

Starting up

- In a café, would you prefer a system where you order your food using a device and collect it without speaking to anyone, or a traditional system, where you order your food from a waiter, who brings it to you?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each system?

Vocabulary 1 – technology

Match the pairs of sentences.

- 1 The factory is completely **automated**.
 - 2 The security system uses **facial recognition** to identify employees.
 - 3 We use **augmented reality** in our training.
 - 4 We use **machine learning** to understand our customers.
 - 5 Our company cafeteria is **tech-enabled**.
 - 6 The project management software is used in very different businesses: banks, manufacturing companies and service industries, but the **underlying technology** is identical.
 - 7 Our financial records are now completely **digitised**.
 - 8 The company uses a **proprietary system** to run the factory.
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- a Everyone who enters the building must first look at a camera.
 - b There's no cashier. A scanner identifies customers' choices and charges their credit card.
 - c It's operated by computers rather than by people.
 - d The computer analyses data about their shopping habits, likes, dislikes and so on, and predicts which of our products they will prefer.
 - e New employees wear special glasses. When they look at a machine, they see instructions about how to operate a machine, inside the glasses.
 - f This means that they're the only company using the technology, and they haven't shared it with anyone.
 - g We no longer use paper to store information.
 - h The computer uses the same application for many different purposes.

Starbucks takes stake in restaurant tech start-up

Starbucks is ¹**taking a stake in** Eatsa, a San Francisco-based restaurant tech company that has closed all of its automated cafés and is now trying to sell its systems to other chains.

As part of a \$30m fundraising alongside other investors, the world's largest coffee chain with 28,000 ²**outlets** is also taking a seat on the board of the four-year old company, which is being ³**rebranded** as Brightloom.

The investment from Starbucks is the latest sign of how some of the world's largest restaurant companies are ⁴**dabbling in** new technology, from facial recognition to augmented reality, as they look to strengthen mobile ordering and delivery systems. Other deals this year include McDonald's \$300m purchase of Dynamic Yield, a machine learning company.

Some of the ⁵**ventures** have had mixed results. Eatsa itself had promised to bring the once-popular coin-operated "automat" food service format into the 21st century through its own restaurants. Customers placed salad orders on iPads and collected their dishes from tech-enabled collection points without dealing with staff.

But the company has closed all seven of its outlets, and Adam Brotman, a former Starbucks executive, joined the company in April to ⁶**implement a change in strategy**.

"There's a bigger opportunity — to change an entire industry," he told the Financial Times, adding that Brightloom was now focused on providing its underlying technology to other restaurants. At present, he said, only 3 per cent of orders across the industry were digitised.

Kevin Johnson, Starbucks' chief executive, said in a statement: "We have experienced first-hand the power that comes through digital customer connections that are relevant to the customer . . . We're excited to apply these innovations toward an industry solution that ⁷**elevates** the customer experience across the restaurant industry."

Starbucks is investing in Brightloom alongside the coffee company's licensees Alshaya and Alsea, as well as Tao Capital Partners and Valor Equity Partners, which already invest in the start-up.

As part of the deal, Starbucks is granting Brightloom a licence to parts of its proprietary system so the start-up can improve its offering to restaurant brands. The ⁸**pitch to** other chains is a "one-stop-shop" for mobile, payment and ordering systems as well as customer loyalty and personalisation schemes.



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Reading 1

Are the statements true or false, according to the article?

- 1 Starbucks is considering selling Eatsa to McDonald's.
- 2 Brightloom is the new name for Eatsa.
- 3 Investment from Starbucks allowed Eatsa to keep seven of its stores open.
- 4 Brightloom hopes to sell Eatsa's technology to other restaurants.
- 5 Several companies now own a stake in Brightloom.

Vocabulary 2 – vocabulary in context

Choose the correct meaning of the bold words in the article.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 a) investing in | b) buying |
| 2 a) investors | b) shop locations |
| 3 a) resold | b) renamed |
| 4 a) experimenting with | b) rejecting |
| 5 a) business activities | b) managers |
| 6 a) increase sales | b) try a new approach |
| 7 a) improves | b) ignores |
| 8 a) problem with | b) selling point for |

Reading 2

Choose the best word or phrase to complete each sentence.

- 1 Rebranded as Brightloom, Eatsa hopes restaurants will buy its
a) services
b) outlets
c) technology
- 2 Restaurant chains are exploring new ways to
a) interact with customers
b) advertise
c) produce food
- 3 Eatsa's concept was
a) completely original
b) not entirely new
c) developed by Starbucks
- 4 The number of restaurants using digital technology for ordering food is
a) about half
b) less than 5%
c) a majority

- 5 Starbucks, Alsharay, Alsea, Tao Capital Partners and Valor Equity Partners
a) are competing to buy Eatsa c) hold shares in Brightloom
b) are using Brightloom's technology
- 6 Starbucks is going to allow Brightloom to use some of its
a) underlying technology c) outlets
b) products

Grammar 1 – linking words for causes and results

Choose the correct expressions.

- 1 Eatsa wasn't successful. *As a result / So that / So much* their seven outlets were closed.
- 2 There were *so that / so many / such* people waiting to go into the restaurant, we decided to come back later.
- 3 Starbucks' management liked Eatsa's technology, *such that / so / a result that* they invested in the company.
- 4 The potential for Brightloom's technology is *therefore / as a result / so great that* investors are happy to support it.
- 5 We had *such / so / so much* a good dining experience.
- 6 The underlying technology is amazing. *So that / Therefore / So much* a lot of restaurants want to use it.

Further discussion

What features do you most appreciate in a café or restaurant? What features do you dislike?

Group work

Work together to answer these questions.

- 1 Adam Brotman believes there's an opportunity to change an entire industry with technology. Do you think the restaurant industry will change? If so, how? If not, why not?
- 2 Kevin Johnson believes that digital ordering and delivery systems elevate the customer experience. Do you agree? Why or why not?
- 3 The article mentions customer loyalty and personalisation schemes. Do you participate in any of these, with any type of company? Do you think they're effective? Why or why not?

ANSWER KEY**Vocabulary 1**

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1 c | 5 b |
| 2 a | 6 h |
| 3 e | 7 g |
| 4 d | 8 f |

Reading 1

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1 F | 4 T |
| 2 T | 5 T |
| 3 F | |

Vocabulary 2

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1 a | 5 a |
| 2 b | 6 b |
| 3 b | 7 a |
| 4 a | 8 b |

Reading 2

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1 c | 4 b |
| 2 a | 5 c |
| 3 b | 6 a |

Grammar 1

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 As a result | 4 so great that |
| 2 so many | 5 such |
| 3 so | 6 Therefore |

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