

GoTab vs. Toast

Updated: June 2026

SELF-POUR & RFID QUICK CLOSE BATTLECARD · FIELD REP REFERENCE

Supplement to GoTab vs. Toast Main Battlecard

BOTTOM LINE

Toast connects to iPourIt — but barely. It sends pour data to an open check, and that's where the integration ends. There's no RFID activation from a bar terminal, no unified tab that follows a guest across zones, no automated card disconnection, no phone-based pour access, and a documented kitchen printer issue that generates a receipt for every single pour. GoTab's iPourIt integration is native and tab-centric: RFID wristbands are activated from any GoTab terminal, they link to an open persistent tab, they travel with the guest across zones and vendors, and they close automatically. Pour Taproom (Atlanta) — an iPourIt venue — runs GoTab across all three floors precisely because no other POS handles RFID tab management at this level. That's the real story.

<h1>1</h1> <p>Terminal to activate RFID with Toast (dedicated charger only)</p>	<h1>Any</h1> <p>GoTab terminal can activate & pair RFID — bar, handheld, kiosk</p>	<h1>42%</h1> <p>Higher avg. ticket on GoTab open tabs vs. closed-check systems</p>	<h1>Auto</h1> <p>GoTab auto-closes & disconnects RFID at tab close — zero manual steps</p>
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CORE SELF-POUR INTEGRATION COMPARISON

FEATURE	GOTAB + IPOURIT	TOAST + IPOURIT	EDGE
RFID Activation Workflow	Staff activates RFID wristband from any GoTab POS terminal (bar, handheld, or kiosk). Wristband links to guest's running tab in the same step. No separate dedicated terminal required.	Staff must open a ticket in Toast first, then take the guest to the dedicated iPourIt charger terminal, use admin access to select the correct ticket, and pair the wristband — a multi-step, multi-terminal flow requiring a dedicated check-in station.	GOTAB
Tab Architecture	RFID wristband links to a persistent open GoTab tab. Guest keeps ordering (bar, server, QR, kiosk) on the same tab. Pour wall charges append in real time. One check for the entire visit.	Pour data is sent to a Toast open check. Check must be created manually before wristband pairing. Pour wall and F&B; may end up on separate checks in multi-zone venues.	GOTAB
Tab Mobility Across Zones	EasyTab: guest scans QR at any zone, tab follows. RFID wristband tap at any bar pulls up the same running tab. Pour wall + F&B; on one check regardless of venue zone.	Toast checks are location-anchored. Moving a guest from pour wall check-in to a table or second bar requires manual server transfer. No native tab mobility across floors or zones.	GOTAB
Multi-Zone / Multi-Vendor	Same RFID wristband works across multiple zones, bars, and vendors. One wristband, one tab, one check — even in food hall or multi-concept configurations.	Toast has no native multi-vendor routing. Each vendor typically requires a separate check. Not designed for food hall or shared-revenue environments.	GOTAB
RFID at Bar Terminal	Any bartender at any bar terminal can tap a guest's RFID wristband to pull up their running tab instantly — add drinks, check balance, reauthorize. No separate station needed.	RFID interaction is siloed to the dedicated iPourIt charger terminal. Bartenders at the bar cannot pull up a guest's pour wall tab using the wristband — they must go to the check-in station or use the POS manually.	GOTAB
Pour With Your Phone (QR on Wall)	Guests scan a QR code directly on the pour wall to open a GoTab tab and start pouring immediately — no RFID wristband required. They can also scan to add to an existing tab mid-session. Age verification handled through GoTab. Perfect for return guests, wristband-free check-in, or overflow scenarios.	Not available. Toast + iPourIt requires a physical RFID wristband for every guest. No QR-based pour wall access — guests cannot self-initiate a tab at the wall without staff issuing a wristband first.	GOTAB
Automated Tab Close & Card Disconnect	When the GoTab tab closes (auto at EON or guest-initiated), the RFID wristband is automatically deactivated. Zero manual steps. No forgotten active wristbands, no walkout risk.	Staff closes the Toast ticket per standard workflow. iPourIt wristband deactivation is not instantaneous and requires the ticket to be closed on the Toast side first.	GOTAB

FEATURE	GOTAB + IPOURIT	TOAST + IPOURIT	EDGE
Auto-Close Tabs at EON	Tabs auto-close with default tip applied at end of night — or close with a single tap. No staff chasing down open tabs. Especially valuable for self-pour venues where wristband-holders may leave.	No native auto-close mechanism. Staff must manually close all open checks at end of service. In a busy self-pour venue, this is a significant labor burden.	GOTAB
Multiple RFID Wristbands on One Tab	Multiple RFID wristbands can be linked to a single GoTab tab — ideal for groups, events, and private parties. All pour activity tracked per wristband, all charges to one check.	Each RFID wristband maps to a separate Toast ticket. Group scenarios require multiple open checks — more complexity, more reconciliation at close.	GOTAB
Product Sync	Products configured once in iPourIt sync to GoTab automatically. No duplicate entry required — set it up once, run everywhere.	Products must be imported/mapped in both iPourIt and Toast separately. Requires manual synchronization when menu items change.	GOTAB
Reporting	iPourIt pour data included in GoTab product mix reports. Unified reporting across self-pour, bar, and F&B; — one comprehensive view of the entire operation.	Pour data flows to Toast check totals. Reporting integration at settlement level only — no unified product mix view between iPourIt and Toast.	GOTAB
Real-Time Tab Transparency	Guests receive a text link to their live tab after every pour — they can see their running balance in real time from their phone. Reduces sticker shock at checkout.	No native real-time tab visibility for guests via text. Guests must ask staff or check the charger terminal for their running balance.	GOTAB
Offline / On-Premise Mode	On-Premises server mode: POS, handhelds, kiosks, and printers stay connected locally during internet outages. Self-pour operations continue uninterrupted.	Limited offline capability. Toast requires connectivity for most functions. POS/iPourIt synchronization is disrupted during outages.	GOTAB

FIT ASSESSMENT

WHEN GOTAB + IPOURIT WINS

- Multi-floor or multi-bar iPourIt venues — the wristband and tab must follow guests across zones, bars, and vendors
- Food halls and multi-vendor environments where iPourIt revenue needs to split alongside other vendors
- High-volume taprooms where end-of-night tab closes need to be automatic, not manual staff labor
- Operators with group event business — multiple RFID wristbands on one tab for private parties
- Venues that want QR-on-wall pour access — guests scan the pour wall QR to open a tab and start pouring, no wristband needed
- Any operator tired of managing separate check-in and POS terminals just to pair a wristband
- Operators who need real-time guest tab visibility via text after every pour
- Venues with internet reliability concerns — GoTab's offline mode keeps the pour wall running

WHEN TOAST + IPOURIT MAY BE SUFFICIENT

- Simple single-zone taproom where guests check in once, pour, and leave — no tab mobility needed
- Operator deeply embedded in Toast ecosystem with no near-term switching appetite
- Low-volume self-pour venue (under 20 taps) where check-in complexity is manageable with a dedicated staff position
- Operator who only needs pour data on the check — no need for unified tab, zone routing, or auto-close

SELF-POUR GUEST JOURNEY — SATURDAY EVENING SCENARIO

STAGE	GOTAB + IPOURIT	TOAST + IPOURIT
1. Guest Arrives	Bartender taps guest's RFID wristband from the bar terminal — tab opens, card on file captured, wristband activated for pour wall. 30 seconds. Guest goes directly to the wall.	Staff opens a Toast ticket, then walks guest to the dedicated iPourIt charger, uses admin access to select ticket, and pairs wristband. Separate stations, multiple steps. Busy nights create a line at the charger.
2. Guest Pours	Each pour posts in real time to the GoTab tab. Guest gets a text after each pour showing their running balance. No kitchen printer noise.	Pour data pushes to the Toast open check. No real-time text to guest. Kitchen/prep stations may print for every pour depending on configuration.
3. Guest Moves to Table	Guest scans table QR code. Existing tab reconnects to new location. Server can add food to the same tab. RFID wristband still active — charges append to the same check.	Server must manually transfer the Toast check from the bar/check-in area to the table. QR ordering creates a separate check — food and self-pour may never merge.
4. Friends Join	Guest shares tab link via text. Friends can be issued their own RFID wristbands linked to the same GoTab tab. All pours tracked per wristband, one unified check for the group.	Each new guest gets their own Toast ticket at check-in. Group of 4 = 4 separate checks. No native way to link friends' pour activity to a single group tab.

STAGE	GOTAB + iPOURIT	TOAST + iPOURIT
5. Server Adds a Round	Server adds drinks from handheld to the same guest tab. Self-pour and server-added items on one check. Guest sees the update instantly on their phone.	Server adds items on POS — likely a separate check from the self-pour tab unless manually merged. No live tab visibility for the guest.
6. Checkout	Guest reviews full tab on phone — all pours, F&B; any server-added items. Tips, pays from phone. Tab auto-closes; RFID wristband deactivates automatically. Zero staff intervention needed.	Staff closes Toast ticket. iPourIt wristband deactivates after ticket closure. Staff must reconcile any split checks (self-pour + table F&B;). No auto-close; end-of-night requires manual closure for all open tickets.

OBJECTION HANDLERS — SELF-POUR & RFID

Q: "We already have Toast and iPourIt is integrated with Toast — why do we need GoTab?"

Toast does connect to iPourIt, but the integration is surface-level — it pushes pour totals to an open Toast check, and that's it. To even pair an RFID wristband, staff needs a dedicated charger terminal separate from their POS. There's no wristband activation at the bar, no tab that follows the guest to a table, no auto-close at end of night. GoTab's integration is purpose-built for iPourIt venues — wristband activation from any terminal, automated tab close and card disconnect, real-time texted balance updates for guests, and everything on one unified check. The question isn't whether Toast works with iPourIt — it's whether your staff and guests deserve a better experience.

Q: "Our guests are used to checking in at a dedicated station — we don't need bar-side RFID activation."

They're used to it because that's all Toast allows — not because it's the best experience. A dedicated check-in station creates a bottleneck on busy nights: every new guest must queue at the charger before they can pour. With GoTab, any bartender at any terminal can tap a wristband and activate it in seconds — no line, no separate station. Pour Taproom in Atlanta specifically cited eliminating check-in friction as a key operational win when running iPourIt on GoTab across three floors. When you remove the queue, guests pour faster, drink more, and staff spend time on hospitality instead of check-in logistics.

Q: "We only care that pour data shows up on the check — we don't need tab mobility or anything fancy."

That's exactly what Toast gives you — and nothing more. The problem shows up the moment a guest with an open pour wall tab wants to sit down and eat: now you have two checks. Or when a group of four comes in and they want one bill at the end. Or when you're closing up and realize you have 12 open Toast tickets from guests who've already left. GoTab handles all of those automatically — one tab, one check, auto-close. 'Just pour data on the check' works fine until your Friday night gets busy and you're manually merging checks and chasing unclosed tabs at midnight.

Q: "We're on a 2-year Toast contract — switching isn't realistic right now."

Two things worth knowing: first, Toast's merchant agreement allows you to terminate without an early termination fee if Toast raises your processing rates and you object in writing before the effective date — and they've raised rates twice since 2024. Second, mark your auto-renewal date and give written notice 30 days before. In the meantime, every month you stay on Toast with iPourIt is a month your staff is doing manual wristband activation at a charger terminal, closing tabs by hand at end of night. Start the GoTab conversation now so you're ready when the window opens.

Q: "We don't really use QR ordering — we're a self-pour venue, not a QR restaurant."

GoTab's QR capability isn't just for ordering food — guests can scan a QR code directly on the pour wall to open a tab and start pouring immediately, no wristband required. They can also scan mid-visit to add to an existing tab. A return guest or pre-registered visitor walks up to the wall, scans, and pours — no staff intervention, no check-in station, no wristband handoff. It also means your bartenders can handle tab management from a handheld anywhere in the venue rather than being anchored to a charger terminal. The QR and RFID systems work together in GoTab — they're not separate products bolted together. Use wristbands when you want them, QR when you don't.

SELF-POUR PROOF POINTS ON GOTAB + iPOURIT

Pour Taproom

Midtown Atlanta, GA · 3-story self-pour venue · iPourIt RFID wristbands

Challenge: Three-floor self-pour venue — needed RFID integration, multi-floor tab management, and walkout protection across all levels.

Result: iPourIt RFID wristbands linked to GoTab tabs across all three floors. QR mobile ordering reduced bar congestion. Pre-auth protects against abandoned tabs. GoTab's multi-floor tab mobility made Pour Taproom possible at scale.

"The flexibility to shift between service styles allows us to optimize efficiency while keeping the guest experience front and center."

Bear Cave Brewing

Hopkins, MN · 17,000 sq ft · 52 self-pour taps

Challenge: Previous POS caused double tabs, failed pre-auths, ~\$1K/mo in revenue loss on a massive self-pour operation.

Result: Eliminated duplicate charges and pre-auth failures. Unified food + self-pour on one tab. Runs lean staff across a massive venue with unified RFID tab management.

"There is absolutely no way we could maintain this place without these systems."

Hoppin' Brands

Multi-location self-pour taprooms

Challenge: Multi-location self-pour operation requiring consistent guest experience, RFID management, and unified reporting.

Result: GoTab + self-pour deployed across locations. RFID, tab management, and reporting unified under one platform. Consistent guest experience across every location.

Reference operator cited for multi-location self-pour excellence.

Malcolm Yards / Golden Mill

Multi-vendor food hall + self-pour

Challenge: Food hall format with self-pour component — needed pour wall to integrate with multi-vendor tab routing and revenue splits.

Result: GoTab's native multi-vendor architecture handles self-pour, food vendors, and bar on one tab. No other POS handles this combination natively.

"GoTab's multi-vendor tab routing is something Toast simply cannot replicate in a food hall setting."