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Proven Strategies to Attract More Diners

(And Boost Revenue at Your Venue)



Simple, Effective Tips to Drive Bookings, Increase Profits, and Enhance Diner Experiences

Attracting diners is the lifeblood of any successful hospitality business. Even with an outstanding menu and exceptional service, your venue needs customers to thrive. In this guide, we'll show you proven strategies to draw diners in, from maximising online bookings to leveraging high-quality marketing tools.

With these expert tips, you can make your venue irresistible to guests and boost your revenue. Ready to fill your tables?

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Why a 24/7 online presence is essential for attracting customers

In today's digital age, a strong online presence is vital for attracting customers to your venue. Traditional marketing methods alone no longer have the impact they once did. To stay competitive and reach more diners, you need to embrace digital strategies that connect with customers where they are—online. ResDiary's [2024 Hospitality Tech Trends Report](#) found that 81% of diners find it easier to make a reservation online. According to ResDiary's [2023 Beyond the Booking industry report](#), 28% say they prefer to use an online booking system or app. That's compared to just 13% who say they still use the phone to call and reserve.

ResDiary's [2023 ANZ Restaurant Booking Insights](#) paints a similar picture on the other side of the globe. Social media bookings as a share of total reservations more than doubled from 2021 to 2023 (1.15% to 3.8%). Bookings made on a restaurant's website saw similar growth from 13.45% to 31.6%.

Last year, ResDiary processed 75 million bookings and 255 million covers globally. While hospitality businesses continue to be challenged in many ways, there is still plenty of appetite for eating out, and your restaurant can capitalise on it.

There's no denying that Google is hugely popular among diners looking to make a reservation for their next meal or special event. "Restaurants near me" is Googled around 137,000 times a month in Australia and 285,000 times a month in the UK. On TikTok, 222 million videos have the tag "restaurant". Restaurants and bars must work smarter to find new ways to appeal to the always-online behaviour of their customers. Your business should be as visible as possible in highly competitive spaces, use great content and offers to engage your audience and make it as easy as possible to make a booking, no matter where customers find you.



6 ways to attract more customers to your venue

If customers are the lifeblood of every restaurant, bar, or hotel, then how can you ensure you're doing everything to attract diners to your venue? We've rounded up six proven strategies to help you ensure a steady flow of online bookings

Follow these methods to increase your foot traffic and your revenue.

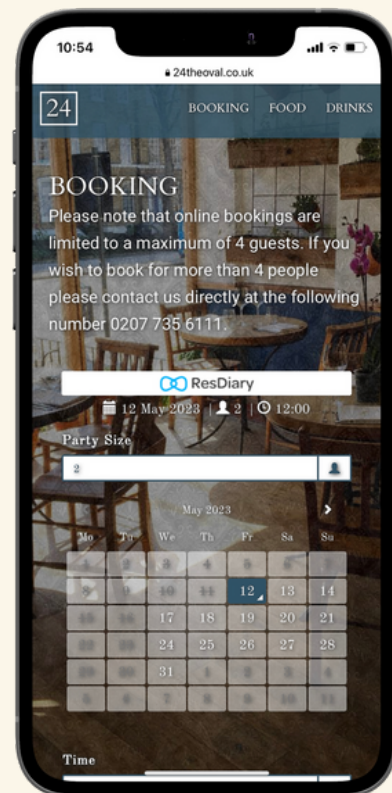
1. Accept bookings any time, anywhere

If you want to bring more customers into your venue, you need to **ensure they can find you online** and make it as easy as possible for them to book when they do find you. This includes making it easy to book when it suits them, 24/7, 365. Having the right booking system can provide a simple yet perfect solution.

ResDiary is a reliable and intuitive solution for reservation management for restaurants, pubs & bars, and hotels - from small independents to household names of groups and chains. ResDiary offers easy-to-use and fully customisable website widgets, which should be your first port of call when it comes to winning more online bookings.

You can then start directing people to your booking page and **take reservations around the clock**. The beauty is that ResDiary does all the work in capturing and processing bookings, without charging a single booking fee - saving you precious money and precious time for your team.

You can also accept bookings on the most important sites where people are searching. ResDiary offers integrations with critical services like **Google, Facebook and Instagram**. ResDiary's [Google integration](#) is free with your ResDiary subscription and makes it easy for customers to place a booking directly from Google Search or Google Maps - perfect for early-planners or nabbing nearby hungry diners. If you've taken the time to get your restaurant ranking on Search and Maps, this integration is a no-brainer to help you convert interested searches into diners more effectively.



Another vital tool for attracting customers is ResDiary's [Meta integration](#). It functions in a similar way to ResDiary's Google integration, allowing you to seamlessly drop a booking widget onto your Facebook or Instagram business page. As you can imagine, this provides a real focal point for your marketing efforts on any of those platforms too.

Any time a customer looks up your business on one of these apps or comes across your viral posts, they'll have the opportunity to place a booking with your business.

The best part about using ResDiary to manage your online presence? All bookings made are totally commission-free, keeping more money in your pocket. [Try our commission savings calculator!](#)

2. Provide a seamless booking journey

Once you've piqued a diner's interest and they are ready to make a booking, it's important that it's simple to do it then and there - **their booking journey must be free of any friction**. This is where ResDiary's reservation system can really shine in helping you attract more table bookings - while streamlining your booking management.

When a customer goes to make a booking on your website, they'll be able to see live availability and easily choose their time slot. With ResDiary's smart rules, you can craft your booking availability in more intelligent ways for a seamless experience for customers and staff alike.

Having smart rules in place ensures a healthy yet controlled flow of customers and that bookings aren't placed that you cannot serve to your highest standards.

Crafting the perfect booking journey doesn't end once the reservation is placed. The process of attracting customers is only successful when a diner actually walks through your doors.

For this reason, ResDiary makes it easy to send branded communications to your customers. You can trigger emails to be automatically sent when a booking is placed. With integrations like [Silverstreet](#), you can also communicate with customers via SMS.



This works towards preventing the dreaded [no-show](#). When customers are reminded about their bookings, it's less likely to slip their mind and cost your business money. That's why our system also enables the handling of deposits and upfront payments; seamlessly slipped into the booking journey - saving your staff having to call the customer and confirm their booking.

You can continue to communicate with customers using ResDiary's tools and integrations after their visit, encouraging them to return to your business.



[Check out these 7 heavenly booking pages to get you inspired!](#)

3. Get the word out

Once you have the systems in place to capitalise on awareness about your business, it's time to start letting people know about it. Developing a marketing strategy for your business might seem daunting, but there are a few **tried and true channels** you can use to attract more customers to your venue.

Email and SMS marketing

Emails and SMS are ingrained in our daily lives. Every new booking is a prime opportunity to add customer contact details to your marketing database. These channels are **a direct route to talking to potential diners**. You don't have to worry about fighting for their attention like you would on social media. They are the perfect way to create highly targeted campaigns at virtually no extra cost to you.

This is why ResDiary supports your business creating your very own branded [email marketing campaigns](#). You can create and send important messages and campaigns, straight from your booking system.



ResDiary also offers a hugely beneficial integration with [Wireless Social](#). This leading **guest wi-fi provider** **collects customer emails** to add to your database. It's especially valuable for larger bookings, allowing you to acquire contact details for the entire party rather than just the person who made the reservation.

ResDiary offers additional integrations for effective email and **SMS marketing campaigns**. This includes [Silverstreet](#) for sending automatic SMS communications. You can use it to remind customers about bookings, advertise special events and more.

SMS marketing can be equally fertile ground for customer communications. Over [90% of Australians aged 15-65 own a smartphone](#). In the UK, [overall smartphone penetration is 94%](#). With an effective SMS marketing campaign, your restaurant can enjoy incredible reach.

To ensure a deeper connection with your diners, you can rely on customer relationship management systems. For example, ResDiary integrates with [Acteol](#), a system that brings all your diner data together to create a single customer view. This allows you to intelligently **craft bespoke marketing campaigns**.



Third-Party Booking platforms

Millions of customers around the globe rely on third-party booking platforms to find their next dining destination, making them a fantastic gateway to attracting more diners to your restaurant.

When you sign up for ResDiary, you get a free [Dish Cult](#) profile (available in the UK only). Dish Cult is used by 9.7 million customers, and when a Dish Cult user makes a booking, there's no extra cost for you - unlike other platforms.

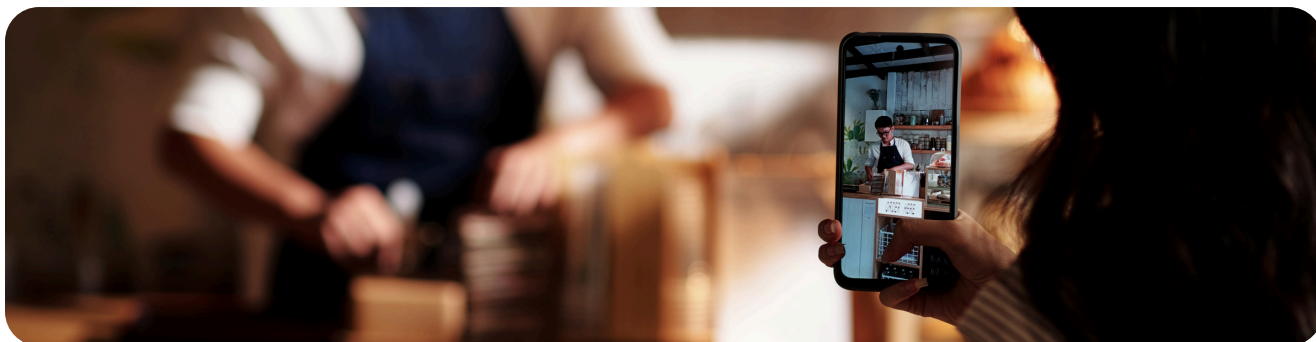
CHECK IT OUT FOR YOURSELF!

Social media marketing

Social media marketing is a highly effective way to market any hospitality business. 62.3% of the global population uses social media, offering an incredible amount of opportunity to showcase your venue to build a healthy flow of online bookings.

Here are a few tips for making the most of social media for your hospitality marketing efforts:

- **Understand demographics:** Having a strong understanding of your target demographics is important for creating social media content that will resonate with them. Consider their age, spending power and pain points.
- **Compelling content:** When creating your social media content, put yourself in the shoes of your target audience. How can you make sure your content is immediately compelling? The best way to do this is to place something truly attention-grabbing at the start of your post or video. Creating a tantalising promotion or event with the help of ResDiary is the perfect starting point for unskippable content.
- **Timing:** Post your content at key times throughout the day. Some of the most effective times to post content are mid-morning, lunchtime and the early evening.



Check out our guide so social media marketing for hospitality venues!

Search engine marketing

Earning visibility on search engines like **Google is pivotal for success in attracting diners** to your venue. It's a common port of call for any customer looking for the perfect place to grab a meal. You can become more visible on search engines through organic or results or paid ads. Unless you have the time and knowledge to create a comprehensive search engine optimisation (SEO) campaign, paid ads might be the best option for you.

Google Ads involves “bidding” on keywords that are relevant to your business. If your bid is successful, customers will be presented with an ad from your hospitality venue. Generally, bids are determined by your daily budget. Ensure that when your Google Ad appears, it is clearly relevant to the search term in question. It should also contain something enticing, like a promotion.

4. Effectively handle phone calls and waitlists



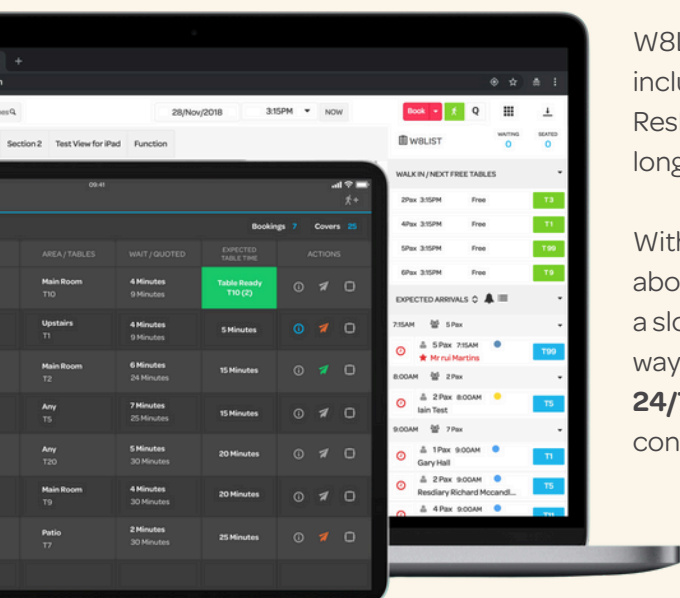
We've talked about the importance of online bookings allowing your diners to reserve whenever they like, and it's important to remember those customers who will make contact through more traditional means. **Some diners will still ring a restaurant to place their booking.** They may also simply show up without placing a booking - much to the frustration of busy staff in the middle of service, no doubt!

We've all been there when a queue is forming or the phone won't stop ringing, and if your business doesn't have the right solutions, it's easy to lose these customers. Fortunately, ResDiary offers the features you need to attract these diners to your venue and ensure they're served in an orderly and efficient way. With **ResPhone**, rather than a customer being left with an answering machine (and probably hanging up), the caller can place a booking, just like as if someone had answered the call.

Once ResPhone has collected a customer's details, it automatically enters them into ResDiary. If their desired time isn't available, ResPhone will even offer them the closest available time. ResPhone ensures you don't miss out on business when your team isn't able to get to the phone in time. It also offers serious peace of mind by reducing the stress involved in an unanswered phone.

Just as you never want to miss a booking opportunity over the phone, you also want to avoid turning away customers that show up to your restaurant. You might be at capacity when they first arrive, but know that tables will soon become free.

To attend to this, you could rely on a pen and paper waitlist. Or, you could upgrade to **ResDiary's digital W8List™**. It offers a far better method for managing walk-ins and waiting lists in your venue.



W8List™ reliably records information about waiting diners, including their phone number or email. It also integrates with ResDiary's booking data to provide an accurate estimate of how long customers will have to wait for a table.

With their contact details stored, waiting diners are able to go about their day while W8List™ will automatically get in touch when a slot becomes available. These smart systems are the perfect way to ensure that your business is **open to receive bookings 24/7 through all channels**, and that interested diners are always converted into paying customers.

5. Provide excellent food and service

An invaluable - but perhaps overlooked - element of marketing your restaurant is word of mouth. While your direct marketing efforts are certainly crucial, it's important to remember that **delivering an experience that your customers will want to recommend** to others can be just as important.

Ensuring that you are delivering excellent food and service to your diners encourages them to tell friends and family what a great time they had. Quality of food and service is also the decisive factor when it comes to customers leaving online reviews and talking about your business on social media. 98% of Australian customers [read online reviews before making a purchase](#), with hospitality businesses receiving more reviews than any other category. In the UK, [76% of customers](#) report having checked online reviews.

Delivering excellent food and service comes down to a few key factors:

The right menu:

You should dedicate plenty of time to creating the right menu for your business. The ideal menu should be distinctive and delicious to entice diners, but still manageable for your team to serve the highest standards during your busiest services.



A great team:

Having the right team on your side is essential for delivering outstanding service. Prioritise experienced team players who are able to guide and assist other members of staff where necessary. Ensure that staff are always treated with respect and that their input is always valued. This keeps morale high and prevents turnover.



Optimised operations:

Taking the time to streamline your operations pays major dividends in the long run. Using a table management system like ResDiary, you'll be able to effectively control the flow of bookings in your venue, create an optimised floor plan, and take advantage of integrated systems to streamline the way your team works. [We've got a great guide on optimising your operations!](#)



Personalisation:

Personalisation is an increasingly critical part of hospitality service. ResDiary makes it easy for your team to provide thoughtful service that is customised for individual diners. Customers can easily leave booking notes with your team which any member of staff can access during service. You can also use CRM systems like Acteol to personalise your service even more deeply.



6. Promotions and events

Another pivotal way your business can attract more diners is by hosting specific promotions and events. By advertising promotions and events, you can **entice visits from new customers and create more personalised experiences for your regular diners.**

The process of creating promotions and events for your venue can be made a whole lot easier with ResDiary. With ResDiary's promotions feature, you can add special offers and events straight to your booking widget, promoting them to potential diners and making them easy to book.

You can use this feature to advertise a new tasting menu, controlling features such as the price, total covers available and deposit requirements to reduce no-shows. ResDiary promotions can also be used to help advertise special events like Valentine's Day or seasonal events like summer patio parties.



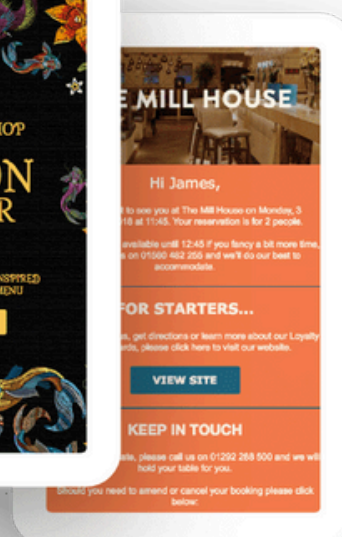
With ResDiary marketing features and integrations, it's easy to let your customer base know about these events and get them in the door.

ResDiary has additional features to make hosting events a breeze. With ResDiary segments, you can **change your booking rules to adapt for big occasions or events.** You can also open up different areas of your business, such as outdoor areas for summer events.

ResDiary also offers easy access to booking data as well as a comprehensive analytics suite. Review this data carefully before hosting an event so your entire team is prepared.



Learn more about growing
your revenue opportunities
with ResDiary's tools for
marketing and promotions



Summary

Attracting customers goes beyond getting the word out about your business. You need a marketing plan and the right solutions in place to make it easy for diners to discover and book a table or their next event at your restaurant, pub, hotel, or bar.

Communication is also key, from the moment they come across your paid ad, email, or social post, right through to reminding them about their booking. This will also help you reduce the risk of no-shows. By delivering great food and service, you can increase the chances they tell their friends and family about your venue, and return themselves.

Understanding the full process of attracting customers is essential to boosting revenue in your business. Follow these tips and rely on effective technology like ResDiary to maintain steady foot traffic in your business.

How ResDiary helps you attract more customers

There's no one answer to attracting customers to your hospitality business. However, there are some fundamentals, and no matter how you go about it, using the right technology to implement your strategy can be critical.

Relying on a table management system like ResDiary is the perfect starting point. It offers the features you need to intuitively accept online and over-the-phone bookings, as well as managing walk-ins.

ResDiary also integrates with leading marketing systems to communicate with your customers as effectively as possible. Additionally, ResDiary makes it easy to manage exciting events and promotions.

Managing your whole strategy from your reservation management system makes it easy to keep track of your activities, maximise their effectiveness and measure their success.



Book a demo and see how ResDiary can help your business grow!