

Using technology to build ticket database can boost bottom line

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From time to time I will use this column to examine technology, programs or approaches that I feel can have an impact on your business. While I will mention specific brands, I am not necessarily endorsing these brands, but I am suggesting that what the technology or program does is worth investigating and that this particular brand has some supporters who have had success.

This month I would like to examine the paperless ticketing technology of Flash Seats by Veritix, and lead scoring and analysis from Prospector by Turnkey Sports. Each of these innovations can improve the efficiency of your operation as well as increase revenue and cut expenses.

Flash Seats

Flash Seats is a paperless ticketing system employed by a number of pro sport franchises, including the Cleveland Cavaliers, Utah Jazz and Houston Rockets. Ticket owners are admitted into the building via an encrypted code that can be placed on a driver's license, credit card or other form of identification. What I have loved about this product since first learning about it several years ago is the data-capture ability that enables the venue or the team to know the identity of every person in the building on any given night. The value of the data for future marketing and sales efforts along with cross-promotional opportunities is a significant revenue opportunity.

According to Chris Dacey, the Rockets' vice president and chief strategy officer, "We discovered that by owning the data, particularly the secondary market data ... that 40 percent of the people coming to our games were people that we didn't know about." As there is a transactional fee any time the ticket is sold or resold, no matter how many times, every seller becomes known to the organization providing more control over the secondary ticket market. Jim Olson, senior vice president of sales and marketing for the Jazz, said this new revenue stream grows as the use of Flash Seats grows. By controlling who is buying and selling the tickets, Olson said, a team can eliminate fraud and duplicate tickets. Dacey also notes that no-show rates have declined for people using Flash Seats compared with non-Flash Seats users.

Both teams have integrated Flash Seats into their ticketing mix, and eventually, along with the Cavaliers, hope to have every seat in their venues tied into the Flash Seats product, eliminating ticket printing costs and providing a green solution for ticketing.

Imagine having the actual broker list of everyone who has bought from a broker and being able to contact those buyers for future sales efforts, all warm to hot leads



A fan's driver's license is scanned using Flash Seats

future sales efforts, all warm to hot leads.

technology at Houston's Toyota Center.

Flash Seats is a ticketing solution, a

database generator, marketing innovation and a revenue opportunity all rolled into one.

Prospector

Speaking of hot leads, Prospector is a lead-scoring program that increases the efficiencies of selling tickets in a variety of ways.

- It prioritizes leads based upon organizational history, PersoniX customer segments, and other types of data on a scale from one star (less likely to purchase) to five stars (likely to purchase and at a higher dollar volume).
- It allows the sales manager to better understand who should be selling what and measures the revenue yield of salespeople in direct correlation to the leads they are assigned.
- It allows for the creation of ticket-selling specialists similar to real estate agents by identifying who is best at selling business-to-business, who is better with premium seating customers, who works better with partial plan buyers and so forth.
- It increases accountability in terms of assigned leads and revenue produced from those leads.
- It allows the sales manager to rotate assigned leads equally or to create a system where five-star leads (the very best leads deemed most likely to generate the most revenue) are earned based on past performance or even performance that week.
- It provides automatic integration between the organization's ticket provider, customer relationship management (CRM) platform and the most commonly used consumer and business data warehouses.

Haynes Hendrickson of Turnkey states that "it is all about improving the efficiency of the sales staff and trying to move from a 1 percent success rate of outbound calling to a rate of 3 or 4 percent or perhaps higher."

Liz Bartle, who is responsible for implementing and working with Prospector at the Miami Heat, offered her thoughts about the value of the product: "The system was a great way for sales reps to maximize their time and truly prioritize leads. From the management level, I liked the ability to segment leads amongst the sales reps rather than using a randomization method with distribution." Bartle said she has made suggestions regarding ways to customize Prospector by inputting monetary value/range for each score in the model to make it more valuable to the team in forecasting the worth of a sales campaign.

In compiling the information in this column I enjoyed talking with Chris, Jim and Liz because they understood that buying products like these isn't buying a silver bullet or a magical cure, but it is buying a process that comes with expertise. You need to keep working with the product and using the expertise and support systems that come with the product to maximize what these products can deliver for you and your organization. Both of these products in their finest form are customized to best fit the other business operating procedures and personnel in place at the respective organizations.

These products can be paired together to have an impact on the sales system and the delivery of that system to the consumer in a cost-effective way that is simple, transparent, green and profitable. Maybe there is such a thing as a better mousetrap.

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