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TRANSFORMATION OF CATERING SERVICES IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY BASED ON INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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The article examines modern approaches to the organization of catering services in the hospitality industry, taking into account innovative transformations and principles of sustainable development. The evolution of scientific approaches to the interpretation of catering is analyzed — from an auxiliary activity within the restaurant business to an independent segment of the service sector operating at the intersection of restaurant operations, logistics, and event management. It is substantiated that the innovative development of catering is complex and includes technological, organizational, and service components, particularly digitalization of management processes, service personalization, and integration into event management. The study determines that the implementation of digital technologies contributes to the optimization of operational processes, improvement of service quality, and cost reduction. The role of sustainable development principles in shaping a modern catering model is identified, including environmental practices, the use of local resources, and the development of socially responsible business. An organizational and functional model of catering services is proposed, reflecting the interaction of production, logistics, service, and management subsystems under the influence of innovation. It is proved that the integration of innovative approaches and sustainable development principles enhances the efficiency of catering enterprises and strengthens their competitive advantages in the modern market. The study also systematizes the key factors influencing the development of catering services, including socio-economic, technological, and behavioral drivers. Special attention is paid to the role of digital transformation in ensuring the adaptability and flexibility of catering enterprises in a dynamic market environment. The practical significance of the research lies in the possibility of applying the proposed model to improve management decisions and optimize service delivery processes. The results obtained contribute to the development of theoretical approaches to catering as an integrated service system. The findings can be used in further research on innovative development and sustainable management in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: catering, innovation, digitalization, sustainable development, operational processes, service personalization, service quality, business efficiency.

ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЯ КЕЙТЕРИНГОВИХ ПОСЛУГ У СФЕРІ ГОСТИННОСТІ НА ЗАСАДАХ ІННОВАЦІЙ ТА СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ

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У статті досліджено сучасні підходи до організації кейтерингових послуг у сфері гостинності з урахуванням інноваційних трансформацій та принципів сталого розвитку. Проаналізовано еволюцію наукових підходів до трактування кейтерингу — від допоміжного напрямку ресторанного бізнесу до самостійного сегмента сфери послуг, що функціонує на перетині ресторанної діяльності, логістики та подієвого менеджменту. Обґрунтовано, що інноваційний розвиток кейтерингу має комплексний характер і охоплює технологічні, організаційні та сервісні складові, зокрема цифровізацію управлінських процесів, персоналізацію послуг та інтеграцію у сферу подієвого менеджменту. Встановлено, що впровадження цифрових технологій сприяє оптимізації операційних процесів, підвищенню якості обслуговування та зниженню витрат підприємств. Визначено роль принципів сталого розвитку у формуванні сучасної моделі кейтерингової діяльності, що передбачає екологізацію процесів, використання локальних ресурсів та розвиток соціально відповідального бізнесу. Запропоновано організаційно-функціональну модель кейтерингових послуг, яка відображає взаємодію виробничої, логістичної, сервісної та управлінської підсистем під впливом інновацій. Доведено, що інтеграція інноваційних підходів і принципів сталого розвитку забезпечує підвищення ефективності діяльності кейтерингових підприємств та формування їх конкурентних переваг в умовах сучасного ринку. Дослідження також систематизує ключові фактори розвитку кейтерингових послуг, зокрема соціально-економічні, технологічні та поведінкові чинники. Особливу увагу приділено ролі цифрової трансформації у забезпеченні адаптивності та гнучкості кейтерингових підприємств в умовах динамічного ринкового середовища. Практичне значення отриманих результатів полягає у можливості використання запропонованої моделі для вдосконалення управлінських рішень та оптимізації процесів надання послуг. Отримані результати сприяють розвитку теоретичних підходів до розгляду кейтерингу як інтегрованої сервісної системи. Висновки дослідження можуть бути використані у подальших наукових розвідках, присвячених інноваційному розвитку та сталому управлінню у сфері гостинності.

Ключові слова: кейтеринг, інновації, цифровізація, сталий розвиток, персоналізація послуг, операційні процеси, якість обслуговування, ефективність діяльності.

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**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM IN GENERAL TERMS
AND ITS CONNECTION WITH IMPORTANT SCIENTIFIC OR PRACTICAL TASKS**

The current development of the hospitality industry is characterized by significant structural transformations driven by the digitalization of the economy, changes in consumer behavior, and increased competition in the services market. Under these conditions, businesses are forced to adopt innovative approaches to service organization in order to maintain their competitive positions and ensure a high-quality customer experience. Catering, as a dynamic segment of the restaurant industry, plays an increasingly important role in shaping flexible and customer-centric service models. Its popularity is growing due to the development of the events industry, the corporate sector, and MICE tourism, which require mobile, adaptive, and high-quality solutions in the field of food service. At the same time, traditional approaches to organizing catering services are proving insufficiently effective in the face of modern economic and social challenges, particularly rapid technological changes and growing demand for sustainable business development. This necessitates a comprehensive rethinking of catering not merely as a supporting activity but as an independent segment of the service sector focused on innovative development. From a scientific perspective, the problem lies in the absence of a unified approach to defining the role of catering in the modern hospitality industry, as well as in the insufficient development of issues related to integrating innovative solutions and principles of sustainable development into its organization. From a practical standpoint, the relevance of this study stems from the need to improve service quality, optimize operational processes, and strengthen the environmental and social responsibility of businesses. Thus, researching innovative approaches to the organization of catering services and their relationship with the principles of sustainable development is an important scientific and practical task, the resolution of which will contribute to increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of enterprises in the hospitality industry.

ANALYSIS OF RECENT RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

The development of catering services in the hospitality industry is being actively studied by both domestic and foreign researchers, driven by transformative processes in the service sector and the growing role of innovative and service-oriented business models. In particular, in the works of N.V. Prylepa, catering is viewed as a new direction in the restaurant business that enables the expansion of the range of services offered by enterprises and the creation of additional sources of income [1]. A similar position is held by Girnyak L.I. and Glagola V.A., who justify the prospects of catering as a type of activity in the context of the development of the domestic services market [2]. In the studies by Tarasyuk G.M. and Chagayda A.O., attention is focused on the impact of innovative changes in the food service sector on the development of the catering business, particularly in the context of the transformation of organizational and technological approaches to service [3]. Further development of scientific approaches is linked to a broader understanding of the essence of catering as a comprehensive system that integrates production, logistics, and service processes. In particular, the works of Tyshchuk I.V. justify the feasibility of treating catering as an independent form of service activity operating at the intersection of the restaurant business, logistics, and event management, and emphasize the role of innovative approaches, particularly the digitalization and automation of processes [5; 6]. An important contribution to the study of current trends in the development of catering has been made by Yakimenko-Tereshchenko N. and her co-authors, who view it as a component of the MICE industry and analyze the prospects for the industry's digital transformation [7]. In turn, Pakhomskaya O. and Postova V. focus on the historical preconditions for the development of catering and its transformation in modern conditions, particularly in the context of emerging service trends and the growing importance of customer-centricity [8; 9]. Thus, a synthesis of scientific approaches indicates an evolution in perceptions of the essence of catering—from a supporting branch of the restaurant business to an independent segment of the service sector, whose development is shaped by the influence of innovative technologies, digitalization, and integration into the field of event management.

**IDENTIFICATION OF PREVIOUSLY UNRESOLVED PARTS
OF THE GENERAL PROBLEM TO WHICH THE ARTICLE IS DEVOTED**

Despite the development of scientific approaches to the study of catering services, certain aspects of their organization remain underdeveloped. First and foremost, there is a lack of a holistic approach to considering catering as an integrated system in which interconnected production, logistics, organizational, and service processes function as a single mechanism. Furthermore, the comprehensive implementation of innovations in the operations of catering enterprises, particularly their integration into all business processes, requires further research. The relationship between the innovative development of catering and the principles of sustainable development also remains insufficiently explored, particularly in the context of building long-term competitive advantages for enterprises. Therefore, it is essential to develop approaches for constructing a comprehensive model for organizing catering services that combines innovative solutions and the principles of sustainable development.

DEFINITION OF THE RESEARCH PURPOSES

The purpose of this article is to summarize academic approaches to the concept of catering and to justify innovative approaches to the organization of catering services in the hospitality industry, taking into account the principles of sustainable development.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS

There is no single approach in the academic literature to defines the essence of catering, which leads to a variety of interpretations of this concept and necessitates its clarification in the context of the current state of the hospitality industry.

Traditionally, catering is viewed as a supplementary segment of the restaurant business, serving to expand the range of services offered by establishments and generate additional revenue streams [1]. Within this framework, catering is also interpreted as a form of off-site service within the restaurant industry.

However, the development of the hospitality industry is driving a transformation in how catering is understood. In contemporary research, it is viewed as a comprehensive system that integrates production, organizational, and service processes in the realm of customer service. In this context, catering emerges as a multi-component system that extends beyond the boundaries of traditional restaurant service.

Further development of scientific approaches involves viewing catering as an independent form of service activity that operates at the intersection of the restaurant business, logistics, and event management [5; 6]. This approach is supported by contemporary scholarly works, in which catering is viewed as a distinct segment of the service market with its own operational mechanisms.

Thus, in the scientific sphere, it is appropriate to distinguish two main concepts: the traditional one, which views catering as a supporting activity, and the modern one, according to which it functions as an independent branch of the service industry. A synthesis of scientific approaches indicates that catering is gradually transforming into an independent segment of the service market with its own mechanisms of operation and development [2; 3].

The shift toward understanding catering as an independent form of activity necessitates a reevaluation of approaches to organizing catering services, which is directly linked to the implementation of innovations.

The modern development of catering is inextricably linked to the implementation of innovative solutions that encompass the technological, organizational, and service aspects of business operations. In an increasingly competitive environment, innovation is a key factor in improving the efficiency of the catering business.

In this context, researchers focus on the technological aspect of innovation, highlighting the role of digitalization, particularly the use of online platforms, CRM systems, and the automation of management processes [5; 6]. This helps optimize internal business processes and improve the quality of customer service.

Today, the digital transformation of catering goes beyond simply taking orders. It involves the implementation of intelligent demand forecasting systems based on artificial intelligence algorithms, which allows for the optimization of raw material procurement and the minimization of overproduction. A separate vector of technological development is the use of cloud services for real-time management of logistics chains, which is critically important for off-site service. This ensures the synchronization of the kitchen, the transportation unit, and the service team on-site, minimizing time losses and the risks of product quality degradation during transportation.

Taking these transformations into account, it is appropriate to present a generalized model of changes in the operational processes of a catering enterprise under the influence of digitalization (Fig. 1).

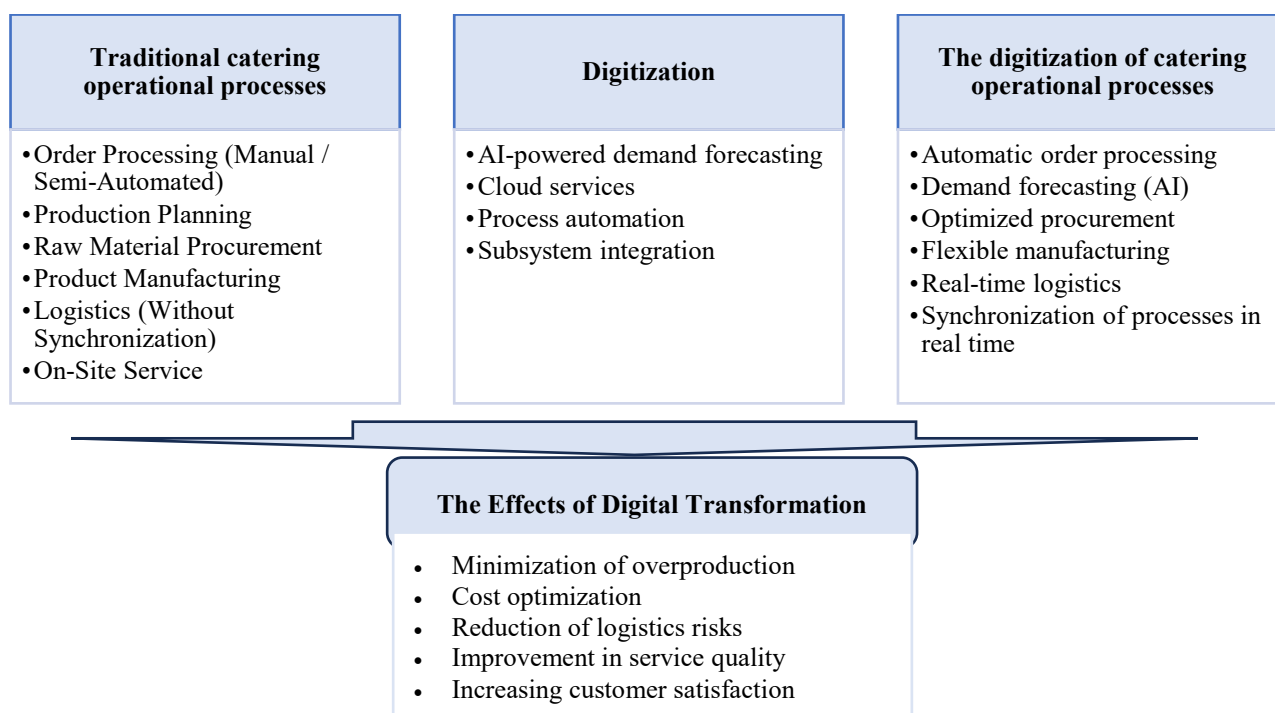


Fig. 1. Transformation of a catering company’s operational processes under the influence of digitalization (Source: created by the author)

Recent research is broadening our understanding of innovation in the catering industry, with a particular focus on the service component. In particular, service personalization, menu adaptation, and the creation of a unique customer experience are viewed as key factors in building a company’s competitive advantage [9].

In addition, organizational innovations related to the integration of catering into the sphere of event management and MICE tourism, where it serves as a component of comprehensive event services, represent an important area [7].

Thus, innovations in catering are multidimensional in nature and encompass technological, service, and organizational components. Their implementation should be aimed at ensuring the long-term effectiveness of enterprises’ operations.

In this context, the innovative development of catering logically transitions into the realm of sustainable development, which defines the strategic guidelines for the operation of enterprises in the hospitality industry.

Growing consumer environmental awareness and the need for rational resource use are driving a transformation in approaches to organizing catering services, placing greater emphasis on environmental considerations—including reducing food waste, using eco-friendly packaging, and implementing “Zero Waste” principles [8].

Implementing sustainable development principles in catering requires a complete overhaul of the service model. Greening processes involves not only phasing out plastic but also the concept of “zero-waste food design,” where menus are crafted to maximize the use of seasonal local ingredients and minimize leftovers. The social aspect of sustainable development is manifested through the development of partnerships with farms, which ensures transparency regarding the origin of products for the consumer and supports the local economy. In addition to the environmental benefits, this strategy creates a unique value proposition for corporate clients (the MICE segment), for whom a contractor’s social responsibility metrics are a key selection criterion.

Thus, sustainable catering has not only an environmental but also a socio-economic dimension, manifested in the use of local products, support for local producers, and the promotion of responsible consumption.

Another important aspect is the strategic dimension, whereby the principles of sustainable development are integrated into the company’s business model, thereby shaping its competitive advantages and positive image.

Thus, sustainable development serves as a logical extension of the innovative transformation of the catering business, ensuring its long-term effectiveness and alignment with current market demands.

Therefore, catering should be viewed as an integrated service system, the development of which is determined by the interaction of three key components: the transformation of its essence, the implementation of innovations, and a focus on the principles of sustainable development.

In the context of the hospitality industry’s transformation, the issue of developing an effective model for organizing catering services—one that ensures the coordination of all stages of service delivery—becomes particularly relevant.

Catering, as an integrated form of activity, involves the combination of several interconnected subsystems, each of which performs a separate function in the process of creating and delivering the service. These subsystems include production, logistics, service, and management.

The production subsystem covers the processes of preparing culinary products and designing menus according to the client’s needs. The logistics component ensures the transportation of products, the organization of the venue, and the technical support for the event. The service subsystem is responsible for direct customer service, while the management subsystem is responsible for coordinating all stages and ensuring quality control.

The interaction of these elements forms a comprehensive system for organizing catering services, the effectiveness of which depends on the degree of their integration. A lack of coordination between individual components can lead to a decline in service quality and a loss of the company’s competitive edge.

In today’s environment, this model is undergoing transformation under the influence of innovations and sustainable development principles, necessitating its adaptation to new market demands.

The development of the catering business is influenced by a complex of factors, a summary of which is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Factors of catering business development

Group of factors	Essence of the factor	Impact on catering activities	Impact on the company	Management decisions
Socioeconomic	Changes in lifestyle, growth of the corporate sector, expansion of the events market	Increase in bookings for corporate and private events. Growth of MICE tourism	Growing demand for catering services. The increasing role of catering in comprehensive service provision	Expanding the range of services, adapting service formats. Integrating catering into event management
Technological	Advances in digital technology, automation, and the use of CRM	Online booking, digital event planning. Use of data analytics	Process optimization and cost reduction. Improving the effectiveness of management decisions	Implementing CRM, automating management. Using digital tools.
Behavioral	Changes in consumer priorities, demand for personalization and sustainability	Customized menus, themed event concepts	Rising standards for quality and service. Establishing new service standards	Developing unique offerings. Implementing sustainable development principles

As shown in Table 1, the development of catering services is shaped by socio-economic, technological, and behavioral factors, which drive changes in demand and approaches to service organization. A synthesis of their impact allows us to conclude that catering operates within a system of interaction among these factors, which necessitates a rethinking of traditional organizational models. Unlike existing approaches, this study demonstrates the relevance of considering technological and behavioral factors as key drivers of innovative development in the catering business, which determine the directions of digitalization, service personalization, and the integration of sustainable development principles into business operations.

To summarize approaches to the organization of catering services, it is appropriate to present an organizational-functional model of catering (Fig. 2).

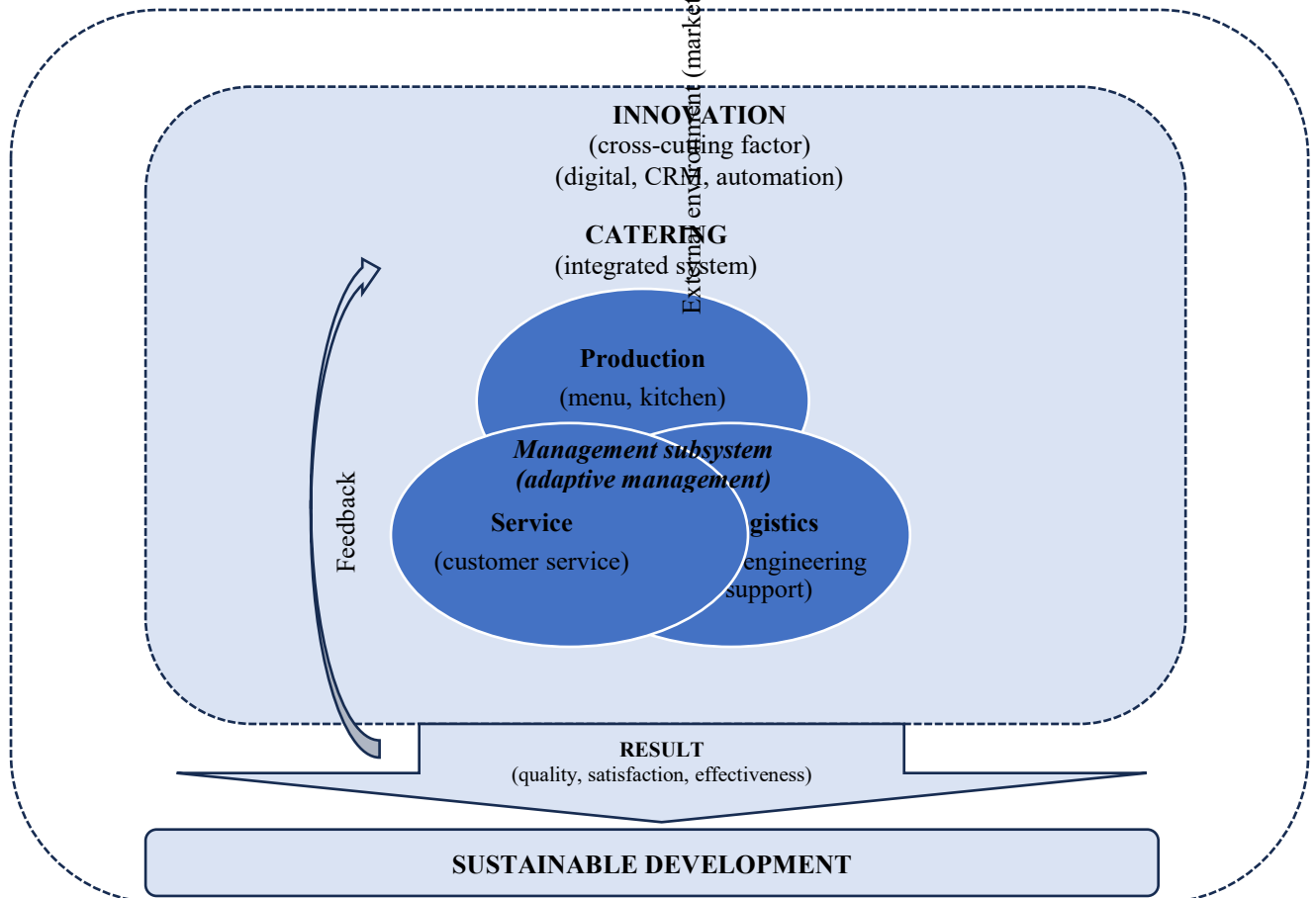


Fig. 2. The organizational and functional model of catering services

[Source: developed by the author]

The proposed model (Fig. 2) represents a system of interconnected elements within a catering services organization. Its operation is based on vertical and horizontal links between the main subsystems. Vertical links characterize the sequence of service formation and delivery—from the influence of the external environment to obtaining the final result and ensuring the sustainable development of the enterprise, while horizontal links reflect the interaction between the production, logistics, and service subsystems, ensuring the coordination of service delivery processes.

In the proposed model, the management subsystem plays an integrating role, ensuring the flexibility of the entire system’s operation. It is based on the principles of adaptive management, according to which each order is treated as a separate project with its own planning cycle. In addition, the logistics subsystem transforms from a transportation function into a complex process of organizational and technical support for the event, encompassing mobile power supply, temperature control, and the organization of the service area. Such interaction between subsystems allows for the creation of a catering product as a comprehensive event service with high added value.

The innovative component of the model is pervasive in nature and influences all subsystems of a catering enterprise, shaping the characteristics of management processes, production improvements, logistics optimization, and service quality enhancement. Consequently, innovation serves as a systemic factor in the development of catering services.

An important element of the model is feedback, which ensures the adaptation of the enterprise’s activities to changes in the external environment. Thus, the proposed model allows us to view catering as an integrated system whose functioning is determined by the interaction of its main components.

This model allows not only for the systematization of the structure of catering operations but also for the identification of key directions for improving its efficiency under current conditions. Its practical significance lies in the ability to comprehensively manage all stages of service provision, taking into account the interrelationships between individual subsystems.

An important aspect is ensuring the coordination of production, logistics, and service processes, which helps reduce operational risks and improve service quality. This is particularly relevant when organizing off-site events, where any breakdown in coordination can lead to significant losses.

Furthermore, the proposed model provides a foundation for implementing modern management approaches focused on flexibility, adaptability, and the project-based nature of catering companies' operations. This allows each order to be viewed as a separate, comprehensive process requiring individual planning and resource coordination. In this context, the effectiveness of a catering enterprise is determined not only by the quality of individual operations but also by the level of integration of all system elements, which determines its ability to adapt in a dynamic market environment.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS ARTICLE AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCHES IN THIS AREA

The results of the study indicate that, in the current context of the hospitality industry's development, catering is evolving from a supporting component of the restaurant business into an independent segment of the service sector, characterized by a high level of integration of production, logistics, and service processes. It is argued that the key factor in the development of catering services is the implementation of innovative approaches, which include the digitization of management processes, service personalization, and integration into the event management sector. It has been established that innovations are cross-cutting in nature and affect all elements of the catering services organization system. It is demonstrated that the innovative development of catering is closely linked to the implementation of sustainable development principles, which involve the greening of operations, the use of local resources, and the establishment of socially responsible business practices. An organizational and functional model of catering services is proposed, which reflects the interconnection of the enterprise's main subsystems and allows catering to be viewed as an integrated service system. The practical significance of the results lies in the possibility of using the proposed approaches to improve the efficiency of catering enterprises and build their competitive advantages in today's market.

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