

SEVENROOMS

Getting Started with Online Ordering



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The State of Online Ordering

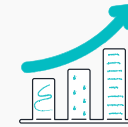


The State of Online Ordering

It's no secret that online ordering is taking the world by storm. COVID-19 spurred explosive growth in the already rapidly growing takeout and delivery industry, and the popularity of these offerings amongst consumers is not expected to decrease to pre-pandemic levels. Online ordering is here to stay, and will continue to drive incremental revenue for restaurants.

For restaurants not yet set up to provide off-premise dining, there has never been a better time to tap into the food industry's fastest-growing revenue channel: online ordering. For those operators already offering online ordering, it's never too late to re-evaluate your tools to make sure your maximizing your orders and revenue.

The following guide will provide you with the information you need to run a profitable takeout business.



Food delivery worldwide is a **\$122 billion industry**, expected to grow over 7% a year through 2024.¹



A **third of all Americans** use delivery services at least once a week.²



60% of restaurants say that offering online ordering options has resulted in incremental revenue.³

What is Online Ordering?

What is Online Ordering?

While it may seem basic, it's important to take a moment to acknowledge the purpose online ordering serves for the industry. An online food ordering system is a software that enables restaurants to accept and manage their pickup and delivery orders placed via the internet. A customer can use this offering to view the menu and place an order through a digital channel.

/ TYPES OF ONLINE ORDERING SYSTEMS

DIRECT:

Technology that does not have a consumer-facing marketplace but instead serves the sole purpose of providing a solution to operators is known as a direct online ordering system. A direct platform enables operators to drive orders across their owned channels and connects them directly with their customers, which means their guest data belongs to them. These platforms typically employ a subscription model, where the restaurant pays a low monthly fee.

THIRD-PARTY:

These systems provide operators with the technology to offer online ordering to their customers, and serve as demand aggregators with consumer-facing platforms where the restaurant has a listing. Restaurants using a third-party platform get the additional benefit of an extra marketing channel, but have to share guest data. This means that the third party "owns" the customer relationship (ie. the third-party will be marketing to guests to order from their marketplace vs. a restaurant's owned channels).

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How to Setup Online Ordering

How to Setup Online Ordering



Here's are the five steps to follow so your restaurant can start taking orders, delivering meals and maximizing revenue through online ordering.

/ STEP ONE

Create a simple, profitable menu

/ STEP TWO

Select your online ordering technology

/ STEP THREE

Streamline your pickup and delivery processes

/ STEP FOUR

Promote your online ordering service

/ STEP FIVE

Focus on building loyalty and retention

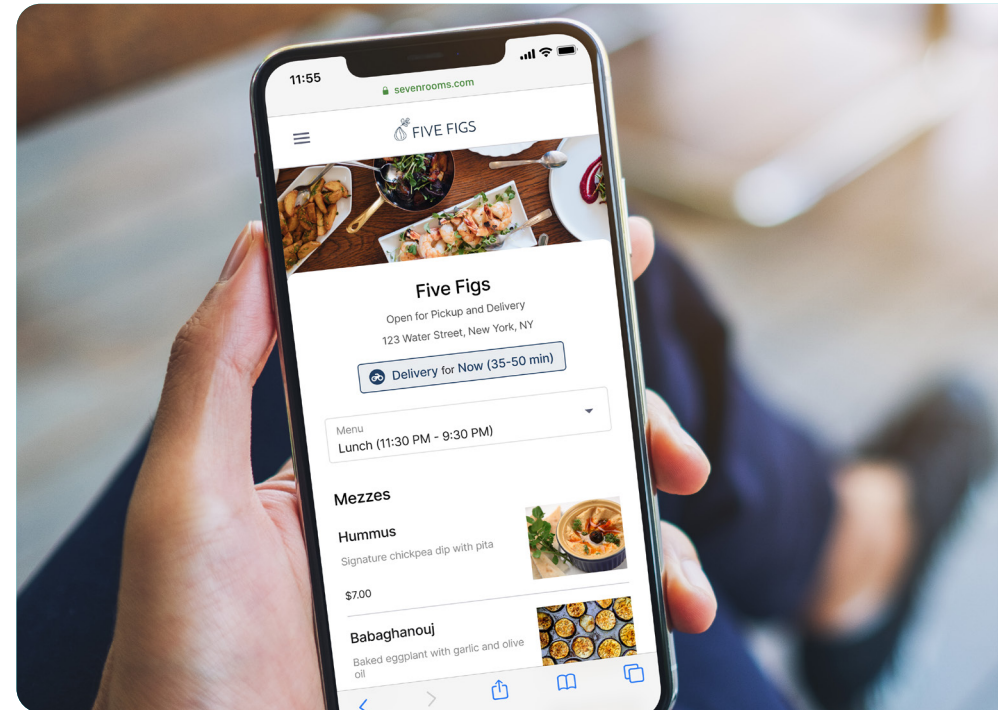
How to Setup Online Ordering

Create a simple, profitable menu

Often, the customers you will serve first and most frequently will be the regulars who frequently visit your restaurant for on-premise dining. Build a menu with them in mind.

It's not necessary to make your entire menu available for online orders. Not every dish will transport well. Nor should you worry about having to jazz up your menu with new, untested dishes. That's not how you'll cut through the noise of other delivery options. There will be plenty of time for this when you're more accustomed to delivery.

What's more important is to offer dishes, preferably high-margin ones, that you know your regulars already know and love. Pull up the order history of these customers in your restaurant CRM for data and insights into the dishes you can rely on to drive orders. With this in mind, curate the menu you'll offer for online ordering.



How to Setup Online Ordering

Select your online ordering technology

There are two main ways you can offer online ordering: through a third-party solution, or through a direct platform. You will need to decide what is best for your business and if you plan to work with both.

What are the pros and cons of a third-party online ordering solution?

PROS:

Third-party online ordering solutions provide great visibility for your restaurant in their marketplaces. A customer who is scrolling through a third-party delivery app or website to order may come across your restaurant and select you for their meal. The third-party platform arranges the process start-to-finish, order-to-delivery (with the exception of the actual cooking of the food, of course).

CONS:

Third-party online ordering solutions provide a strong marketing offering, but come at a high cost. Typically, you can expect to pay upwards of 30% on every order in commission fees. Not only are you paying these fees for every order, but you're also handing over control of your brand and valuable guest data (email address, phone number, allergies and preferences, etc.). These providers will then use the information from the order placed at your restaurant to drive repeat orders through their platform, often promoting a competing restaurant. Though you may receive orders through third parties, they come at a high price. **You have no ability to build a relationship with that diner, and there's less opportunity to turn them into a repeat customer for your business.** Though the orders may be "free" in some cases, the price you pay in the long run is far greater.



How to Setup Online Ordering

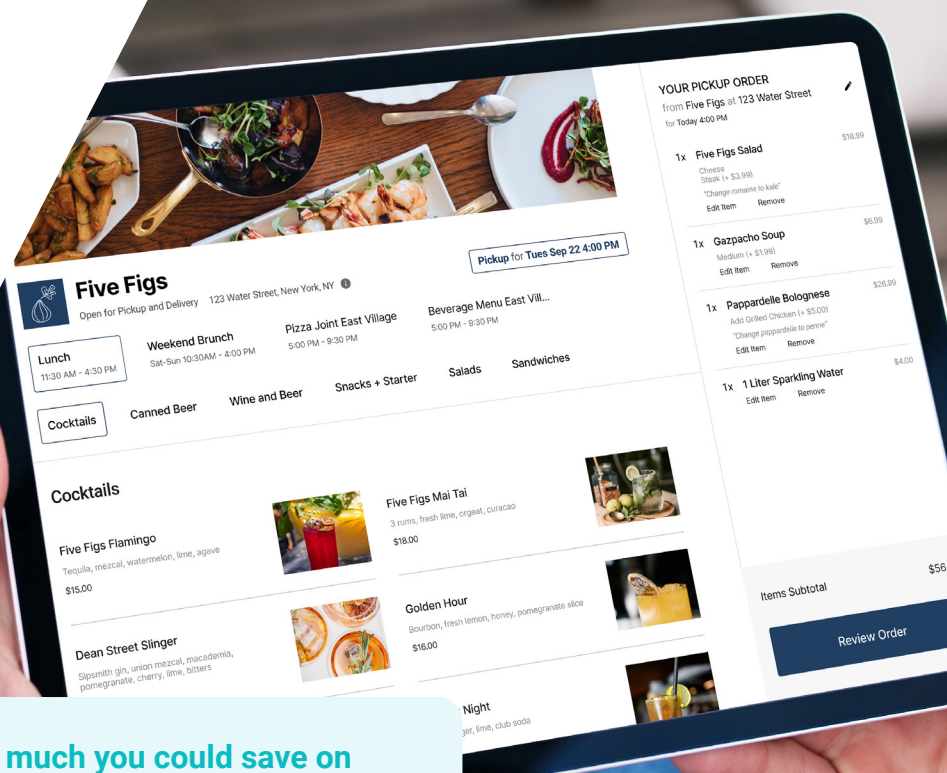
Direct is best

Here's what we mean by direct:

- Diners book directly through channels where you own both the experience and data collected, not a third-party solution.
- You can cut costs and increase profits by taking delivery orders through direct, free channels (e.g. your website and social channels), no longer relying exclusively on third-party channels with high commissions.
- You have contact information for every guest that orders through you, so you can remarket to them with personalized, automated marketing campaigns that boost revenue and repeat orders.
- You have a 360-degree view of your guest, with both on- and off-premise data, so you know who regular orderers are when they step in the door to dine in, or who your dine-in regulars are as soon as they order for delivery or takeout.

Curious how much you could save on third-party fees by going direct?

Check out our direct online ordering [ROI calculator](#).



/ SUCCESS STORY

MINA family kitchen



2.3K

TOTAL ORDERS IN
FIRST 4 MONTHS

\$300K

TOTAL SALES

\$43K

ESTIMATED SAVINGS
ON FEES

“After implementing SevenRooms at Mina Family Kitchen, it’s clear how important guest data is in helping us curate and customize future experiences for our guests. This rings especially true when managing delivery and takeout orders. Our CRM database allows us to share information throughout our portfolio, so we can recognize guests who have ordered take-out and delivery who then come to eat in one of our restaurants, engage with our clientele to share news and promotions, and ultimately drive demand for our direct ordering site resulting in increased revenue.”

Ashley Keeney,
Director of Administration

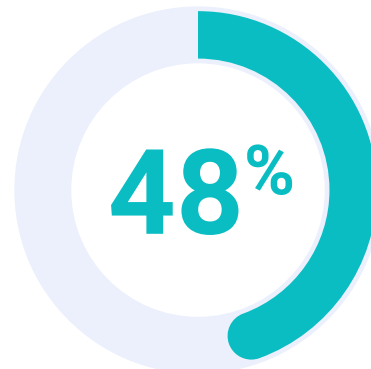
How to Setup Online Ordering

Customer Preferences: Third-Party vs. Direct

Recent data reports reveal consumers are aware of the difference between third-party and direct ordering.



In the UK, a recent study found that **70% of customers preferred to order from restaurants directly.**



In the US, of Americans who say they're motivated to order directly from a restaurant, **48% think it's cheaper to order directly**, while 37% want to do all they can to directly support restaurants.



54% of delivery customers actually start off with a specific restaurant in mind and go online to find them.



How to Setup Online Ordering

Don't forget a POS integration

If you're offering online ordering for the first time, prioritizing an online ordering platform that integrates with your point of sale (POS) is crucial. When the two are integrated, orders flow into your POS in real-time and notify staff so they can get to work putting together orders immediately. An integrated POS means faster, more efficient operations, and more accurate orders with less opportunity for human error.

If your online ordering platform is not integrated with your POS, you'll want to make sure you have someone on staff keeping a close eye on incoming orders so they can enter them into the POS system as soon as possible.

Depending on your goals and operation size, here are popular POS providers to consider:





How to Setup Online Ordering

Streamline your online order processes

Restaurant operators starting to offer online ordering need to 'wow' from the first interaction to ensure diners become repeat orderers. When it comes to your restaurant's pickup procedures, make sure that guests feel safe and comfortable. This could include having a dedicated 'greeter' when customers arrive or having a designated pickup area that helps create a contactless experience for diners. Plus, make sure your customers have a quick and easy way to contact you with any questions or concerns.

Most importantly, invest in technology that enables the entire ordering, payment and pickup process to be done seamlessly and virtually. When looking for new technology partners to facilitate online ordering, look for platforms that not only enable you to own and leverage diner data, but that help you do better business, faster. This could include a platform that allows diners to pay in advance to facilitate speedier pickup times, or one with SMS functionality to let diners know their order is ready.

Repeat customers **spend approximately seven times more** than one-time purchasers



How to Setup Online Ordering

Promote your Online Ordering Service

Once your online ordering service is up and running, don't forget to let the world know! Here are some ways to spread the news far and wide to start seeing the orders roll in.

- Update your social accounts for direct bookings
- Make sure all of your social media profiles – and any ordering link you control – all go directly to your direct digital ordering solution.





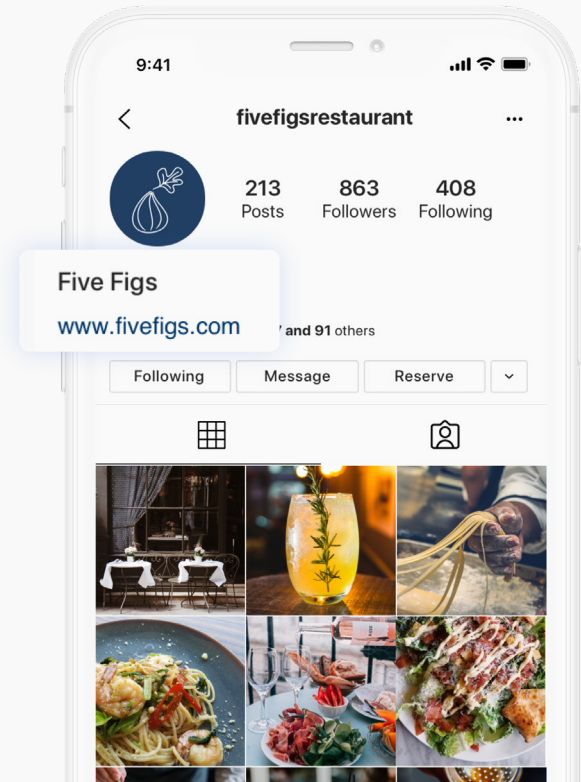
How to Setup Online Ordering

Instagram: Add Your Menu to Your Profile

Take advantage of your restaurant's presence and reach on the photo-sharing social network by putting your online ordering link across every place possible.

Here's how to make sure your profile has a link to your online ordering menu:

- Open your Instagram app and go to Edit Profile > Website.
- Copy and paste your online ordering link.
- Select 'Done' on the right hand corner.



PRO TIP

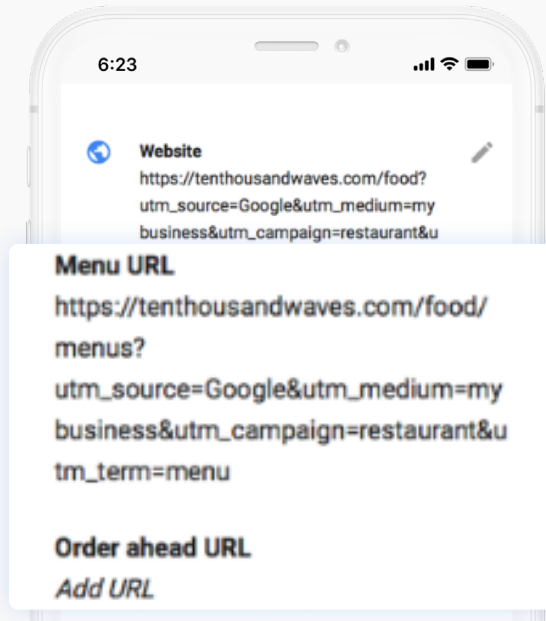
If your account has more than 10,000 followers, create a variety of stories highlighting your online ordering offerings, with a CTA to 'Swipe Up' to ORDER NOW. This will help drive conversions when people are thinking about your venue while swiping through Instagram Stories.

How to Setup Online Ordering

Google Business Listing

Using Google, you can now pay zero commissions on delivery orders booked through your Google My Business listing when adding a Online Ordering link. By adding a custom link to your Google Business Page, guests looking to order delivery and take-out through Google Search and Google Maps can go directly to your digital menu page to browse your offerings and place an order.

- If you don't already have one, create a Google My Business account (or claim an existing one) for your restaurant.
- Sign in to your Google My Business account. Click on the 'Info' tab for your listing.
- In the URLs section, copy and paste your online ordering link into the 'Order Ahead URL' and "Menu URL" fields.
- Click Apply.



PRO TIP

If you use a third-party delivery system, you likely already have an 'Order Online' button enabled on your profile. You are currently not able to change which provider this links out to (i.e. to your own commission-free direct order website), but you can remove this button from your profile.

Simply sign in to Google My Business, click 'Info' in the menu on the left, scroll to 'Food ordering' and click Edit. Under 'Delivery, Takeout and Order Ahead' turn off 'Accept partner orders on Google.'



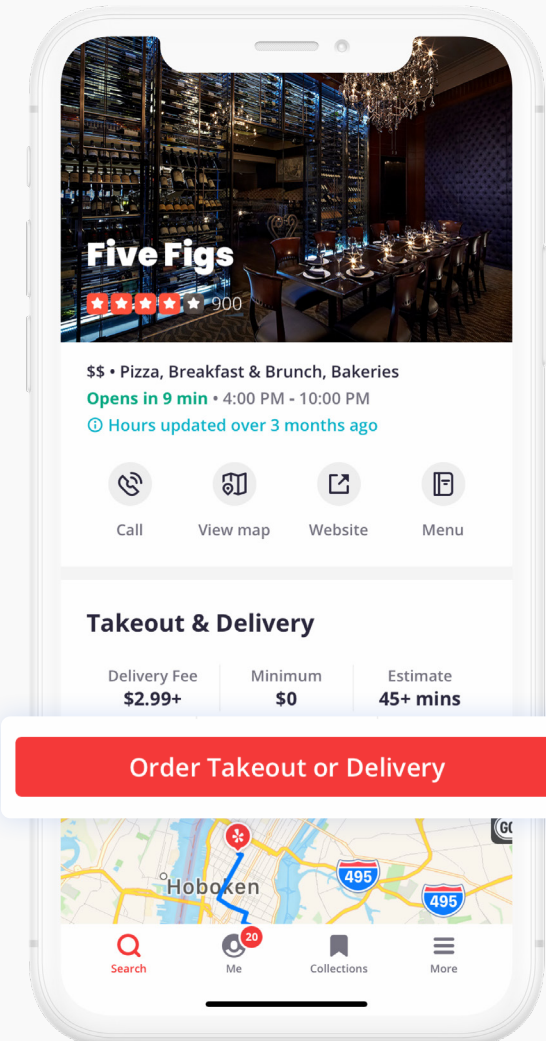
How to Setup Online Ordering

Yelp: Add a Call to Action Button

Yelp may be a go-to resource for online reviews, but the site is also ranked as the most frequently used review site for discovering restaurants. Provide an easy way for Yelp users to go from browsing reviews to ordering delivery by adding a “Order Now” button to your Yelp Business page.

The ‘Call to Action’ feature is included in some of Yelp’s advertising programs.

- Visit the ‘Billing’ section of Yelp for Business Owners to see the list of products currently available.
- Contact your Yelp Customer Success Manager to enable this feature.



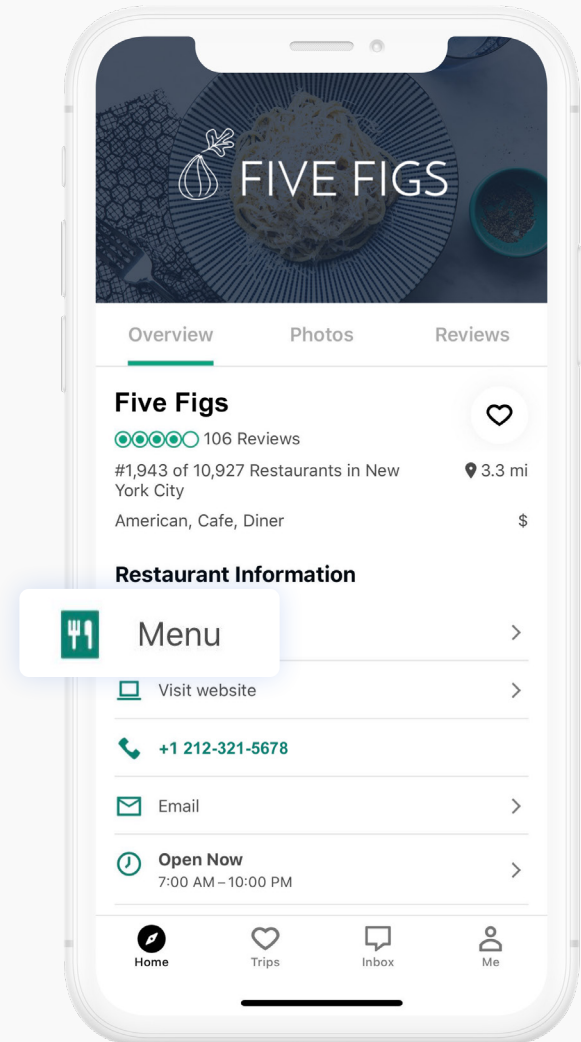


How to Setup Online Ordering

TripAdvisor: Add a Menu Link

As the world's largest travel site, Tripadvisor is an important channel for sourcing online orders, helping you connect to millions of potential customers. Adding a menu link to your restaurant listing on Tripadvisor is a quick and easy way to display your menu and drive direct orders.

- Sign in to you Tripadvisor account.
- Visit 'Menu' under the 'Manage Listing' tab and copy and paste your online ordering URL.





How to Setup Online Ordering

Facebook: Add a Shop Now Button

Facebook remains the most-used social networking site by restaurants. Nearly 74 percent of restaurant owners use Facebook as their social media channel of choice to promote their business.

Not only is Facebook used as a place for restaurants to invest in digital marketing, but you can also use your restaurant's Facebook page to drive direct orders.

- On the right-hand side of your business page, select 'Edit Button'. Select the type of button you want to display – we recommend 'Shop Now' or 'See Offers'
- Copy your Online Ordering link
- Select Done on the right hand corner

Like Follow Share ...

Step 1: Which button do you want people to see?
The button at the top of your Page helps people take an action. People see it on your Page and in search results when your Page appears. You can edit it any time.

Book with you

Contact you

Learn more about your business

✓ Shop with you

Shop Now

See Offers

Download your app or play your game

Cancel Next

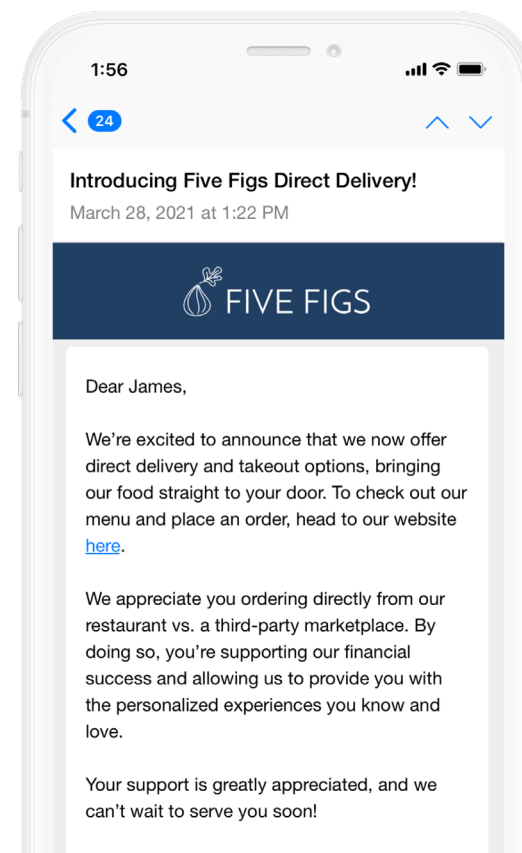
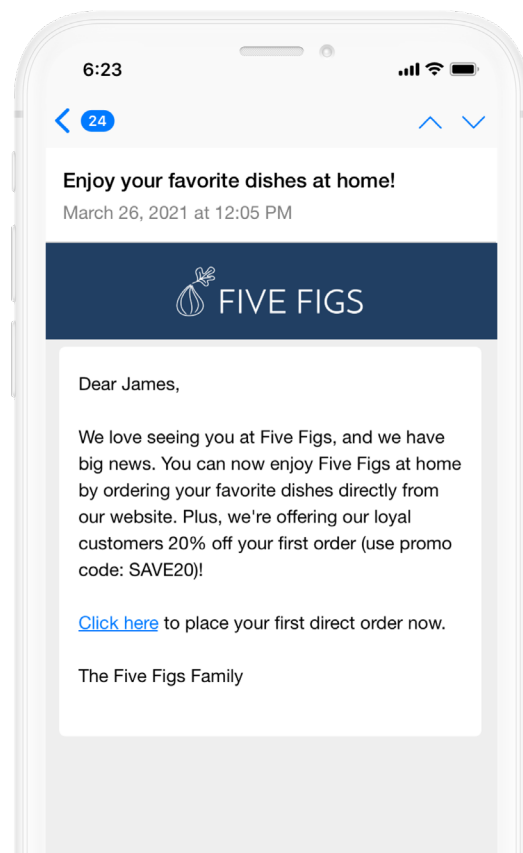
How to Setup Online Ordering

Launch Online Ordering via Email

As with all marketing, the more personalized you can make the outreach, the better. If guest data reveals a set of regulars who consistently order a specific dish, let them know their favorite offering from your menu is now available for delivery and takeout. You can even offer a value-add (i.e. free dessert) for everyone on their first

direct order. When you reach out to your database, consider highlighting the boost that ordering delivery and takeout directly will offer your business.

Make it an appeal; make it exciting. However you decide to notify your customers, get the word out.



/ SUCCESS STORY

TARTINE



11K

TOTAL ORDERS IN
FIRST 5 MONTHS

\$533K

TOTAL SALES

\$160K

ESTIMATED SAVINGS
ON FEES

“SevenRooms gives us the tools to completely own and manage the guest experience both in-person and online. In a world where off-premise is the majority of our business, their end-to-end platform gives us insight into who is ordering, what they’re purchasing and when they do so. Throughout Tartine’s six locations, over 11,000 online orders have been placed through SevenRooms’ online ordering platform. The benefit is twofold, helping us eliminate ordering fees all while maintaining ownership of our guest data to jumpstart our marketing efforts.”

Jillian Ressler,
VP of Brand

How to Setup Online Ordering

Focus on building loyalty & repeat business

Owning the guest relationship with direct online ordering is about more than just paying a smaller commission. It also means you can engage directly with customers to drive repeat business — both through delivery & takeout and dine-in.

Email automation streamlines this process, and takes that burden off your staff. It keeps your restaurant top-of-mind for loyal customers. And makes repeat orderers out of people trying your restaurant's online ordering for the first time.

Re-engaging customers also drives dine-in business. The people who have become repeat customers of your online ordering offering will be much more likely to join you in your restaurant. Especially if you offer dine-in promotions alongside, or as part of, your online ordering offerings.

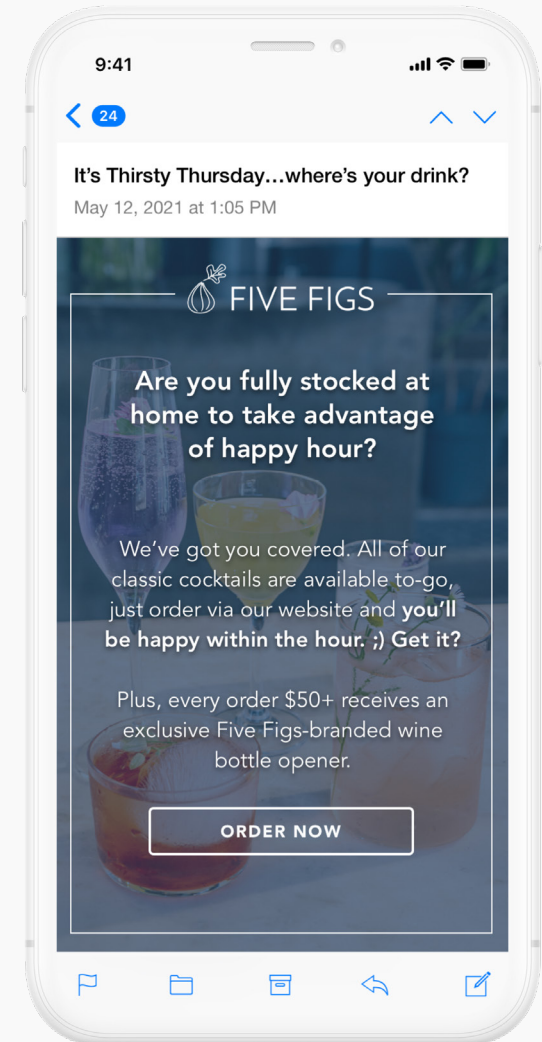


How to Setup Online Ordering

Emails: Ongoing Engagement

Check out these campaign ideas to help drive more customers to your online ordering offerings.

- **Big delivery nights** (Thursday/Sunday)
- **Weather-related communications** (Rainy or Extreme Heat days)
- **Timely messages** (11am/4pm – before lunch and dinner)
- **Value-add messages** (e.g. promotions)
- **Holidays** (Easter, Passover, Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day)

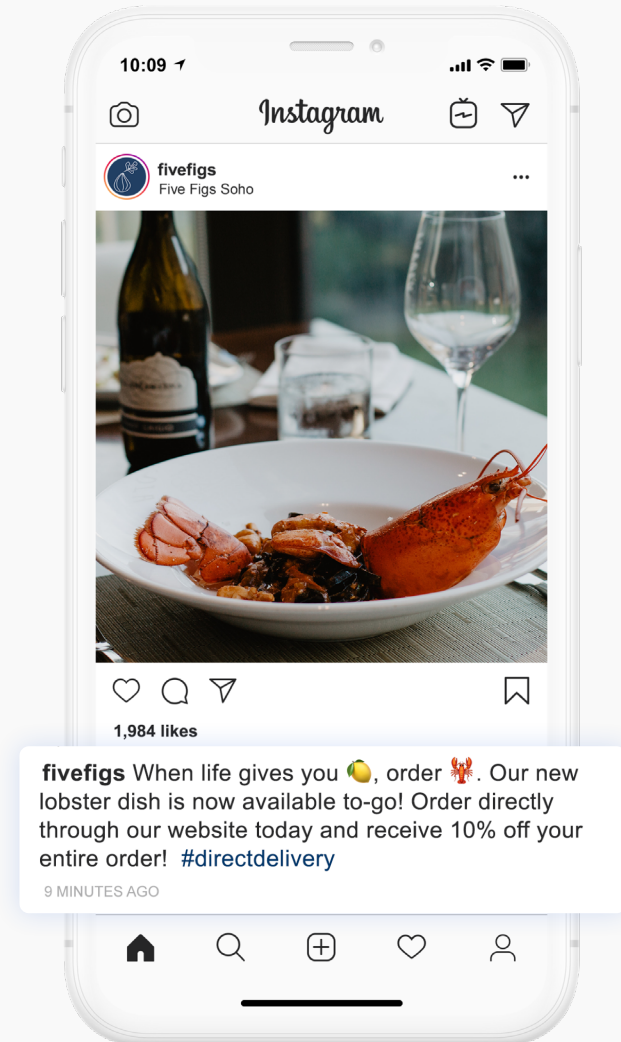




How to Setup Online Ordering

Social Media

Regular social media posts help keep your restaurant at the forefront of customers' minds. Be sure to include calls-to-action to encourage direct orders!



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360° View of Your Customer



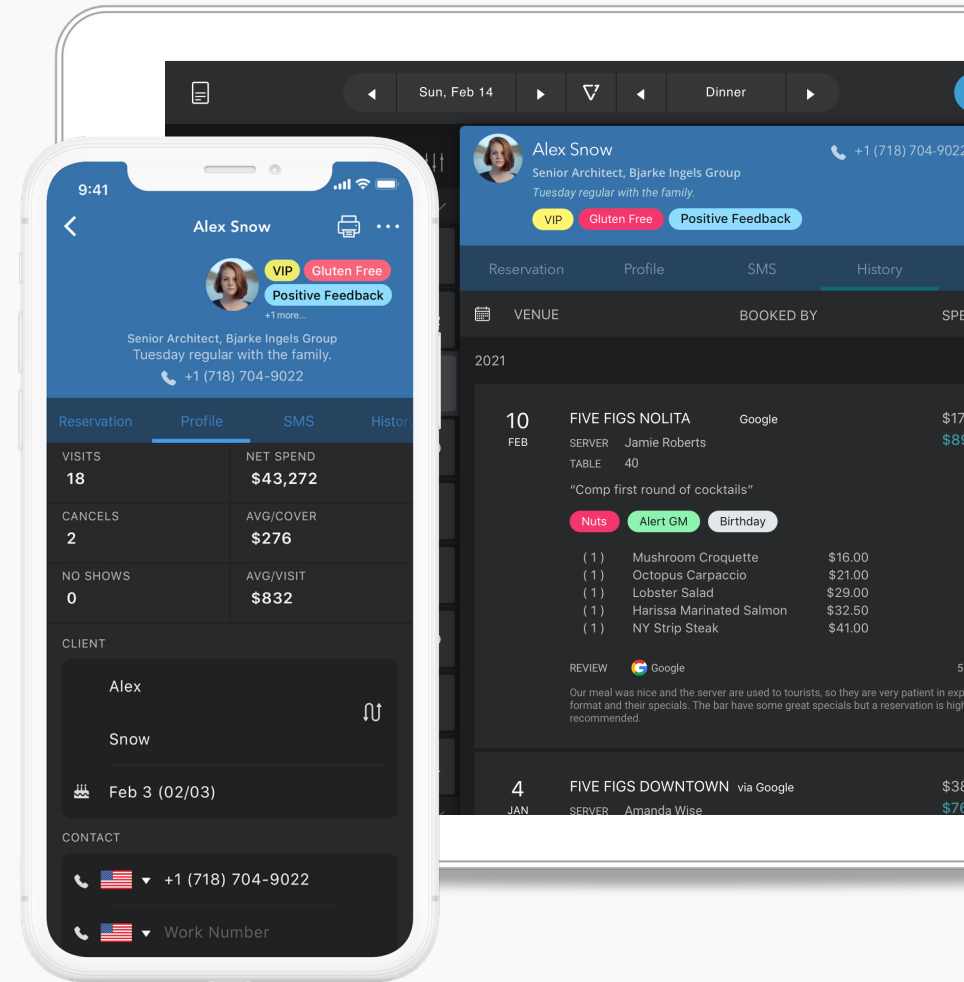
360° View of Your Customer

When you start gathering and actioning on guest data gathered both on- and off-premise, you take hospitality to the next level. Having a complete view of your guests means you unlock the opportunity to drive repeat orders AND visits.

Guest experience and retention platforms, like SevenRooms, are built on a powerful CRM that organizes guest data into actionable insights for the restaurant. The operator owns all of their guest data, and can share it across locations, to enable exceptional experiences and drive repeat business.

With a 360-degree view of your guests, you can:

- **Turn regular orderers into dine-in regulars**, and vice versa
- **Send out hyper-targeted marketing campaigns** like a “We Miss You!”, “Special Access for our Wine Lovers”, or “Negative Reviewer” campaign.
- **Take special care of regulars** across your hospitality group
- And ultimately, **drive repeat business and loyalty**





Conclusion

If you're interested in offering online ordering for the first time, you can not only create new, profitable revenue streams, but own your customer relationships for the long term.

Looking to update your online ordering technology? Direct online ordering, combined with third-party delivery marketplaces, is an exciting and growing revenue opportunity in our industry that you can expect to remain an important part of your business going forward.

Want to learn more? [Speak to our team](#) about getting started with online ordering.

1 <https://www.restaurantbusinessonline.com/consumer-trends/stats-are-consumers-are-upping-restaurant-delivery>

2 <https://www.nrn.com/sponsored-content/restaurant-takeout-and-delivery-are-taking-bite-out-dine-traffic>

3 <https://www.statista.com/outlook/dmo/eservices/online-food-delivery/worldwide>