



# CATERING IN 2025: EVOLVING WITH CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS



**ADAPTABILITY KEEPS  
CATERING BUSINESSES  
THRIVING.**

## Introduction

Catering is shifting again. While cost-of-living pressures are making clients more selective, the industry is still on track for growth. IBISWorld projects catering revenue to reach \$13.5 billion by 2029–30, with opportunities emerging for operators who can adapt quickly and deliver value where it counts.

## Sector Stability Drives Growth

Health and education contracts have provided consistency in a volatile market. These clients prioritise compliance, reliability, and nutrition standards. Operators who understand these needs and can deliver at scale have a competitive edge. Live events and travel are also bouncing back, offering renewed momentum — but clients in these spaces are price-aware and expect seamless service.

## The Shift to Fresh, On-Site Service

Clients are asking for more than drop-off food. They're after freshness, flexibility, and service that feels tailored. On-site preparation is gaining traction — it allows for real-time dietary adjustments, adds a sense of occasion, and meets rising expectations around food quality.

More foodservice businesses are stepping into catering — and doing it well. Strong branding, efficient systems, and customer-first thinking are helping restaurants and cafés secure event business that was once reserved for dedicated caterers.

## What Matters to Clients in 2025

- Quick response times and clear communication
- Sustainable packaging and ethical sourcing
- Menus that automatically cater to allergens and dietary needs
- Streamlined services that remove the need for multiple vendors

Meeting these expectations is no longer a differentiator — it's the baseline.

## Looking Ahead

Catering businesses that stay focused, flexible, and close to customer needs will keep winning work. The tools are there — it's about using them with purpose.

R&CA will continue to support members through insight, advocacy, and industry connection — because staying informed means staying competitive.