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Combatting Restaurant No Shows: Diners Crying Out for Easier Cancellation Methods

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With no-show diners increasingly being blamed for substantial losses in the restaurant industry, a comprehensive survey into consumers' booking habits has revealed that the power to buck this trend is in operators' hands. Over half of diners believe restaurants' need to make their cancellation process easier, with 56% expecting an option to cancel in any correspondence.



Additionally, for the more tech savvy consumers, 27% welcome the ability to cancel via text message and 17% through a restaurant's app. The study by, Guest Experience Management expert, HGEM also revealed that 61% of guests would be more likely to turn up if they received a reminder about the reservation 24-hours in advance. Of those respondents, 62% would like the reminder to be sent via text, whilst 35% would prefer an email.

When it comes to parting with their money in advance, a surprising 58% of consumers said they would never book a restaurant that required a deposit upfront, with 45% refusing the responsibility of having to collect money off other guests, 33% not wanting to lose their money if they couldn't make the booking and 12% admitting it made them feel like they were spending more. For those that would book a restaurant that required a deposit, 47% said they would expect to do this when there's a large group, whilst 28% would pay to secure a table for a special occasion. That said, a staggering 69% of consumers would be more likely to turn up if they had paid something in advance.

Sally Whelan, Founding Director of HGEM stated: "Restaurant no-shows is a topic that has been particularly prevalent in our industry in recent months. Our research has revealed that, while diners are more likely to turn up for their tables if they receive direct communication in advance, there is a clear opportunity for operators to offer a smoother cancellation process across a variety of methods. Incorporating these learnings will no doubt have a positive impact on restaurant bookings."