

# Applebee's® Fan Fanatics Contest Rewards College Basketball Fans Who Talk Smack

## Survey Shows Majority of Social Media Users Cheer for Their Teams Online

KANSAS CITY, Mo.--The final weeks of the college basketball season means buzzer beaters, upsets and underdogs. With **Applebee's Fan Fanatics contest**, the March tournament means something else for **Applebee's fans**: time to trash talk, cheer online – and win.

Half (51 percent) of Americans who use social media root for their favorite sports teams in a variety of ways online, including cheering on their favorite players and teams, following fan pages or simply “talking smack,” according to a recent survey\* conducted online by Harris Interactive on behalf of Applebee's.

Applebee's is inviting its millions of **Facebook fans** to do all of that with its Fan Fanatics contest, which rewards the biggest fans with the best chances to win thousands in Applebee's gift cards.

Fan Fanatics can accumulate points for the following simply by visiting **Applebee's main Facebook fan** page and the nearly 1,500 local neighborhood Applebee's Facebook fan pages:

- Shout Out: One (1) point every time a Fan Fanatic sends a post
- Photo Upload: Ten (10) points for every photo a Fan Fanatic uploads
- Twitter Share: One (1) point each time a Fan Fanatic tweets about their team

“Applebee's brand page has an app that shares fans' shout outs, uploaded pics and tournament tweets. Fans also can root for their teams on Applebee's 1,500 local restaurant Facebook pages and their posts will be seen by fans across the country,” said Jill McFarland, senior manager of digital and social media for Applebee's Services, Inc. “Fan Fanatics rewards super fans for their team spirit and invites them to cheer on their favorite college hoops team at their local Applebee's.”

Applebee's will reward top fans with Applebee's gift cards following each round of the basketball tournament. Those with the highest scores will receive \$20 gift cards in the early rounds and \$50, \$100 or \$250 in later rounds. The overall winner will receive a \$500 Applebee's gift card following the April 2 college basketball championship.

Applebee's makes connecting with friends during games even easier with a customized invitation on its Facebook fan page. Applebee's fans can send a **“Fans Watch Here” invite**, with time, date, Applebee's location – and even a personalized message – for watching their favorite team.

Scheduling a party is a breeze and the new feature lets Applebee's fans keep track of the watching events they're hosting, attending, or both. The invite feature also allows fans to buy friends digital gift cards, which can be sent instantly to get the fun started.

Applebee's guests can see all tournament games live at nearly 1,900 Applebee's nationwide, most of which are open until midnight or later. Guests can cheer on their local teams and perennial powerhouses at their neighborhood Applebee's, which offer ample bar seating and many flat screen televisions.

Check with local restaurants for specific game times and showings. Visit <http://applebees.com/about-us/catch-the-games> for game-day specials.

No purchase necessary to win. To view official contest rules, visit the **Fan Fanatics** Facebook page.

### **About Applebee's**

Applebee's ([www.applebees.com](http://www.applebees.com)) is the world's largest casual dining chain, with approximately 2,000 locations in 49 states, 16 countries and one U.S. territory. Based in Kansas City, Mo., Applebee's takes pride in providing a welcoming, neighborhood environment where everyone can enjoy the dining experience. Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar® is a DineEquity, Inc. (NYSE: DIN) brand, and is franchised and operated by Applebee's Services, Inc. and its affiliates.

### **\*Survey methodology:**

This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of Applebee's from March 6 – 8, 2012 among 2,254 adults ages 18 and older, of whom, 1,600 use social media. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables, please contact Derek Farley with DFPR, 704-941-7353.

### **About Harris Interactive**

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading custom market research firms, leveraging research, technology, and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries including healthcare, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant, and consumer package goods. Serving clients in over 215 countries and territories through our North American and European offices and a network of independent market research firms, Harris specializes in delivering research solutions that help us – and our clients – stay ahead of what's next. For more information, please visit [www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com).

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