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 "Full service restaurants face many obstacles preventing traffic which will need to be rectified in order to boost sales. . In response, operators can expand dayparts and item formats; undergo renovations and reimaging; utilize deals, discounting, and portioning; and offer better-for-you options focusing on a variety categories."
 Bethany Wall, Foodservice Analyst

This report looks at the following areas:

- What are the most effective strategies for full service menus?
- How can sit-downs compete with low-priced dining options?
- Should restaurants be providing healthy options to attract consumers?

Full service restaurants' largest threat is trade-down behavior. While they are differentiated from their limited service counterparts due to service, many consumers opt to serve themselves in order to save money. This shift is primarily due to lower levels of disposable income, as well as a shift in consumption remaining after the recession.

Some guests are trading down to other concepts within the full service category, while others are trading down to fast casual concepts or cooking at home instead. This is a reflection of the shift in consumer needs and behaviors, with many consumers seeking upscale items with a less formal dining experience at moderate prices. Further, more and more consumers are looking for snacking and on-the-go options.

Each full service segment has responded to these threats in a different manner. Family midscale concepts have raised the bar when it comes to upscale and better-for-you offerings, while maintaining it's a value price point and service. Casual dining restaurants have increased store hours, expanded their menus, and created lunch promotions that align with fast casuals. They have also created to-go areas, as well as fast casual spin-off concepts. Fine dining restaurants are moving away from prix fixe menus and focusing on happy hour with small plates and cocktails to provide a reduced-priced dining experience. Many full service restaurants have undergone rebranding and restaurant renovation.

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This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market



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Key points

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