significantly reduce errors and streamline operations.
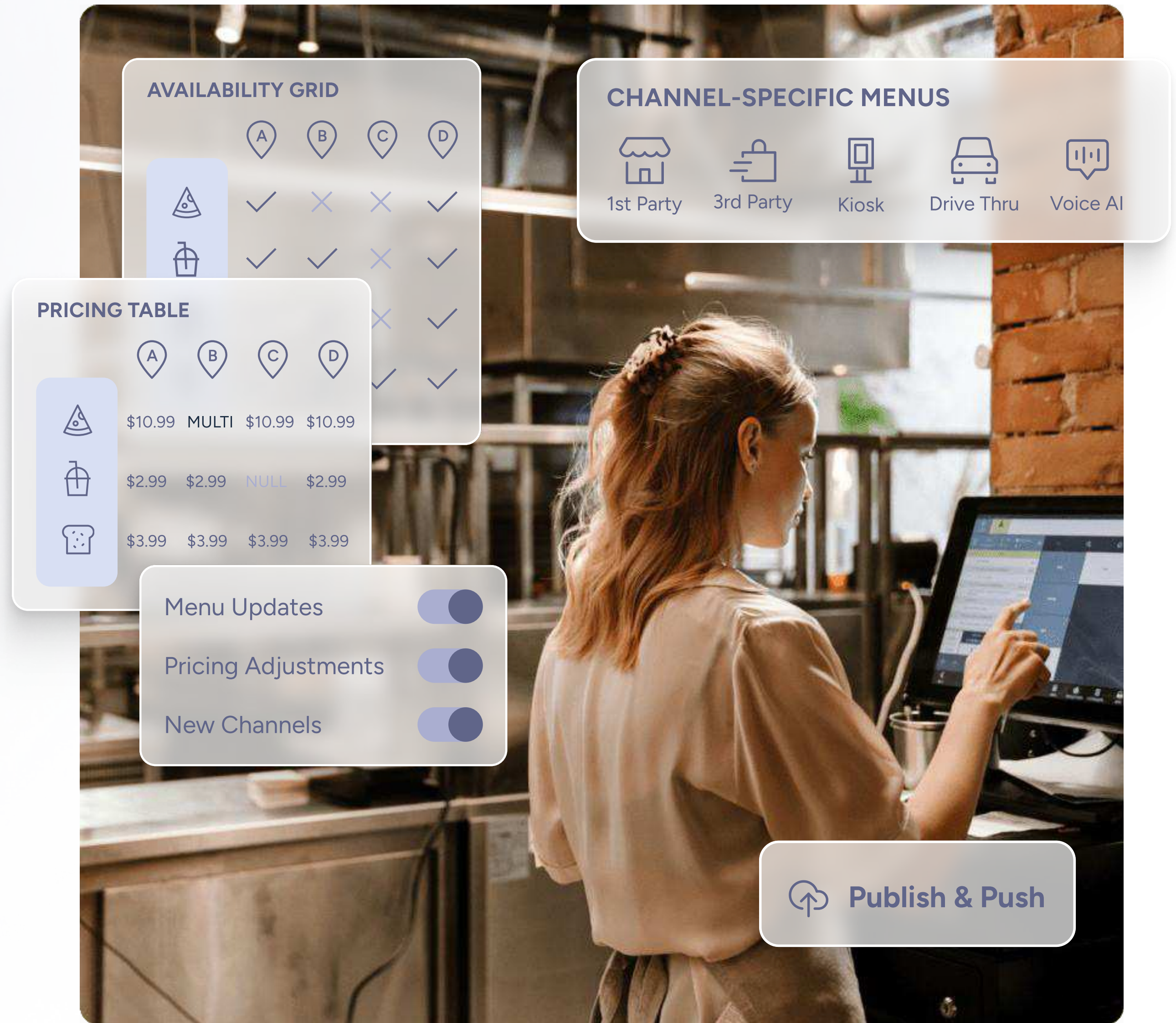
Integrated Voice AI

Voice AI has quickly become the biggest topic of discussion within the restaurant industry, and for good reason. Brands that manage multiple digital channels in addition to traditional ones such as phone and drive-thru are struggling to meet customer demand.

Voice AI allows brands to automate phone and drive-thru ordering while improving order accuracy and overall customer satisfaction.

Here's how Voice AI translates to more sales and happier customers

24/7 Order Taking
Never miss an order, even during peak hours or late nights.

Upselling Consistency
AI never forgets to suggest extra toppings or sides.

Multilingual Support
Serve a diverse customer base without language barriers.

PAPA JOHNS®

Implementing Voice AI

Papa John's implemented "Papa Call," an AI-powered phone ordering system that integrates directly with its POS for seamless processing. Papa Call manages the high volume of phone orders, reduces human errors in order-taking, and delivers a consistent customer experience across locations.

Results

30% reduction in abandoned calls

Improved order accuracy across locations

Increased efficiency, allowing staff to focus on food preparation and in-person customers

ORDER #1224   VOICE AI

Pepperoni Pizza   x 1
Add bacon
Add jalapeños

Coke   x 1

Tax $0.25
Discount $0.00
Total $12.24

Actual screenshots from Checkmate's platform

Custom Kiosks

Self-service kiosks are changing the game for dine-in and takeout orders:

Line Busting
Reduce wait times during rush hours.

Order Accuracy
Customers input their own orders, reducing errors.

Customization
Visual interfaces make it easy for customers to customize their perfect pizza.
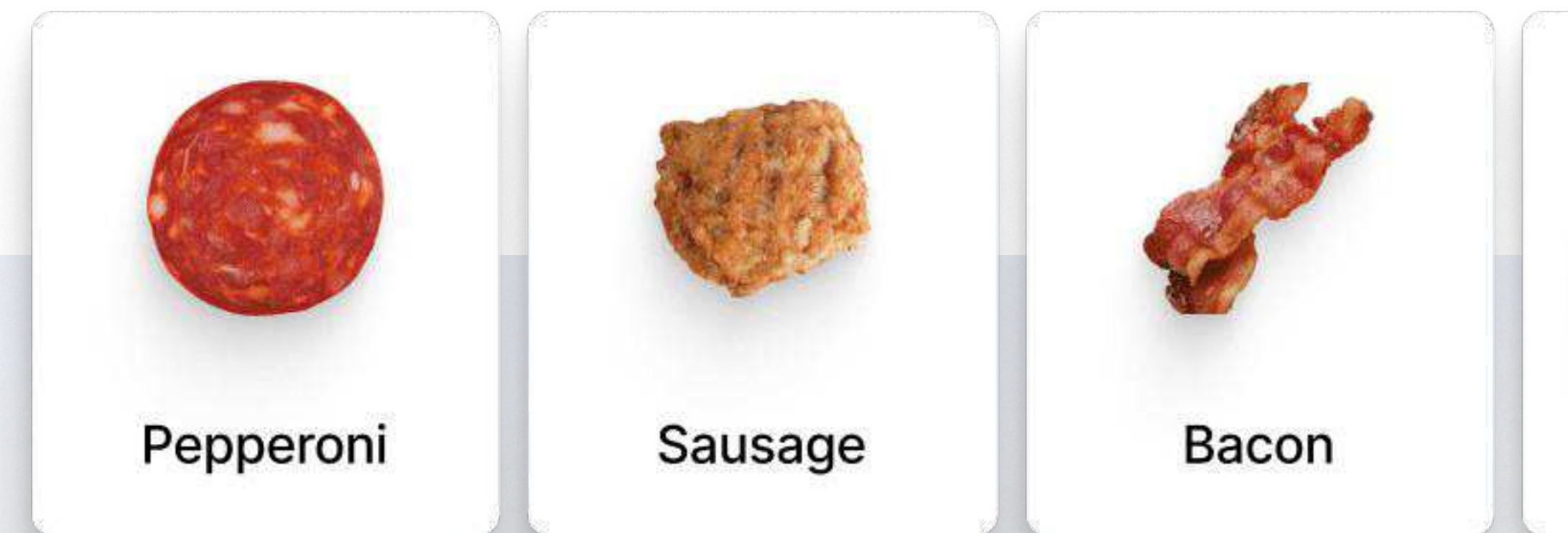
Pizza Creator: Bringing the Pizzeria to Their Fingertips

With over half of online orders coming from mobile devices, a seamless mobile experience is non-negotiable. One of the most exciting innovations in mobile ordering is the custom pizza creator tool. This allows customers to build their perfect pizza with an intuitive, visually appealing interface.

Here's why how it sets your brand apart:

Interactive Customization
Customers can easily add, remove, or adjust toppings with simple taps and swipes.

Real-time Visualization
As customers build their pizza, they see a dynamic visual representation of their creation, making the ordering process more engaging.

Section Toppings
Customers can add different toppings to different sections of the pizza, catering to split preferences or family orders.

Upselling Opportunities
Subtly suggest premium toppings or crust upgrades as customers create their pizzas.
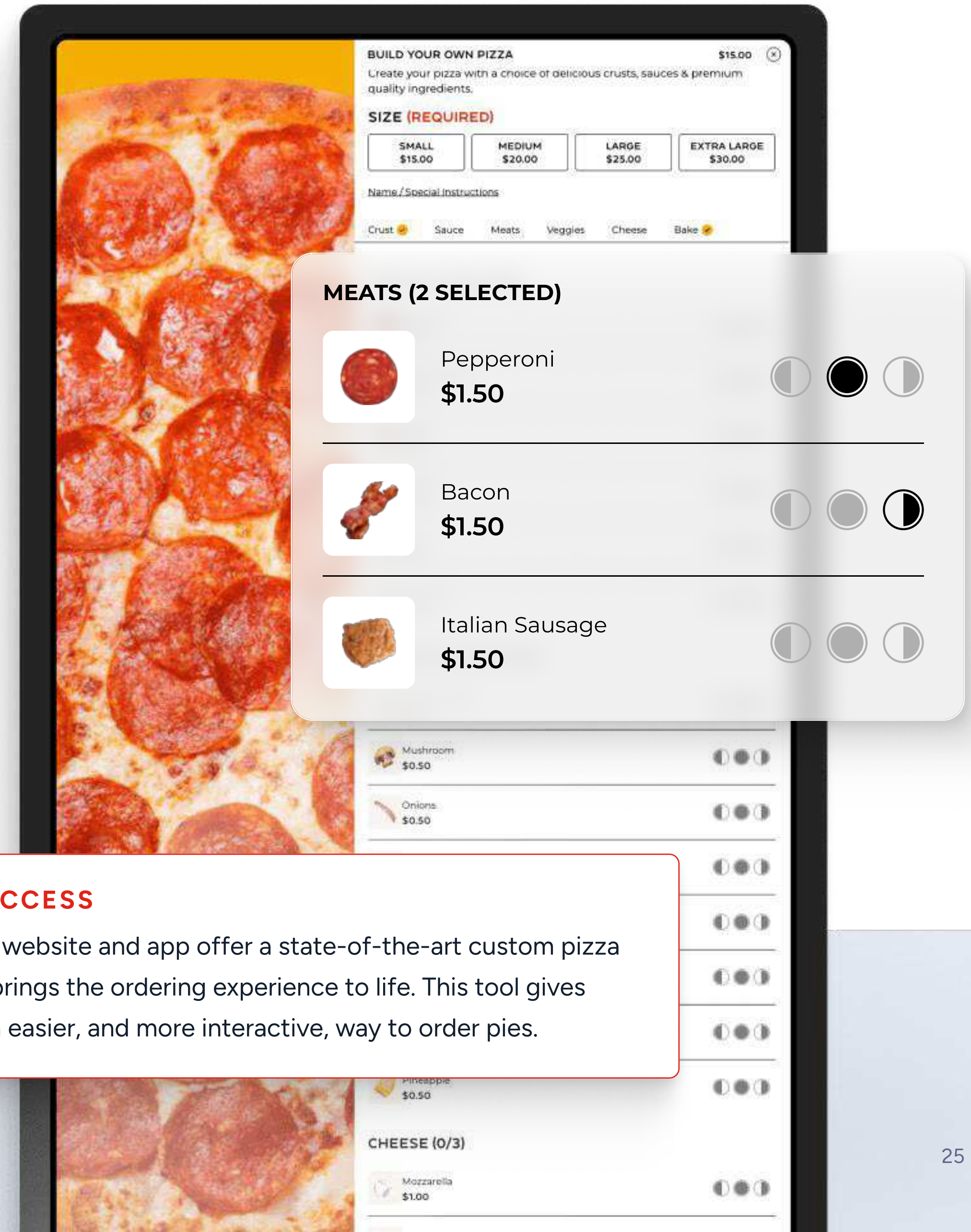
KEY TO SUCCESS
Checkmate's website and app offer a state-of-the-art custom pizza creator that brings the ordering experience to life. This tool gives customers an easier, and more interactive, way to order pies.

Room to Scale and Evolve

Your tech stack should be like a good pizza dough—ready to stretch as you grow.

Modular Solutions
Start with core features and add on as needed.

Cloud-Based
Scale up or down based on demand without hardware limitations.

Open APIs
Ensure your systems can talk to each other and integrate new tools easily.

Implementing advanced technology doesn't have to be daunting. Here are some key considerations:

Start Small, Think Big
Begin with foundational elements that offer immediate ROI.

Phased Implementation
Roll out new features gradually to manage costs and training.

Expert Guidance
Partner with technology providers who understand the unique challenges of the pizza industry.

CHAPTER FIVE

Rolling Out Your Solution

You've recognized the need to upgrade your tech stack. Your current online ordering system has served its purpose, but it's time for a more unified, efficient solution. Let's explore how to make this transition smooth for both your team and customers.

ORDER #1224   WEB

Meat Lover's   x   1
Jalapeno Ranch

Coke   x   1

WEB ORDER   ● Status: Preparing   01:48

ORDER #1224   1 ITEM

1   **Meat Lover's**   **16.99**
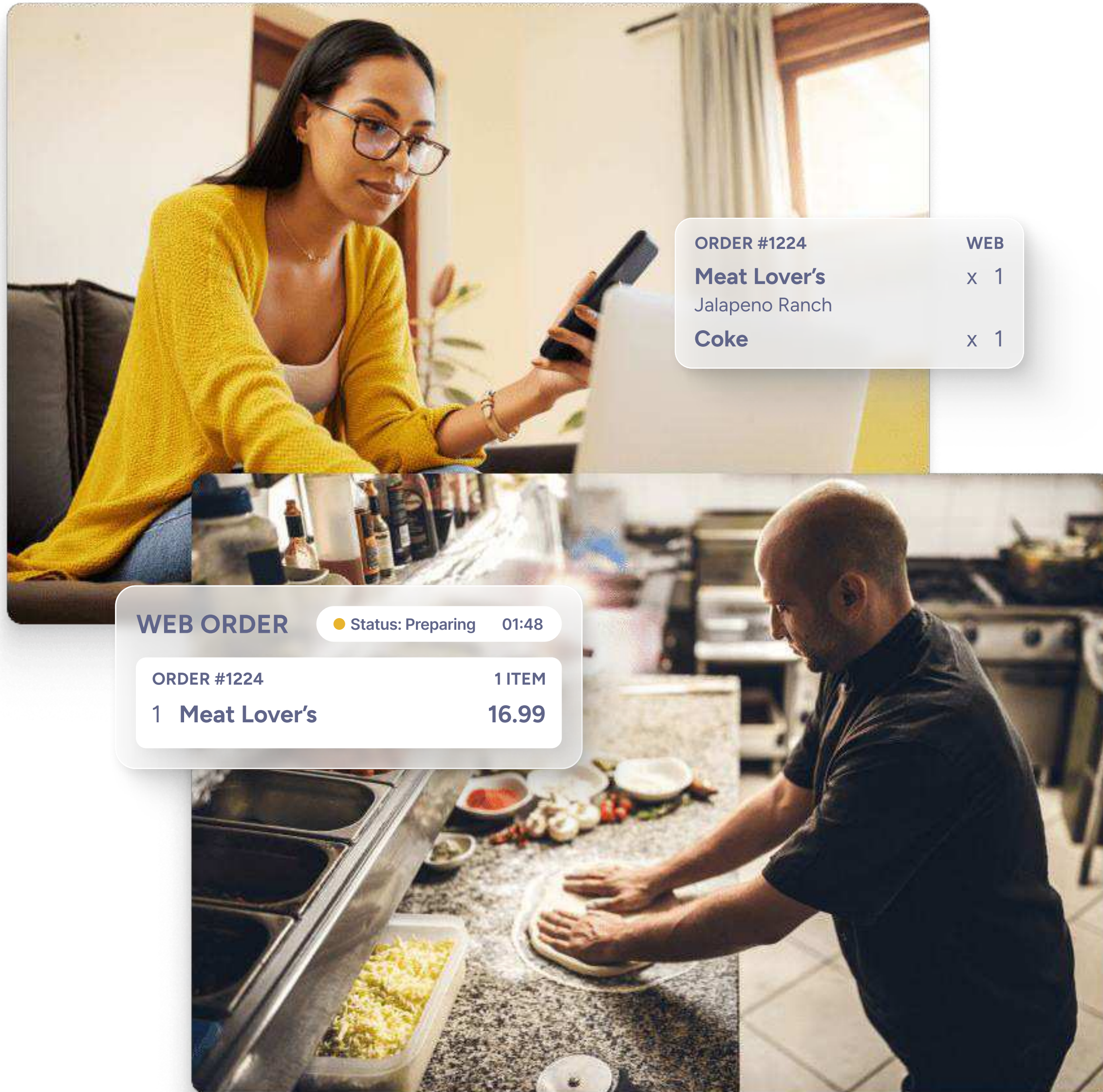
Assessing Your Current Setup

Before diving into implementation, take stock of your existing systems:

Audit Current Processes
Identify what's working well and what's causing friction.

Data Migration Plan
Ensure customer data, order history, and menus can be transferred.

Integration Requirements
List all the systems your new platform needs to communicate with (POS, kitchen display, etc.).

PRO TIP

Create a detailed map of your current order flow, from customer input to kitchen output. This will help identify areas where a unified system can bring the most value.

Phased Implementation

Rather than a complete overhaul, consider a phased approach. This allows you to build on your existing setup while gradually introducing new capabilities.

Foundation

Start with core unified ordering functionality.

PHASE 1

Fillings

Integrate third-party platforms and additional channels.

PHASE 2

Toppings

Add features like AI-driven upselling or predictive analytics.
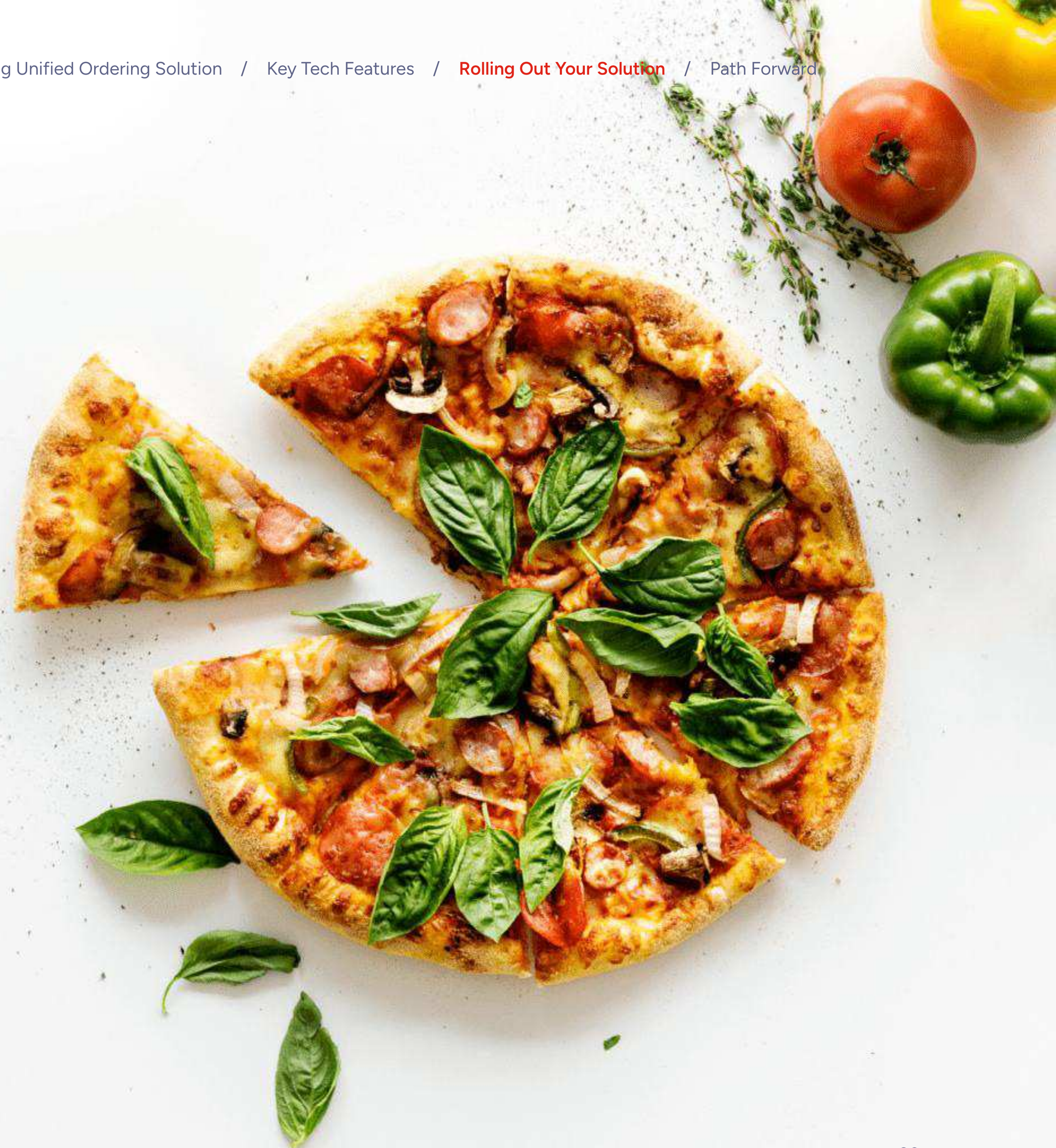
PHASE 3

Managing the Transition

Parallel Operations

Consider initially running your new system alongside the existing one to ensure smooth operations.

Staged Rollout

Begin with a few locations or a specific region before company-wide implementation.

Feedback Loop

Continuously gather input from staff and customers to refine the system.
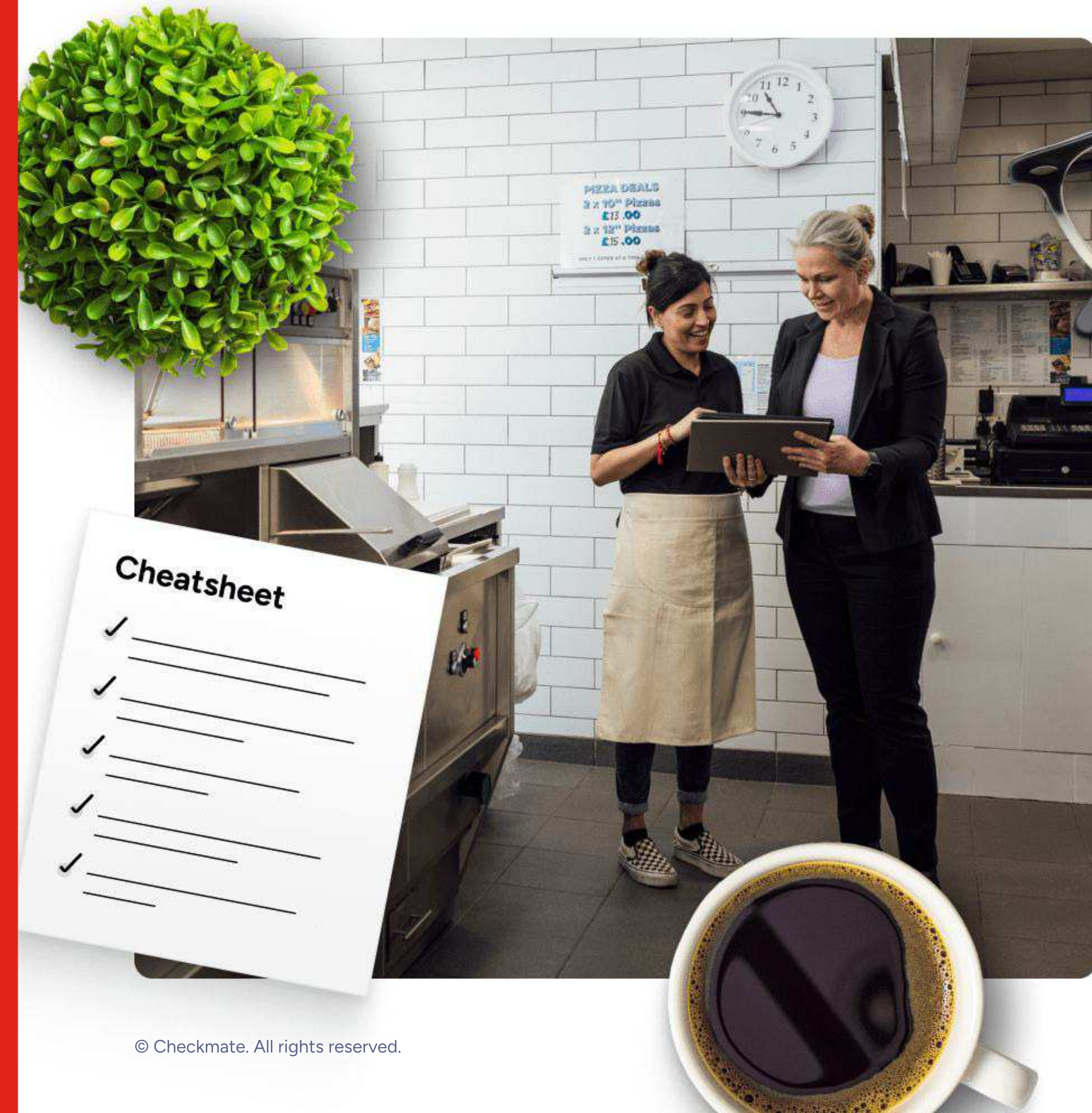
Retraining Your Team

Your staff is already familiar with online ordering. The key is to focus on the enhancements:

⚙️ Tailor training to each role, emphasizing new features relevant to their responsibilities.

▶️ Hands-on workshops to provide practical, scenario-based training sessions.

🗄️ Implement a system for ongoing education as new features are rolled out.

PRO TIP

Create a 'cheat sheet' of common tasks in the new system compared to the old one. This can serve as a quick reference guide during the transition.

Cheatsheet

Syncing Delivery and In-Store Operations

A unified platform should enhance the coordination between your in-store and delivery operations:
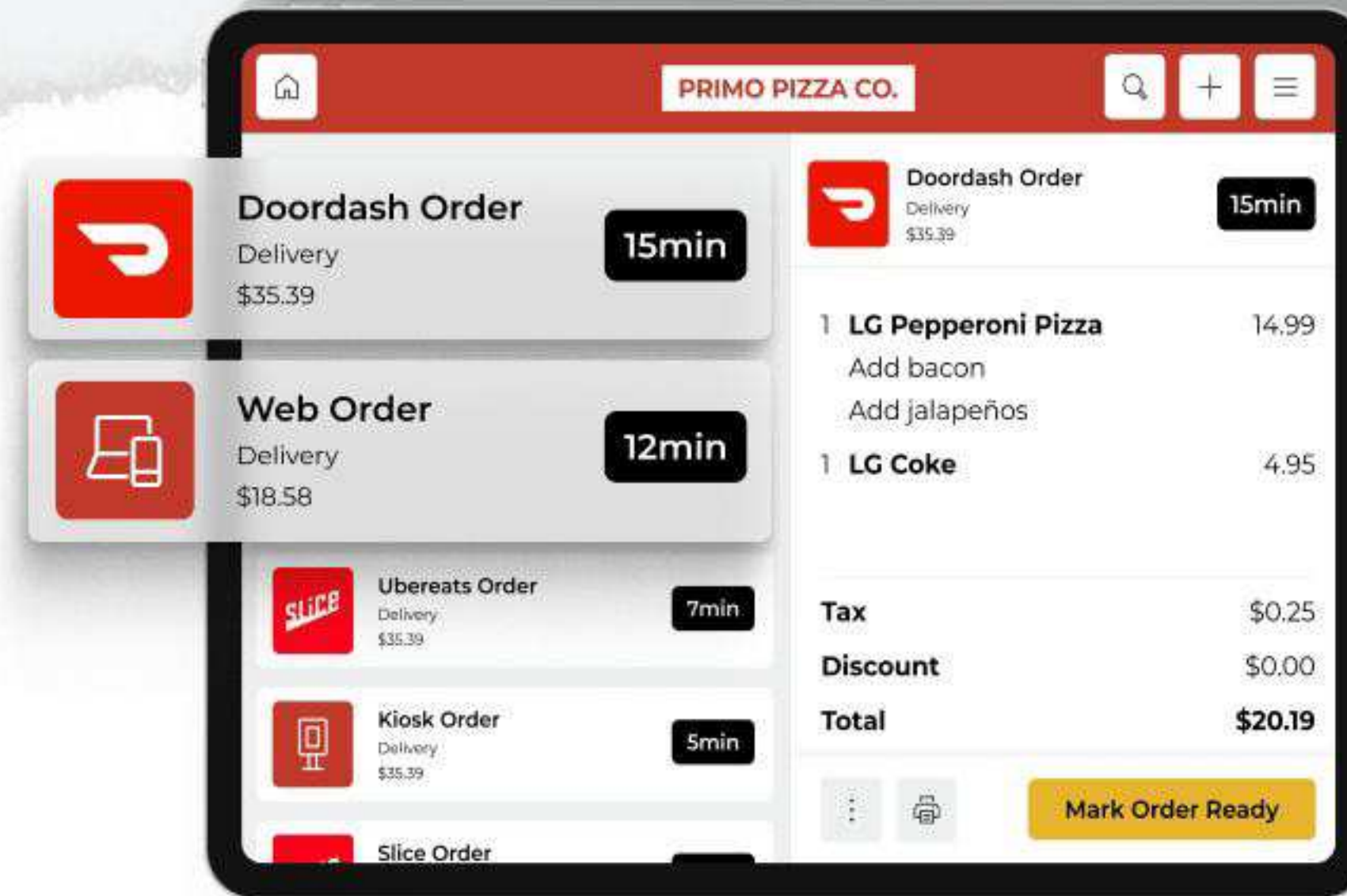
Real-time Updates
Ensure staff have visibility into order status, regardless of the channel.

Smart Dispatching
Implement AI-driven dispatching to optimize delivery routes and balance workloads.

Integrated Inventory Management
Link your in-store and online inventory to prevent overselling and stockouts.

Customer Communication

As you upgrade your system, keep your customers informed:

⇉ **Pre-launch Communication**

Notify customers about the upcoming changes and benefits

🏪 **User Guides**

Provide simple tutorials or FAQs for navigating the new ordering experience

↻ **Feedback Channels**

Establish easy ways for customers to provide input and flag any issues

REMEMBER

Transitioning to a unified platform is about **evolution, not revolution**. By building on your existing foundation and focusing on incremental improvements, you can create a more efficient, customer-friendly ordering experience without disrupting your current operations.

Emily Johnson
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 5.0

Service was quick and fast! The staff was extremely friendly and welcoming. Highly recommend this pizza place!

Alex Galistel
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 5.0

The friendly service and cozy atmosphere make it a must-visit spot for anyone craving a satisfying slice.

The Path Forward
for Mid-Sized Pizza Brands

As we've explored throughout this guide, the future of the pizza industry is undeniably digital first. Let's recap the key ingredients for success.

Unified Ordering

Seamless experience across all platforms

AI Integration

Enhancing operations and customer interactions

Smart Implementation

Phased rollout for smooth transitions and a team who can guide you along the way
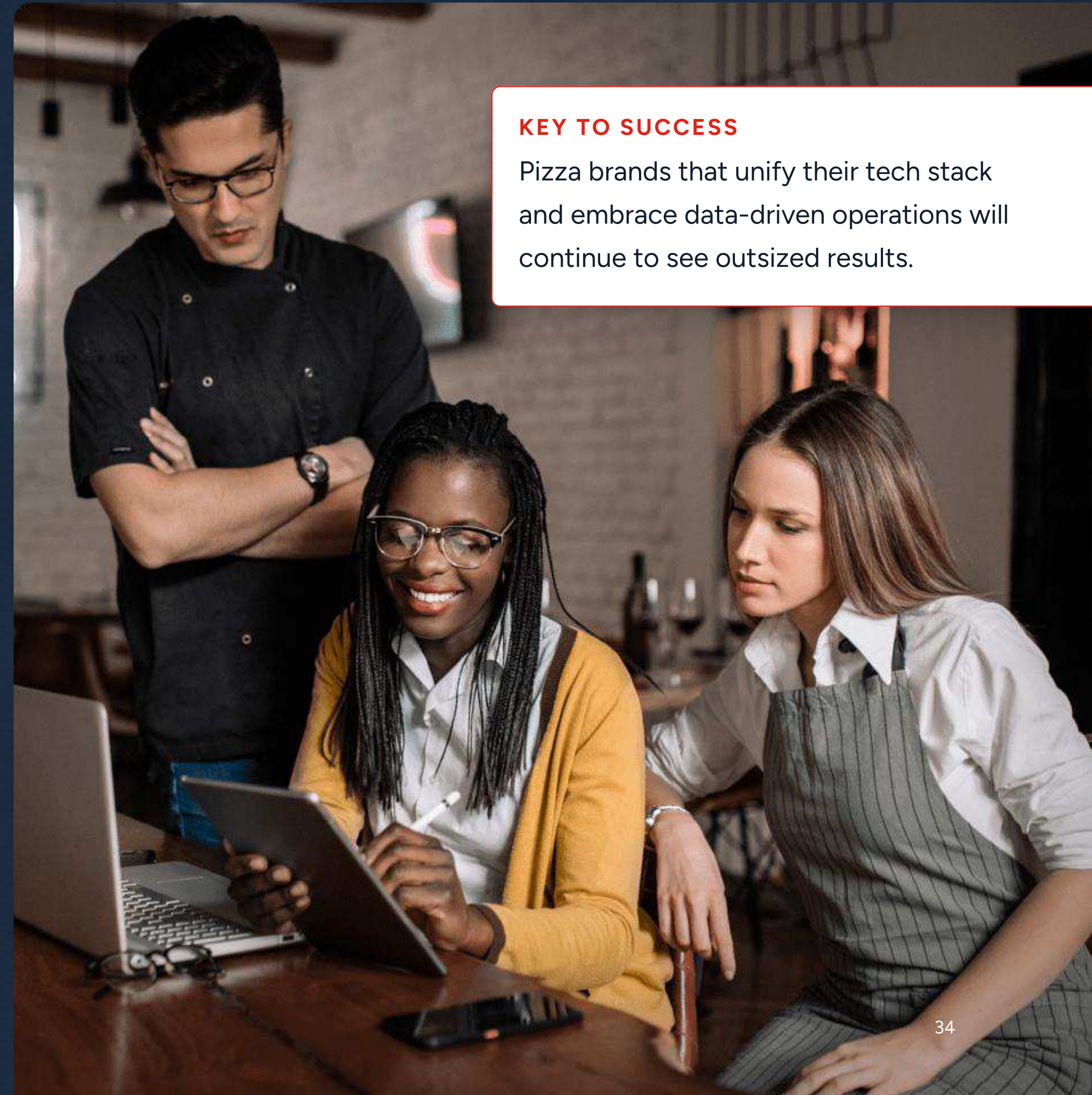
Scalable & Integrated

Technology that grows with your business

Mobile Optimization

Meeting customers where they are

KEY TO SUCCESS

Pizza brands that unify their tech stack and embrace data-driven operations will continue to see outsized results.

The Checkmate Advantage

At Checkmate, we specialize in addressing the unique challenges faced by mid-sized pizza brands:

Building Custom Experiences
Easier than ever to launch unique ordering sites and apps

Data-Driven Insights
Personalize customer interactions and optimize operations

Order Centralization
Integrate multiple platforms into a single stream

Scalable Architecture
Start with core functionalities and expand as you grow

Voice AI Integration
Streamline operations with cutting-edge technology

Expert Guidance
Benefit from our deep industry knowledge

Checkmate

Our solutions are designed to help you scale on your terms, whether you're upgrading existing systems or building a comprehensive digital strategy from the ground up.

Ready to take the next step?

Reach out to Checkmate for a consultation tailored to your unique needs and goals. The future of pizza is digital, and your slice of the market is waiting.

Let's make it happen

Checkmate

ABOUT CHECKMATE

Checkmate empowers enterprise restaurant brands with powerful ordering solutions and hands-on support. Our scalable technology enables restaurants to drive sales across channels, including custom websites, apps, kiosks, catering, third-party marketplaces, voice AI, and more. With seamless integrations, smarter analytics, and 24/7 service, Checkmate helps brands conquer their digital goals. Restaurants can launch unique ordering experiences, centrally manage menus, recapture revenue, leverage customer data, and continually adapt with new integrations. Regardless of how you want to grow, Checkmate has the tools and guidance to power, manage, and evolve your digital business. Learn more at itsacheckmate.com.

Connect with us