ResDiary
an access company

The 7 Areas You Need to Focus on to

Optimise Venue Operations

Keep your customers and team smiling with a well-oiled hospitality business

In this guide...

As a hospitality business owner or operator, you're always looking for ways to make your business run more smoothly. This guide will take you through the seven most important areas for optimising your venue's operations.

We'll explore the best methods for streamlining your venue in these areas, and how table management software can help.

Content

Why streamlining your venue's operations is essential

No matter how smoothly your restaurant is operating, there's a good chance that things could be functioning even better to help ensure you're maximising the value of every service and every table booking. In the world of hospitality, reduced service bottlenecks and efficient table management can make all the difference for your venue's success.

Here are some key reasons you should invest in <u>optimising your operations</u>.

Better service, happier customers

Operational inefficiencies can have a serious impact on the experience of your customers. A poor booking experience, long wait times, and shaky service can quickly spoil a diner's night out - and your chances of converting them into regular customers.

Remember that <u>unsatisfied customers are more likely to share their experience than satisfied ones</u>. By optimising your venue to run a smooth service, you're in pole position to deliver an exceptional experience every time. You can rest assured that your customers can enjoy a great meal, come back in future, and let all their friends know as well!

An efficient team

Any restaurant, bar, or hotel worth its salt has a dedicated team of staff members committed to fulfilling the needs of each and every customer. But nobody can get more frustrated by operational inefficiencies than staff. By ensuring your pre-service work and shifts run smoothly, your team can focus on what they do best: **Delivering exceptional service to your customers**. A happy team means a better working atmosphere, better performance and higher retention.

Reduced costs

Profit margins can be thin in hospitality, sitting at around <u>7% on average</u>. Cutting down your operational inefficiencies can be great news for your bottom line. Accessing and analysing your booking data is a great starting point, helping you to view peak days and prepare accordingly by altering staff rotas and reducing food waste. Operations optimisation doesn't just help your business generate more revenue. It also cuts back on wasted money, helping you create a more sustainable business moving forward.

7 focus areas to optimise venue operations

Not sure where to start when it comes to optimising operations in your hospitality venue? We've rounded up seven areas where a little bit of streamlining - with simple systems - can go a long way.

1. Control the flow of bookings

When accepting a reservation, there are plenty of things you need to keep in mind. Are you making sure that your tables are seating the optimal number of covers to maximise your space? Do your staff have the ability to handle a large booking during a particular time period? Which tables do you wish to sell first? Will there be enough time to allow for the number of turns you need in a service?

With an intelligent table management system like ResDiary, you can set certain smart rules to apply automatically. Your potential customers will only see the options available within the rules you've applied. If a reservation for a specific time doesn't fit within your rules, it won't appear online.

This enables you to automatically control the flow of bookings. No more stressful headaches for your team trying to work out what the best options may be or frantically trying to make your reservations fit together in your paper or digital diary. A booking system, like ResDiary, can handle it for you.


These rules only accept bookings of particular sizes on certain tables – a minimum of five covers on tables of six and a minimum of three covers on tables of four.

ResDiary also enables you to simply limit the number of covers that can be booked for particular time slots - Yield Management. While it might be tempting to try to serve as many customers as possible, overwhelming your staff can easily throw your entire service into disarray. Your yield management selections can apply for a single day or repeat on a consistent basis, providing critical flexibility.

Automation but with the flexibility you need to stay in control

No matter how much time you spend engineering your rules, they will never apply perfectly 100% of the time. That's why ResDiary allows you to "break" your own rules with one-off exceptions, giving you the flexibility you need to stay in full control of your table bookings. This ability is reserved for users with the correct permission settings, like managers.

Also, you may also only need to run specific rules for yield management at certain times, like the festive season for example. That's why you ResDiary allows you to save these rules and activate or deactivate them as and when you need to. This set-and-forget method is a crucial way to optimise your operations.
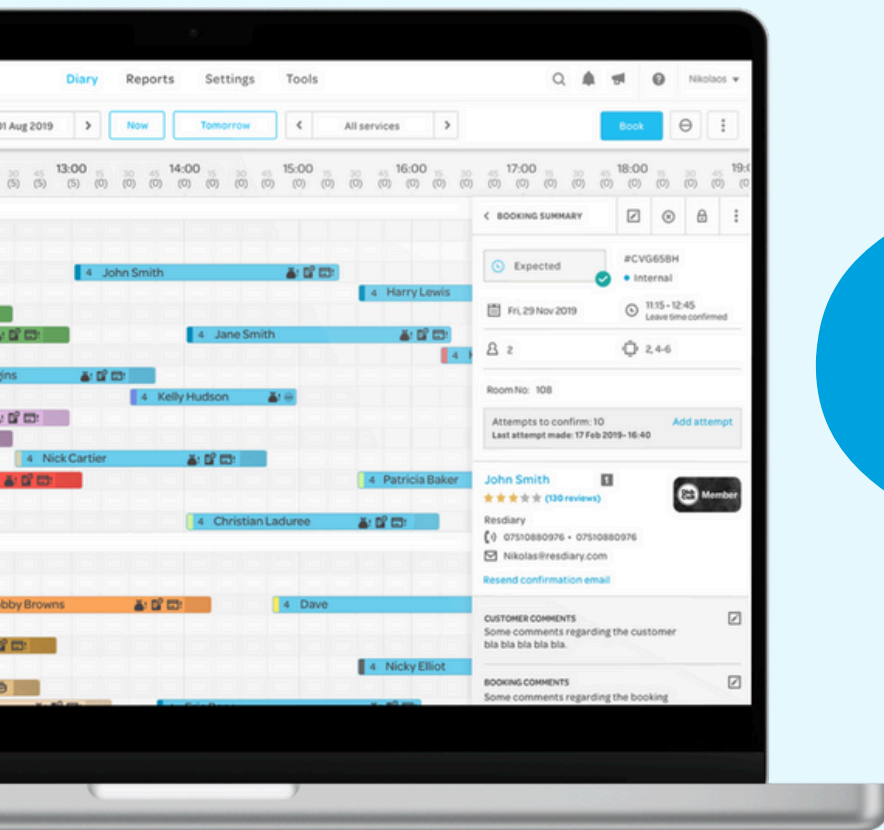
With ResDiary's yield management features, you can set maximum numbers of bookings and covers for any given service. This prevents your diary from becoming overwhelmed with bookings.

2. Manage bookings during service

Handling online bookings when they come in is one thing, but dealing with them during a hectic service can be very different. We all know what it's like with people wanting to move things around, the phone ringing, and walk-ins waiting at the door. You need the right tools at your disposal to take care of reservations and walk-ins in the most efficient way.

Table management software like ResDiary makes it easy to see your bookings in a variety of different views and on multiple devices. This includes floor plan views, grid views, and running order views. Giving your team the visibility and the foresight they need to prepare well and stay ahead of events during busy services.

Easily accessible for when you're on the move

ResDiary can also be accessed across multiple computers and tablets. Any member of your team can log on and see critical booking information and find out the status of different tables around the venue.

This streamlines communication, preventing the need to discuss certain details or rely on leaving paper notes. Your team can simply check ResDiary and get the information they need to provide a personalised yet still efficient service.
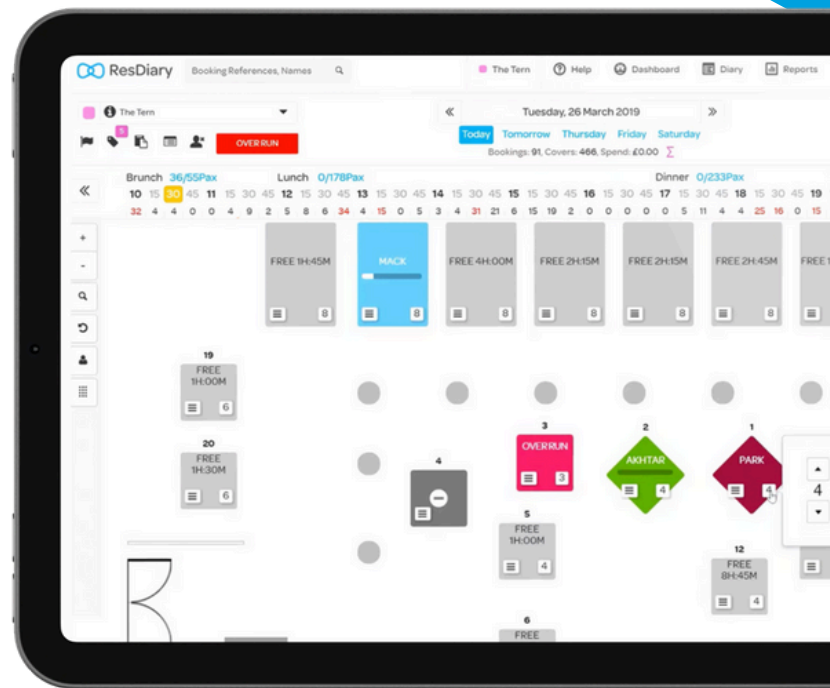
A smarter way to handle waitlists

These tools also better position your team to handle walk-in customers and waiting lists with ease. At times when your restaurant is not fully booked, walk-ins are an important way to maximise your revenue. Thanks to clear booking views, it's easy for any member of staff to see which tables are available and for how long.

A waiting list is another important tool for managing walk-ins in your venue. Digital waitlist management software like ResDiary's W8List™ reliably records information about waiting diners. W8List™ integrates with your booking data to let you know how long a customer will be waiting for a table. You can take down a customer's phone number or email and automatically alert them when a table opens up.
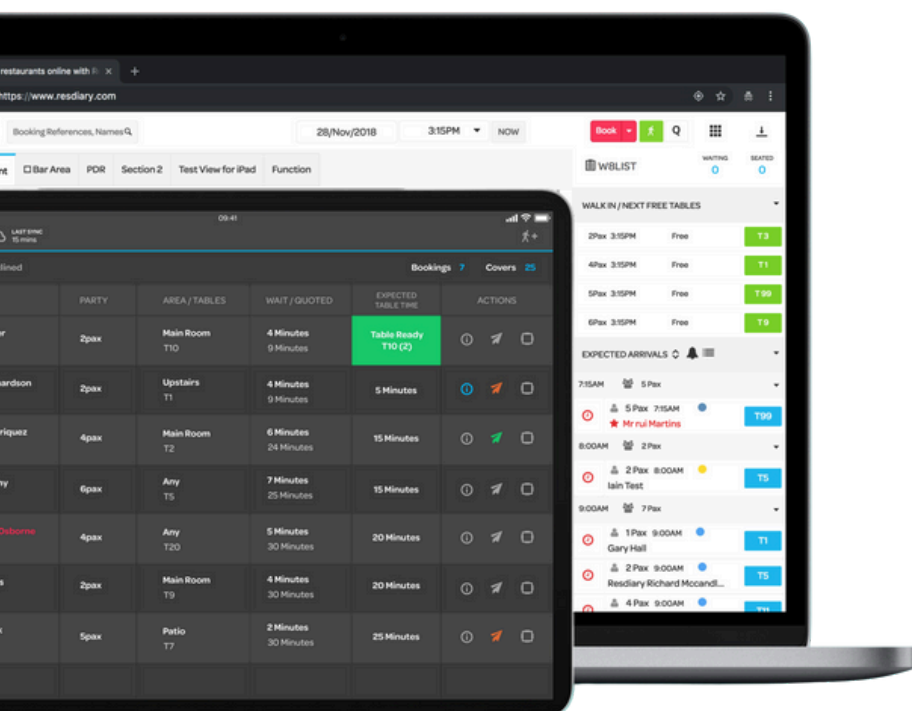
**See ResDiary
in action!**
Book a demo today
to discover what's possible
for your venue.

3. Maximise space

Maximising space in your venue comes down to having a great table plan and getting the most value out of every table. To do this, you need to prioritise reservations that work for you, filling as many seats and and turning over as many tables as you can.

Everything starts with a table plan. Digitising it will help you organise your space in order to maximise your bookings for every service. With a digital floor plan, you'll experience the following benefits:

Getting a clear view to ensure you are making the most of the physical space in your venue.

Seeing more opportunities for smart and effective table joins.

Taking advantage of opportunities like opening additional space for the holiday season using tools like ResDiary's segments.

Developing your rules to choose which tables should be sold first.

Clearly seeing the status of your tables, like if they're being cleaned or the party is running late.

Putting away your pen and paper floor plan drawings (for good).

Viewing your booking diary in this way can offer new insights into which areas of your restaurant are not being effectively maximised. You can take your digital floor plan to another level with segments. Segments allow you to change certain parts of your diary during a specific time period.

For example, during the summer you may make use of outdoor areas in your venue. With segments, you can expand the number of bookings you can accept during that period. Then, you can easily switch back when the season is over.

The beauty is that once you've created a segment, it's saved ready to use again whenever you like.

This takes the stress out of making changes to your venue during busier periods, empowering you to maximise your space at valuable times of year.
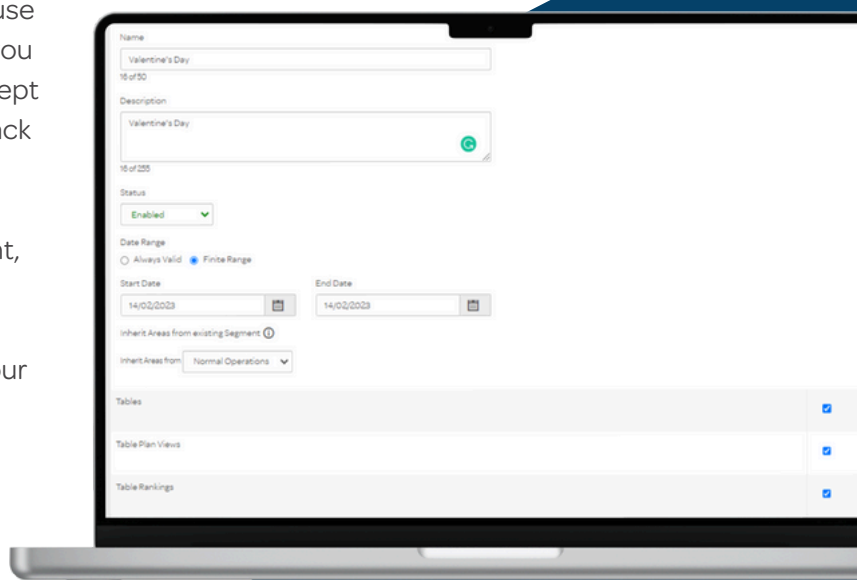
4. Communicate with your team

Communication is key for smooth hospitality operations. Some simple steps to improve communication in your venue can be extremely impactful when it comes to levelling up the experience of your diners. Here are a few top methods for getting better communication flowing in your restaurant:

Booking notes

With table management systems like ResDiary, customers' booking notes are easily saved in your diary. Your team can see these notes and adjust the service they provide to those customers accordingly.

Plus, with the mobile app you can see the number of bookings you're expecting for any given day. And with everything saved in ResDiary, the opportunities for errors to arise will also reduce.

Managers are able to share announcements to all members on ResDiary too. This makes it easy for everyone to be aware of where big VIPs will be sitting or which specials need to be pushed.

Kitchen display systems

A kitchen display system is used to communicate orders from a POS system directly to a screen in the kitchen. This takes the potential for human error out of order communication. Plus, your front of house team members will have more time to focus on their other duties when they aren't dashing to the kitchen to report orders.

Signs and labelling

Labelling various areas of your venue and specific items in your kitchen can be a helpful way to keep your entire team on the same page. It can be especially useful for recent hires who need a hand getting up to speed. Correctly labelling food containers can also be instrumental in ensuring communication errors don't result in cross-contamination or customers being served an allergen.

Regular staff meetings

Staff meetings are a great opportunity to keep your team informed about everything going on in your venue. These could be daily briefings or weekly check-ins, with additional meetings held as needed. Whether you have specific goals for a particular day, you're planning a special event or have menu changes to report, staff meetings are the perfect way to keep your team across changes in your venue. Be sure to have your booking diary open to share key insights from booking data and add important notes.

5. Integrate systems

A well-oiled restaurant requires many different kinds of software. This can range from table management systems, point-of-sale technology, and marketing software - even if we have shown you how ResDiary can serve so many roles already. When selecting which kinds of systems to use in your venue, integration is a major feature to look out for. If your systems are not designed to fit together, it can be much more difficult to enjoy smooth operations. 47% of respondents in ResDiary's 2024 Tech Trends Report said that integration is an important factor in determining future tech choices. That's why ResDiary has been designed to work with a wide array of other essential hospitality solutions.

Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) systems

One of the most significant integrations a hospitality venue can make is with a table management and EPOS system. This integration can enable you to easily track the inventory for menu items, spend data, diner status and so much more.

A two way integration between your table booking system and EPOS, can make analysis of this much easier. And make service a breeze as info passes directly between the booking system and EPOS terminal so every system, and team member is in the loop. Solutions like PowerEPOS from Triniteq and Oracle Hospitality offer seamless integrations with ResDiary. Take advantage of a leading EPOS system right alongside your reservation management system to make your business operations exceptionally streamlined.
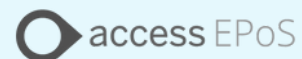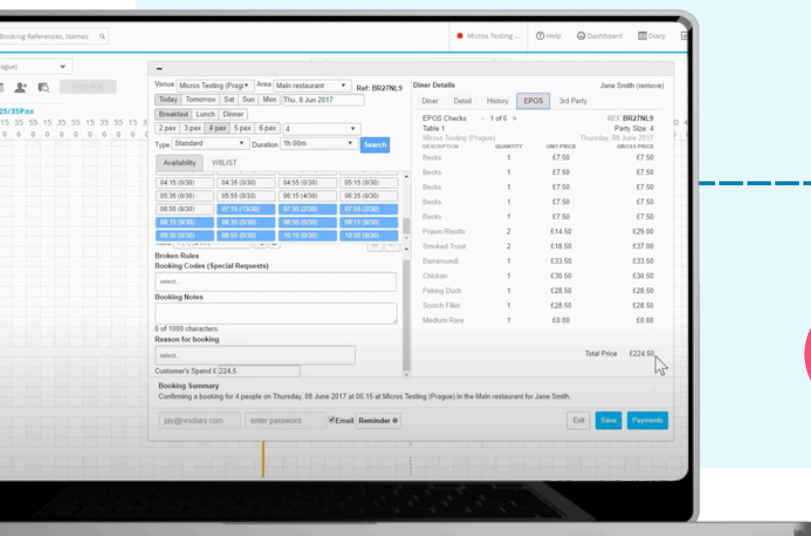
Explore our EPOS integrations

Marketing

Getting the word out about your venue can be time-consuming and inefficient. For many venue owners and managers, learning marketing strategies simply isn't feasible on top of all your other duties. Fortunately, ResDiary integrates with a range of CRM and marketing tools to simplify the promotion process. These tools leverage your data for you, automating much of the marketing process.

For instance, TalkBox by Impact Data offers shared data flow with ResDiary. It is automatically updated with customer contact details, booking date and number of covers booked. It also offers calculated fields like total visits and visit frequency to inform your marketing efforts. Then, messages are automatically triggered for your customers, encouraging them to return to your venue.
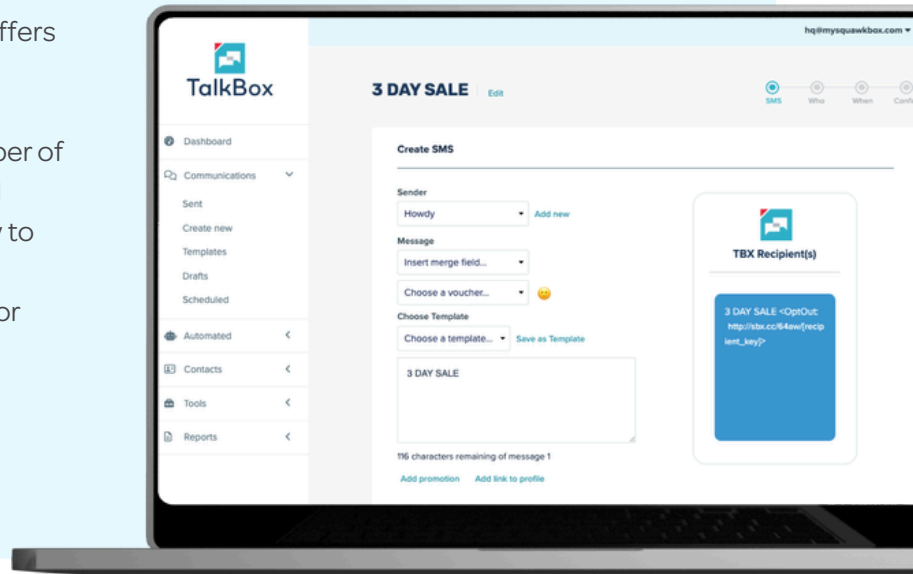
Booking partners and channels

Online booking platforms are a massively important way for your business to get noticed online. That's why ResDiary partners with a number of leading booking platforms.
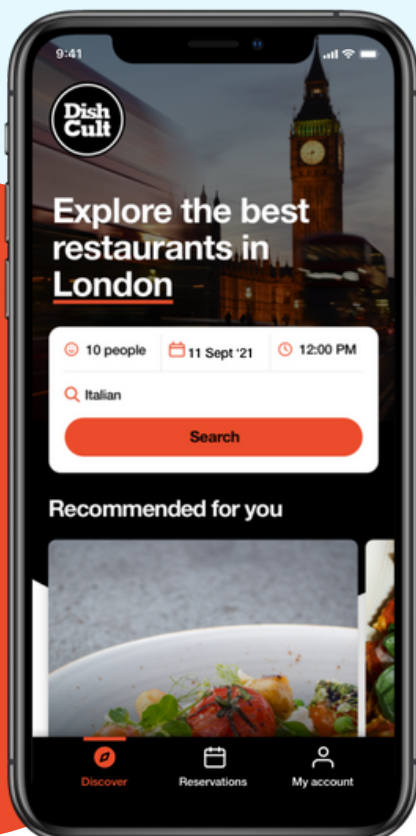
ResDiary offers real-time availability to users on multiple channels, including **Google**, enabling customers to place a booking directly from Search or Maps.

We've also got you covered on **Meta** platforms like **Facebook** and **Instagram**, with attractive booking buttons you can place on your profiles. These along with our other booking partners all give you the opportunity to showcase your venue to a new audience. With a ResDiary integration, taking bookings from multiple platforms becomes simple, with virtually no upkeep required.

And don't forget **Dish Cult**, powered by ResDiary, which is used by **9.7 million hungry diners** looking for their new favourite restaurant. When you join ResDiary, you get your very own free listing on the platform. And when users make a booking, there's no extra cost to you.

Property Management Systems (PMS)

Operating a hotel or inn adds layers of complexity to your hospitality business. Fortunately, a smooth integration between ResDiary and a PMS like Guestline can make things much simpler. With this two-way integration, you can create, edit and cancel bookings all within the platform. Reporting is also made much easier.

This integration is ideal for hotels or inns with restaurants attached. It means that you can easily provide table reservations and link them to the hotel booking. Other PMS integrations include Elina, Hop and ResortSuite, giving operators a range of options to ensure their restaurant booking system works in harmony with the tech across their hotel estate.
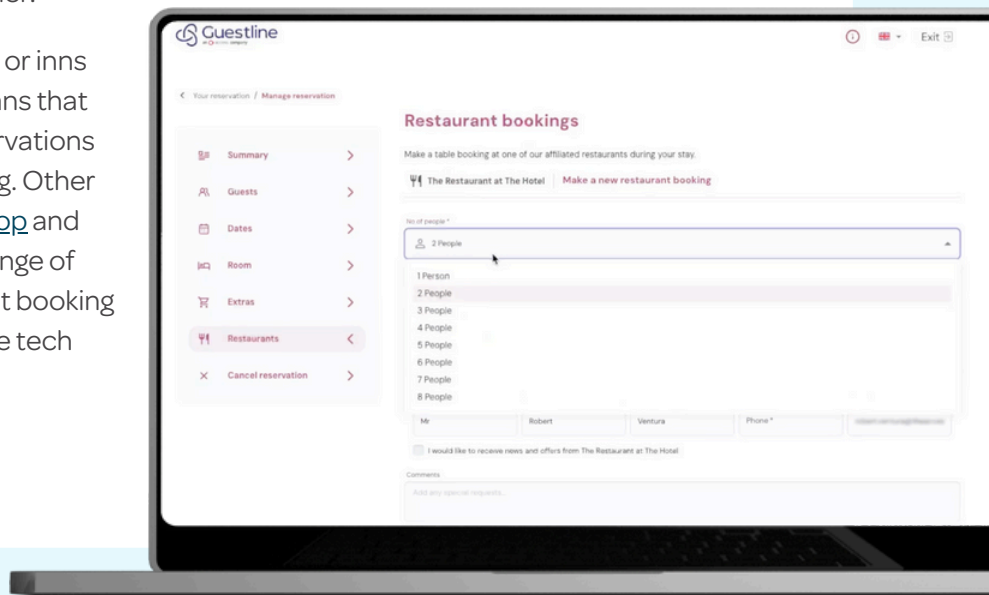
More than 60 integrations to discover!

Let's make your business run more smoothly with all your most essential systems working together.

Explore your options and if you don't find what you're looking you can always speak to our friendly team.

Get started today!

6. Make the most of booking data

If you want to make your hospitality business more efficient, you need to use the data at your disposal. In this effort, using a table management system like ResDiary can be a massive help. ResDiary offers an extensive analytics suite allowing you to make the most of all the data you're collecting.

When you have ResDiary set up in your venue, here are a few ways you can put your data to use:

Preparing for service

At its most basic level, booking data can be used to ensure you are ready for any given service. By understanding how many tables are reserved at particular times, creating rotas becomes far simpler.

It can also be a major leg up when it comes to inventory management. If you're running low on a particular ingredient and you can see that a busy service is on the horizon, it's time to make an emergency order.

Booking trends

ResDiary allows you to access and analyse plenty of data about your restaurant bookings. You can quickly identify peak times and trends among your bookings.

Bookings can be segmented in a range of handy ways. You can report on different party sizes or cancellations. This information can be used to help set up your tables, prepare for your busiest days and understand the reasons customers are cancelling their bookings.

You can also break down bookings by lead times and the channel by which they made a booking. All of this data is crucial to optimising your venue.

Marketing

The booking data of your customers presents many marketing opportunities for your business. ResDiary's integrations offers free-flowing data between systems for maximum effectiveness.

This use of customer contact details and more detailed booking information allows for simplified and more efficient marketing. You can also use Wireless Social to collect customer data through guest Wi-Fi. This means you don't only get contact details from the person who made the booking, but potentially the whole party.

Acteol is another option for optimising your marketing efforts. This CRM software collects customer data points to deliver targeted and effective marketing campaigns. With the benefits of ResDiary's other handy integrations, you'll have access to plenty of data for targeted and effective campaigns.
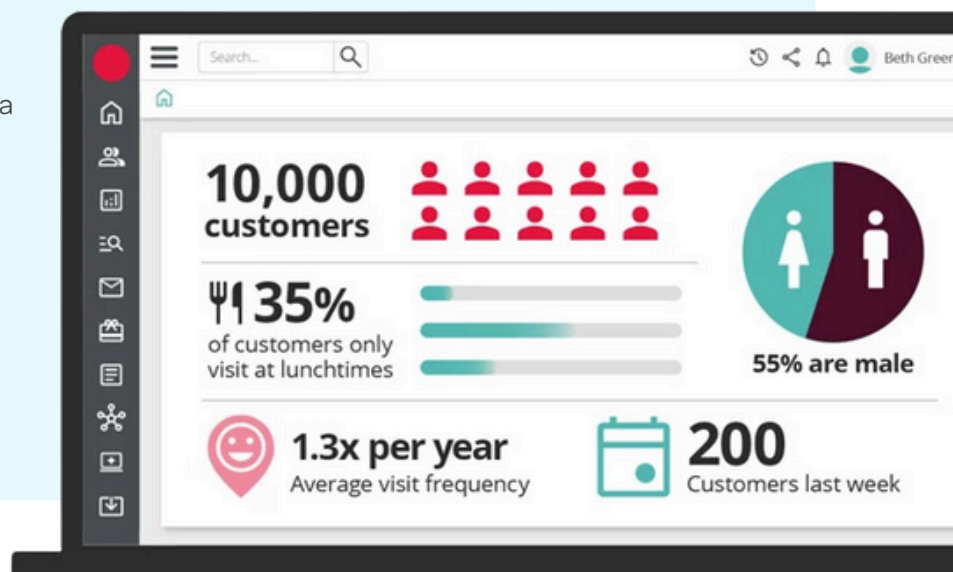
Personalisation

Personalisation is an increasingly important element of the dining experience for many customers. Consumers appreciate all the benefits that come with a venue tailoring experiences just for them.

ResDiary empowers hospitality businesses to personalise their service with Acteol. Used by thousands of restaurants, pubs and bars across the UK, Acteol brings together all your customer data points to paint a comprehensive picture of your guests.

It also allows you to deliver more personalised service when your customers arrive in your venue with a better understanding of their dining habits and preferences.

You can even use Acteol to garner customer feedback and route it to relevant team members, helping to improve your venue's performance.

10,000 customers

35% of customers only visit at lunchtimes

55% are male

1.3x per year Average visit frequency

200 Customers last week

7. Reduce no-shows

Nothing throws a spanner in the works quite like a no-show. Your team is all set to provide amazing service and generate revenue from a party. Then, they simply never arrive.

This reduces your ability to generate a profit during a service and can throw your costs off-balance. Rather than being able to rely on your booking diary, your team is stuck relying on walk-ins to fill the voids left by customers who haven't shown up or previously cancelled.

No-shows by the numbers

We've dug into the numbers across the UK and Ireland to understand exactly how no-shows are hurting hospitality businesses.

Here's what we found:

76% of venues were impacted by no-shows in 2023	**An average of 8% of bookings did not fulfil their reservation**	**Average revenue loss due to no-shows was £3,621* per venue in the UK.**

While reservation management tools like ResDiary make managing walk-ins and waiting lists easier, reducing no-shows should still be a top priority. Fortunately, ResDiary has ways to help here, too.

Customer reminders

Another important tool for reducing no-shows is customer communications. It can be easy for our dinner bookings to fall through the cracks of our hectic minds.

ResDiary enables you to create branded confirmation and reminder emails which integrate with your diary. When a customer confirms their attendance, you can see this update in your diary.

Want to go even further? ResDiary integrates with Silverstreet to send automatic SMS messages to your customers. Simply set the time and type of message you want your personalised messages to be sent.
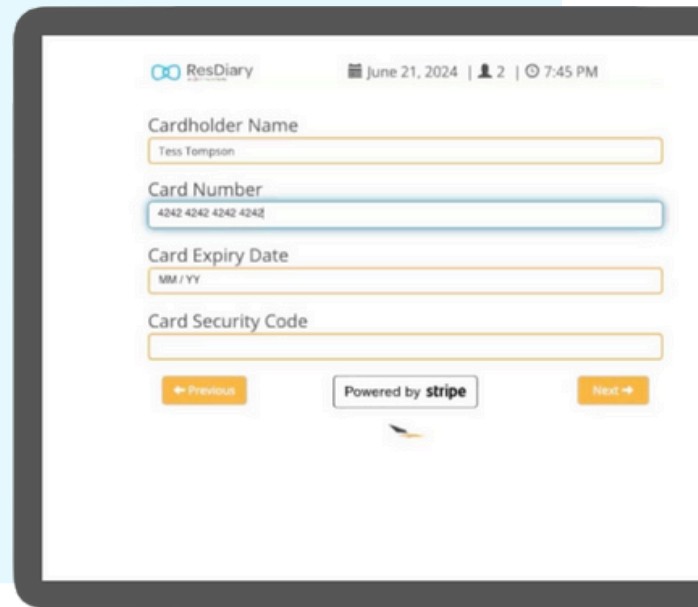
O2-UK

15:53
Wednesday 28 November

MESSAGES   now
The White Heart
Join us this Friday for our new live music nights
from 8pm till late.
Free entry and 2-4-1 cocktails.

*Estimated based on data from our Beyond the Booking Industry Report in 2023.

Booking deposits and pre-payments

Deposits are an effective way to ensure customers honour their reservations. With ResDiary, deposits become a seamless, unobtrusive part of the booking process. Simply decide when you want deposits to apply and they will be automatically integrated into the process for those bookings. You can also apply specific no-show charges.

By customising when booking deposits apply, you can ensure that this feature is used in a way your customers can understand. According to ResDiary's 2024 Tech Trends Report, 62% of customers are happy to provide their card details to secure a booking.

With ResDiary's automated email reminder and confirmation features, SMS integration, and payment features, it's easy to educate customers on the damaging impacts of no-shows. This will help to make them even more agreeable to deposits and no-show fees.

In the 21st Century, a great tech stack is the key to optimising operations and maximising revenue in hospitality. With a table management system at the centre, you'll have the functionality you need to for a highly efficient venue. Controlling your bookings and having easily accessible data for smooth service are key to customer and employee satisfaction.

You can also leverage ResDiary's impressive collection of integrations to streamline your services. From data-sharing POS systems to time-saving marketing solutions, collaborative systems are essential for success.

Prioritise easy-to-use systems that offer the data and functionality you need. This ensures that anyone in your team can jump in and use software when required without compromising on what these systems offer to your venue.

Why choose ResDiary to optimise your operations?

ResDiary offers the tools and integrations you need to get a permanent handle on your operations:

- **Automatically control the flow of bookings** as reservations are made using smart rules.
- **Manage and analyse your bookings** with a variety of different views, allowing your team to see availability and table statuses.
- **View your booking diary** in floor plan form to get a complete understanding of what's happening in your dining room.
- **Access a diner's booking notes** at any time, and provide your team with the information they need to deliver an amazing service.
- **Take advantage of ResDiary's integrations** with over 60 leading solutions for smooth operations and business success.
- **Use a comprehensive analytics suite** to understand your data and put it to work.
- **Reduce no-shows** with booking deposits and automated reminder communications.

What are you waiting for? Find out why 95% of surveyed venue operators think that reservation software is important for running a hospitality business.

Speak to our team to find out more about ResDiary or book a demo today!