



Powering shift workers, 24/7

Explore smart solutions to meet the mealtime demands of rotating shifts, remote sites, and round-the-clock schedules.



Food fuels more than just productivity

Keeping a workplace running 24/7 takes more than machinery or technology — it takes people. More specifically, it takes shift workers.

In today's world, shift workers make up roughly 80% of the global workforce, powering continuous production and critical services across every industry. Naturally, this nonstop effort builds up big appetites.

Food plays a key role in keeping shift workers alert and productive during long or irregular hours. But beyond just fuel, food is a powerful workplace perk — one that makes team members feel engaged, appreciated, and most importantly, eager to clock in each day.

That sense of appreciation matters. According to [Boston Consulting Group](#), improving workplace satisfaction can reduce attrition by 62% for deskless workers, compared to 49% for those in traditional office settings. Yet, [half of shift workers](#) say they feel undervalued for their work, a gap that food can go a long way in closing.

That's why more organizations are incorporating meals into employee recognition efforts: offering lunches to celebrate milestones, ordering food to recognize employee-focused holidays, or bringing in catering to simply say thanks. But coordinating food and ensuring meal fairness for rotating shifts, remote sites, and high headcounts is far from easy.

Luckily, difficult doesn't have to mean impossible, especially with the right tools and operational approach. In this guide, we'll explore smart strategies to fuel team productivity and morale with meals that work as hard — and as long — as your shift workers.



Food tops the list of workplace perks

According to ezCater research, more than half of non-office workers (54%) say free or subsidized meals are the most appreciated work perk.

91%

of non-office workers say free food makes them feel more positively about their employers.





The challenges of feeding a 24/7 workforce



Free food = better work

According to ezCater research, more than half of non-office workers (66%) say free food makes them more productive, and 60% say food allows them to do higher-quality work.

Workplace meals don't magically appear. Between promoting food fairness, syncing meal schedules, and juggling high-volume orders, feeding teams that don't clock out at 5 is a full-time job in itself. Here's a look at the all-too-familiar challenges that come with fueling round-the-clock operations.

Ensuring food fairness

As many restaurants turn on their "closed" signs, your night shift is often just getting started. Unfortunately, this means many overnight employees are left with fewer and lower-quality meal options than their daytime counterparts. This disparity not only impacts nourishment but can also take a toll on morale.

Feeding hundreds of people at once

Coordinating frequent, high-volume orders only adds to the pressure on managers, especially those with nonstop operations. Feeding hundreds across shifts, all while accommodating different dietary requirements, calls for precision and patience. Unpredictable delivery windows or meals that show up late — or in poor condition — can disrupt workflows and drain your time.

Making every minute count

For employees, 30-minute breaks go by fast. If food deliveries are late or if shift workers are sprinting to a "nearby" restaurant and back, they lose valuable time to rest and recharge. Worse still, 61% of non-office workers end up snacking instead of eating a proper meal when lunch isn't available — a habit that impacts both well-being and on-the-job performance.

Tracking and reporting costs

Meal complexity doesn't end once everyone's been fed. Feeding a large workforce also means meticulous expense tracking across departments, sites, and schedules. Without a clear system, managing receipts, reconciling reports, and staying within tight budgets often become added burdens for already busy managers.

Finding restaurants in rural communities

in rural and remote locations, even sourcing meals can be a challenge. With fewer nearby dining options, employees in these outposts are frequently left with slim pickings. That scarcity can lead to repeated meals, limited variety, and a drop in overall satisfaction.

What do employees crave most?

Sandwiches (38%), pizza (36%), healthy food options (35%), and Mexican cuisine (32%) top the list of what non-office workers wish they could eat more often.





Food tech solutions for all-day (and night) dining

You already rely on technology to manage everything from shift scheduling and communication to workforce safety and compliance. So, why not use it to manage food, too?

ezCater's workplace food solutions offer greater control over food expenses and access to a wider network of restaurants that align with your employees' preferences and varied shift schedules. That means consistent, high-quality meals for every shift. Here's why ezCater is the go-to technology solution for feeding shift workers.

1. Extensive marketplace

Sourcing food is a huge challenge — and it's even harder when your teams work in rural areas. Your team could spend hours digging through reviews, menus, and online suggestions, but that's time you likely don't have.

ezCater's Marketplace provides instant access to over 100,000 restaurants across the US, helping you find nearby options with just a few clicks.



Pro tip: Turn meals into rewards

With ezCater, you can earn points on every dollar you spend. The more you order, the more you're rewarded. Redeem points for gift cards or apply them as discounts to save on your next delivery.

2. Food fairness

Your second and third shift workers deserve the same meal quality and variety as your first shift. ezCater promotes food fairness for every team — at every hour — with a simplified ordering process that narrows down restaurant options capable of accommodating workplace catering any day or time of the week. This way, your third shift crews are just as satisfied as your day workers.

3. Effortless budget management

Tracking and reporting food costs becomes more efficient with an ezCater corporate account. You can set per-person limits, control delivery fees, and choose between monthly or bi-weekly invoices, making it easier than ever to stay within budget and remain compliant with internal regulations.

4. Convenient concierge ordering

Skip the hassle of browsing restaurants and building orders from scratch. With ezCater's Concierge Ordering, your specialist will collect key details like delivery time, dietary needs, and daily budget to create a draft order for your approval. Once it's ready to review, you'll get an email to make any final changes — or you can have your concierge specialist handle them for you. When everything looks good, just check out and you're done.

5. Reliable expertise and around-the-clock customer support

ezCater's team of food experts is here to recommend options tailored to your workers' location, schedules, and preferences, so you don't have to manage it all alone. And if something goes wrong? Our around-the-clock customer support is ready to step in, resolve issues quickly, and keep your 24/7 team on track.





How HelloFresh simplifies complex food orders

HelloFresh, the world's leading meal delivery company, feeds more than just its customers. It also fuels a 24/7 workforce at 11 distribution centers across the U.S., keeping teams fed, focused, and fully engaged.

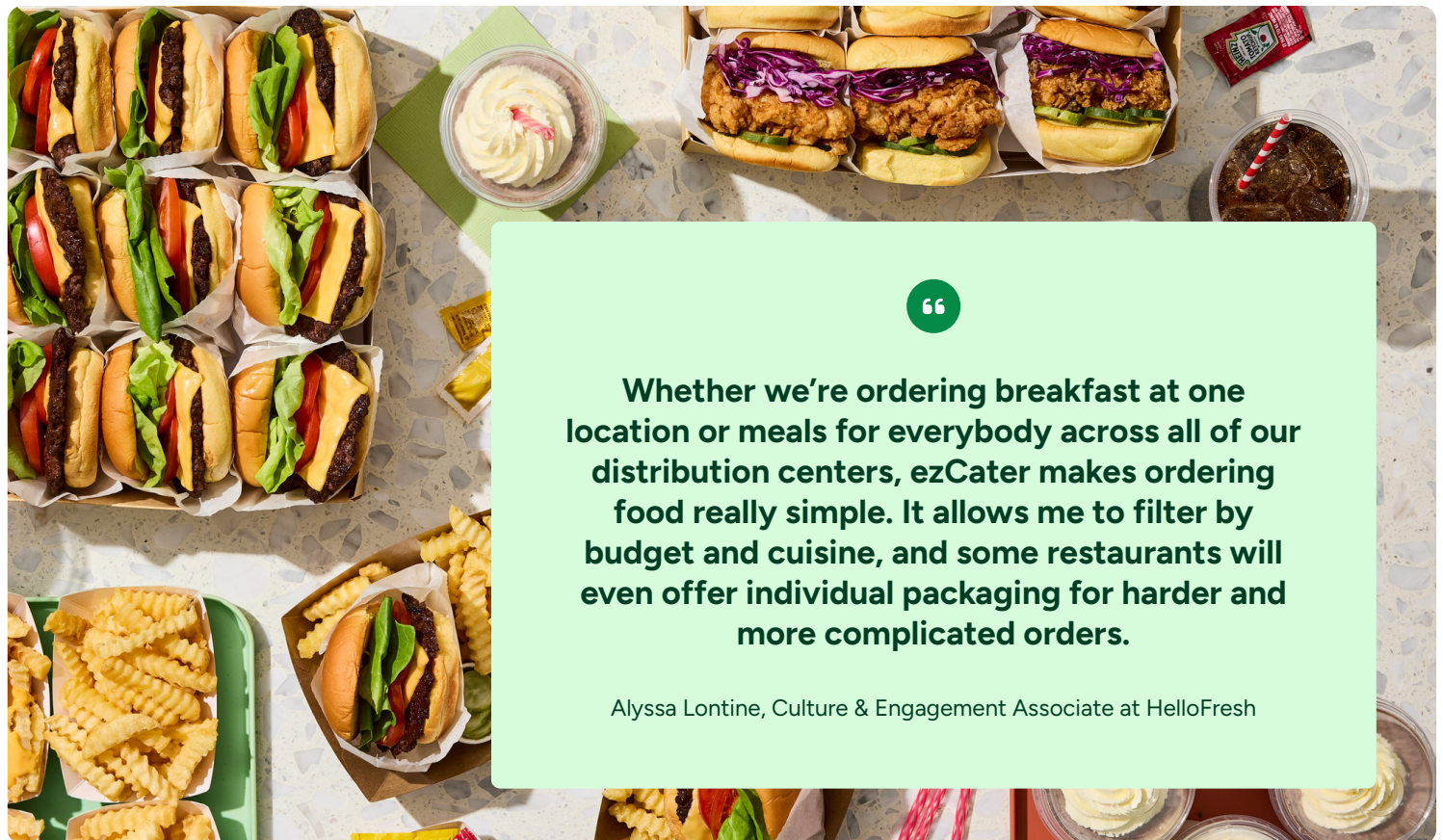
Unfortunately, coordinating meals at that scale — with headcounts ranging from 50 to over 1,000 employees on any given day — was no small feat for HelloFresh employees Katie Francis and Alyssa Lontine.

"Ordering food for our distribution centers can be a bit complicated," Alyssa says. "I had to call restaurants directly to see who was able to meet my catering needs."

Thanks to ezCater, Katie and her team can plan and coordinate meals from a network of over 100,000 restaurants nationwide, all without falling short of food expectations or exceeding their budget.

"ezCater takes a ton off my plate," Katie says. "My team uses ezCater by setting a budget that will be used across all locations. From there, the local sites are able to look at ezCater's options and choose what is best for them."

[See case study](#)



Smarter food solutions for shift workers

ezCater offers flexible workplace food solutions designed to support your operation's 24/7 needs:

- ✓ Schedule meals for every shift
- ✓ Tailor menus to dietary preferences
- ✓ Guarantee timely deliveries anytime
- ✓ Streamline meal planning and ordering

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