2019
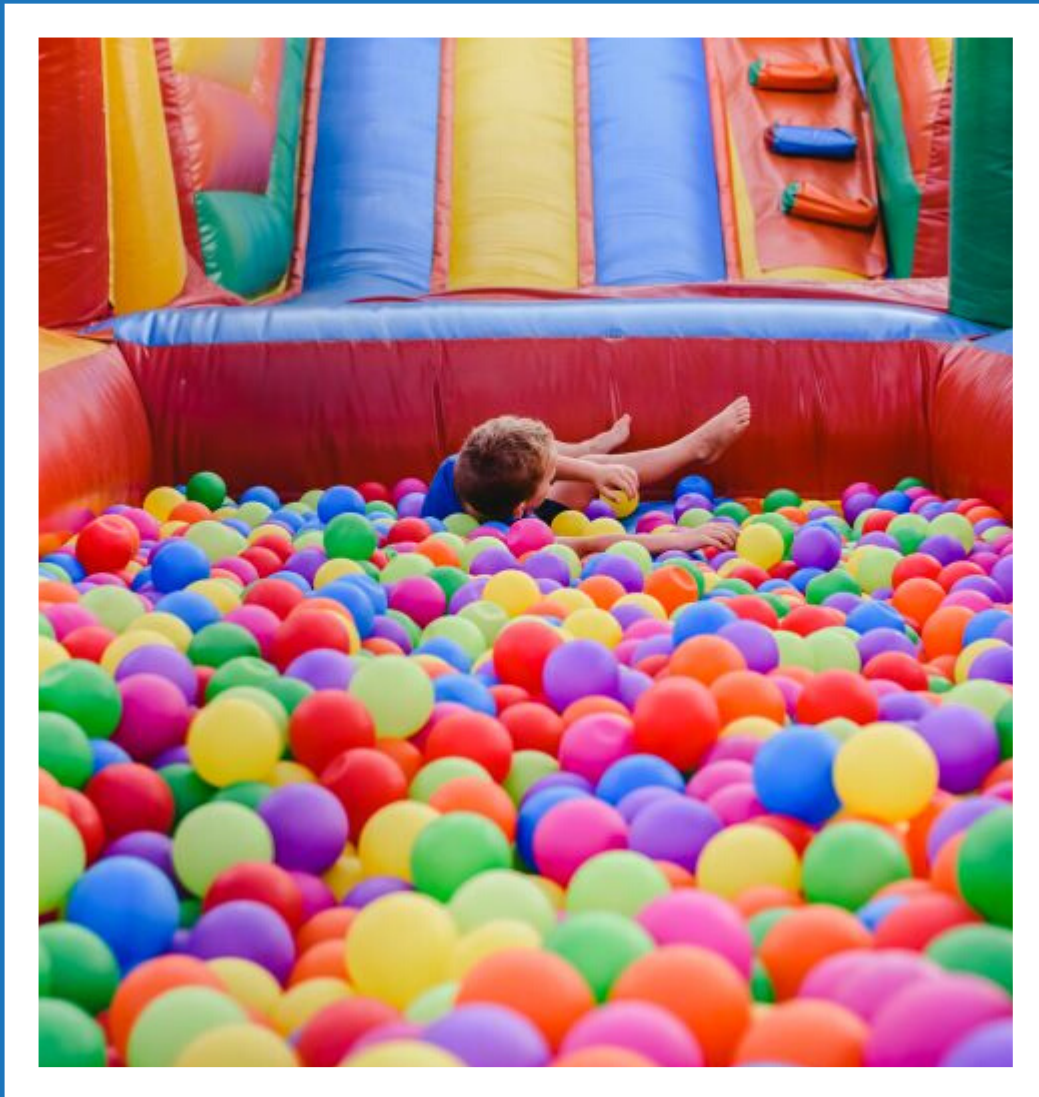
ONLINE PARTY BOOKING STUDY

2019 ONLINE PARTY BOOKING STUDY

Here, at Party Center Software, we love sharing new tips and trends to help those of you in the Family Entertainment Industry shape your party booking strategies and plans for business growth.

Year after year, the demand for party booking venues continues to increase, and we're proud to partner with our customers to keep up with the market through online party booking.

In this 2019 Online Party Booking Study, we're thrilled to bring you insights using the data we've gathered from our online booking application over the past year to help you on the path to FEC success.

If you're interested in expanding your knowledge of the industry and continually learning what you can do to grow your business, **stay connected with us**! We're constantly publishing new articles, creating helpful resources, as well as sharing ideas and promoting collaboration within the FEC community throughout the year.

Click the links below to follow us on social media, check out our blog and download FEC resources!

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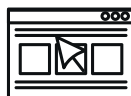
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WHO'S BOOKING PARTIES?

Parties Booked Online by Gender
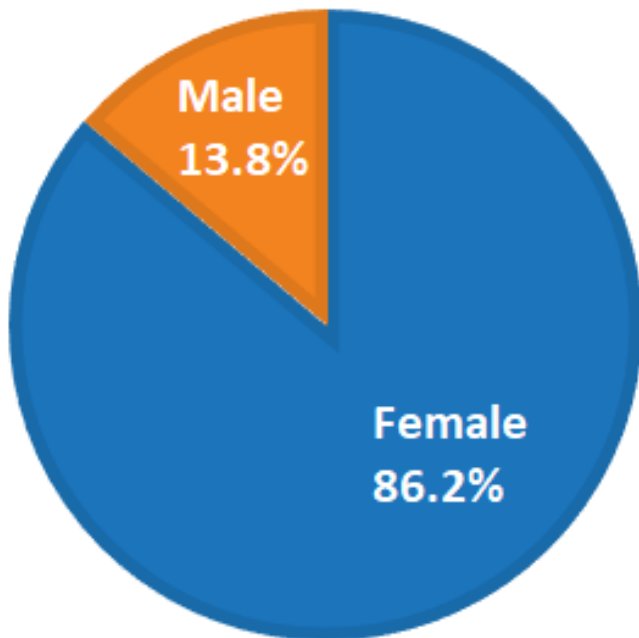
The data gathered from the businesses we studied clearly shows women booked far more parties than men in 2019, both offline (via phone or in person) and when using the facility's online booking module.

Additionally, it's interesting to note that more men chose to book parties in person or using the phone rather than online.

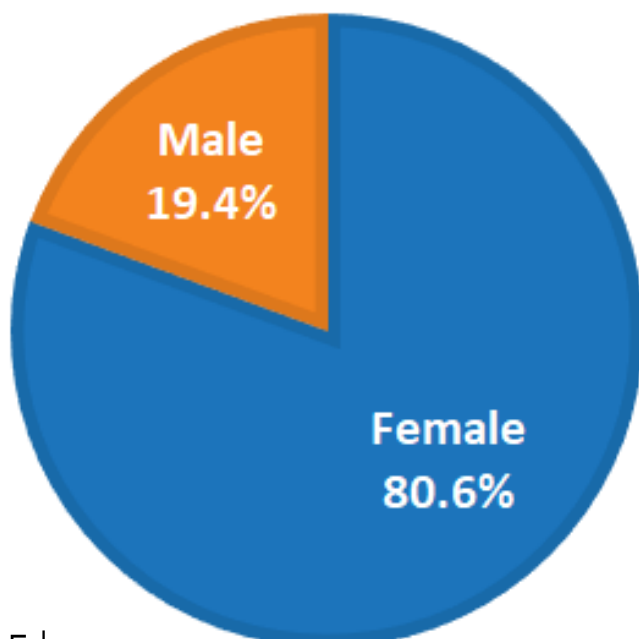Knowing information like this helps you to gain more details on your buyer personas and improve the way you market to each,

Parties Booked Offline by Gender

Consider running an ad telling men they'll receive a coupon for their next visit when they call in to book a party. Or, if they decide to book the party in-house, they can apply the coupon on the same day, so their child can play while they discuss party details and pay the deposit.

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SEARCH QUERY INTEREST BY SUBREGION

Using Google Trends, we can identify the popularity or interest of a particular search query among people in various locations.

As an example, below is the search interest of the search query, "birthday party places." It's probably safe to assume whomever is searching this term is looking for a place where they can celebrate a birthday party. The ranking of states below is based on states where the search term was most popular in 2019 compared to in 2018.

Top 20 (2019)

1. Texas
2. New Jersey
3. Oklahoma
4. Ohio
5. Connecticut
6. Kentucky
7. Louisiana
8. Delaware
9. Missouri
10. Maryland
11. Arizona
12. Illinois
13. Pennsylvania
14. Georgia
15. Tennessee
16. Rhode Island
17. Washington
18. South Carolina
19. Indiana
20. Massachusetts

Top 20 (2018)

1. Texas
2. New Jersey
3. Pennsylvania
4. Oklahoma
5. Georgia
6. Louisiana
7. Rhode Island
8. Ohio
9. Arizona
10. Connecticut
11. Mississippi
12. Illinois
13. Arkansas
14. Missouri
15. Maryland
16. North Carolina
17. Alabama
18. Kentucky
19. New York
20. Indiana

Note: A higher ranking means a higher proportion of all queries in that location, not a higher absolute query count. So a tiny state, for example, where 80% of the queries are for "birthday party places" will get twice the score of a giant state where only 40% of the queries are for "birthday party places."
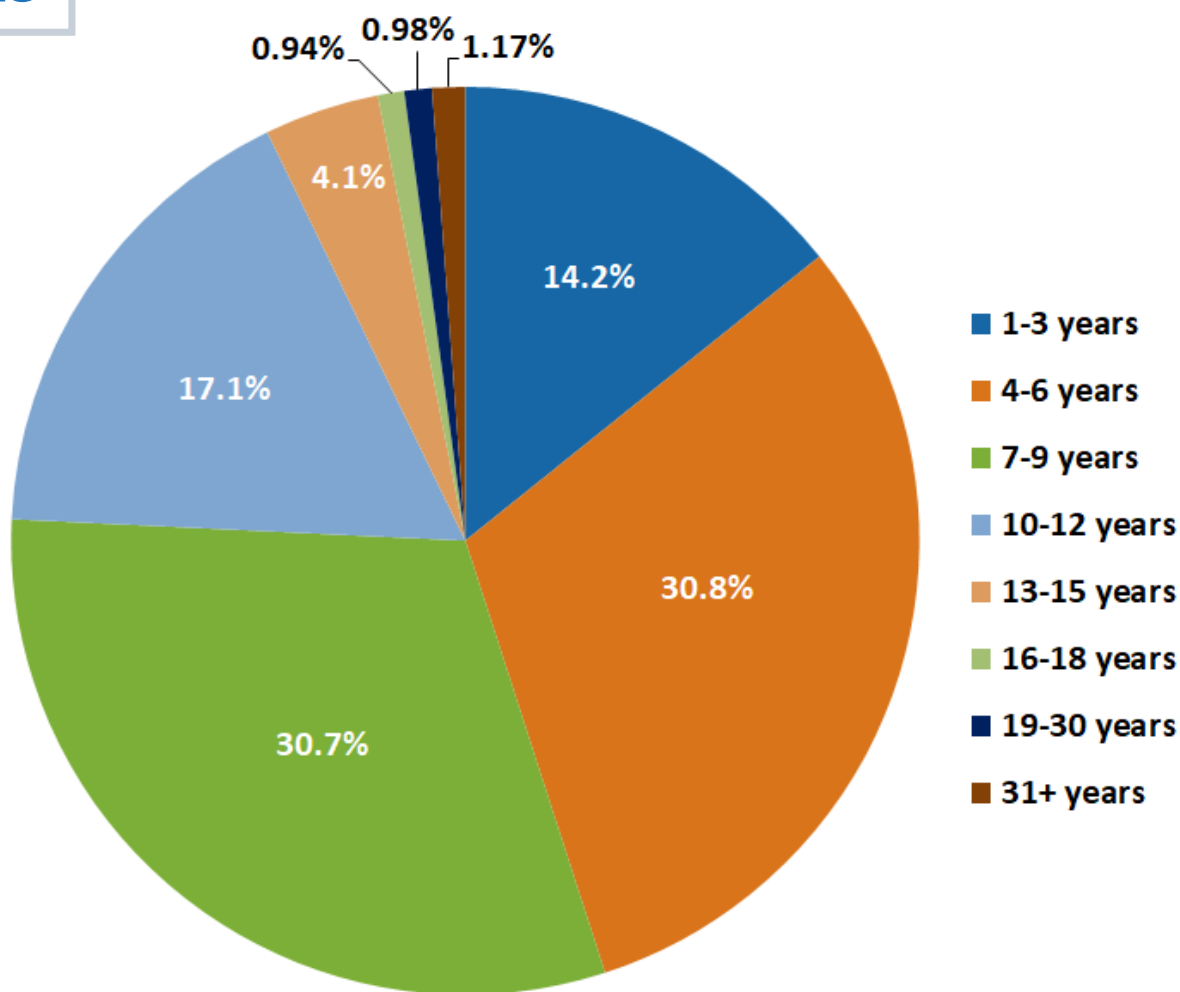
Related queries in 2019 include:

- "places to have a birthday party for adults"
- "bounce house rental"
- first birthday ideas"
- "trampoline parks near me"

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WHO'S BEING CELEBRATED AT THESE PARTIES?

2019

Pie chart legend:
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-9 years
- 10-12 years
- 13-15 years
- 16-18 years
- 19-30 years
- 31+ years

Chart values: 14.2%, 30.8%, 30.7%, 17.1%, 4.1%, 0.94%, 0.98%, 1.17%

As party of this study, it's important to highlight that out of all booked parties recorded in our database in 2019, the majority of them were for celebrating children age four to nine years old as the guest of honor.

Consider running a report to analyze the most popular age groups for party bookings at **your** FEC. Knowing the age of attendees for your private parties will help you appropriately customize party packages and theme offerings at your facility.

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WHAT TECHNOLOGY IS BEING USED TO BOOK PARTIES?

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BOOKING SESSIONS BY DEVICE TYPE

Online Booking Sessions by Device Type

2019

2.9%

26.4%

70.7%

2018

4.5%

29.5%

66.0%
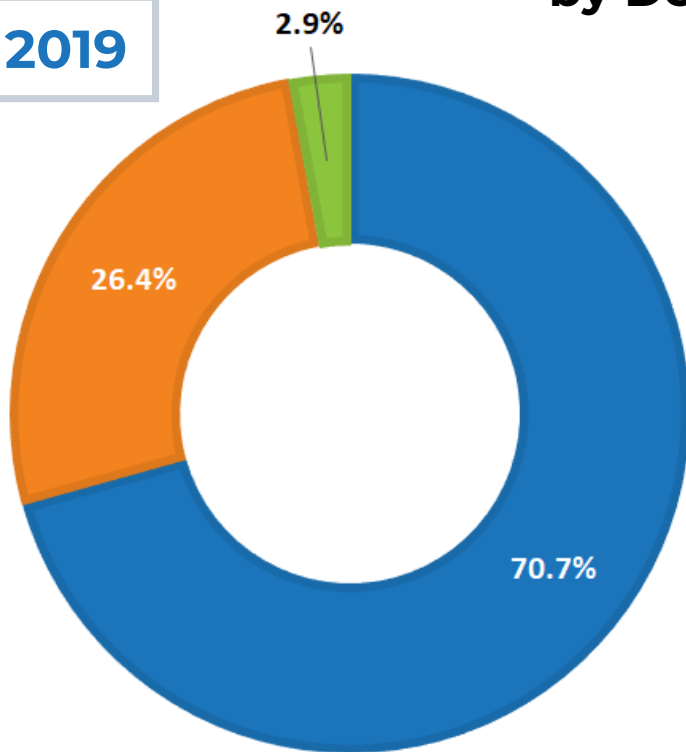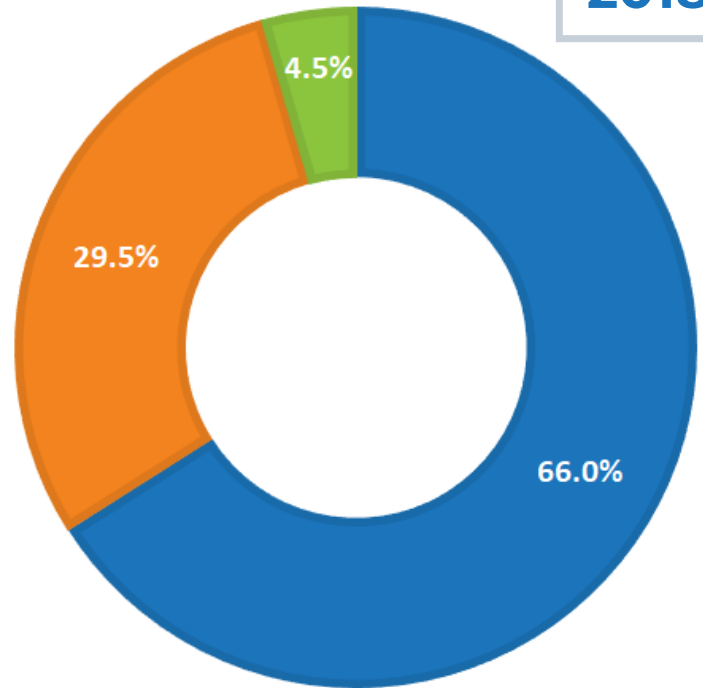
■ Mobile ■ Desktop ■ Tablet

It's no secret that, in today's society, technology rules the roost.

The popularity of portable technology is more popular than ever, which is why it comes as no surprise that the percentage of sessions in our online booking application using either a tablet or mobile device rose in 2019 over the year prior, while the use of a desktop computer to book decreased.

Parents, guardians, and friends want to be able to cross tasks off their to-do lists (such as book a birthday party) from wherever they are, and without it taking up a significant amount of their time. This is why it's critical as a family entertainment center for your website to be mobile compatible, and to be using online booking software.

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ONLINE BOOKING BY OPERATING SYSTEM

Online Booking Sessions by Mobile Operating System

2019

Online Booking Sessions by Mobile Operating System bar chart:

- iOS: 67.4%
- Android: 32.2%
- Other: 0.4%

Note: The use of the term "mobile devices" also includes tablets for this statistic.
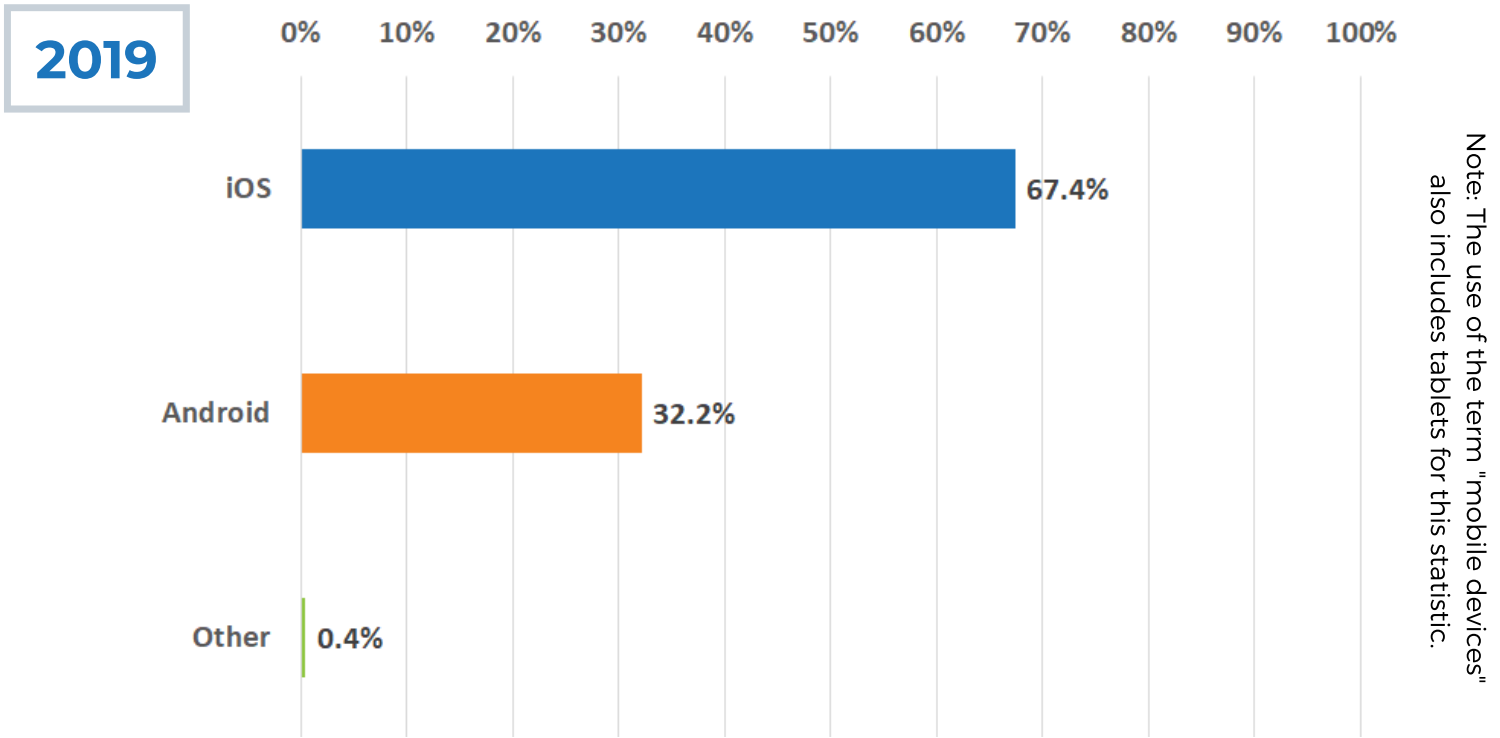
Since booking parties online via a mobile device is incredibly popular, it's important to see what mobile operating systems are most commonly being used. You might be thinking, "*Why does it matter? As long as the online booking feature works for them, who cares what operating system they're on?*"

Well, according to a recent Slickdeals survey, "*IPhone and Android users have distinct personality traits in addition to differences between household incomes and spending power, which could inform marketers as they seek to reach these consumers. For mobile marketers, this means they need to consider consumer differences when planning ad campaigns targeting various segments of smartphone owners.*"

If your FEC is familiar with running paid advertisements on social platforms, this could be a targeting parameter to consider when deciding what kind of discounts or specials to offer your audience(s).

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WHEN ARE PARTIES BEING BOOKED?
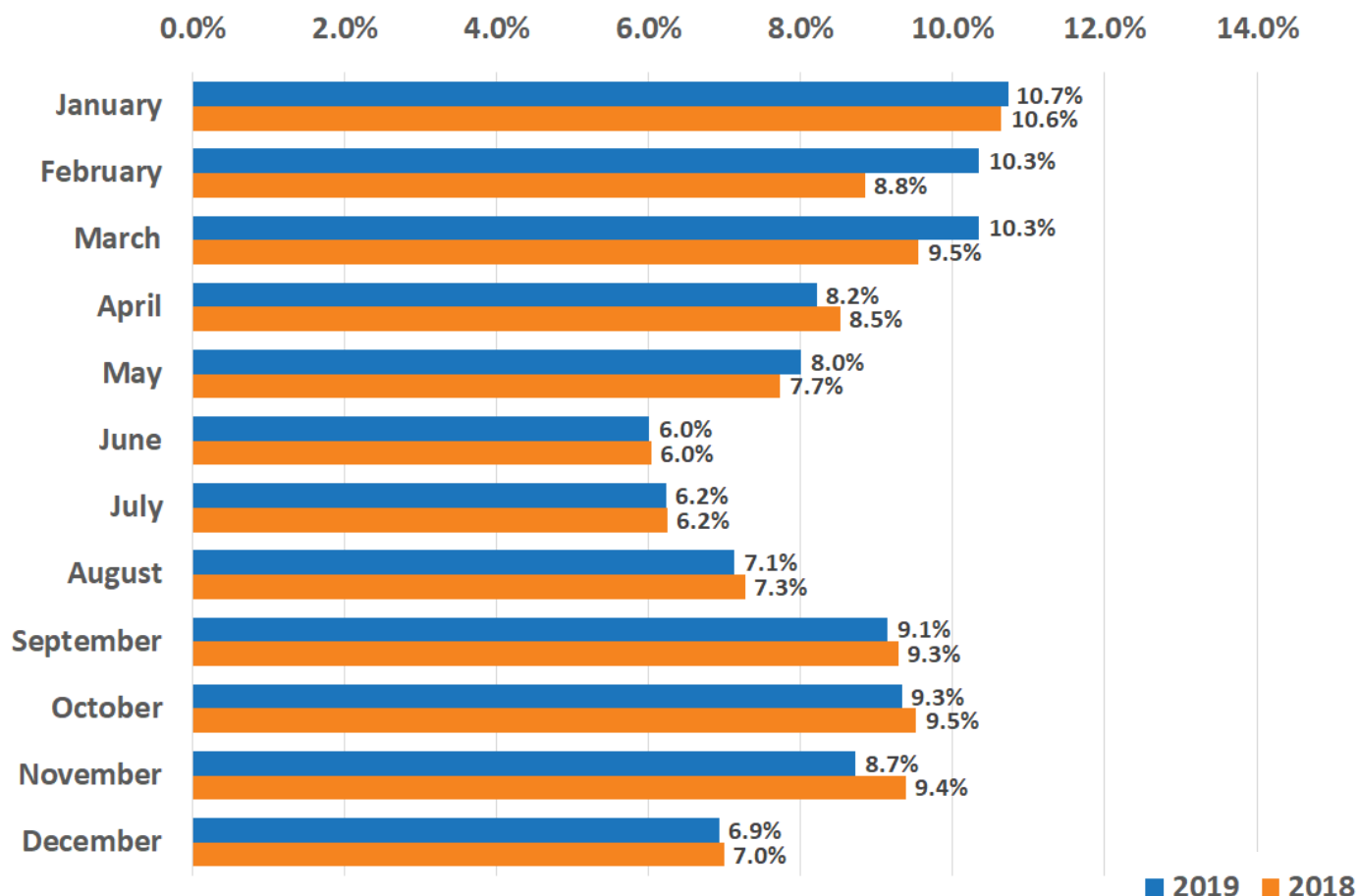
PARTIES BOOKED BY WEEKS IN ADVANCE

2019
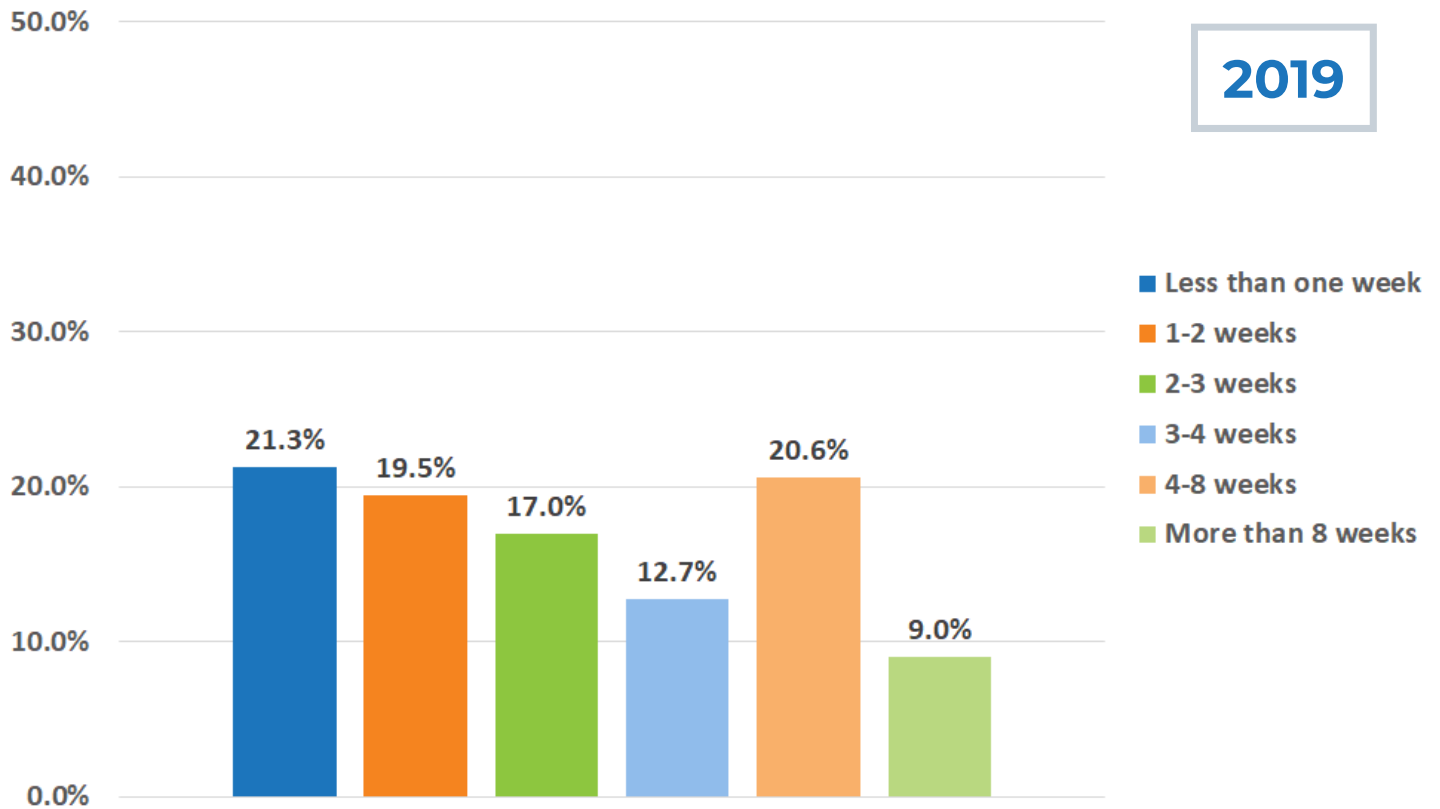
These days, it seems like EVERYONE is busy, ALL of the time. Many people plan for a party months in advance because they know they'll be too busy soon to remember, *or*, more commonly, plans are made at the very last minute because planning was forgotten entirely.

This is clearly evident by how far in advance parties are being booked at a facility. In 2019—regardless of how the party was booked (in-person, over the phone, or online)—**parties were booked less than one week in advance more so than any other time frame!**

These numbers prove why it's crucial for your business to have an online booking feature. When you offer potential guests the option to book online, you give them the ability to book a party 24/7 and make all desired requests, without the pressure of needing to make time for a phone call or to visit your facility during work hours. Offering this kind of convenience is what will set your facility apart from the competition.

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Party Booking Sessions by Month of the Year

| Month	2019	2018
January	10.7%	10.6%
February	10.3%	8.8%
March	10.3%	9.5%
April	8.2%	8.5%
May	8.0%	7.7%
June	6.0%	6.0%
July	6.2%	6.2%
August	7.1%	7.3%
September	9.1%	9.3%
October	9.3%	9.5%
November	8.7%	9.4%
December	6.9%	7.0%

■ 2019 ■ 2018

If you're looking for ways to forecast revenue and drive more attention to your marketing efforts throughout the year, identifying trends—such as which months your facility experiences the most party bookings—is a fantastic thing to do.

As you can see from the data above, Family Entertainment Centers tend to struggle meeting their party booking goals during the summer months, while the beginning of each year and back-to-school season is when FECs see their highest amount of party bookings.

Consider offering special discounts for party bookings during slower months to increase your revenue during that time.

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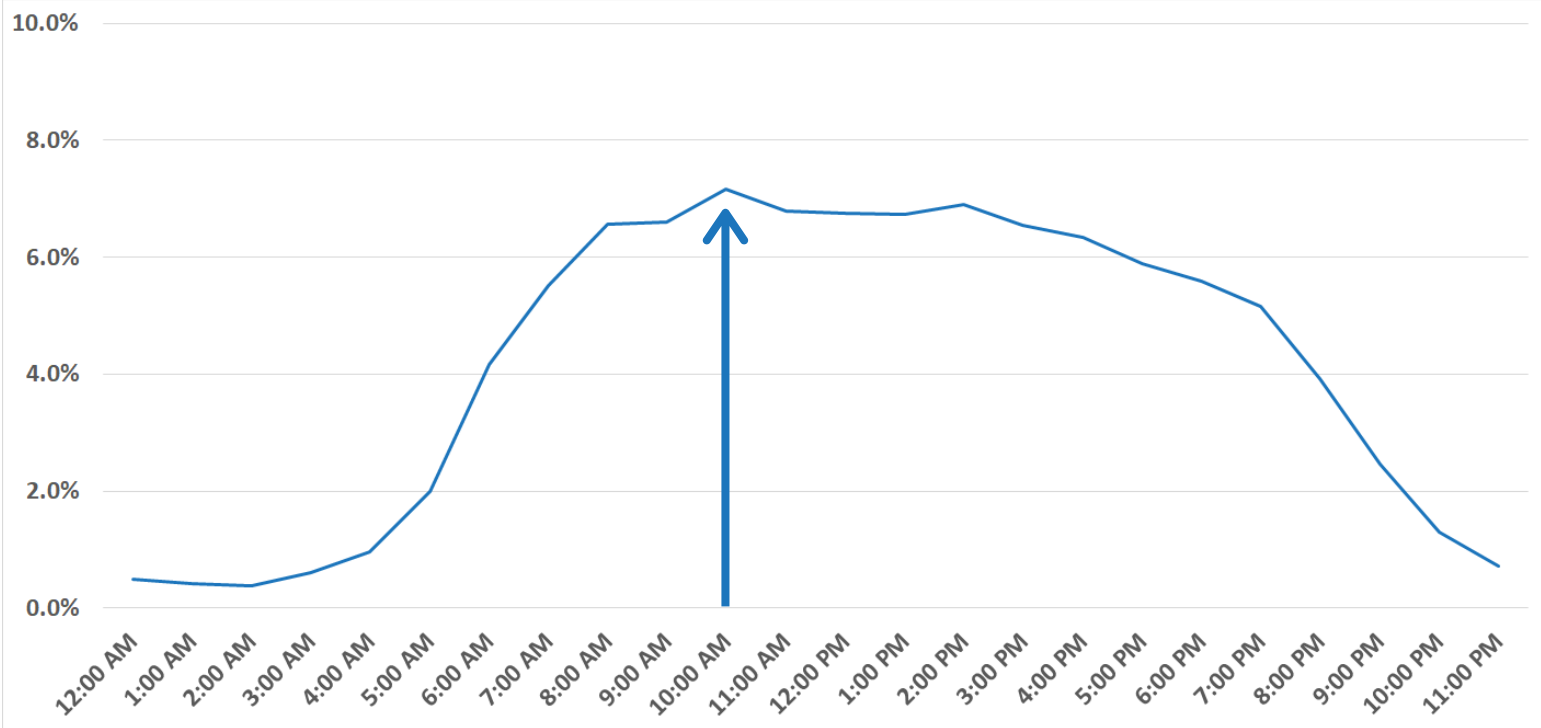## Online Party Booking Sessions by Day of the Week
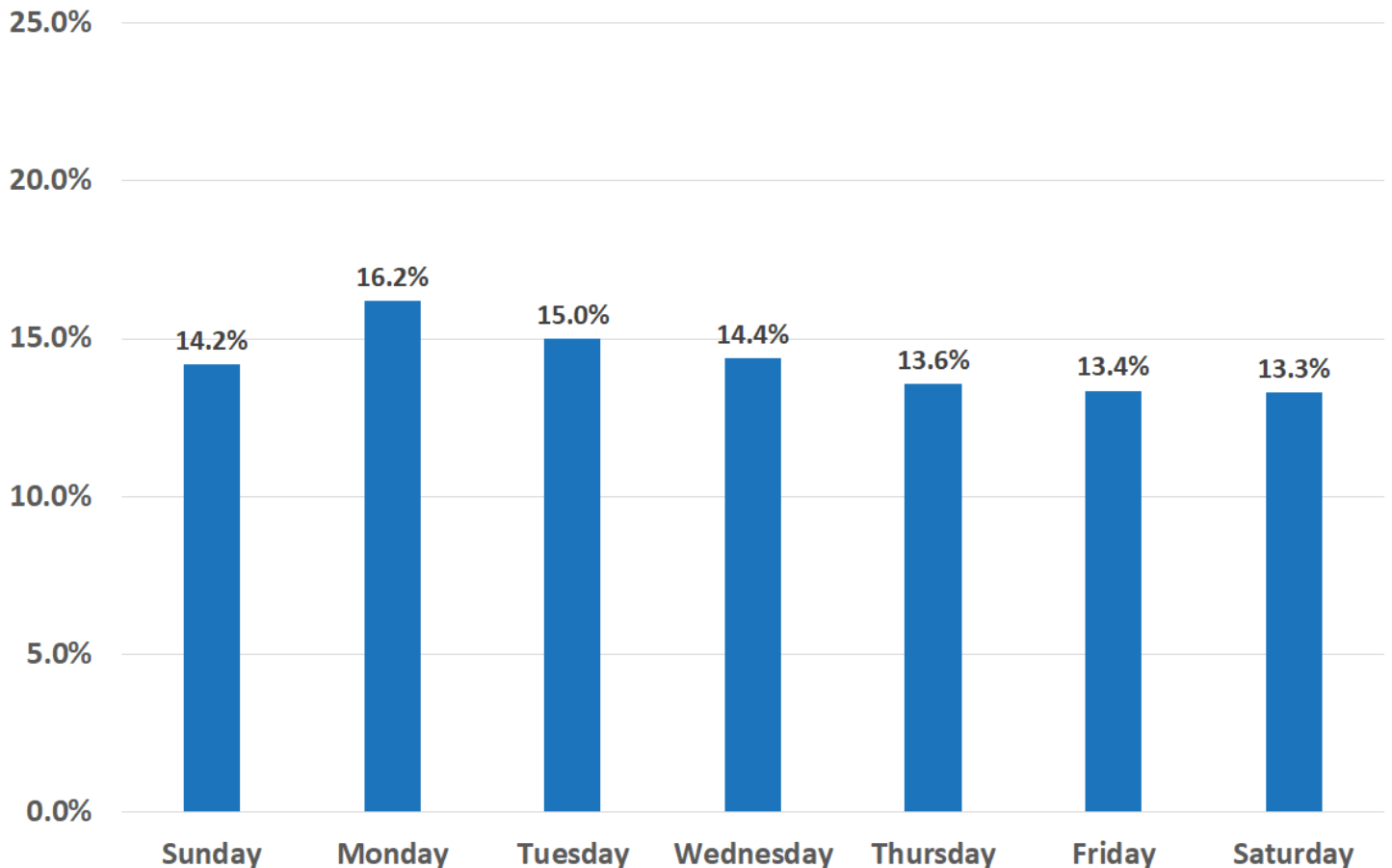
Discovering what day of the week parties are most commonly booked is also a great way to increase the effectiveness of your marketing efforts and increase your party bookings.

Our study uncovered the most popular time to book a party during 2019 was less than a week advance. Taking that into account, its not surprising that **Monday is the day of the week with the highest percentage of online party booking sessions**. It's a fresh start to the work week, a time when many adults go over what they need to accomplish before the weekend. For last minute party bookers, Monday must feel like their "last chance" to book an event before the weekend and still be able to successfully pull it off.

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Online Party Booking Sessions by Time of Day
2019

Online booking is highly beneficial, as it allows guests to book parties any time, day or night, simply by navigating to your website. In 2019, the most popular time frame for online party booking sessions was between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM, with **the highest percentage of online party booking sessions occurring at 10:00 AM**.

At the most popular hour, it's likely party bookers have arrived at their place of work by then, and are taking a quick break after getting through their inbox of morning emails. During the other mid-day peak hours, individuals are probably using their lunch break to go online and book a party.
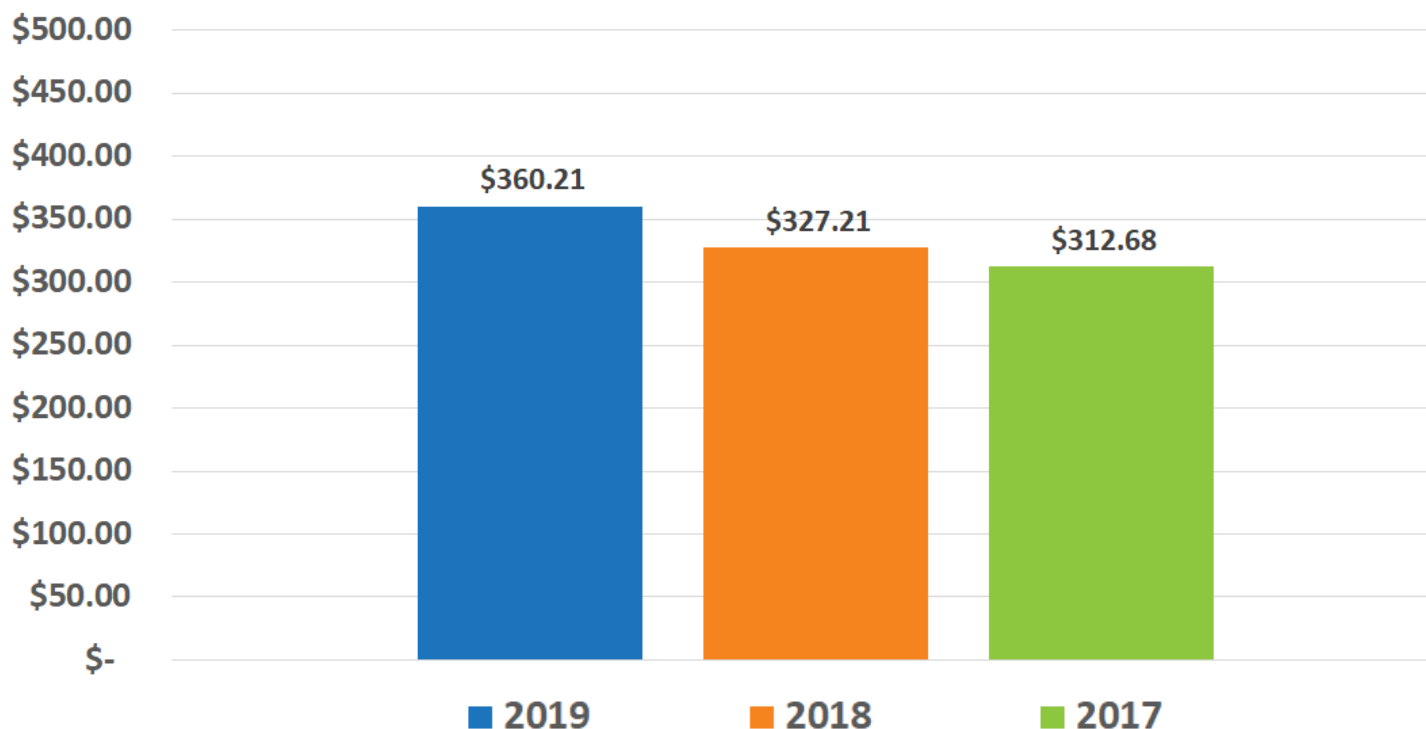
Use this knowledge when choosing times to publish and share your social media posts and advertisements, as this is when your target audience is more likely to be online checking their social accounts and browsing the web.

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HOW MUCH REVENUE IS EARNED FROM PARTY BOOKINGS?

AVERAGE REVENUE PER PARTY

Average Party Booking Revenue

Whether the party is booked online, via phone, or in-person—our study shows the average revenue per event continues to increase, year-after-year.

In 2019, the average party revenue increased 10.1% from last year, which is a 15.2% increase from 2017. Amazing!

Having insight into the amount of revenue that should be seen from parties helps facilities to adjust their pricing strategy for party packages and determine prices for add-ons each year.

Information like this is also great to share with customers! This way, potential guests know what to expect should they decide to book a party at a family entertainment center or events facility.

How do these numbers compare with your average revenue per party?

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KEY TAKEAWAYS AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

KEY TAKEAWAYS
AND
RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

We hope this year's online party booking study helps those of you who own businesses in the family entertainment industry to better understand your customer and plan effective party booking campaigns.

Use this data (and the comparisons of this year's numbers to years prior) to start conversations with your team and other business owners in the industry, gather reasons behind customer behavior, and make data-backed decisions for how to improve your business and continue increasing party revenue.

Action Items to Consider:

1.) Online Booking is a game-changer for family entertainment centers and event facilities. If you don't use it already, **schedule a demo** for the online party booking software that's right for you and add the feature to your website. You're likely to start seeing increased party bookings and revenue almost immediately.

2.) Who is your target audience/customer? What age group frequents your facility the most? You can't cater to everyone all the time, so it's best to invest your time and money into attracting your most profitable demographic.

3.) Use the behavioral data in this study, such as the most popular months, days, and times to book parties, to help you outline a marketing strategy, Schedule your party booking campaigns based on these insights to help you maximize engagement and conversion results.

4.) Out of all the inquiries your facility receives, how many of them turn into booked parties? If you're looking to close the gap between the two numbers, offering online party booking will help. **Calculate the projected ROI of party booking software** to see if it makes sense for you to invest.

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JOIN THE PCS COMMUNITY!

Running a family entertainment center isn't easy. Sometimes we need a little help from our friends.

That's why we created the **Party Center Software Community**, a Facebook Group for FEC owners, operators, and professionals who want to improve their business.

We discuss topics such as emerging industry trends, best practices for running your facility, and ways to build customer advocacy.

[Click here](#) or the icon below and request to join the PCS Community today!

We also invite you to click the links below and follow us on our social accounts:

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@partycentersoft

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Be sure to follow our hashtag #partywithPCS to stay in the loop whenever we publish new content!

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WHAT PARTY CENTER SOFTWARE CAN DO FOR YOU

WE STREAMLINE YOUR PROCESSES

Our software streamlines your party booking processes so you can manage all your parties in one place, and avoid unfortunate situations such as double-bookings. We also save you the time and hassle of managing your paper waivers by giving you the ability to search for signed or expired digital waivers by name or phone number.

WE EXPAND CAPABILITIES

Leveraging online technologies to achieve desired outcomes takes digital fluency. We expand your online capabilities with continued education and customer assistance from our expert Customer Success Managers. It's like having an online party booking expert on your team at all times.

WE IMPROVE THE GUEST EXPERIENCE

We care about your guest experience. That's why we provide the best online party booking experience in the marketplace. Our product architecture integrates our POS with our online booking module, digital waivers, and online storefront, so you get a holistic view of your guests.

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