Capitalising on the drop-off catering opportunity

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Drop-off catering offers bakeries, sandwich retailers and restaurants an opportunity to enter a new market. Sometimes called corporate catering, it can provide a significant additional revenue stream, without the need for any additional investment. It’s a win-win as organisations arranging meetings over breakfast or lunch reap the rewards in enhanced relationships and productivity.

It makes good business sense to utilise existing physical and human resources, at quieter times in the day, to prepare and deliver ‘Drop-off’ food. Many businesses have contemplated the benefits but have been held back by logistical difficulties. There is now a range of delivery or courier services, generally available in business districts, which provide fulfilment without the need for any investment. Alternatively, some providers only deliver to a very tight area around their premises and manage this by providing their team with some light exercise!

Drop-off catering involves less management than a full catering service, but must still be meticulously planned in order to be successful. This allows for a greater volume of orders, with a faster turnaround time, i.e. more business. With such an opportunity seemingly too good to miss out on for most, it is important for those considering offering drop-off services (and those already in the sector) to employ technology to assist with automated bookings and delivery schedules.

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Meanwhile, diversifying service offerings can create issues in terms of record-keeping, and folders full of paper copies can be lost. As such, paper-based operations, having long been relied upon, are beginning to be phased out by companies as they seek to streamline their administrative procedures and ensure the consistency and reliability of receipts, records and schedules.

Just as services like Just Eat have simplified the process of ordering fast food, automating and integrating a catering company’s admin through computer software or a mobile application, makes growing demand both possible – via ease of use and improved business practices – and manageable – by easing the workload.

Drop-off catering offers a wealth of opportunity for companies to expand their business via a relatively low-risk diversification strategy. The convenience of being able to further mobilise a catering service, using largely the same equipment, workforce and promotional tools, means that new business is within reach.

However, in preparation for this expected growth, it is important that companies implement the correct procedures and ensure that they are prepared for increased workflows and revenues and make sure that they get it right every time. The simplest way to do this is by running your entire operation through software like Spoonfed that streamlines the process both in terms of user experience and back-end. Being integrated with Google Maps, it also offers delivery drivers the quickest route to the drop-off point.

The convenience of automated – and one-click repeat – ordering and of knowing that details are input directly into the orders that will be received, will give customers confidence in the service they are using. This all amounts to a satisfied customer base, perhaps being introduced to your food for the first time, that is likely to bring repeat business as well as offering you positive reviews through word-of-mouth.

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