



Hereford FC save time and improve efficiency with Advanced's ticketing solution

Background

Hereford FC is an English association football club from the city of Hereford. Founded in 2014 as a phoenix club for Hereford United, we inherited the Edgar Street stadium. We are nicknamed 'The Whites' after our predominantly white kit and 'The Bulls' after the Hereford cattle breed. We have a passion for football and our motto is 'Our greatest glory lies not in never having fallen, but in rising when we fall.' The club is affiliated to the Herefordshire County Football Association.

Currently we play in the Southern League South and West, in the eighth tier of the English football league system. We entered the football pyramid before the 2015–16 season, and won the Midland Football League Premier Division in our first season and the Southern League South & West in our second season. Our focus needs to be on the game, therefore back office administration and financial stability is paramount. We needed a solution that could support us so we didn't have to worry about anything but winning.

Manual tasks

Previous to our partnership with Advanced, we had no seating plan for the stadium. Moreover, we would manually count out ticket stumps to determine ticket sales. We have a dedicated volunteer workforce who would previously have had to deal with a large amount of cash sales, but the new system has seen a big increase in card transactions and online sales, meaning we don't

have the security issues of moving large sums of cash around the stadium on a match day.

Overcoming market issues

For us, our largest market problem was dealing with large crowds. At Hereford, our average crowd size is around 2,800. Ticketing management for such a large crowd is very time-consuming and frustrating when done manually.

Although for some clubs ticketing is not a priority (with some having no ticketing system at all), for us this process was quickly becoming unpractical and unsustainable. Finding an affordable solution with a quick ROI but with high functionality became an immediate priority for us. We needed a solution that would provide seating plans, batch prints and provide 24/7 online sales to reduce the burden on back office staff.

Decision-making

When considering who our provider would be, we knew we needed a solution with a strong financial return on investment. Additionally, we knew whichever system we used had to have the ability to significantly reduce time spent on administrative tasks, enabling us to improve the online experience for fans without diminishing contact with the club.

After a careful tendering process, we chose to partner with Advanced for their Cloud ticketing solution. For us, we found Advanced to be the most cost effective solution that still provided the critical elements we were looking for. The



Client >

Hereford FC

Sector >

Ticketing

Project >

Implementing a Cloud solution to save time and improve efficiency

Hereford FC



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Jamie Griffiths >
Administration Officer >
Hereford FC

solution has key features such as seating plan functionality and a high ROI that frees up our workforce; which is invaluable – especially on match days.

Jamie Griffiths, our Administration Officer at Hereford says, *"The Advanced system allows us to prepare the match day tickets in a fraction of the time that our previous system took. This saves countless hours counting out tickets by hand, allowing us to batch print large amounts of tickets at the press of a button. This means our limited match day staff can spend time on other duties."*

Constant access

Advanced's solution results in fans having 24/7 access to tickets, providing them with the flexibility and choice of when to interact with us. Our physical ticket office is open 10-4, Wednesday & Friday so the availability of ticketing now gives fans ultimate access – whenever they want to buy, they can.

Jamie continues, *"The new system is also much quicker for our ticket sellers to physically sell the tickets, and allows us to quickly check on the latest sales."*

The flexibility of the solution, for example custom seating plans and a branded integrated site, are some great assets. This functionality has improved the service we provide our fans, which is our main goal.

Support system

Advanced's support throughout the implementation and since have been first class. The implementation had an extremely fast turnaround. It took about a week from the signed agreement to seeing the first version of the site. We have a dedicated account manager to provide us with support should we need it and regular communication ensuring we maximise our investment.

Benefits to us

In essence, the solution has been a workforce multiplier for us. Our staff aren't caught up in back office tasks so they're able to focus on other business priorities. Online ticketing keeps cash handling to a minimum, thereby reducing pressure on volunteers and the risk involved in handling cash payments. Online uptake has significantly improved since implementing the system.

Improving happiness

Advanced's solution has allowed fans to select their own seats. Previously this caused issues that would require steward intervention. Now everyone has a guaranteed seat, making them happier and reducing stress for the volunteer staff.

The technology allows operators to access specific ticket types for discounted tickets that are not available online. Moreover, it allows them to address fan's specific requirements to ensure that they have trouble-free attendance on match day and the club can address their specific needs.

Business enablement

Advanced's solution has allowed us to print reports that autonomously count ticket sales, saving valuable time. The clean and bespoke URL, partnered with mobile optimisation allows for greater sales and fan engagement through social media channels by adding links to tweets and posts to direct supporters to the games – vastly improving the fan journey.

The system can also be used for off-season events to help bolster income when the football season is over.

The offering of the solution means that we can mutually partner with local businesses, enabled by the bespoke design options for both branding and sponsorship, allowing a greater commercial utilisation and online presence.

Hereford FC

Added value

Thanks to this technology, we now are proud to say we have increased fan and volunteer satisfaction, leading to higher match day attendance (meaning more sales) and improved community cohesion. Additionally, we now spend less time reconciling and printing and fans have more flexibility and choice in buying tickets.

Having a dedicated account manager means should any issues arise, they are dealt with at pace and with professionalism. Jamie explains, It is extremely useful to have a dedicated account manager to hand who can either answer any questions quickly, or signpost us to the correct point of contact. This means that if something does go wrong, our account manager is on hand to keep us informed on progress and resolve the situation. There is also a great benefit of being able to have face-to-face meetings to discuss progress and plans for Hereford, rather than talking to a different contact each time over the phone or via email.

The time we have gained back from manual tasks has meant that the small backroom team can focus their time on more crucial club issues. Since our partnership with Advanced begun, we have saved a great deal through ticket stock rather than using expensive ticket booklets.

Moving forward

In the near future, we will be looking at the possibility of having barcoded entry to reduce ticket printing costs further and give supporters greater choice on how they purchase tickets.

Our aim is to try and get back into a position where the club can challenge for a return to the Football League. To do that we need to continue to try and build our supporter base. As we continue to develop and grow as a club, we are hoping for an increase in popularity for our off-season, summer events – turning our venue into a year round success.

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Administration Officer >
Hereford FC

More information

w oneadvanced.com
t +44(0) 8451 605 555
e hello@oneadvanced.com

Ditton Park, Riding Court Road, Datchet, SL3 9LL

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