Restaurant Research®

Concept Analysis & Benchmark Report

Applebee's 2025/2026

Executive Summary

While Applebee's is an iconic casual chain that is executing around a solid strategy to improve every aspect of its fundamentals, it continues to lose share. The problem has been identified as having to do with its value equation, but Applebee's value equation is not so bad, and it is clear from the current stress of its unit-level profitability that it will be difficult to do more around price. In fact, the chain's 2Q25 results suggest that its 2 for $25 platform has the potential to drive sales. In any case, the leading casual chains like Chili's, Long Horn & Texas Roadhouse are successful because they are differentiated by winning menu items (delicious $10.99 3 for me burgers & affordable, high-quality steaks). Compelling protein offers seems to be the common denominator in a MAHA world. We suggest that Applebee's would be better served creating a defensible niche in an otherwise conventional segment by figuring out a specific menu item to hang its hat on. The chain will also do well to continue improving its operations and service levels. If it does this, Applebee's could spark a sustainable rejuvenation without having to go down the rabbit hole of making value all about price.

Parent Company Summary

Parent Company	Ticker	Corp. Debt Rating	Net Debt [(1)]/ EBITDA	EV/ EBITDA	Stock Performance		
					2024	TTM	Sep-25
Dine Brands Global, Inc.	DIN	Not Rated	6.42	8.20	-39.3%	-27.5%	
$1B+ Chains			5.40	14.47	-3.8%	11.8%	

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

	Page		Page		Page
Strengths & Challenges	2	Operations	11	Closings	20
RR Dashboard	3	Tech & Equipment	12	Remodeling	21
System Statistics	4	Sales & Market Share	13 - 14	Franchise Summary	22
Marketing Strategy	5	Unit Economic Summary	15	Menu Exhibit	23
Marketing Spend	6	Unit Economic Trends	16	State Unit Map	24
Menu Strategy	7	New Build Costs	17	State Unit Detail	25
Menu Trends	8	New Build vs. Buy Analysis	18	Photos	26
New Products & Promotions	9 - 10	Development	19	RR Overview	27

(1) Net Debt includes operating leases.

 Copyright 2025 Restaurant Research® LLC.