

HOSPITALITY · VENUES · 2026

# Phone Systems for Restaurants, Pubs and Venues

Restaurant and venue phones are almost always set up like a small office, one number, one ring, whoever is nearest. But a venue does not operate like an office.

**Five calls, one of which is worth many times the others.** A venue takes bookings, operational questions, suppliers and staff, complaints, and **function and event enquiries**, and treats all five identically, which is why the fifth is the one that gets lost. Four design decisions fix most of it: **route by service period, not by business hours**, because a venue's busiest phone hour is its busiest floor hour; **give function enquiries their own path** with a named owner and a same-day response, since these callers are shopping and ring two or three venues in a row; **solve the acoustics** with a headset or DECT handset off the floor, because a booking taken over a loud room gets taken down wrong; and **never take a card number on a recorded call**, deposits are where venues unknowingly create a payment security problem.

## ■ The short version

| Booking caller                | Function caller                                                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Has chosen you already        | Is <b>shopping</b> , and has a list of three or four venues            |
| Will call back if you miss it | Rings the next venue on the list, usually within minutes               |
| Wants a table                 | Wants confidence that you can handle their event                       |
| Two minutes                   | Ten minutes, then follow-up, then a site visit                         |
| Worth the average cover       | Worth a hundred times it, and often produces repeat business for years |

## ■ Also worth knowing

| Period                               | What the phone should do                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Morning admin (roughly 9. 11)</b> | Everything rings through. This is when functions, suppliers and complex bookings are best handled, and when someone actually has time                               |
| <b>Lunch service</b>                 | Bookings to a quick path or an online prompt. Functions to a mobile. Operational questions answered by a recorded message. <b>Minimum interruption to the floor</b> |
| <b>Afternoon lull</b>                | Everything rings through again, and this is when callbacks from the lunch period get worked. Build the habit; it is the highest-value hour on the phone             |
| <b>Dinner service</b>                | As lunch, but tighter. Nobody on the floor should be answering general enquiries at 7:30pm on a Saturday                                                            |
| <b>Closed</b>                        | Hours and address by recorded message, bookings to online, functions to voicemail with a transcript and a promised response time                                    |

### The asymmetry that should decide your design

A missed booking call costs you one table, and there is a decent chance the customer books online instead. A missed function enquiry costs you the entire event, permanently, to a competitor, and you never learn it happened. **Those two events sit in the same voicemail box, indistinguishable, and are treated identically.** Almost every venue has this problem and almost none has looked at it.

## ■ Questions the full guide answers

- ☐ What makes a venue phone system different from an office one?
- ☐ Why do function and event enquiries need their own path?
- ☐ How should the phone behave during a busy service?
- ☐ Is it a problem to take deposit card numbers over the phone?
- ☐ How do we stop losing calls when the room is loud?
- ☐ What should happen to calls that arrive when we are closed?
- ☐ We run several venues. What changes?

### This is the summary. The guide has the detail.

Every point above is worked through in full on our site, with the Australian context, the numbers and the exceptions. If you would rather talk it through, call **1300 881 662** or visit **[unidenvoice.com/get-started](https://unidenvoice.com/get-started)**.