

January 2026

Restaurant Performance Index Rose 0.6% in January

The National Restaurant Association’s Restaurant Performance Index (RPI) posted a moderate increase in January, but continued to reflect challenging business conditions for the industry. The RPI – a monthly composite index that tracks the health of the U.S. restaurant industry – stood at 99.9 in January, up 0.6% from a level of 99.3 in December.

Although same-store sales and customer traffic levels improved somewhat from December, readings were still dampened in January. Looking forward, restaurant operators are cautiously optimistic about business conditions in the months ahead. Thirty-two percent of operators expect their sales will be higher in six months, while only 12% anticipate a decline.

The RPI is constructed so that the health of the restaurant industry is measured in relation to a neutral level of 100. Index values above 100 indicate that key industry indicators are in a period of expansion, while index values below 100 represent a period of contraction. The Restaurant Performance Index consists of two components – the Current Situation Index and the Expectations Index.

Current Situation Index Increased 0.8% to a Level of 99.1 in January; Expectations Index Rose 0.4% to a Level of 100.6

The Current Situation Index, which measures current trends in four industry indicators (same-store sales, traffic, labor and capital expenditures), stood at 99.1 in January – up 0.8% from a level of 98.3 in December. Despite the gain, January marked the seventh consecutive month in which the current situation index was below 100 in contraction territory.

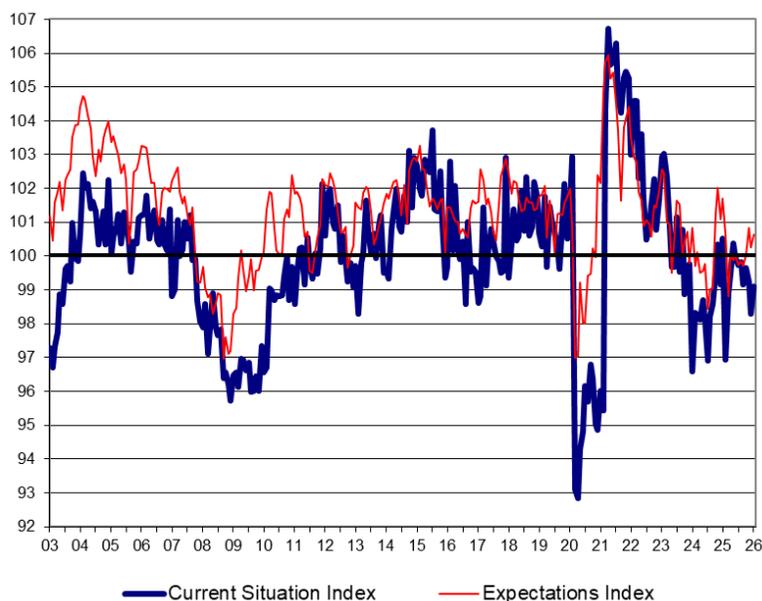
The Expectations Index, which measures restaurant operators’ six-month outlook for four industry indicators (same-store sales, employees, capital expenditures and business conditions), stood at 100.6, up 0.4% from the previous month. Driving the increase was an improvement in restaurant operators’ outlook for sales growth in the months ahead.

Restaurant Performance Index



Source: NRA; Values Greater than 100 = Expansion; Values Less than 100 = Contraction

Current Situation & Expectations Indices



Source: NRA; Values Greater than 100 = Expansion; Values Less than 100 = Contraction

Restaurant Operators Reported Mixed Sales and Traffic Results in January

Restaurant operators reported mixed sales results in January, which was an improvement from December's dampened readings. Forty-three percent of restaurant operators said their same-store sales rose between January 2025 and January 2026, up from 37% of operators who reported higher sales in December. Forty-five percent of operators said their sales declined in January, down from 53% in December.

Restaurant operators continued to report customer traffic declines in January, though results were somewhat better than December. Thirty-six percent of operators said their customer traffic rose between January 2025 and January 2026, up from 28% in December. Fifty-five percent of restaurant operators reported lower traffic in January, down from 60% in December. January represented the 12th consecutive month in which operators reported a net decline in customer traffic.

Fifty percent of operators said they made a capital expenditure for equipment, expansion or remodeling during the last three months. That was the 8th consecutive month in which at least half of operators reported expenditures.

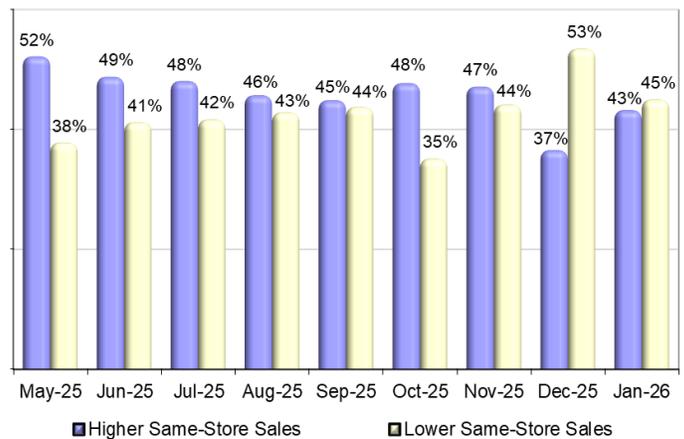
Restaurant Operators Are Somewhat More Positive About Sales Growth

Restaurant operators are slightly more optimistic about sales gains in the months ahead. Thirty-two percent of operators expect their sales volume in six months to be higher than it was during the same period in the previous year. That was essentially unchanged from 34% last month. Only 12% of restaurant operators think their sales will be lower in six months, down from 25% last month.

Restaurant operators remain uncertain about the direction of the overall economy. Only 20% of restaurant operators said they expect economic conditions to improve in six months. Twenty-five percent of restaurant operators think economic conditions will worsen during the next six months, while 55% think conditions will remain about the same as they are now. That represented the 12th consecutive month in which restaurant operators had a net negative outlook for the economy.

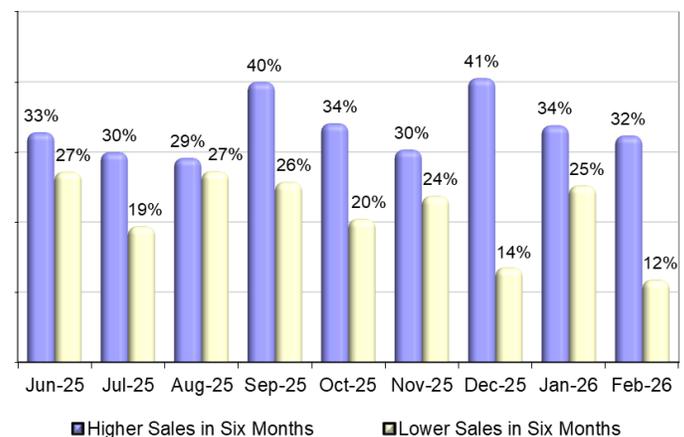
Despite the mixed signals, operators' outlook for capital spending is holding relatively firm. Fifty-three percent of operators said they plan to make a capital expenditure for equipment, expansion or remodeling during the next six months. That represented the 10th consecutive month in which a majority of operators reported plans for capital spending.

Restaurant Operators' Reporting of Same-Store Sales versus Same Month in Previous Year



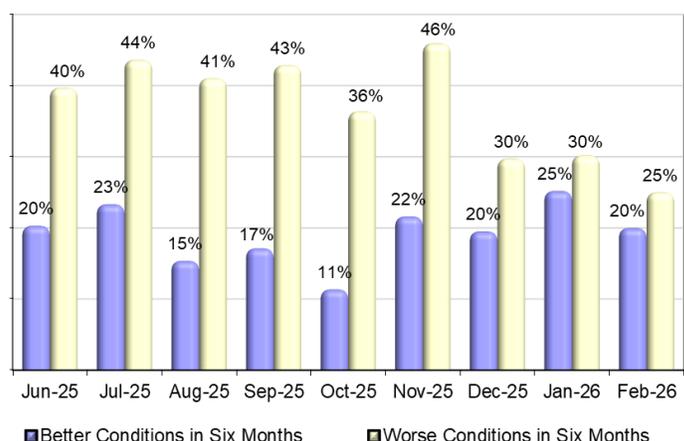
Source: National Restaurant Association, Restaurant Industry Tracking Survey

Restaurant Operators' Outlook for Sales Volume in Six Months versus Same Period in Previous Year



Source: National Restaurant Association, Restaurant Industry Tracking Survey

Restaurant Operators' Outlook for General Economic Conditions in Six Months



Source: National Restaurant Association, Restaurant Industry Tracking Survey

National Restaurant Association Restaurant Performance Index and Its Components

	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	Dec-25 to Jan-26
Restaurant Performance Index	99.4	99.8	100.0	99.3	99.9	0.6%
Current Situation Index	99.2	99.6	99.2	98.3	99.1	0.8%
<i>Current Situation Indicators:</i>						
Same-Store Sales	100.1	101.3	100.3	98.3	99.8	1.5%
Customer Traffic	98.2	98.5	98.0	96.8	98.1	1.3%
Labor	97.9	98.5	98.3	97.8	98.4	0.6%
Capital Expenditures	100.4	100.3	100.4	100.2	100.1	-0.1%
Expectations Index	99.7	100.0	100.8	100.2	100.6	0.4%
<i>Expectations Indicators:</i>						
Same-Store Sales	101.4	100.7	102.7	100.9	102.1	1.2%
Staffing	99.8	101.1	100.7	100.1	100.4	0.3%
Capital Expenditures	100.2	100.8	100.9	100.6	100.6	0.0%
Business Conditions	97.5	97.6	99.0	99.5	99.5	0.0%

Note: For each of the Indices and Indicators, a value above 100 signals a period of expansion while a value below 100 signals a period of contraction.

Definitions

The National Restaurant Association's *Restaurant Performance Index* is a statistical barometer that measures the overall health of the U.S. Restaurant Industry. This monthly composite index is based on the responses to the National Restaurant Association's monthly Restaurant Industry Tracking Survey, which is fielded among restaurant operators nationwide on a variety of indicators including sales, traffic, labor and capital expenditures. The *Restaurant Performance Index* is composed of two equally-weighted components: the Current Situation Index and the Expectations Index. For each of the Indices and Indicators, a value above 100 signals a period of expansion while a value below 100 signals a period of contraction. The distance from 100 signifies the magnitude of the expansion or contraction.

The Current Situation Index is a composite index based on four 'recent-period' restaurant industry indicators:

Same-Store Sales: Compares same-store sales volume in the reference month versus the same month in the previous year

Customer Traffic: Compares customer traffic in the reference month versus the same month in the previous year

Labor: Compares the number of employees and the average employee hours in the reference month versus the same month in the previous year

Capital Expenditures: Measures capital expenditure activity during the three most recent months

The Expectations Index is a composite index based on four 'forward-looking' restaurant industry indicators:

Same-Store Sales: Restaurant operators' outlook for same-store sales in six months, compared to the same period in the previous year

Staffing: Restaurant operators' expectations for their number of employees in six months, compared to the same period in the previous year

Capital Expenditures: Restaurant operators' capital expenditure plans during the next six months

Business Conditions: Restaurant operators' outlook for general business conditions during the next six months