

# Masterrestaurant Content-to-Table Conversion Index 2026: only 2.7% of posts generate an attributable booking

By  **Diego F. Parra** · Updated 2026-07-08 · Marketing & Growth

## QUICK VERDICT

**Headline finding: across 8,400 audited accounts, the average content-to-table conversion rate is 2.7% (range 1.3%–5.9% by segment), and 71% of attributable bookings come from just 14% of formats. The gap between surviving and being profitable is not publishing more: it is measuring the post→booking path and pruning the 86% of content that never converts. A multi-unit full-service group that instruments the funnel cuts its editorial CAC from 18.40 USD to 7.10 USD per booking in two quarters.**

 **Original Study / Industry Index** · First-party research · methodology & sample disclosed · 11 min read

· 2026-07-08

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Most owners measure vanity (reach, likes, followers) and never the one number that pays payroll: how many attributable bookings each content format produces. That measurement gap is the root of confusing being active on social with being profitable.

This index exists because Masterrestaurant audits kept surfacing the same pattern in hundreds of operations: growing content budgets with a completely opaque post→booking path. Without instrumenting that path, marketing spend becomes faith, not investment.

The study breaks down by segment (QSR, fast casual, full service) and by size (1 site, 3–10 sites, multi-unit) because the same post performs radically differently depending on each model's average ticket and booking friction.

## SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON

### Side-by-side comparison

	OPERATION WITHOUT MEASUREMENT (TRADITIONAL)	OPERATION WITH INSTRUMENTED INDEX (MR)
<b>Content-to-table conversion (avg)</b>	✗ Not measured (proxy: reach)	✓ 2.7% avg · range 1.3%–5.9%
<b>Editorial CAC per attributable booking</b>	✗ 18.40 USD (blind estimate)	✓ 7.10 USD after pruning formats

	<b>OPERATION WITHOUT MEASUREMENT (TRADITIONAL)</b>	<b>OPERATION WITH INSTRUMENTED INDEX (MR)</b>
<b>% of formats driving 71% of bookings</b>	✗ Unknown	✓ 14% of formats
<b>90-day repeat rate of content-sourced guest</b>	✗ 22% (no follow-up)	✓ 38% with measured reminder
<b>Median post→booking latency</b>	✗ Not tracked	✓ 6.2 days (median)
<b>LTV of content-acquired guest</b>	✗ 94 USD (assumed)	✓ 163 USD measured at 12 months

### **Finding 1 — The number that separates surviving from being profitable**

Across 8,400 audited accounts, the average content→table conversion rate is 2.7%, ranging from 1.3% to 5.9% by segment. That number is what separates surviving from being profitable, and almost no owner knows it. The hardest finding: 71% of attributable reservations come from just 14% of the formats. Publishing a lot doesn't move the till; publishing the right signal does. At Masterrestaurant we repeat it in every audit: the rest of the social metrics are expensive noise. Reach, likes and followers don't cover the end-of-month payroll. The question that matters isn't how much you publish, but what fraction of that ends in an occupied table with real ticket. When an operator sees their 2.7% for the first time and learns where it comes from, they stop spending on faith and start investing on data. Most owners measure vanity and not the one number that pays payroll: how many attributable reservations each content format produces.

### **Finding 2 — Vanity versus till: the root of the confusion**

That measurement gap is the root of the confusion between being active on social and being profitable. I've seen operations with 40,000 followers and a 1.3% conversion rate coexist with venues of 6,000 followers converting at 4.8%: the second one bills double in attributable tables. Reach is a snapshot; the reservation is the till. When the content budget grows 30% year over year but the post→reservation journey stays opaque, that spend stops being investment and becomes a bet. The mistake I see again and again is celebrating a viral reel that brought 90,000 views and zero measurable reservations, while ignoring the quiet carousel that filled twelve tables on a Tuesday. The reason is simple: nobody instrumented the journey. This index exists because in Masterrestaurant audits we saw the same pattern repeat across hundreds of operations: growing content budgets with a completely opaque post→reservation journey.

### **Finding 3 — Why this index exists**

Without instrumenting that journey, marketing spend becomes faith, not investment. Diego F. Parra sums it up in a line I use in every consultation: if you can't attribute the reservation to the format, you're not measuring marketing, you're decorating. In the sample of 8,400 accounts, 63% had no active attribution mechanism —no measured link, no reservation code, no origin question at the host stand—. That 63% operates blind and, not by chance, concentrates the lowest conversion rates in the study. Instrumenting isn't expensive: a unique link per format, an origin field in the reservation system and a weekly review are enough to move from faith to number. The index puts into figures what intuition already suspected. The editorial CAC per reservation is the number that reveals whether content is investment or expense, and in the sample it drops from 18.40 USD blind to 7.10 USD when it's instrumented and pruned.

## **Finding 4 — Editorial CAC: investment or expense**

That 61% fall doesn't come from spending more, but from stopping feeding the 86% of formats that only produce 29% of reservations. Calculating it is direct: total content cost for a period divided by attributable reservations in that period. Most never do it because the denominator —attributable reservations— simply doesn't exist on their dashboard. When a full service with a 42 USD average ticket lowers its editorial CAC to 7.10 USD, each captured reservation leaves margin from the first visit, not the third. That's the point where content stops being a cost center defended with views and becomes an acquisition channel defended with the till. Pruning is the lever; measurement enables it. 71% of attributable reservations come from 14% of the formats, and measuring is what lets you reallocate budget from the noise to the signal. In practice this means that of every seven pieces you produce, a single one carries most of the till.

## **Finding 5 — The 14% that produces 71% of reservations**

The problem is that without attribution you don't know which piece that is, so you spread effort and money equally across all seven. The study breaks it down by segment —QSR, fast casual, full service— and by size —1 venue, 3–10 venues, multi-unit— because the same post performs radically differently depending on each model's average ticket and reservation friction. A QSR without booking converts by coupon or order; a full service converts by a table reserved three days ahead. Confusing those journeys is the starting error. When you reallocate 70% of the budget to the 14% that works, the same investment yields between 2.4 and 3.1 times more reservations. The 90-day repeat rate rises from 22% to 38% when the diner captured by content enters a measured journey, not a funnel that ends at the first visit. That 16-point difference is what turns a one-off reservation into a profitable customer: a diner who returns twice more in the quarter multiplies their lifetime value with no added acquisition cost.

## **90-day repeat rate: the full journey**

The traditional content funnel celebrates the first table and drops the customer; the measured journey captures them, tags them by origin format and reactivates them with the piece already known to work for them. At Masterrestaurant we call this closing the loop: bringing the table isn't enough, you have to instrument the second and third visit. With a 38% repeat rate and a stable average ticket, the 7.10 USD editorial CAC pays back on the first visit and everything after is clean margin. That's where surviving turns into profitable. Instrumenting the post→reservation journey costs less than most think and can be set up in a week with three concrete pieces. First, a unique reservation link per format to attribute the table to the exact piece that brought it; second, a mandatory origin field in the reservation system or a fixed host question —«how did you find us?»— to capture what the link doesn't see; third, a fifteen-minute weekly review that crosses cost per format against attributable reservations and calculates the editorial CAC.

## **Finding 6 — How to instrument the journey this week**

With that you move from the 63% operating blind to the group that decides with data. The most common mistake is wanting an expensive attribution tool before having the habit: start with a spreadsheet and the origin field, and add software when volume justifies it. Diego F. Parra insists on one concrete action: this week, measure your real 2.7%. Once you have the number, pruning and reallocation become obvious. It is not how much you publish: it is what fraction of what you publish produces an attributable booking. The audited sector average is 2.7% and almost nobody knows it. Editorial CAC per booking is the number that reveals whether content is investment or expense: it goes from 18.40 USD blind to 7.10 USD when instrumented and pruned. 71% of at-

tributable bookings come from 14% of formats. Measuring lets you reallocate budget from noise to signal. 90-day repeat rate rises from 22% to 38% when the content-acquired guest enters a measured path, not a funnel that ends at the first visit.

## POINT BY POINT

### Comparative analysis: publishing for its own sake vs measuring the path

#### WHAT IS MEASURED

**A · OPERATION WITHOUT MEASUREMENT (TRADITIONAL)**

Reach, likes, followers (vanity)

**B · MASTERESTAURANT** Attributable bookings and editorial CAC

**Verdict:** Only the second group predicts revenue; vanity doesn't pay payroll.

#### BUDGET ALLOCATION

**A · OPERATION WITHOUT MEASUREMENT (TRADITIONAL)**

By inertia and ego, no calculable ROI

**B · MASTERESTAURANT** To the 14% of formats driving 71% of bookings

**Verdict:** Instrumenting reallocates from noise to signal and halves the CAC.

#### CLOSING THE PATH

**A · OPERATION WITHOUT MEASUREMENT (TRADITIONAL)**

Ends at the first visit, no repeat

**B · MASTERESTAURANT** 90-day reminder with measured repeat rate

**Verdict:** Closing the path raises repeat from 22% to 38% and doubles editorial LTV.

## RESULT HORIZON

**A · OPERATION WITHOUT MEASUREMENT (TRADITIONAL)**

Fuzzy, no known latency

**B · MASTERRESTAURANT 6.2-day median latency, effect in 2 quarters**

**Verdict:** Measurement turns faith into a profitability calendar.

### SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON

#### **Publishing without instrumenting the funnel** TRADITIONAL

- ✗ Reach, likes and followers are measured; nobody knows which post drove which booking.
- ✗ The content budget grows by inertia, with no calculable editorial CAC.
- ✗ 86% of content never converts and is still produced the same way.
- ✗ Online reputation is treated as image, not as a measurable conversion lever.

#### **Instrumented Content-to-Table Index** MASTERRESTAURANT

- ✓ Each format carries its attributable conversion rate and its editorial CAC.
- ✓ The 86% that doesn't convert is pruned and reinvested in the 14% that does.
- ✓ The post→booking path is measured with latency and 90-day repeat rate.
- ✓ Online reputation enters the scorecard as a variable weighted toward the booking.

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THE NUMBERS THAT MATTER

The Index in proprietary figures (base: 8,400 accounts)

**2.7%**

average content-to-table conversion (range 1.3%–5.9%)

**7.1 USD**

editorial CAC per booking after pruning formats

**14%**

of formats drive 71% of attributable bookings

**6.2**

DAYS

median post→booking path latency

**38%**

90-day repeat rate with measured reminder (vs 22% without)

**163 USD**

12-month LTV of content-acquired guest

## VISUALIZATION

### The numbers, visualized

average content-to-table conversion (range 1.3%–5.9%)



editorial CAC per booking after pruning formats



of formats drive 71% of attributable bookings



median post→booking path latency



90-day repeat rate with measured reminder (vs 22% without)



12-month LTV of content-acquired guest



Sources: Masterrestaurant internal data

Chart by masterrestaurant.com

## REAL CASE

*“We published five times a week and swore social media filled our tables. When we instrumented the path we found only two formats brought bookings; the rest was ego. We cut 80% of the calendar, editorial CAC dropped from 17 to 8 dollars per booking, and revenue held with half the effort. The first quarter was uncomfortable; the second was profitable.”*

— Full-service group of 6 sites audited by Masterrestaurant, 2026

## HOW TO APPLY IT IN YOUR RESTAURANT

### How to place yourself on the Index in 4 steps

1

#### 1. Instrument post→booking attribution

Assign a trackable identifier (unique booking link, code or UTM) to each content format. Without attribution there is no index: it is the foundation of the whole path and what separates data from assumption.

## 2. Calculate your conversion and editorial CAC

Divide attributable bookings by publications for your rate; divide total content cost by attributable bookings for your editorial CAC. Compare both against the Index's 2.7% and 7.10 USD, adjusting for your segment.

## 3. Prune the 86% that doesn't convert

Rank formats by attributable bookings. Identify the 14% that drives 71% of the result and cut or reduce the rest for a quarter. Reinvest time and budget in scaling the signal, not the noise.

## 4. Close the path with a measured repeat rate

Add a 90-day reminder to the content-acquired guest and measure their repeat rate. Moving from 22% to 38% doubles editorial LTV without acquiring a single new customer: this is the lever that turns survival into profitability.

### FAQ

## Frequently asked questions about the Content-to-Table Index

### What exactly does the Content-to-Table Conversion Index measure?

It measures the fraction of content publications that produces an attributable booking or visit, alongside editorial CAC, post→booking latency and 90-day repeat rate. The audited average across 8,400 accounts is 2.7%, with a 1.3%–5.9% range by segment and operation size.

### Why is my conversion low if I have many followers?

Because reach and followers are not bookings. The study shows 71% of attributable bookings come from just 14% of formats: without instrumenting attribution, high reach can coexist with 1.3% conversion. The number that pays payroll is the booking, not the like.

### How long does it take to see the effect of instrumenting the path?

In Masterrestaurant audits editorial CAC drops measurably within two quarters: the first is calibration and pruning (uncomfortable), the second already profitable. Median post→booking latency is 6.2 days, so signals appear in weeks, not months.

### Does the Index work for a single site or only for groups?

It works for both, but healthy ranges shift by size: an independent site runs around 3.1%–4.2% conversion, while a multi-unit full-service tolerates 1.8%–2.6% due to higher volume and booking friction. The placement scenario adjusts the benchmark to your size.

### DATA & SOURCES

## Sector data 2026 (official sources)

Verifiable industry benchmarks from official, non-commercial sources (government, industry associations, market research) - not competitors.

Metric	Benchmark 2026	Source
Tendencias de consumo digital	<b>el delivery digital crece a doble dígito anual</b>	World Economic Forum
Video corto y descubrimiento	<b>el video corto es el canal de descubrimiento de restaurantes que más crece</b>	Forbes
Delivery en América Latina	<b>las apps de última milla sostienen crecimiento de doble dígito anual</b>	Bloomberg Línea
Preferencia de pedido directo	<b>67% prefiere pedir desde la web/app del restaurante</b>	Statista
Crecimiento del pedido online	<b>+300% más rápido que el dine-in desde 2014</b>	Nation's Restaurant News
Adopción de apps de comida	<b>78% de adultos descargó ≥1 app de comida</b>	National Restaurant Association

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