Fall 2025

State of Business Dining Report

Presented by

dinova™ Technomic by informa

The $212 Billion Case for Business Dining

The latest headlines dwell on consumer pullbacks—fewer office lunches, tighter wallets, slowing traffic. But those snapshots miss an important part of the picture: business dining is holding steady and remains a massive, underappreciated growth engine.

The full scale of that market has been quantified for the first time, and it's staggering: around 1 of every 5 dollars spent at restaurants can be traced to business dining. In an unpredictable economy, business dining is one of the clearest opportunities for restaurant operators to gain an edge.

This report is the only one of its kind, built on proprietary data that cuts through the noise to uncover the patterns shaping business dining—and the foodservice industry—today.

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Sizing Up the Business Dining Market

Team lunches. Client dinners. Meals on the road. Event catering. These expenditures add up to a market far bigger than most realize.

The $212B Slice You Can't Ignore

Business dining is 16-20% of the $1.06T U.S. dining market.

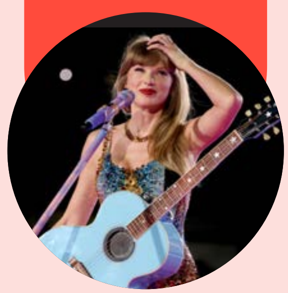
How We Got Here

Dinova's market size estimate is based on a blend of top-down and bottom-up analysis, drawing from U.S. Census industry totals, GBTA business travel data, IRS filings, and our own corporate cardholder spend data. Because no single source captures all business dining activity and reporting practices vary widely, the result is a range rather than a single figure: $170–212 billion, or roughly 16–20% of the U.S. dining market.

How big is $212 billion?

Over $403,000 is spent on business dining per minute.

Roughly the revenue of **100 Taylor Swift Eras Tours**

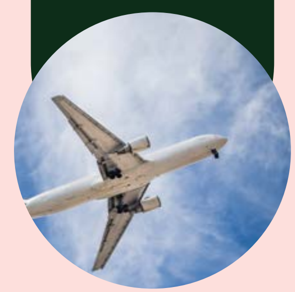


$200B

Almost the entire **GDP of Orlando**

$217B

Nearly equivalent to **total U.S. airline revenue in 2024**



$247B

Market Outlook: Business Dining Segment Growth

Expectations were high after a strong finish to 2024, but the new year brought a bumpy start. Business dining has seesawed through the first half of 2025, with growth tempered by seasonal mid-year patterns and broader economic headwinds.

Despite the volatility, YOY sales and traffic growth outpaced the overall market in June, and the segment remains on track for modest year-end gains of 2-4%. In an environment with such strong headwinds on consumer spending and traffic, the modest gains from business dining is even more vital.

Total Sales and Traffic by Segment

June YoY Growth

3.5%
Total Sales, **All Dining**

5.3%
Total Sales, **Business Dining**

0.4%
Total Traffic, **All Dining**

1.6%
Total Traffic, **Business Dining**

"Business dining isn't monolithic. Growth varies dramatically across industries, markets, and formats, which is why tracking the data in real time matters more than ever."

Alison Quinn
Dinova CEO

All dining spend is also following an uneven path, coming back from negative performance the previous year to show gains in overall spend and traffic. While consumer sentiment remains poor across US dining due to personal budget constraints and policy shifts, business dining continues to show resilience, with 5.3% YOY growth in overall sales compared to the broader market's 3.5% growth.

Digging Deeper

Looking beyond June, business dining shows positive YTD growth of 2.4%, but results vary significantly across the sector. Some restaurant formats and markets are posting double-digit gains in both spend and traffic, while others struggle with declining performance. **Geography, format, and client mix all play an outsized role in business dining performance.**

One

4 Shifts Defining Business Dining in 2025

Fast Beats Fancy—For Now

Business diners' appetite for convenience, value, and catering grows.

Limited-service restaurants, especially fast-casual brands, are capturing a growing share of business dining spend even as chains like Chipotle and Cava struggle in the broader market. **As overall LSR growth held steady, fast casual brands saw the strongest YTD (January-June) sales growth at 5% among business diners.**

YTD (Jan-June) Business Dining Growth

Fast Casual Brands

5.2%	1.9%	3.3%
Total Dining Spend	Traffic	Average Sale

Quick Service (QSR)
"Fast food" focused on low cost, consistency, and efficiency, often with drive-thru or counter service.

Fast Casual
A step up from QSRs, offering fresher ingredients, more customization, and a higher-quality atmosphere.

Business Catering

A Key Opportunity for LSRs

10.5%
Spend Growth
YTD (Jan-June)

6.7%
Traffic Growth
YTD (Jan-June)

3.5%
Avg Sale Growth
YTD (Jan-June)

Much of fast casual's momentum is driven by business catering, defined by Dinova as purchases over $150 at limited-service restaurants. These larger-ticket orders, often tied to team meals and workplace events, are fueling growth in a segment otherwise constrained by consumer value wars and the shrinking price gap with full-service restaurants.

Did You Know

70% of employees who **first try a restaurant through an employer-provided meal will purchase from that restaurant outside of work**, making workplace catering a valuable customer acquisition engine for savvy restaurant operators.

Meanwhile, Broader Market Faces Headwinds

"Traffic continues to be sluggish and driven by consumer weariness related to inflation and the uncertainty caused by the tariff situation."

Rich Shank,
Senior Principal
and Vice President of
Innovation at Technomic

https://www.ezcater.com/company/press-release/new-ezcater-data-highlights-workplace-food-as-a-key-growth-driver-for-restaurants/

TWO

4 Shifts Defining Business Dining in 2025

Fewer Visits, Higher Value

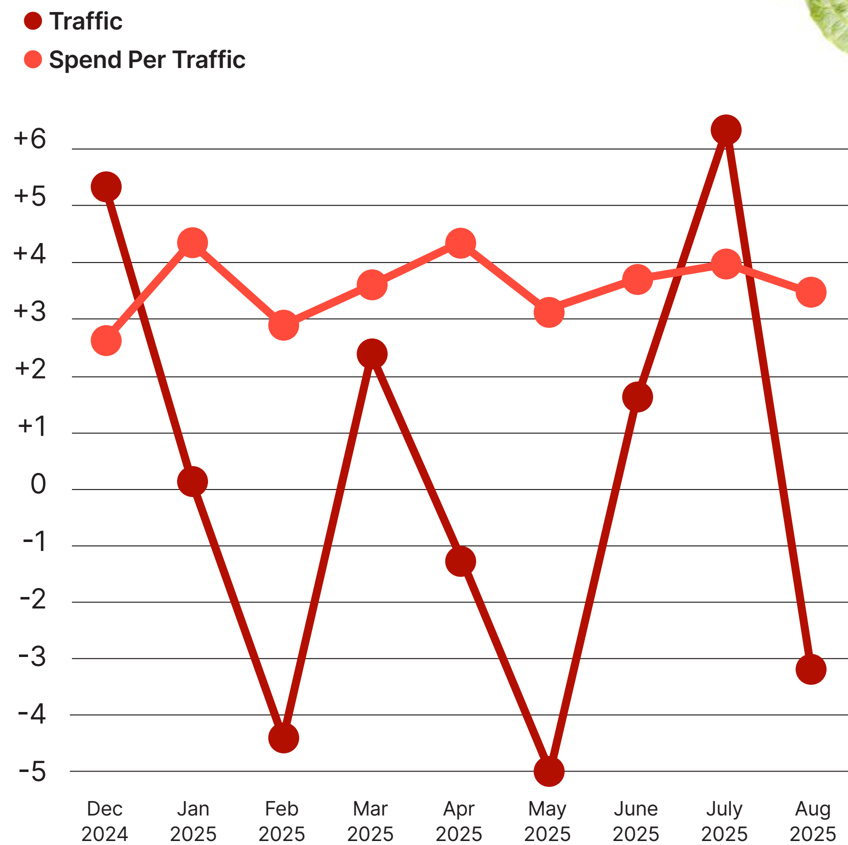
Business diners are focusing on quality over quantity.

Average spend per business dining meal is up 3.6% YTD (Jan-June), pointing to fewer but more premium dining occasions. The same growth pattern appears in Technomic's consumer dining data, where average sales rose 3.7% YTD even as traffic turned negative.

Tapping into highly-profitable and non-price sensitive business diners can help improve both the top-line and bottom-line results for restaurant operators.

The average spend per business meal has increased 3.6% since 2024.

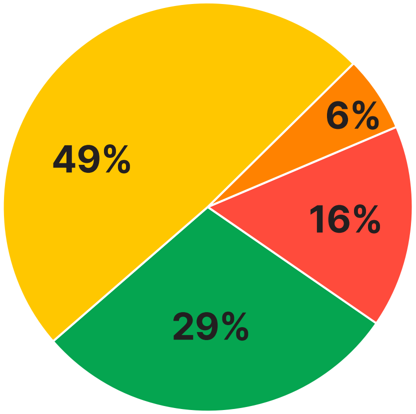
Year Over Year Performance



52% of the top U.S. business dining markets demonstrate value-led growth, where average spend exceeds traffic.

Where Do The Dollars Go?

The breakout of **business dining spend by occasion** has remained largely unchanged since 2023, with personal dining and group gatherings comprising over three-fourths.



- Large Meetings and Events (more than $5K)
- Small Meetings ($1-$5K)
- Gatherings ($250-$1K)
- Personal Dining (less than $250)

Full Service Down, Fast Casual Up: What Gives?

Full-service restaurants are underperforming among business diners.

Midscale: ↓15% **YTD (Jan-June)**
Fine Dining: ↓14.8% **YTD (Jan-June)**
Casual Dining: ↓5% **YTD (Jan-June)**

While the downturn is more pronounced among business diners, full-service restaurants are also squeezed in the broader market, where midscale and fine dining are down.

Bottom line: In this unpredictable economy, traditional patterns are being flipped on their heads—and staying close to the data is essential.

Three

4 Shifts Defining Business Dining in 2025

Tech & Finance Markets Feast

Industry mix and regional dynamics shape business dining performance.

The GBTA's 2025 Business Travel Index highlights clear divides across industries. Trade-sensitive sectors like manufacturing and wholesale trade remain under pressure, while service-driven sectors such as professional services, financial services, and technology continue to show relative strength. This dynamic may be contributing to fast casual's strong performance, since these industries often generate steady demand for large group dining and catering.

Business Dining Growth by Industry

YTD (Jan-June)

Growth Industries

- 10.6% Financials
- 9.7% Telecomm
- 9.6% Information Technology

Steady Performance

- 2.7% Health Care

Facing Headwinds

- 3.9% Energy
- 3.6% Consumer Staples
- 3.1% Materials

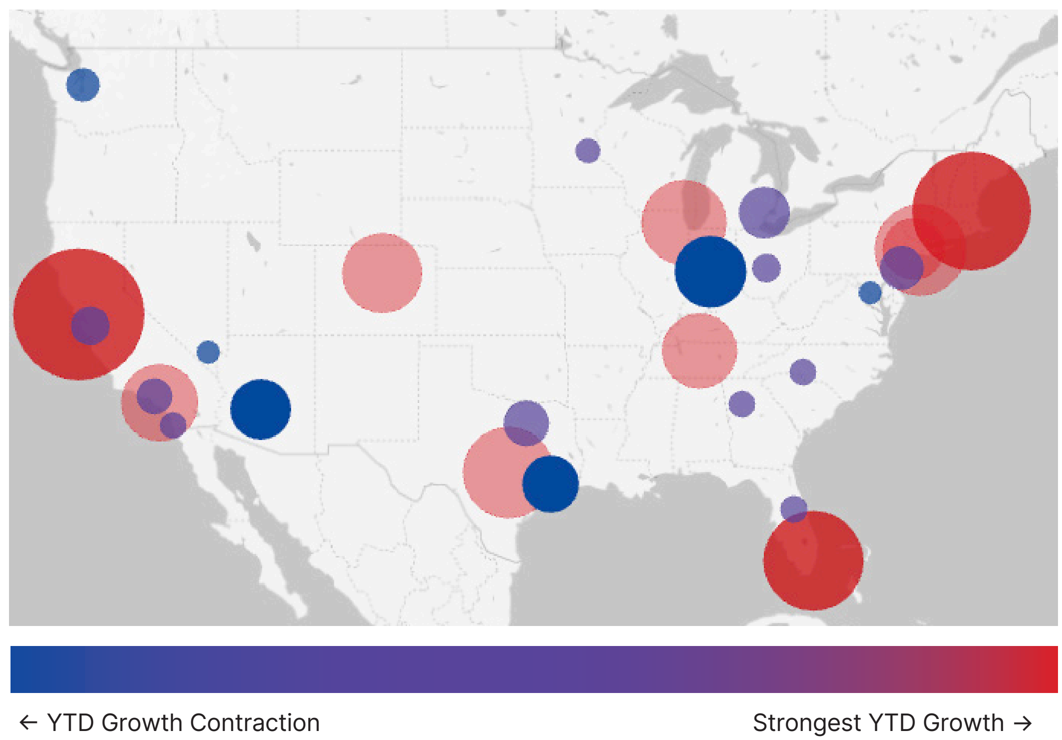
Dinova's business dining data reflects these broader patterns at the market level, across both travel-related and everyday business dining:

- Business dining **growth is currently concentrated in tech-heavy hubs** like San Francisco, Boston, and Austin.
- **Financial hubs** like NYC and Miami maintain solid performance.
- Markets tied to **manufacturing and energy**—including Indianapolis, Phoenix, and Houston—are seeing declines, reflecting economic headwinds.

Many of the **strongest-performing markets are also major destinations for conferences and corporate travel,** bringing in business diners who don't otherwise patronize restaurants in those areas. Programs like Dinova's help restaurants capture spend from out-of-town professionals, providing access to high-value customers.

Total Sales Growth YTD (Jan-June) by Market

San Francisco	16.4%	Los Angeles	2.0%
Boston	13.6%	Columbus, OH	1.0%
Miami	11.0%	Orlando	0.8%
Austin	9.8%	Charlotte	0.7%
New York City	9.8%	Atlanta	0.7%
Chicago	8.9%	San Diego	0.7%
Denver	8.2%	Minneapolis	0.5%
Orange Co.	7.5%	Las Vegas	-0.2%
Nashville	7.5%	Washington, DC	-0.2%
Northern NJ	5.6%	Seattle	-1.7%
Detroit	4.2%	Houston	-5.0%
Dallas	3.4%	Phoenix	-5.5%
Philadelphia	3.1%	Indianapolis	-7.1%
San Jose	2.4%		



Four

4 Shifts Defining Business Dining in 2025

Spend Control Takes Center Stage

Economic uncertainty drives companies to scrutinize budgets.

After strong growth in 2024, global corporate travel forecasts have cooled, with 2025 projections revised down from 10.9% to 6.6% amid ongoing trade policy uncertainty. In a July GBTA poll, 62% of U.S. travel professionals cited higher travel costs as a concern, and nearly half flagged potential budget cuts.

Still, business travel dining spend remains robust in North America, where companies are pairing high per-traveler spend with stronger tools for managing budgets and rewarding travelers.

$258
Average F&B spend per North American business trip[1]

72%
Companies allowing employees to redeem corporate card benefits

73%
North American travelers with a corporate card

[1]GBTA 2025 Business Travel Index Outlook - Annual Global Report & Forecast

"As we thoughtfully anticipate reaching a new high in business travel spending this year, the outlook is steady — but the road ahead is more complex."

Suzanne Neufang
CEO of GBTA

With food and beverage now the third-largest global business travel expense, companies are paying closer attention to how and where business dining dollars are spent—creating both challenges and opportunities for restaurant operators.

Meanwhile, companies are trimming premium-class air travel, with forward bookings trending lower. These patterns suggest organizations may be redirecting resources toward local, in-person gatherings. This will likely create more in-office catering opportunities as employers feed employees who used to travel frequently.

Given these trends, restaurant operators should strategically position themselves in corporate travel and expense programs to capture a larger share of the limited travel spending.

Where Spend Control Meets Employee Satisfaction

As companies look to rein in budgets while keeping employees engaged, Dinova's Preferred Dining Program delivers on both sides of the equation. It offers finance leaders greater visibility and control over business dining spend. For employees, it provides personal perks and rewards that make corporate card use more appealing.

Learn more at Dinova.com

Key Takeaways for Operators

Corporate dining is big business.

The business dining market is worth $170–212 billion—up to 20% of all U.S. dining spend. Even in an uncertain economy, this segment remains fundamentally healthy, with companies continuing to invest in meals that build relationships, fuel productivity, and support their teams.

Value & convenience win.

Travel and dining budgets are under the microscope, making value more important than ever. Business diners are willing to invest in memorable dining experiences, but they also prize convenience—whether that's easy restaurant discovery, seamless ordering, or simplified catering.

Know your client mix.

Performance varies dramatically by industry. Tech and finance drive growth, while trade-sensitive sectors like manufacturing are pulling back.

Geography matters.

Business dining growth depends on **industry mix and traveler dynamics.** Tech and finance hubs fuel steady demand through group dining and catering, while manufacturing- and energy-heavy regions lag. Inbound travelers add another layer, fueling spend from diners who might never otherwise visit local restaurants.

Catering is the key growth engine.

Larger-ticket catering orders are fueling business dining momentum, especially for fast-casual brands, and doubling as a marketing channel that turns workplace meals into new customer acquisition.

Unlock the $212B Business Dining Opportunity

Success in business dining doesn't happen by accident. In an uneven and shifting market, restaurants that act intentionally and strategically will capture a disproportionate share of this lucrative customer segment.

Dinova's Preferred Dining Program connects restaurants directly to corporate diners, delivering high-spend traffic from a market that eats midweek and spends more per check.

Learn more at Dinova.com

Dinova operates a business dining program that includes a network of over 24,000 restaurants in the U.S. and Canada and nearly 600 corporations, government agencies, and small to medium-sized businesses.

Since 1966, Technomic has delivered unparalleled understanding and information to the foodservice industry, supporting thousands of professionals worldwide with original research across every facet of the industry.