

Want a great Christmas? Answer the phone

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The phone could be your most important tool in the run up to Christmas, according to a new survey.

Stats from guest management experts HospitalityGEM show that 42 per cent of people would rather call to book a Christmas party rather than do it online or in the venue.

And if you haven't started planning yet now is the time to do so, with 92 per cent of guests saying they would book their party three months in advance.

Data collected by the company indicates areas of improvements for pubs and other hospitality businesses include:

- answering the phone in good time
- building rapport with the caller
- checking the guest's special requirements.

The top reasons potential customers become disengaged when calling to make a Christmas booking are: an unfriendly tone, hurried/abrupt responses and a lack of knowledge/information.

Ollie Navias, head of business development at HospitalityGEM, said: "Phoning a venue to book a Christmas party may be a guest's first ever interaction with that brand.

"This is why the first impression a business portrays here is so crucial to whether they secure that booking, and potentially more in the future."

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