

bottle rocket®

APP FACE OFF

assessing the digital experiences
of today's leading brands



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
 Enterpret

Welcome to The App Faceoff, a series in which we perform a digital experience review across two apps in the same industry to explore how they stack up in areas such as design, customer engagement and growth. The framework we use to perform this critical analysis is called “A.C.E.R.” which includes:

- **Acquisition:** What is being done to drive app downloads and new users?
- **Conversion:** How are the apps designed and are they encouraging users to purchase?
- **Engagement:** What campaigns are being run to drive engagement and repeat visits?
- **Retention:** How do customers feel about their experience and what is driving customer loyalty?

At **Bottle Rocket**, we specialize in building and growing digital experiences for leading brands in a variety of industries. Each of the analysis points for this report are measurable areas that should be considered when evolving and growing a digital experience, such as a mobile app, website, or kiosk. To enhance our analysis with even deeper insights, we've also partnered with **Interpret**, an industry leading customer feedback analytics platform that helps product teams integrate the Voice of the Customer into their product development process to build impactful products.

Now, let's dive into Raising Cane's and Popeyes!

tech spotlight



The Raising Cane's app is built with Capacitor on top of Ionic while Popeyes is built on React Native using Expo. Though different, both of these are cross-platform technologies, enabling them to deliver nearly identical experiences across both iOS and Android platforms while using a single codebase.

However, there are some differences between these platforms, as well as alternative solutions, to be aware of:

- The Popeyes app is more responsive than the Raising Cane's app, due in part to the performance characteristics of the underlying technology.
- Capacitor uses web technologies (HTML, CSS, JavaScript) with a hybrid approach, packaging web apps into native wrappers. React Native utilizes JavaScript and React to build native UI components, following a more native-like approach.
- Neither app works quite as smoothly as a native application and will likely be slower to adopt new OS features, such as live activities for order tracking, customized push notifications, etc.
- Every team and product is unique, but considering these factors, we often find that QSR apps, or any app with significant customer touchpoints, may benefit from being developed natively to prioritize optimal performance and user experience.

[Learn More About the Choice Between Native & Cross Platform Here](#)

Before we dive into the different aspects of the ACER model, let's take a look at some quantitative metrics that can show us just how popular and well liked these two apps are by their customers.

Name	iOS Rating	iOS Rank	iOS Number of Reviews	Android Rating	Android Installs	Android Number of Reviews
Popeyes	4.6	19	96,000	4.4	5,000,000	72,500
Raising Cane's	4.9	24	217,000	4.8	1,000,000	51,000

* Source: App Stores

Both apps have high ratings with 100k+ reviews. We can tell based upon the iOS ranking and the number of Android installs that Popeyes has a much larger user base, which is to be expected considering Popeyes has 2,700 locations in North America compared Raising Cane's which has roughly 700.

What stands out to us is how positive Raising Cane's app rating is considering how many reviews they have on their iOS app. Compared to Popeyes, they have more than double the amount of reviews despite fewer downloads leading us to conclude that Raising Cane's has an incredibly loyal audience that is passionate about the Raising Cane's brand and can't wait to tell you about it.

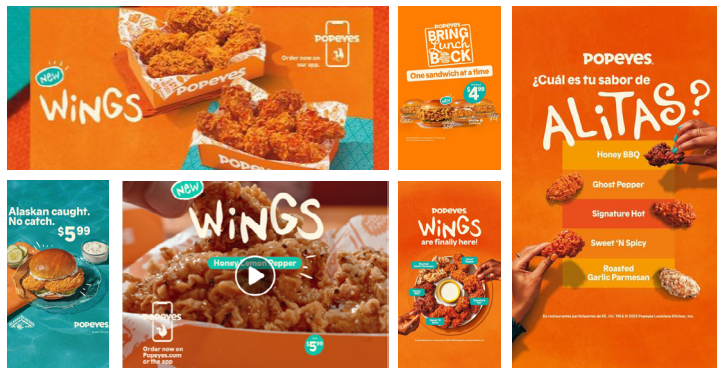
acquisition campaigns

Acquisition refers to the crucial first step in the user journey, capturing potential users' attention and convincing them to download and engage with the app. Best-in-class acquisition strategies are distinguished by their ability to efficiently convert potential users into active app users through a blend of digital marketing, in-store promotions, and exclusive incentives.

In examining these two brands, we find Raising Cane's to be a more prolific advertiser, featuring influencers and local promotions, while Popeyes appears to excel at directly driving users to their mobile experience.

This may explain why we see stronger growth in monthly downloads and active users for the Popeyes app compared to Raising Cane's.

POPEYES



~140 ad sets across Facebook & Instagram

- Popeyes employs a comprehensive strategy to acquire new users for their mobile app, leveraging various channels to drive downloads and engagement.
- A special app logo is prominently featured across digital platforms, national TV campaigns, and in-store promotions, ensuring high visibility.
- The app is also promoted through Spanish language versions of ads, expanding their reach to a broader audience.
- Most digital campaigns focus on product promotions, showcasing exclusive deals and discounts only available through the app, creating a strong incentive for customers to download and use the app to save.

138.5k

Avg. Monthly Downloads

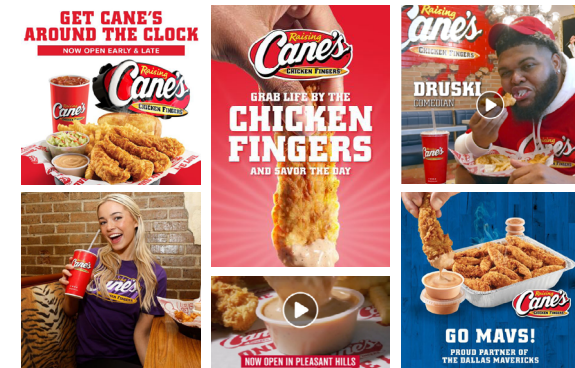
↑16.96% vs. Previous Month

48.8k

Avg. Daily Active Users

↑8.07% vs. Previous Month

Raising Cane's
CHICKEN FINGERS



~1,400 ad sets across Facebook & Instagram

- Raising Cane's emphasizes influencer partnerships to drive app acquisition. They leverage a network of influencers known as #CaniacAmbassadors, which includes hometown celebrities, professional athletes, comedians, and more. This approach helps them tap into diverse audiences and boost app visibility.
- Their acquisition strategy focuses heavily on local and regional campaigns, tailoring their efforts to resonate with specific markets.
- Raising Cane's doesn't heavily promote their app like Popeyes. Instead, they subtly encourage downloads with occasional mentions in ads, such as "Order Online, or with our App, to get your chicken fingers even faster."

65.7k

Avg. Monthly Downloads

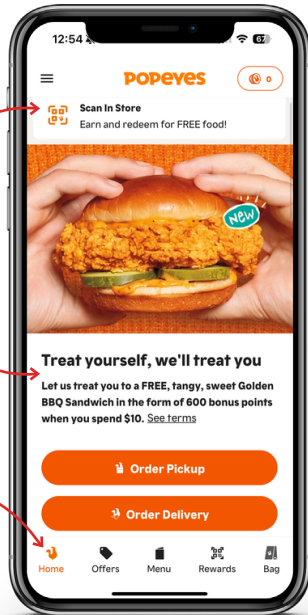
↑1.58% vs. Previous Month

12.4k

Avg. Daily Active Users

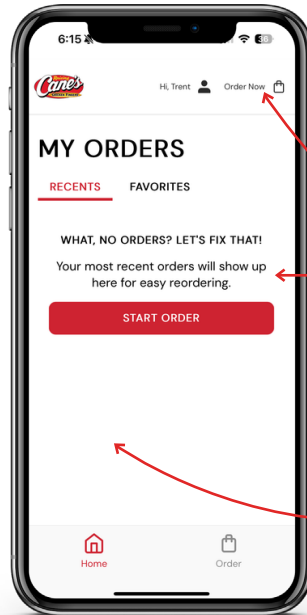
↑5.49% vs. Previous Month

HOME SCREEN



Large, enticing imagery and offer promotion with a strong emphasis on the loyalty program

Key Features of the app are easy-to-access from navigation for users (Menu, Bag, Offer, Rewards)



Multiple CTAs fighting for attention

No enticing imagery or offers to try to encourage customers to order

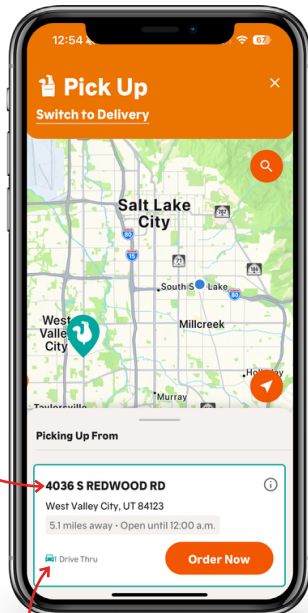
conversion order flow



STRENGTHS

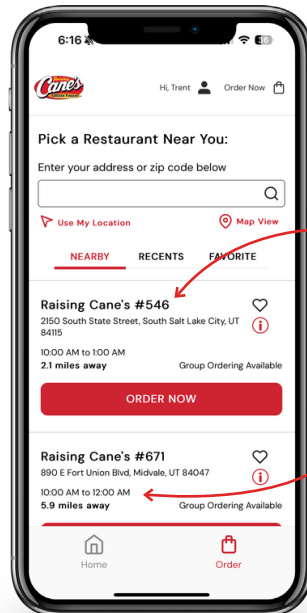
- While checking out, the app makes it easy to apply customizations to orders.
- Overall, the app has a more consolidated design, where it takes less clicks and screens to complete an order.

STORE LOCATION SELECTION



Address information is emphasized

Dynamic hours & location tags like "drive thru"



Store # (as opposed to address) can be confusing for users

Lacks dynamic information about the store (closing soon, open now)

POPEYES

STRENGTHS

- The navigation bar prominently showcases key functionalities, enabling users to effortlessly navigate between screens, view their bag, redeem rewards, etc.
- The app maintains consistent branding, aligning with Popeyes's established identity.
- In-app guest ordering is clearly supported.
- The app subtly encourages loyalty participation, with clear visibility of loyalty points integrated throughout the ordering process, ensuring users are subtly nudged towards engagement with the program.

conversion order flow



AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

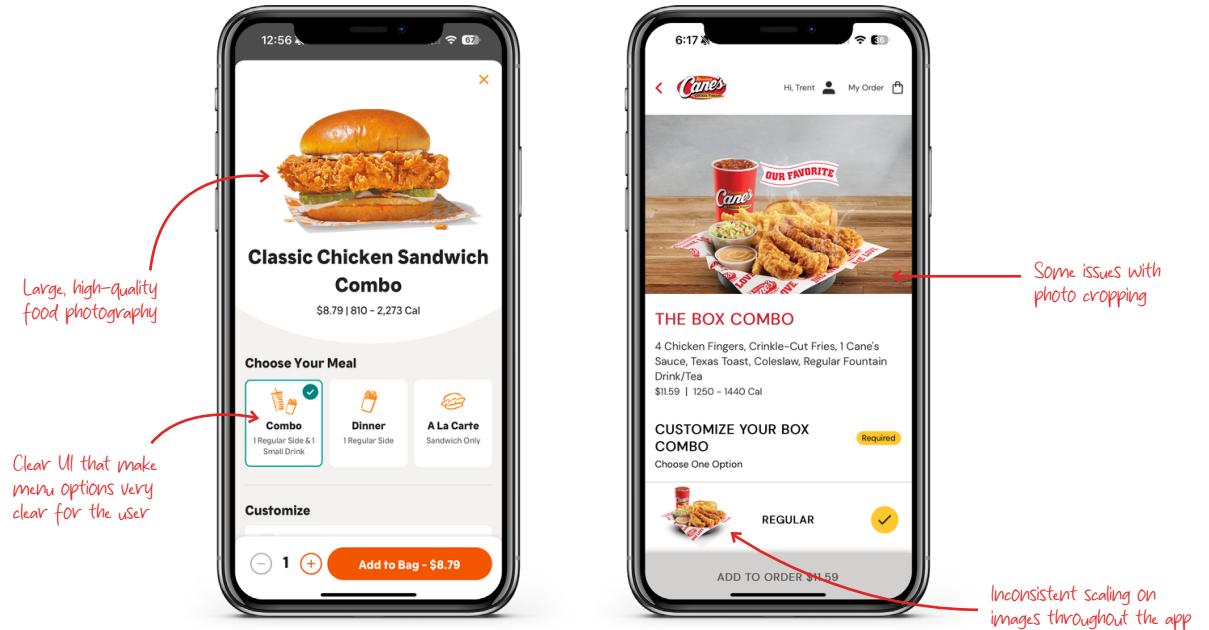
- There are minor UI inconsistencies regarding menu option sizing and order modifications that introduce some friction into the customization portion of ordering.
- With minimal animation incorporated into the app, there is the potential to provide context and direction to the experience.



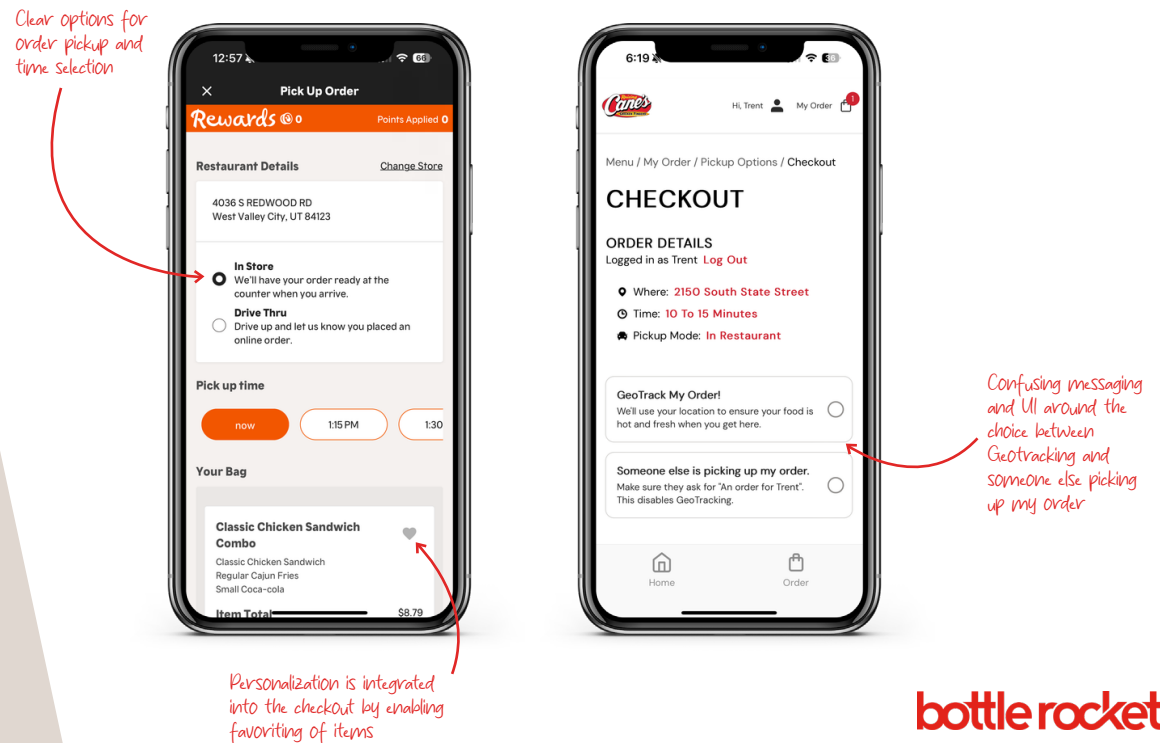
AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Photography feels more basic compared to Popeyes, and improving the quality of menu photography or optimizing image scaling could enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of the application.
- There is an opportunity to more prominently promote the loyalty program in-app.
- Potential to incorporate clearer guest ordering functionality into the UI.
- There are opportunities to include more consistent Raising Cane's branding throughout the app.
- Similar to Popeyes; there is minimal animation incorporated, increasing animation could provide additional context and direction to users.

MENU ITEM



CHECKOUT



engagement push & email

After downloading both mobile apps, we signed up for each company's loyalty program so that they had the ability to reach out to us via email, push and SMS. We didn't immediately place an order so that we could see what kind of messages they both send to encourage ordering. The drop off from loyalty sign-up to placing orders within the QSR/Restaurant space can be 60% or more depending on the brand which makes this part of the customer's journey vitally important from a messaging and engagement standpoint.

Below is a table which shows when each brand sent different types of messages during this period of time:



What jumps out to us here is how few messages that Raising Cane's sends to new app users who create an account. We got one push notification over the course of 15 days and then a confirmation email after placing our first order on day 15. This is an area of opportunity to activate more customers who sign-up and place their first order. We expected to get more messages from both channels between sign-up and first order. Further, the emails that are being sent today could be leveled up from a design perspective to make their messages more engaging.

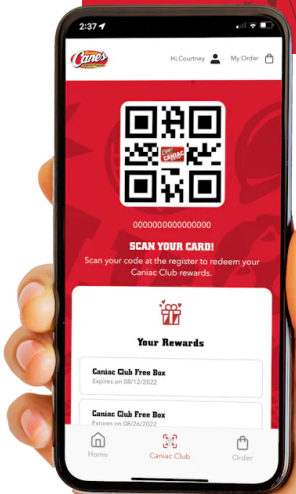


POPEYES

We are very impressed by the volume and quality of messages that Popeyes sends to new users before they even place their first order. A total of 14 messages were sent across email and push over a 14-day period and featured product promotions, seasonal offers, and fun and engaging messaging. The number of communications is certainly on the high side and customers might find this volume of messaging a bit too much and pause notifications. However, the emails and content are highly visual with creative language that we felt fostered an overall positive customer experience.



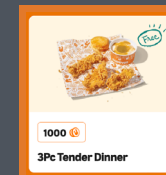
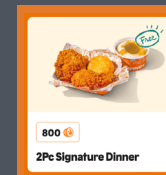
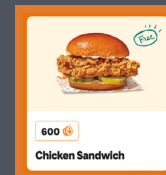
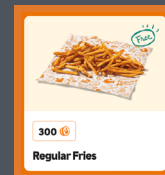
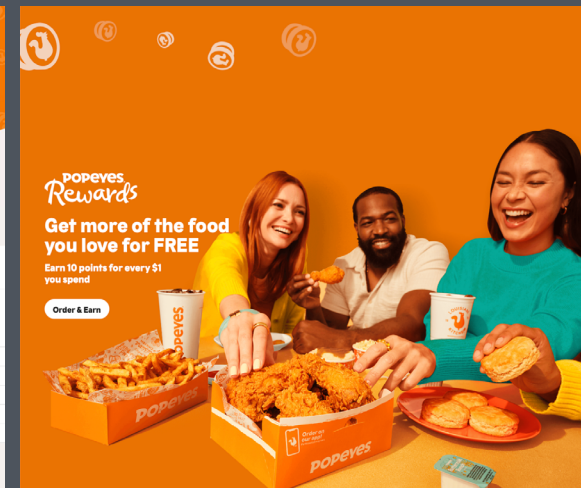
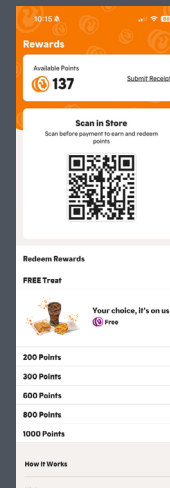
Raising Cane's lacks the same level of integration of their loyalty program into the in-app experience as Popeyes. Joining the Raising Cane's "Caniac Club" loyalty program is a multi-step process that involves asking an in-store crew member for a physical card, then going through both the web and mobile applications to activate the offers. The Caniac Club rewards program is visible from only a few screens in the app. Once the mobile ordering flow begins, the user loses visibility into their unique loyalty points and rewards. This represents an area of opportunity for Raising Cane's to continue to build relationships with its customer base. Despite this, Raising Cane's has managed to cultivate a loyal customer base who rave about their brand and products. It's proof that even without a robust loyalty program integration, a brand can still win over customers.



retention loyalty program

POPEYES

Popeyes sets the bar high with their seamless incorporation of the loyalty program into their mobile app. Not only is the loyalty program well-integrated into the app, the process to sign-up for the loyalty program can be completed within a few clicks upon account creation. Throughout most of the screens that a user navigates, the exclusive offers and points are visible. This isn't just about functionality, it's about creating an experience where loyalty feels natural rather than forced. Popeyes complements this user-friendly design with timely and relevant communication across a variety of channels as we saw with their push and email campaigns.



retention customer feedback

in partnership with



At Enterpret, we are in the business of customer feedback analytics, and we often pull public customer feedback data (in this case, from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store) to see what we can learn about companies of interest. Let's look at the top complaints for each of the apps, normalized to a percentage since the raw numbers of reviews are pretty different over the past few months. Overall, it's clear that these apps are sometimes getting in the way of that most basic thing that customers want: Tasty Chicken, Now.

POPEYES

SNAPSHOT OF FEEDBACK FROM THE APPS

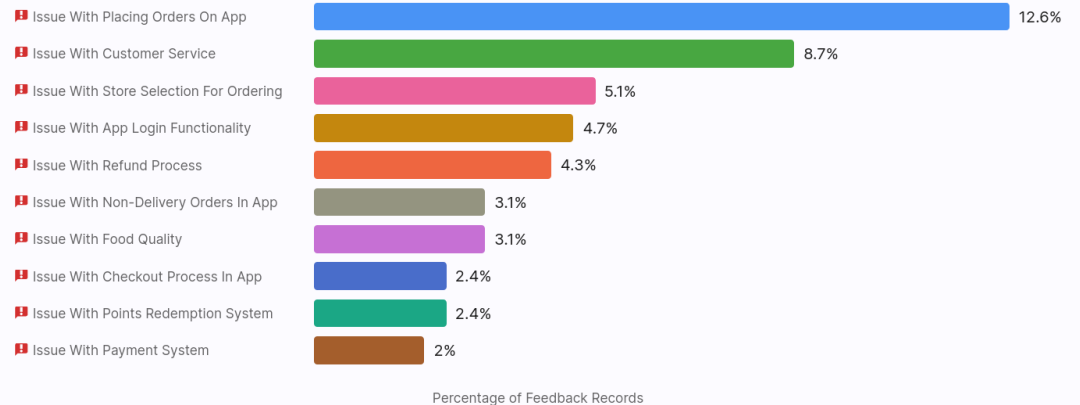
“ I can never pay for an order so the orders are never placed. I haven't been able to use it for a couple years. When I use Apple Pay, I just see a spinning wheel that never ends.”

“ Really wanted some Popeyes tonight...app wouldn't let me select locations or check out. Kept asking to select location and no matter how many times I selected the location, it would take me to check out.”

“ One time the order went through and the restaurant was closed. Another time, the restaurant was unable to find the order and refused to honor it.”

Quantify: Popeye's: Top Complaints

Showing 10 selected Reasons



Generated by: Enterpret

May 30, 2024

INSIGHTS

- Popeyes users experience issues both before and after ordering
- Some users are encountering difficulties when processing payments
- Users frequently report having trouble selecting locations within the app
- There seems to be some issues with the processing of orders, since a few customers are reporting long wait times, or orders gone completely missing

Popeyes might improve by focusing on order processing efficiency and customer service enhancements.

retention customer feedback

in partnership with  Enterpret



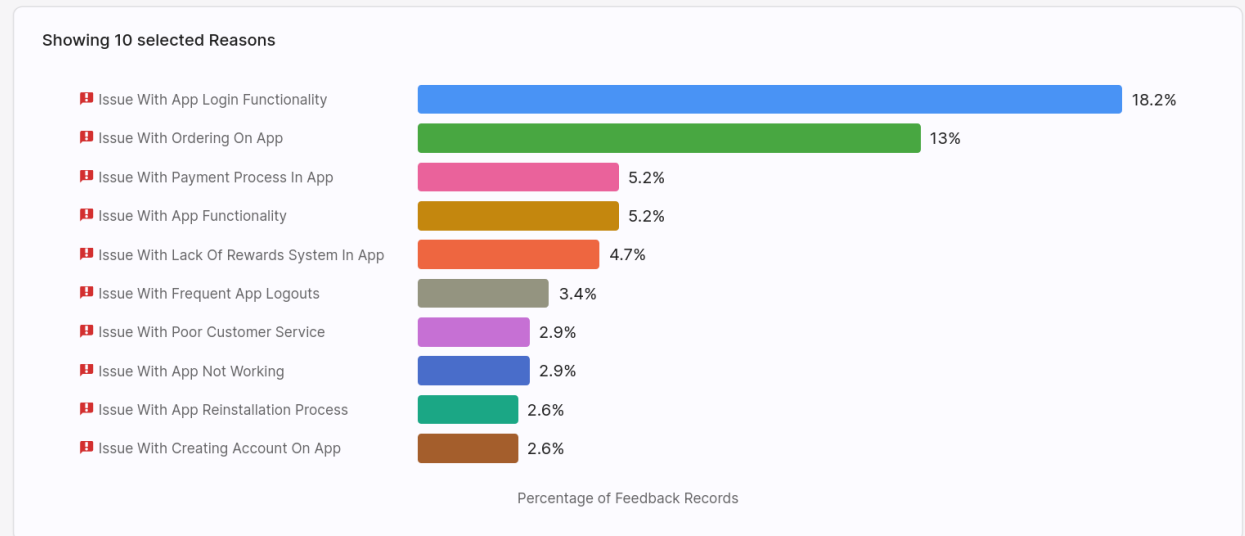
SNAPSHOT OF FEEDBACK FROM THE APPS

“ Tried to log in and I got locked out for 14 minutes after 2 attempts. Not waiting that long to order food. Going to Chick-fil-A now.”

“ Whenever I try to add my card to pay, it doesn't give me the tax till AFTER I hit order, making the amount coming out of my card lower than the actual amount, giving me an error that 'the card amount must match the total' or it'll just stop ordering and not give me any error at all.”

“ Didn't really like the app because Cane's doesn't have any rewards system like most fast food chains, like no offers or points?”

Quantify: Raising Cane's: Top Complaints



Generated by:  Enterpret

May 30, 2024

INSIGHTS

- Raising Cane's users are mainly focused on issues and hurdles with the ordering process
- Occasional glitches, such as issues with tax calculation, are impacting order placement
- The loyalty program integration could be improved, as some users are unaware of its existence
- Users are experiencing some challenges logging in and accessing the app

Raising Cane's could benefit from addressing key technical glitches and enhancing their loyalty program integration.

what's next?

Taking each of these apps for a spin over the past several weeks has been fun for us and we enjoyed both experiences that resulted in us getting hot and fresh chicken lunches and dinners. From a maturity standpoint, both brands showed unique strengths throughout our review. However, there are areas for improvement for each, which can further increase engagement and adoption within their digital channels. Below we have created a small roadmap with what we feel could be high impact items to improve each phase of the A.C.E.R. framework.

NOW

NEXT

LATER

POPEYES

RETENTION (FEEDBACK)

Focus on addressing the order processing efficiency, location selection, and ways to enhance the customer service experience.

CONVERSION

UI Enhancements - Customers are wanting an easier way to customize their orders based upon feedback reviewed (dietary restrictions, white vs. dark meat, additions).

RETENTION (FEEDBACK)

A/B Test Messaging Campaigns - Test different post sign-up email/push message variations to see how you can reduce messages and avoid annoying customers.

RETENTION (LOYALTY)

Digital Wallet Loyalty Card - Keep maturing the program with things like a loyalty card that can be downloaded to Apple/Google wallets.

ACQUISITION

Incorporate influencer partnerships and local campaigns to boost app downloads and engagement through authentic endorsements and interactive content.



RETENTION (LOYALTY)

Fully Integrated Loyalty Program Into Mobile - Make it possible to sign-up and manage loyalty accounts directly from the mobile app instead of needing to ask a cashier for a physical card.

CONVERSION

Redesign the home page to make it more visually appealing with offers and the loyalty program. This could be done for the entire mobile app experience.

ENGAGEMENT

Loyalty Program Activation Campaign - Create a campaign across email / push channels to promote new loyalty sign-ups to place their first order within the first 15 days.

ACQUISITION

Mobile web top banner promoting people to download/open the app. This is low hanging fruit to capture the web traffic already being generated.

RETENTION (FEEDBACK)

Address key technical glitches surrounding the ordering process, tax calculation, and login.

At **Bottle Rocket**, we follow a meticulous and comprehensive process when reviewing the digital experiences our clients present to us. Our approach involves an in-depth analysis to uncover insights and opportunities that lead to optimal outcomes. We examine every aspect of the user journey, from initial interaction to long-term engagement, ensuring no detail is overlooked.

Enterpret is an industry-leading customer feedback analytics platform that empowers product teams to integrate the Voice of the Customer into their development process. By leveraging advanced analytics, Enterpret helps organizations gain deeper insights into customer needs and preferences, enabling the creation of impactful and customer-centric products.

If your brand is seeking to enhance its digital presence, we invite you to leverage our expertise for a detailed and insightful evaluation. Reach out to us today, and let our team of specialists provide you with the guidance and strategies needed to achieve exceptional results.

Contact us today to get started!



Photo Courtesy of Raising Cane's



Photo Courtesy of Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen