

Canada Post Strike Disruption of Restaurant Marketing, Payments, and Operations

Prepared by: Restaurants Canada
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Executive summary

A Restaurants Canada survey of restaurant operators conducted from September 29 to October 2 reveals that nearly two-thirds expect the ongoing Canada Post strike to have a moderate to significant impact on their operations, with the biggest disruption coming from halted coupon and flyer distribution that many restaurants rely on to drive customer traffic and sales.

Beyond marketing, operators report growing challenges with delayed payments, stuck cheques, and disrupted supply deliveries.

Key findings:

- 64% of foodservice businesses expect the strike to have a significant or moderate impact on their operations.
- 49% of restaurants use Canada Post for direct mail campaigns such as coupons and flyers.
- 56% rely on the mail for sending or receiving cheques and financial documents.
- Many operators report thousands of printed coupons and gift cards stuck in transit, threatening sales during a critical period.
- Over half are pivoting to digital payments and courier services, though many stress that physical coupons remain vital for reaching local customers.
- Delays in receiving and sending payments create cash flow issues and may require more expensive alternatives like wire transfers or couriers.

Some respondents expressed frustration, saying the ongoing disruption is accelerating their move away from Canada Post entirely. Others warned that higher courier costs and reduced marketing reach could hurt small and independent operators most.

Conclusion and recommendation

Restaurants Canada is urging a swift resolution to the strike to prevent further harm to foodservice businesses and to protect the fragile recovery of Canada's restaurant industry.

Flyers and all marketing materials should be included in the deliveries being reinstated on a rotating basis so organizations that have paid significant fees for marketing materials and distribution don't incur further losses and don't find their deliveries pushed to the back of the line.