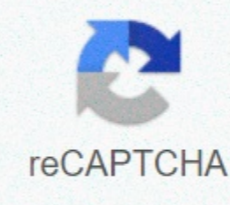




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## Catering event delivery checklist

Drawing up a catering contract requires you to include many details. One of the most important details is the deposit. The depot ensures a customer's appointment with your catering services, but also protects your catering company from unexpected cancellations, changes, or adverse weather conditions that would otherwise create a loss for your business. When determining the deposit amount, you can use a set percentage or base the deposit on unique factors surrounding the event. The standard amount of the catering deposit is 50% of the total catering invoice. This percentage is factored after all costs , including SALES TAX, have been calculated. Special circumstances surrounding the event may require you to request more or less a deposit. For example, newlyweds are not sure about the guest count when they book your services. You can get an estimated count of guests from the couple, calculate a price, and deduct a standard deposit fee from that amount with the clause that the deposit can increase if the couple adds more guests. In other situations, newlyweds may require a particular dish or ingredient that requires special ordering of the product. In this case you may request an advance deposit, in full, for that special item in addition to the standard deposit for the entire event. When a customer submits their deposit, they should receive key information about that deposit, including cancellation policies, refunds, and terms. The standard refund for a cancellation is the full amount of the deposit if the customer cancels within one month of the event. If the customer cancels up to 11 days before the event, the standard refund is 50% of the original deposit. If the customer cancels 10 days before the event, the customer does not receive any refund. Create your own refund policies with industry standards in mind. If you purchase certain ingredients or supplies a month in advance, please give yourself the date of your refund policy to meet this issue. Your deposit policy is designed to protect your catering company from losses. Therefore, when estimating deposits you need a solid understanding of how much the event will cost you – food costs, labor costs, and rents — and how much your business loses if the event is canceled at the last minute. Adjust the deposit amount based on what the market allows in your area and compare your deposit requirements with other restaurateurs in the area. In some cases you may find a 10% collection policy to book and 50% per month in advance or the collection of a third of the price as a deposit appropriate. Not to include final payment information: The industry standard is to collect the entire balance one month before the event. So, you're hosting a 40th birthday party... or a bridal shower ... or an anniversary party for your parents. It is not a huge event, life-changing like a wedding, where you to start planning a year in advance and work with multiple suppliers - and lose your mind - to make everything perfect. This party will probably be a pretty DIY affair: it will be held at your home, with homemade food, and you don't expect a huge crowd. But it's not even a child's birthday -- it's an adult party, and to do it right, you're going to do a good deal of planning. So, where (and when) do you start? When do you shop and cook? How much wine should you buy? And - perhaps most importantly - how to avoid the dreaded scenario of opening the door to your first guests while you're still in your robes and slippers? This handy-dandy checklist will erase stress a lot from the party planning process. If you follow these simple steps, we promise you won't shuffle to suck up the living room and thaw starters as the bell rings. You will be able to mix, socialize and enjoy your festive creation. We will start about a month before the day of the party. The first thing you should do is... Content Set the date. Decide on a theme. Think about what food, music, and decorations you might need. Understand a budget. The second part of this task -- sticking to that budget -- is likely to be more difficult. Nail a place if you're not hosting at home. Hire a restaurateur and/or bartender, if you're using them. Enlist help, if necessary, to set up the party, passing appetizers and cleaning up. Rent all the equipment you might need. Finalize the guest list and send invitations. Depending on the formality of your party, you may professionally print invitations or pass the handwritten or email route. Everyone is perfectly acceptable. Plan the menu - start making a shopping list and figure out a timeline for when all dishes will be prepared. Don't forget to consider your guests' allergies or food sensitivities. Advertising Buy wine and spirits. As a general rule, you should have three bottles of wine for every four guests and plan for people to drink three to four drinks over the course of a two- or three-hour party. Take an inventory of your dishes, plates, utensils, glasses, flow pieces and table linen. Have you had enough or will you have to buy more, rent or borrow something? Setting up your table might help you understand that. Use Post-Its to label things to remember what I intended to use them for. Create a music playlist. Keep an eye on the running time - you don't want to repeat any songs. Order a cake if you need it. Buy non-perishable food and drink. Do an important cleaning (or take professional detergents) closer to the one-week mark. In this way, you will only have to keep things in order in the days instead of climbing to vacuum the living room or clean the sink of the powder room. About a week before, call or email anyone on the guest list who doesn't have RSVP yet. If you need something that can be frozen, frozen, about a week before time. Announcement Finalize part configuration. Keep in mind the flow of crowds when you're a arranged furniture and remove anything that cluttered a room or might break. Have a decent amount of seating available, but not so much that everyone will sit down and forget to socialize. Refuel the bar and refrigerate the drinks. Wash glasses, dishes, flow pieces and dishes. Table linen and iron napkins. Buy perishable food except meat and seafood two days in advance. Take meat and seafood a day earlier. Take a short (but in-depth!) once you're away from home. Tidy up and make sure you have enough toilet paper and towels. The day before, prepare all the foods that can be refrigerated. Do all the preparation work you can for everything you need to do on the day. Decorate and understand lighting. You may need to change bulbs if some rooms appear to be too bright or dark during the party. Advertising A few hours before, you end up cooking. If you planned in advance, this should be a minimum amount of work. Buy and organize fresh flowers and balloons. Set tables and bar. Collect ice and pre-made dishes. Dress about two hours before start time. You may be tempted to leave this until the last minute, but you could easily get involved in party preparation and end up greeting your guests with wet hair, in a robe and slippers. Cold wine. Remember to wear an apron if necessary! Set off for appetizers and plastic dives wrapped and not ruined a couple of hours earlier and remove the plastic wrap upon arrival of the first guests. About an hour in advance, overheat any frozen dishes. About 15 minutes before the first guests arrive, light candles and start music. Grab a cocktail, sit back, relax and have fun! For more information about party planning, check out the links on the next page. Evite advertising. Cocktail party checklist. (March 5, 2012) Stewart. Holiday planning guide. (March 5, 2012) Simple. Checklist for holiday planning. (March 5, 2012) Caterers and other event organizers today have many useful tools to help them plan the perfect event. A product, called Room Viewer, automates the process of processing floor plans for events and parties. Both inside and regardless of the shape or specifications of the room, this computer aided design (cad) software helps the restaurateur make the most of the space. According to the TimeSaver Software Website, Room Viewer can improve the work of. Meeting PlannersFacilities ManagersCaterersSpecial Event PlannersRental CompaniesProduction and Audio Visual Companies Client Client Services joel uses Room Viewer to arrange an entire function, from buffet tables to seating arrangements to floral displays. Not only does the software help in the planning phase, but it is also useful when running the project. Restaurateurs can make prints that show exactly where everything should go (even until the utensils are positioned) so that the catering staff has a precise map of the event. These prints are especially useful when restaurateurs work with outside vendors, such as equipment rental companies that provide everything from tables and chairs to linen and porcelain. Each vendor is provided with a printed diagram of the event plan to use for planning and setting up. Advertising In addition to CAD-based software programs, there are many business management software packages that are particularly suitable for catering and the food services industry. A quick internet search provided this list: CaterEaseCaterPro for WindowsCaterPlusCaterTraxEvent MasterMaestro Sales and CateringParty PerfectVisual Synergy SystemsTotal Party PlannerWinEAS! Catering Enterprise These programs are very versatile and, once you figure out how to use them, they are amazing time savers. For example, Joel uses user Visual Synergy products to manage databases for recipes, marketing, customer lists, and vendors. Restaurateurs could also use the software to maintain purchase records, produce receipts, and create event calendars. This type of software really helps keep everyone in the company knowledgeable, because it makes it easy to share information across the board. From planning to execution, each part of the team can work from the same documentation. The Synergy International website explains in more detail what their software can do. Two software packages that are particularly useful for catering companies are Visual Synergy Small Business and Visual Synergy Enterprise. Some of the useful features of these products are: Visual Synergy Small Business Full Sales & Revenue Management ToolEvent Calendar Management and Event Schedule ReportsCustomer Marketing - Tracking and ReportingRevenue Management for Food, Beverages, equipment, personnel & items misdeedsListing for production and storageEvent staff planning and reportingProposal/Contracts & Billing Visual Synergy Enterprise Proposal & Contract CreationsSales Prospects & Contract ManagementRecipe Costing & Purchase OrdersInventory Tracking & Reservation PrioritiesCustom Report WriterTrack Event LaborabilityEvent Scheduling & Management Management