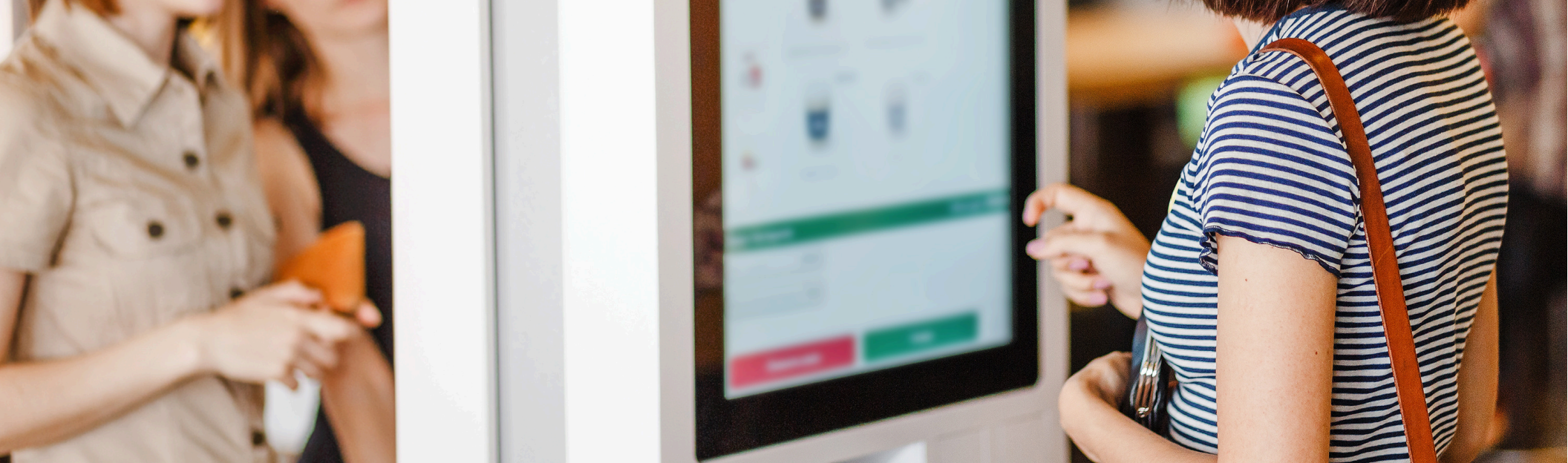




CHEF'STORE INDUSTRY REPORT:

Digital Ordering: What Tech Are Restaurants Investing In?



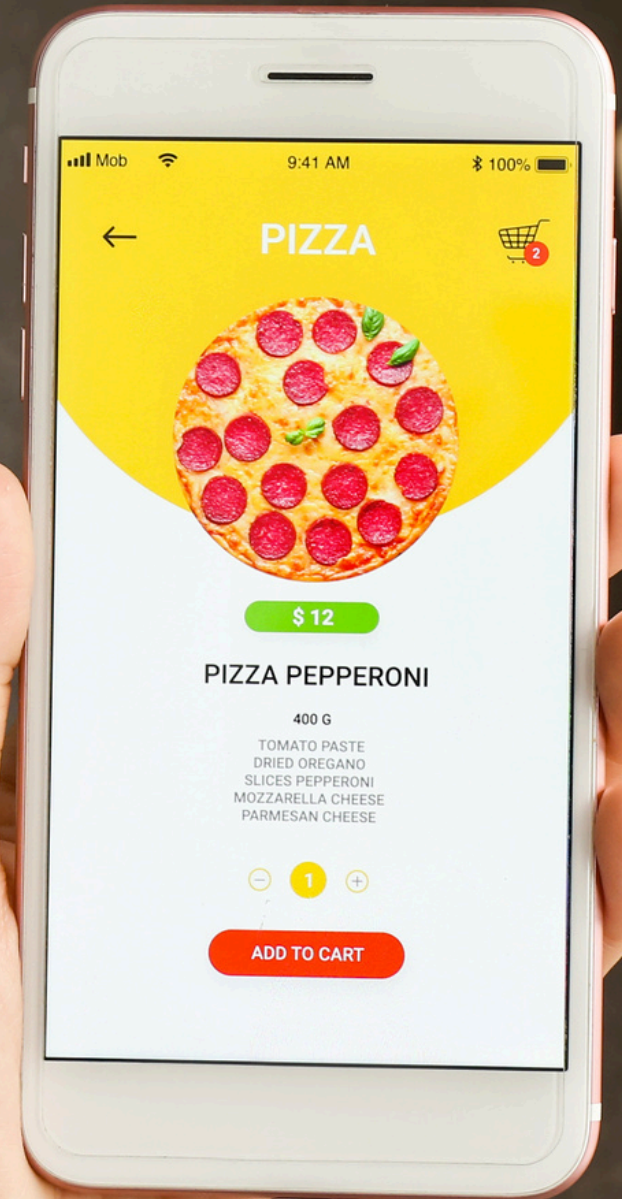
60 PERCENT¹ OF RESTAURANTS PLAN TO INVEST IN DIGITAL TOOLS THAT DIRECTLY BENEFIT THEIR PATRONS, WHILE 55 PERCENT² ARE ADOPTING OPTIONS THAT IMPROVE SERVICE.

The restaurant industry is undergoing a rapid transformation as operators increasingly turn to technology to meet evolving customer expectations and maintain profitability in a highly competitive market. In 2025 and beyond, digital innovation is no longer a luxury; it's a necessity for growth. From streamlining operations to creating more personalized, seamless dining experiences, restaurants are prioritizing strategic tech investments that align with shifting consumer behaviors.

A significant **60 percent¹** of them plan to invest in digital tools that directly benefit their patrons, while **55 percent²** are adopting options that improve service. This growing adoption of digital solutions signals a clear industry-wide pivot toward tech-driven guest experiences that build loyalty, drive efficiency, and ultimately shape the future of dining.

THE EVOLUTION OF RESTAURANT TECH TRENDS

The food-service industry has demonstrated remarkable adaptability, swiftly evolving with the introduction of new technologies over the past few decades. This adaptability is a testament to the industry's resilience and ability to embrace change.



Tech in the 2000s

- Point of Sale (POS) systems became more commonplace, replacing traditional cash registers, early in the 21st century. POS gave restaurants the ability to track and monitor sales and inventory digitally.
- By the mid-2000s, online platforms for ordering and delivery started appearing as a response to customer demand and the rise of internet use.



Digital Ordering in the 2010s

- The 2010s witnessed a significant shift with the widespread adoption of digital restaurant ordering systems. This revolutionized how customers place and receive orders, offering them unprecedented convenience and speed.
- Restaurants implemented mobile payments and loyalty apps to simplify transactions and improve customer engagement.
- Automated dining experiences started showing up, including self-serve kiosks and QR-coded menus. They provided customers the autonomy to take charge of their orders and payments, while helping restaurants manage labor demands.



Digital Pivot Solutions in the COVID Era

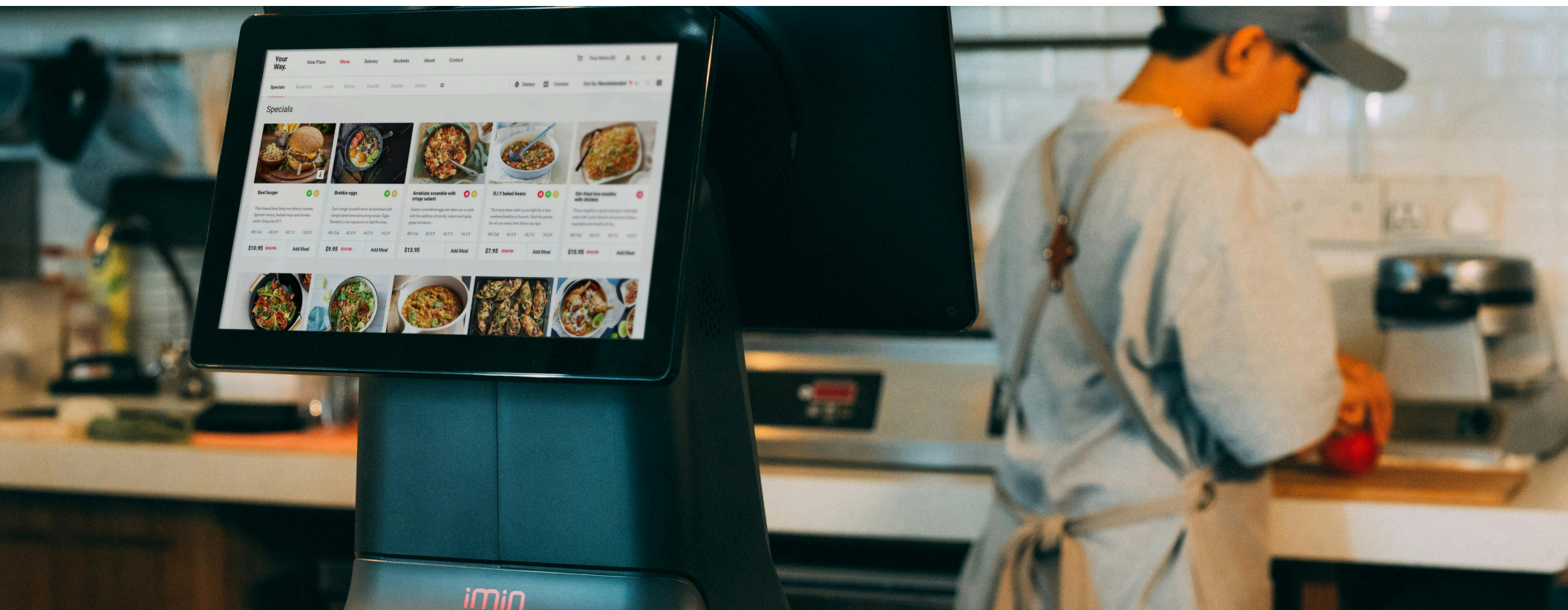
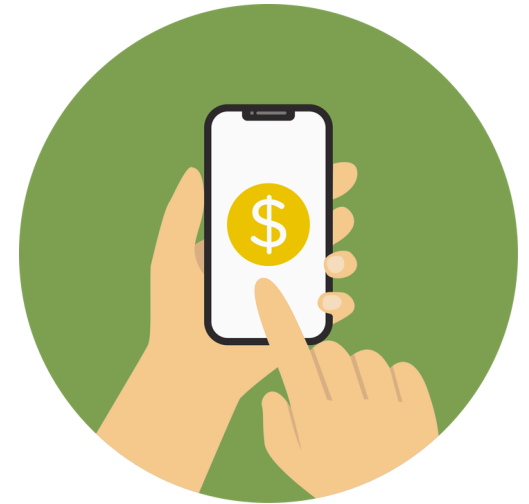
- Contactless technologies, especially concerning delivery and takeout options, quickly expanded in 2020.
- The use of food delivery apps increased 25 percent³ in 2020.
- By 2021, 68 percent⁴ of diners stated they were more likely to order takeout than pre-pandemic.



THE EVOLUTION OF RESTAURANT TECH TRENDS

Technology is no longer just an operational convenience - it's a strategic differentiator in the restaurant industry. In fact, **76 percent**⁵ of restaurant owners believe technology provides a competitive edge. Yet, despite this belief, only **13 percent**⁶ find their current tech systems sufficient.

So, what technologies are emerging as game-changers for the future of dining? The following four innovations are leading the charge, offering restaurants new ways to improve efficiency, enhance guest experiences, and future-proof their businesses in 2025 and beyond.



1. Mobile Payment

The ease of mobile payments is driving a shift away from card or cash payments.



79 percent⁷ of all digital transactions are expected to come from mobile payments by 2025.



53 percent⁸ of U.S. consumers state they use mobile payments over traditional payment⁴ methods.

Mobile payments can simplify and speed up transactions. A single tap from a downloadable app on a customer's mobile allows for quick payments, without the added wait for change or a receipt to print.



2. Self-Ordering Systems

What took off during contactless service in the early 2020s has become a significant part of consumer preference.

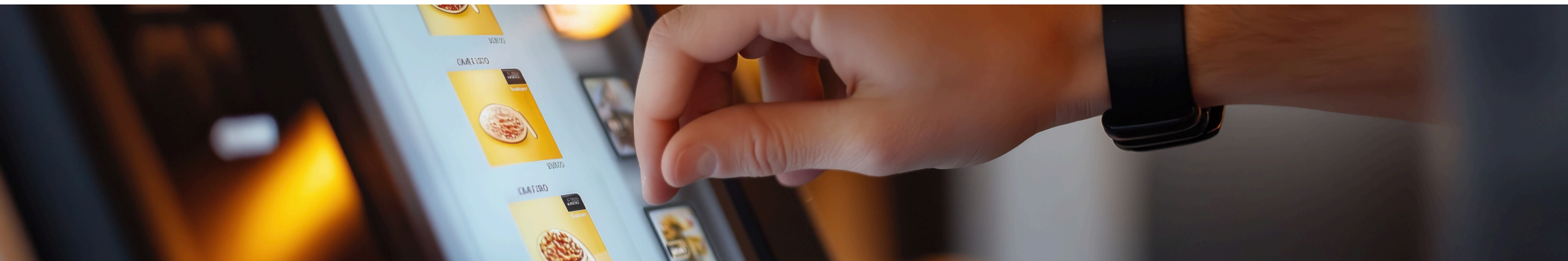


An astounding **91 percent**⁹ of surveyed Gen Z consumers said they would frequent a restaurant with self-service kiosks. With a population of just under **71 million**¹⁰, Zoomers can significantly impact revenue.



Outside of Gen Z customers, **60 percent**¹¹ of general consumers would choose an establishment that offered self-ordering options over one that did not.

Self-service kiosks give customers the benefit of placing and paying for orders quickly. For restaurants, these customer-ordering-based systems are not just about convenience; they also help combat labor costs, reduce order errors, and increase efficiency, offering a promising outlook for revenue growth.



3. Online Ordering and Delivery Apps

80 percent¹² of surveyed diners said they would order delivery through a mobile app. From the restaurant owner's perspective, operators state that **41 percent**¹³ of their overall sales come from digital touchpoints, like online apps.

Restaurant owners share which **digital touchpoints**¹⁴ they believe have the greatest positive impact on revenue:

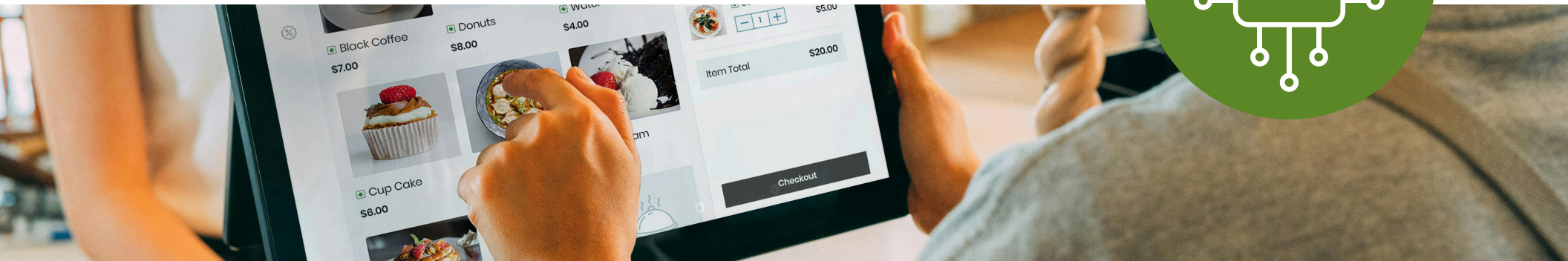
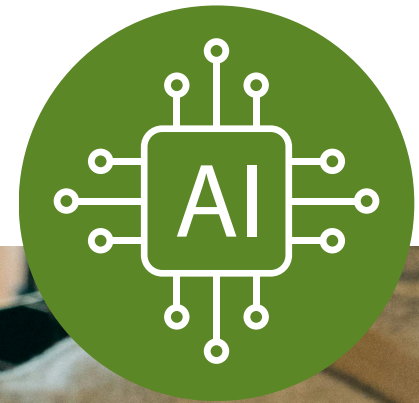
- **25 percent:** Third-party delivery app
- **13 percent:** Restaurant-branded mobile app
- **11 percent:** First-party delivery app
- **10 percent:** Catering order app



4. Data Optimization Tools

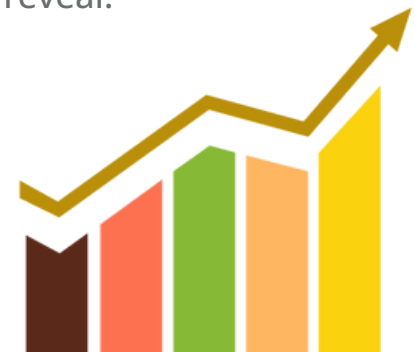
Advanced POS systems and generative artificial intelligence solutions provide key operational and customer insights. These systems can collect digital data to anticipate and adapt to future industry and customer trends. **95 percent¹⁵** of restaurants use some form of AI to streamline service and logistics in **three main categories¹⁶**:

- **Menu Optimization:** 35 percent
- **Inventory Management:** 35 percent
- **Reservation Management:** 32 percent



Collected and optimized data also gives owners a good understanding of customer habits, which can positively impact targeted marketing campaigns. **Statistics¹⁷** from surveyed restaurant owners reveal:

- **27 percent** believe they definitely optimize their data
- **26 percent** stated it's possible they do
- **23 percent** claimed they likely did not
- **6 percent** definitely do not optimize



THE FUTURE OF RESTAURANT TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT

Technology has not only become an integral part of the foodservice industry but will remain a driving force behind its evolution in the years ahead. From precision-targeted marketing campaigns to AI-powered inventory management, advanced online ordering platforms, and real-time data analytics, tech solutions are shaping every aspect of how restaurants operate and engage with guests.

Operators who prioritize the right digital investments today are setting themselves up to meet rising customer expectations, navigate ongoing labor challenges, and remain agile in an increasingly competitive market. As consumer behaviors and technologies continue to evolve, the restaurants that proactively embrace innovation will be the ones best positioned to thrive, not just in 2025, but well into the future of dining.



Sources

1. <https://www.netsuite.com>
2. <https://www.netsuite.com>
3. <https://www.appmysite.com>
4. <https://www.appmysite.com>
5. <https://get.apibase.com>
6. <https://get.apibase.com>
7. <https://tech.co>
8. <https://tech.co>
9. <https://bizplanr.ai>
10. <https://www.statista.com>
11. <https://www.statista.com>
12. <https://www.netsuite.com>
13. <https://images.go.informamail05.com>
14. <https://images.go.informamail05.com>
15. <https://get.apibase.com>
16. <https://get.apibase.com>
17. <https://images.go.informamail05.com>