VIP PLAYBOOK

How to Identify & Keep Your Most Valuable Diners







SevenRooms

INTRODUCTION

It’s a busy Saturday night

Reservations are pouring in, there’s a 30-minute wait and your team’s firing on all cylinders, no one seems to notice the important guest seated at table 10. It isn’t until the end of the shift that your manager suddenly realizes they dropped the ball on the reservation.

Sound familiar?

Delivering a VIP experience requires planning and flawless execution. However, the chaos of busy shifts, staff turnover and disconnected technology systems create service inefficiencies. These missed opportunities to surprise and delight your most valuable guests can disincentivize loyalty and hurt your bottom line.

Restaurants need a more efficient way of identifying and nurturing high-value relationships. In this guide, we’ll show you how leveraging guest data and a VIP playbook can help your team stay organized to deliver an incredible VIP experience across every touchpoint of your business.



What we’ll cover:

- Identifying Your Most Valuable Guests
- Handling Priority Reservations
- VIP Playbook in Action
- Tips for Keeping Your VIPs Loyal
- Rolling Out the Red Carpet

OVERVIEW

Identifying Your Most Valuable Guests

Spotting VIPs isn't easy. Unless you have a seasoned manager stationed at the host stand greeting every guest, recognition depends on frontline staff who may be new, rotating or overwhelmed. Memory alone can't scale, but guest data can.



Uncovering Guest Data with CRM

Guest data is the foundation of building relationships. It takes the guesswork out of who your customers are and how to best serve them. Most modern-day reservation systems give you basic guest information, but you'll need more than simple features to impress a VIP. Customer relationship management software (CRM) is the best solution for collecting and centralizing guest data.

A restaurant CRM integrates reservation, online order and POS data, giving all members of your team a detailed view of every guest in your restaurant.

BENEFITS OF A RESTAURANT CRM:

Makes Your Staff's Job Easier

With all of your guest intel stored in one location, your staff can spend less time chasing details and more time delivering on them.

Automatically Creates Detailed Guest Profiles

Upon booking, each guest is assigned a profile. As they return, their profile becomes more robust with detailed information such as dining preferences, special occasion history and visit and spend data.

Identifies VIPs for You

With a CRM, you can create customer statuses and tiers such as "Platinum VIPs," "VIPs" and "Regulars" based on visit frequency, check averages, preferences, etc.

Identifies VIPs Across All Venues

A centralized database gives your staff a unified view of every guest, no matter where they dine in your portfolio.

Guest Tags in Action:

Mina Group operates over 40 locations internationally and uses SevenRooms' CRM to identify their most valuable guests. These tags are based on certain levels of engagement and put into tiers. Guests who make two visits within a certain time period are automatically tagged "Future Fans," while those who visit 20+ times earn the distinction of "Platinum VIPs."

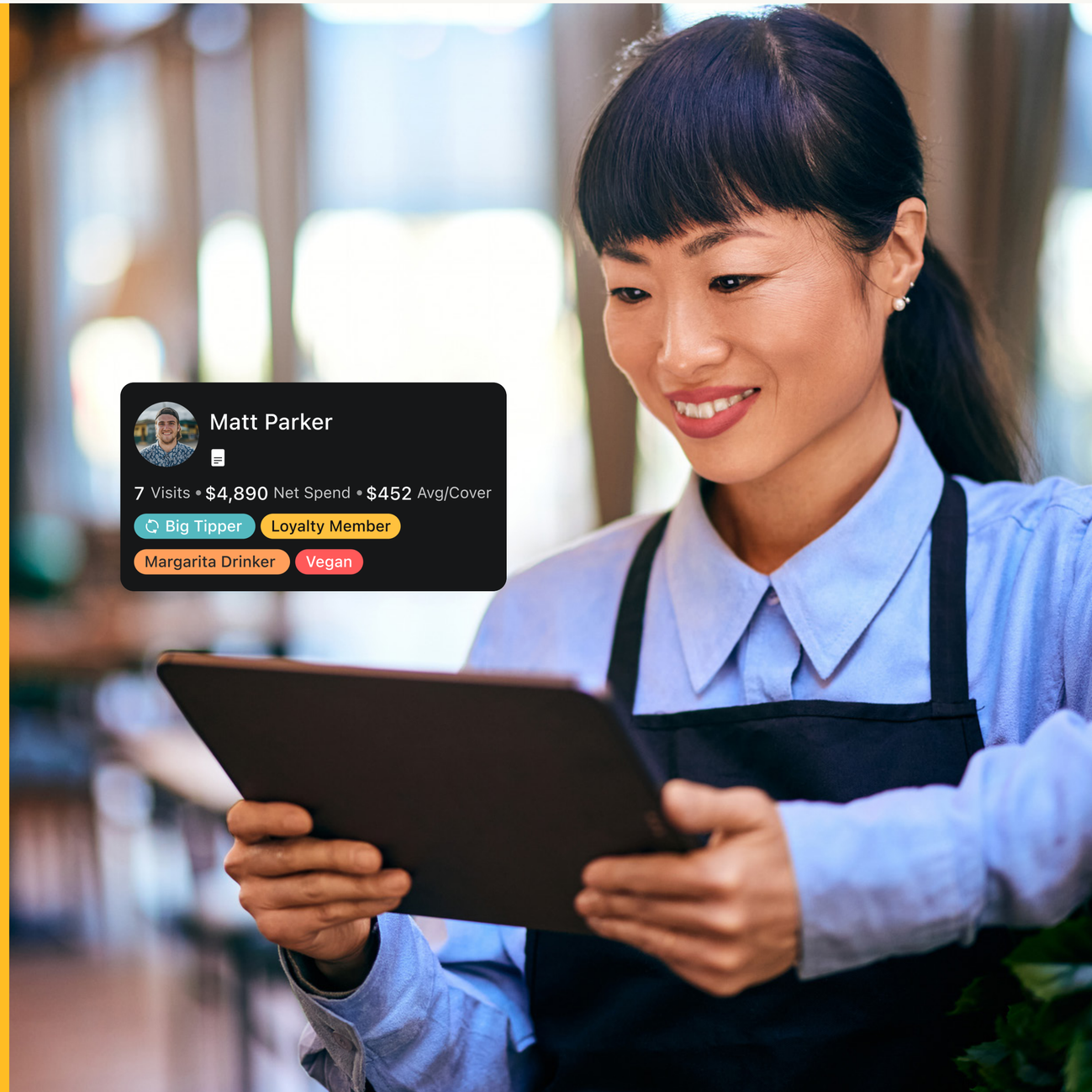


Vandal, a vegan Mexican restaurant in Sydney, creates VIP guest tags based on customers who leave positive and negative reviews. Stellar reviews are automatically assigned a "Five-Star Review" tag on their profile indicating special treatment. Conversely, if a guest leaves a negative review, the owner adds a "VIP" status to their profile and invites them in for a chance to win them over.



Handling Priority Reservations

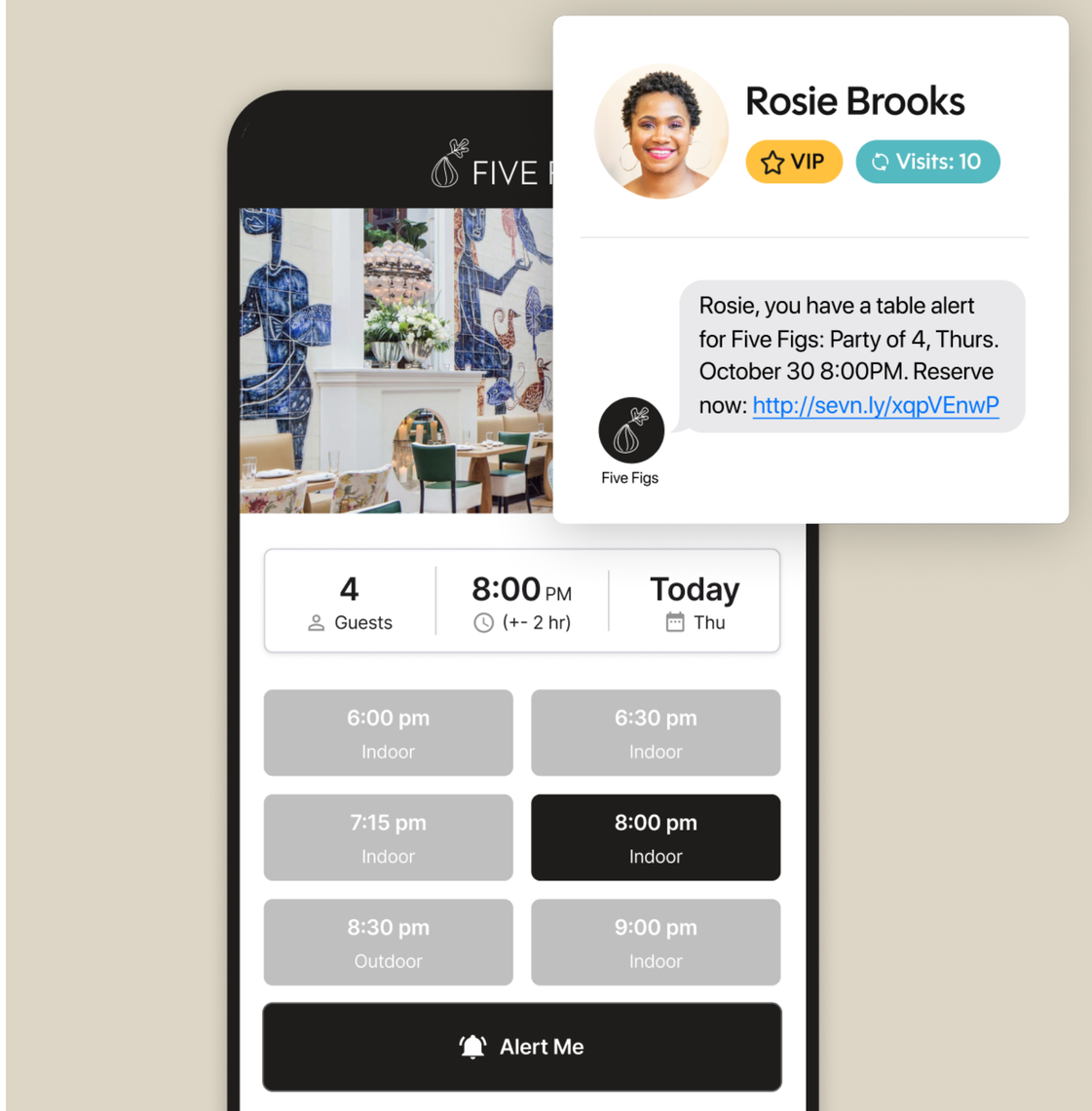
As your staff fields booking inquiries from hundreds of guests a week, the important reservations risk getting lost in the shuffle. Busy restaurants need a more systematic way of prioritizing VIP communications, reservations and requests.



How SevenRooms Makes Exclusive Access Easy

Priority Alerts

It's your team's job to fill seats, but what if they could prioritize every booking based on guest value? Priority Alerts is a reservation feature that allows you to set up tiered access so that your most valuable guests are notified first when a table opens up. Using the example from earlier, you could automatically prioritize your "Platinum VIPs," followed by "VIPs" and "Regulars."



Create a System to “Surprise and Delight”

What does a VIP experience look like at your restaurant? For example, maybe regulars get priority seating and high spenders receive complimentary drinks. Defining service standards for high-value guests ensures your team is always prepared to surprise and delight.

Using guest data, you can create special perks and experiences at scale.

With SevenRooms’ Perks, you can automatically assign special offers based on profile status, taking the guesswork out of who gets special treatment and how.



Noelle Baker

VIP | Welcome Cocktails | GM Table Touch



Kishan Patel

Friend of Owner | Corner Booth



Jenny Young

Regular

Early Access to Reservations

VIP Playbook in Action

We partnered with one of our customers, The Apollo Group, to show you what a VIP experience looks like using a CRM. From meticulous planning to flawless execution, this playbook outlines the behind-the-scenes steps they use to deliver an exceptional VIP experience across four venues.



Get Organized Ahead of Time

Managers on duty must review the reservation book before the start of each shift. Your staff should know who's coming in and what they have to do to prepare.

- Filter the reservation system for your specific VIP guest tags such as "VIPs," "Regulars" and "Positive Reviewers."
- Review any guest profiles that match those tags and adjust the floor plan to accommodate special seating or server requests.
- Make note of guest details such as special occasions, dining preferences, likes and dislikes, favorite wines, etc., and check your inventory for special food and beverage requests. If guest details are limited, create a note for a complimentary appetizer from the chef.

PRO TIP: If your reservations are booked a few days in advance, don't wait until the day of to review guest details. The earlier you can prepare for special guest arrivals, the better.



Brief Your Team

Make sure your entire staff is briefed prior to service and equipped with the information they need to take care of your VIPs

- Print chits for all important bookings and distribute them to the appropriate server. The manager should also have these details on hand. ″
- Notify the kitchen of VIP dining requests such as modifications, allergies, special menus and preferences. If your chef is required to pay a special visit during service, be sure they know in advance.
- Alert your beverage team or sommelier to any special wine or beverage requests.
- Review all noted VIP details during pre-shift to confirm everyone is on the same page.

FYI: SevenRooms' Pre-Shift feature automatically collects, stores and presents all of the insights you need in one place. View your reservations, guest notes, server overview, cover flow and more.



Deliver a White-Glove Experience

Each person in your restaurant has a role to play in the guest experience. Be clear about your expectations and define each team member's responsibilities.

Host

- Train your staff to welcome VIPs by their first name and a "welcome back" greeting. Adding guest photos to profiles can help your FOH team easily identify VIPs.
- After the host seats the guest, they should confirm the server has their chit and notify a manager of the VIP's arrival.

Server

- Notify the kitchen of the guest's arrival and add any modifications or requests to the ticket order with a VIP status.
- Tailor the guest experience according to their guest notes and pay special attention to the table throughout service. Be accommodating but not overbearing.
- Notify a manager immediately if there's an issue.

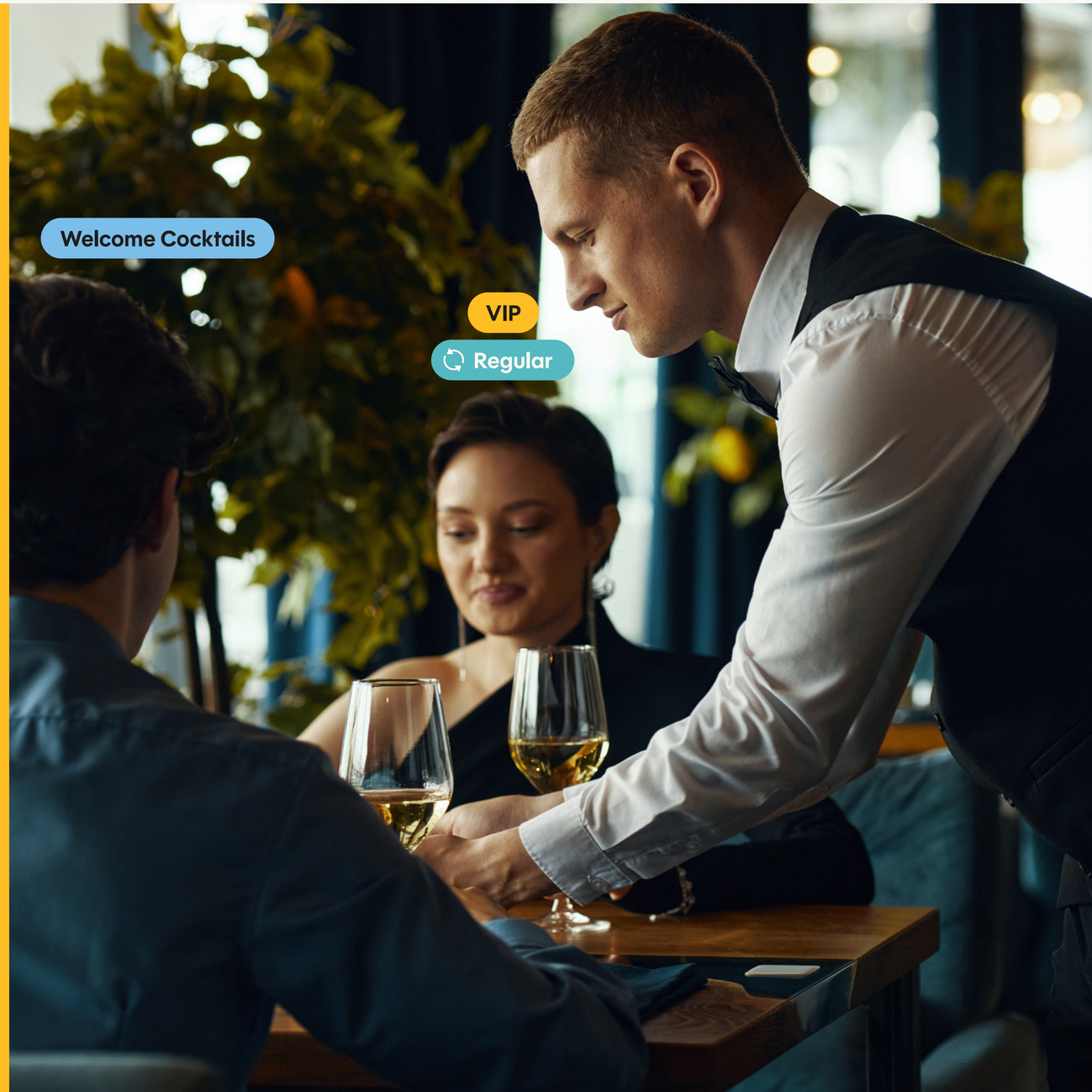
Manager

- Greet your VIP guests upon arrival or shortly after being seated.
- Send out a complimentary appetizer or beverage. A personal delivery from the manager is a nice touch.
- Once the guest has left, collect all chits from the server and update the guest profile with any new details or preferences.

PRO TIP: We recommend creating a list of the most important information you want to collect about your VIPs (e.g., seating preferences, favorite wine, or spouse and family information.) This ensures profiles are always updated with the most important details relevant to the experience you want to provide.

Keep Your Most Valuable Guests Loyal

The VIP experience shouldn't end just because the guest has left the building. There are several ways you can continue building the relationship to keep them coming back again and again.



VIP Retention Tips

Send a Personal Thank You Message

Sending a VIP a custom thank you email or text message from your GM is a nice, personal touch that makes the guest feel valued.

Create Special Email Offers

Email is a powerful tool for staying in touch with your most valuable guests. Another benefit of a CRM is the ability to segment your database by guest status for marketing purposes. Use email to send personalized offers, perks and experiences to your regulars and VIPs to get them back in the door.

Reward Your VIPs

The competition for guest retention has never been tougher, as nearly 60% of restaurants in the U.S. now offer loyalty benefits. Rewarding your VIPs incentivizes loyalty. With guest data, you can pinpoint the types of rewards and perks your guests really love. Learn more about creating a loyalty program unique to your business.



Roll Out the Red Carpet with SevenRooms

In the fast-paced world of hospitality, every guest is important, but your VIPs deserve an experience that truly sets them apart.

Never miss a chance to surprise and delight. SevenRooms' industry-leading CRM, reservation and marketing solutions help your team make every guest feel special, and your most valuable guests feel like rockstars. Our team would love to show you how.

BOOK A CONSULTATION

