

A smiling couple is taking a selfie at a restaurant table. The man, wearing glasses and a blue shirt, is holding a white smartphone. The woman, with blonde hair and a white top, is eating a corn cob. In the foreground, there are two burgers on wooden boards, a glass of iced coffee, and a small bowl of ketchup. The background is a brick wall.

SEVENROOMS

Making Booking Social

UK Restaurant Industry Report

2023

Foreword

The UK's hospitality sector has contended with many challenges over the past few years. A cost-of-living crisis, rising energy prices, staff shortages and reduced consumer spending are causing lingering uncertainty about the future of the industry.

Entering 2023, venues must look to expand their customer base by adapting to consumer trends. Social media is having a profound impact on the ways in which diners choose and book an establishment to dine at. Establishing a presence on social platforms and leveraging this to boost bookings will help operators meet diners where they are and ensure that they are tapping into additional revenue streams.

We hope this report will shed light on how restaurants can implement and take advantage of social booking tools to draw in new, diverse customer bases and foster long-term diner loyalty. By using social media to convert passive browsers into active bookers, operators will reap the benefits of increased takings and deeper connections with customers.



Danilo Mangano

Managing Director, International at SevenRooms

Capturing the Social Generation

Social media channels provide strong guest engagement tools for restaurants. We have seen the rewards that 'going viral' on platforms such as TikTok can bring, from swathes of new visitors queuing up outside establishments, to people travelling across the country to try a unique menu item.

Younger diners in particular have a huge appetite for viral venues.

92%

of Gen Z Brits are **willing to travel to visit a 'social media famous' venue**

36%

of Gen Z Brits have **visited a restaurant just so they could post about it on social media**

38%

of Gen Z Brits **would spend more** at a restaurant that has gone viral



From making a venue as aesthetically pleasing as possible, to creating and promoting a dish that will capture the interest of content creators, implementing a marketing strategy with social media trends in mind will enable operators to tap into the Gen Z customer base and help spread the word about their restaurant.

Creating the Insta-factor

Although 9 in 10 businesses have an Instagram presence, **many have yet to maximise the opportunity for audience engagement and attracting new followers.**

Whether the goal is to increase visibility by encouraging diners to tag the establishment in posts, or increasing orders for a new dish, Instagram has considerable potential to give restaurants that all-important boost.

Social media is all about being in the know, so providing followers with reasons to recommend the restaurant to family, friends and colleagues is a must.



Give sneak peaks – whether it's a new Instagrammable dish, a promotional offering or special event, entice guests towards the reservation button with teasers



Post strategically – think about when and what is being posted. A cocktail posted at mid-afternoon is a great way to encourage guests to come in for an after-work tipple



Keep on top of the calendar – celebrate national food holidays with pictures of menu options in action and day-specific hashtags to maximise bookings

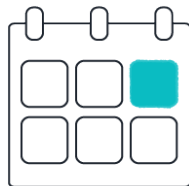
An £800 Million Opportunity

Unlocking a younger generation of Gen Z diners could be the key to success for hospitality operators.



£68.02

Average spent per week in venues by those aged 16-24: **68% more than the average consumer.**



£857M

Amount **Gen Z consumers are worth in a week in the hospitality sector**, given the estimated 12.6 million in the UK.

This identifies **16-24 year olds as a key demographic for operators to target.**



Leveraging Social Bookings

Despite the huge opportunities to be gained from capitalising on social media, the majority of the UK's restaurants are failing to capture diners via these channels.



“Failing to take simple steps to implement social bookings may be causing self-imposed restrictions on revenue at a time when restaurants need to increase takings. To broaden horizons and appeal to as many consumers as possible, operators must address the desire for social bookings by making simple and effective changes to enable guests to make reservations on these platforms in real-time.”

Danilo Mangano

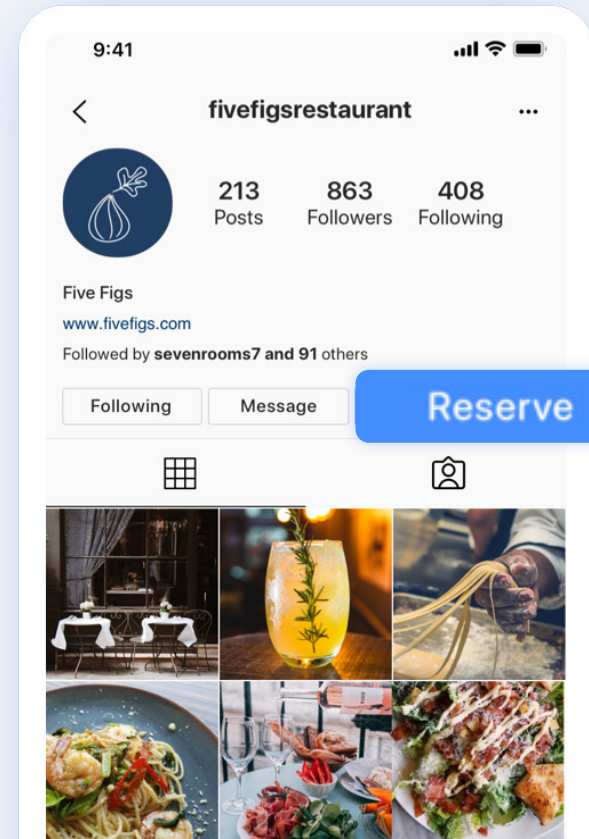
Managing Director, International at SevenRooms

A Seamless Reservation Experience

As the cost-of-living crisis ensues, prioritising guest relationships will continue to be crucial for operators. Increasing a venue's visibility on social media now and implementing accompanying booking tools will serve to maximise customer engagement and meet new and existing guests wherever they are.

SevenRooms' booking capabilities connect diners with restaurants on a variety of channels, enabling them to make reservations directly.

For operators, this is as easy as enabling a 'Reserve' button on their Instagram or Facebook page. When linked through to a direct booking platform, reservations can be set up and taken through social media in a matter of minutes.



PRO TIP

Drive bookings on social media through organic posts or paid promotions. Make it easy for followers to book directly when they're already thinking about you with a 'Reserve' button that goes directly to your booking widget. Direct followers to 'Reserve' when promoting an upcoming event or on dedicated posts informing guests about your preferred booking channels.



Research Methodology

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from Censuswide Research – a third party, professional research and consulting organisation. Total sample size was 2,012 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 4th – 10th October 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 16+).

For more information on SevenRooms, please visit www.sevenrooms.com