Streamling processes and expediting tasks with the help of Donor Strategy and Cloud Venue

Advanced's online booking system has enabled our school to save time and made attending events quicker and easier for prospective parents, parents, alumni and former staff. Booking open days, reunions, receptions, parent lunches and industry group events have become streamlined processes.

Founded in 1877, the Dragon School is an Oxford based prep (8-13 year olds) and pre-prep (2-7 year olds) co-educational private school. Although we have two sites, we are run as one school.

Manual Processes

We wanted to move from manual to online booking and learnt about Advanced's Cloud Venue solution and how this can be linked to their Donor Strategy CRM (customer relationship management) and fundraising database, which we already use. Before Advanced, we managed events manually and the process was rather clunky, getting attendees to fill in forms and returning them to the school by post or taking bookings by email and phone. Our events team had to manually collate responses and put these into the CRM (customer relationship management) system. Of course, this process was inefficient and resulted in a lot of extra time spent on administrative tasks.

We have a small team that manages the website, marketing, PR, communications and fundraising. Due to our multiple responsibilities,

we are always looking to create efficiencies and streamline processes in any way that we can to ensure we can do more with our limited staff resource. Too much unproductive time was taken up with administrative tasks and we realised we had outgrown this process. In addition to this payments were really difficult to do manually without online processing and many parents and alumni no longer have chequebooks and this was creating problems whe organising events. For us, Advanced's Cloud Venue solution was a simple, streamlined events technology that could be tailored to our needs whilst from a cost-effective perspective, surpassined others competitors.

Before we implemented Cloud Venue, we have already been using fundraising solution Donor Strategy, not long after it was launched and collaborated to refine the product for the schools' market. Since then, we have worked with Advanced and the product as it has evolved. We have been involved in developing products for the School's Development Market with them ever since and they feel like part of our team.

Client >
The Dragon School

Sector >
Education

Project >
Improve admin processes and increase productivity with the integration of Donor Stategy and Cloud Venue

Increased efficienies with Donor Strategy & Cloud Venue

The digital generation

Younger generations want to respond to event invitations quickly and simply. For us, this was an extra push to implement a solution that would save us time and improve the experience for our alumni and parents, thereby increasing the likelihood of their attendance at events.

At the time Cloud Venue was very recently launched and was originally designed for small theatres. The implementation team however, tailored the product specifically to the needs of a school development office to suit our specific needs. Unlike small theatres that use ticketing solutions, we are in the business of building relationships, not just selling tickets, meaning the system needed to be tailored slightlty differently. The Advanced team had to develop the product so that we could record events attended on individual records and this has proven very important as part of our relationship building excercise and assisted us build a picture of potential donors. Once the data captured is quickly audited, the system updates the records in the back-end of the Donor Strategy database, saving a lot of time and effort for staff.

Having this technology has taken out many manual processes, increased event attendance and enabled us to launch a series of very successful industry networking events for our alumni – allowing us to support Old Dragons with their careers and building our donor base greatly.

Last year, the school ran a very successful public World War II commemorative event for old staff, local people and alumni. The technology was incredibly helpful for this as we could tailor the questionnaire element of the product to the stakeholder groups that attended. Over 300 people came to the event over two days, and we were delighted to have a system that could be used by those on our database, as well as those who were not, such as local neighbours and grandparents. Advanced's solution is now key for recording our event data in an inccurate yet simple way.

Although some attendees still send separate emails, Cloud Venue is a key time saver and our parents and alumni prefer to use a system that is quick and easy for them. In addition to this, we have found the system is particularly useful for prospective parents booking open days with 100% uptake from that group.

Time savings

When attending events, parents and staff like to be able to click 'attend' on their phone or tablet – confirming their attendance quickly. This simultaneously saves time for the attendees as well as our events team, particularly for parents and alumni who attend many events as the system remembers them. Additionally, it is easier to reach potential attendees across a variety of social platforms such as our e-newsletter, Facebook and Linkedin.

Increased efficienies with Donor Strategy & Cloud Venue

Since implementing the solution, we have been able to build a series of industry groups and have more time for promoting, rather than administrating events. To accommodate this digital shift, communication has to be very clear, with automatic acknowledgement when booking. This was one of the features we thought most important and which Cloud Venue provides us with.

We have brought together alumni groups and held a Digital Forum, insurance and risk event, entrepreneurs' evening and Art exhibition using the technology's booking system. Moreover, we have been able to record essential information about attendees, which would not be possible without using Cloud Venue.

By partnering with Advanced using Donor Strategy in combination with events solution Cloud Venue, we have freed up time for other more productive activities, such as launching our e-newsletter and a series of other events which we were unable to do before with the limited resource in the team. Through integrating Cloud Venue into the CRM the technology has improved our service to our stakeholders and opened up new creative possibilities.

More information

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