

Cashless Catering with a System and Support: IT Partner GiroWeb on Innovations and Trends

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GiroWeb | Complete Solutions for Cashless Catering | giro-web.com

Cappuccino with GiroWeb: Cashless catering in transition

Company and school catering traditionally operate in a dynamic market environment that constantly presents caterers with new challenges. Due to bureaucracy, a shortage of skilled workers and digitization, the range of tasks for in-house operators and contract caterers has expanded again. Those responsible must find a new balance between gastronomy, flexibility and profitability. GiroWeb has been supporting small and large catering providers for decades with innovative systems and competent support. Customers include listed corporations and medium-sized companies as well as districts and municipal companies. Through numerous innovations and successful market-defining projects, GiroWeb maintains close contact with clients, customers and partners. Over a cappuccino, Managing Directors Marc Brauer and Ramon Siemon provide insights into the past and future of cashless communal catering.

Where do the beginnings of modern communal catering lie?

Ramon Siemon: Before the turn of the millennium, IT in canteens and company restaurants in Germany was still very heterogeneous. Every catering provider had a different POS system. In an analog world without remote maintenance, without cloud solutions, without automatic updates and without artificial intelligence, GiroWeb decided decades ago to introduce hardware and software that was as uniform as possible in order to exploit synergies. Looking back, the harmonization of the systems for ordering, payment and billing was a great advantage for all GiroWeb clients, especially for large caterers and companies with distributed locations and canteens. Data could be managed centrally and an automated reporting system could be set up across all operations. And if personal support was needed on site, competent service technicians could quickly analyze and resolve all problems.

What role does GiroWeb play in digital transformation today?

Marc Brauer: The large contract caterers in particular recognized the relevance and opportunities of digitization early on. Payment optimization and data analysis quickly generated operational added value. In the 2000s, the integration of employee ID cards and electronic payment media was still in its early stages. However, large caterers recognized the great potential early on. Using the latest technology, GiroWeb managed to set up processes for catering partners and restaurant guests that were both customer-friendly and secure. Through long-term customer relationships and technical innovations, digital standards for communal catering in Germany gradually developed. What has been successfully established in large canteens in Frankfurt, Mainz or Leipzig is of course not necessarily suitable for every school canteen in rural areas. However, cost-effective innovations usually find their way into smaller companies as well.

What are the biggest challenges apart from digitization?

Ramon Siemon: Regardless of whether you are a caterer or an IT systems provider such as GiroWeb, the shortage of skilled workers is a challenge for the entire catering industry. Finding affordable employees with professional qualifications and high motivation remains difficult. Technical innovations such as AI software with digital food detection can help to alleviate staff shortages. Employees are relieved of their workload through automated processes and gain time for other tasks. However, the efficiency potential offered by automation, digitization and AI is not infinite. Long-serving cashiers are the face of communal catering and also ensure interpersonal contact with guests. It is therefore important to find a good balance between automation, digitization and customer enthusiasm through committed staff, whether in the kitchen, in service or at the cash register.

How can home office and profitable catering be combined?

Marc Brauer: In recent years, the large contract caterers in particular have consistently geared the range of their offerings towards flexibility. New and integrated technology enables alternative processes, locations and media for ordering, payment and billing. The trend towards home office in particular has made catering concepts more flexible. The most important topics here are pre-ordering, collection, delivery and efficient use of resources. In general, the trend towards home office has also led to hybrid usage concepts for catering, vending, meetings and co-working. Fewer employees in the office also basically means fewer people eating in the canteen. Caterers naturally want to compensate for this with higher productivity and additional sources of income. However, we are currently observing a trend reversal. Employers are demanding more presence

in the office to increase productivity.

How can constant change be achieved without overwhelming staff?

Ramon Siemon: Every change is a challenge. This should not be underestimated. Successful caterers try to get all employees on board at an early stage in order to create transparency and avoid uncertainty. Only if employees understand where the journey is headed and what added value is being created will they respond positively to upcoming changes. Concerns and criticism can also arise in later phases. However, internal communication and professional training usually enable even critical employees to see changes in a positive light. Where automation and digitization ultimately lead to time flexibility or better working conditions, the focus of committed employees quickly returns to the day-to-day gastronomic business, customer enthusiasm and customer loyalty.

What additional revenue can catering providers realize easily?

Marc Brauer: The software interfaces are flexible and enable GiroWeb clients to generate additional business cost-effectively with little staff effort. At the moment, the focus is on self-service solutions with self-checkout in combination with cashless payment. Guests choose their own food and drinks through self-service, scan them and pay cashlessly. Caterers are also increasingly opting to use AI software with automatic food recognition and intelligent data analysis. Online ordering systems offer additional savings potential for purchasing and production, with which resources can be optimally planned and used. The aim here is to avoid food waste as much as possible. Established marketing tools such as digital signage with interactive menus for kiosk systems, notebooks, tablets and mobile apps complete the GiroWeb offering for catering providers.

How do market leaders shape the catering of the future?

Ramon Siemon: One pioneering example is the Arapay innovation project of our customer Aramark, one of the world's leading service providers in catering and service management. Together with technology partners such as CashControl and Qnips, GiroWeb has developed an integrative cloud POS system with mobile and stationary functionalities for Aramark. The integration of online credit, smartphone app, digital signage and optical food recognition with Dishtracker has created real added value for Aramark restaurants. However, automation and digitization are not only shaping GiroWeb systems for ordering, paying and billing. In the future, the world market leaders will probably also use smart robots, both in kitchens and in service. This will relieve the burden on staff, especially during off-peak times and in shift work. Guests will also be able to pre-order via app or self-service terminals and watch their food being prepared automatically. Afterwards, they can either take their food away with them or be served at the table by the gastro robot.

How will the market for IT system providers develop?

Marc Brauer: Communal catering will continue to be characterized by digital innovations and networking. For small caterers, cloud-based POS systems and mobile applications for indoor and outdoor catering will be real alternatives to stationary POS solutions. The more flexible GiroWeb customers want to be, the more the focus will shift to intelligent POS systems with modular extensions. Integrated AI, flexible payment, checkout systems with self-checkout and cross-entity controlling are becoming increasingly important for large-scale caterers. With GiroWeb, small and large customers continue to have a strong IT partner for maintenance and networking of proven systems and economically viable innovations. Regardless of location, service and support will be even faster and more efficient in future thanks to better mobile networks and secure remote access. The GiroWeb world is growing together.

Links and Downloads

GiroWeb CCS - Cashless Catering Solutions:

- <https://giro-web.com>

GiroWeb Wiki - Glossary and Dictionary:

- <https://giroweb.org>

GiroWeb Products and Services

- Management and transaction clearing to provide efficient administration for self-catering organizations and contractors
- Cash and cashless systems as well as peripheral modules to speed up payment and reduce queuing times at the POS

- Self-service terminals such as top-up machines and guest systems for issuing and loading RFID cards and transponders
- All-in-one kiosk systems for infotainment, transactions and pre-ordering of meals for in-house consumption or take-out
- Operation units: Card readers and controllers for quick payment at coffee, soda, snack and vending machines (VMC)
- RFID media: Chip-cards and transponders for easy, fast and secure service and identification of RFID chips and holders
- RFID full-service provision: Customized design, coding, integration and migration into existing environments
- POS, cloud, web and app: Mobile software for Google / Android (e.g. tablets) and Apple / iOS devices (e.g. iPads)
- Full-service offer: Consulting, project management, installation, training and support (on-site and remote)
- Back-office service: Additional individual services for operating environments (e.g. administrative tasks)

Gender note: For readability, we use generic masculine and mean all.

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About GiroWeb

GiroWeb is an IT system provider offering complete solutions for ordering, payment and billing in company and school catering - with or without cash. As a full-service provider, GiroWeb offers more than 30 years of experience and expertise as well as an international network of technology partners. With the products and services of GiroWeb, contract caterers and direct clients offer efficient communal catering for internal and external guests, from company restaurants and factory canteens to school eateries and daycare centers. Whether cashless payment systems, digital checkout systems with automatic food recognition using artificial intelligence (AI), integrated billing systems with app pre-ordering or multifunctional top-up stations, guest card machines and kiosk systems - GiroWeb designs and implements the best solution for every catering concept. The logical consequence is a long history of numerous first-class references throughout Germany. As an IT service provider and pioneer of cashless communal catering, GiroWeb is committed to maintaining proven system solutions as well as innovative technologies that generate real added value for clients.

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