

Southwest Texas Popular Culture Association

Event Organizer Adds Acteva – Increases Attendance, Reduces Workload

CHALLENGE

Eliminating manual processes and outdated technology

SOLUTION

Implementing new technology; multiple payment options

RESULTS

Acteva helps increase conference attendance; provides “ideal solution”

Background

Each year, The Southwest Texas Popular Culture Association, a regional chapter of the American Popular Culture Association, holds a conference to highlight the study of popular and American culture. Although there are numerous regional chapters, the Southwest Texas regional chapter consistently draws some of the larger crowds. “We’re basically an organization that celebrates American popular culture and this is our showcase event,” says Dr. Ken Dvorak, the primary organizer for the conference. “We’re now approaching our 30th year and we’re continuing to grow.”

Business Challenge

Eliminating manual processes and outdated technology

Before coming on board as the organizer, registration and payments were handled manually at SWTX-PCA, resulting in year-round responsibilities for a team of three organizers. “It was absolutely a year-long process,” says Dvorak. “Everything was done the old fashioned way – mailing checks, stuffing envelopes and making phone calls.” As a result, once the conference was over, volunteer organizers immediately started planning for the next one.

Dvorak wanted to provide an easier, comprehensive solution for attendees while also reducing his own workload. “When I assumed the role of primary organizer, I wanted to take advantage of the new technology that was available to make my job easier,” he says. “I started looking around to see what was available in the marketplace and was hoping the technology would allow one person to do the job alone.”

Acteva Solution

Implementing new technology; multiple payment options

After looking at other online registration solutions, Dvorak attended one of Acteva’s daily Webinars and was immediately sold on the value of Acteva. “It was apparent right away that Acteva had the professional, easy-to-use solution I was looking for.” The ability to provide multiple payment options to their attendees – by credit card, check or, most importantly, by purchase order, way a primary selling point. Initially, though, the main selling point was the ability to reduce his overall workload. “Immediately after choosing Acteva, my role as organizer became 10 times easier. I could focus on my other responsibilities and that’s the true value of Acteva for me,” says Dvorak.

Acteva provided Dvorak with a self-service solution to centralize his registration and payment data so he could monitor – in real time - who was registering for the conference. “The data is right where I need it to be and it’s constantly updated,” says Dvorak. “We even run in-depth reports to track where attendees are coming from and how they chose to pay. It’s exactly what I needed.” Dvoark hopes to add more options in the coming year, such as Post-Event Surveys, to get detailed insight into attendee preferences and needs for future conferences.

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Ken Dvorak

Event Organizer,
Southwest Texas Popular
Culture Association



In December, 2006, Acteva released a new, improved user interface that delivers even greater ease of use and a more streamlined system. As pleased as Dvorak already was with Acteva, he found the new user interface to be yet another bonus of using the solution. "It's much simpler to maneuver through the system and locate whatever information you need right away," he says. "And anyone can use Acteva. There's such a short learning curve when you're getting started that you can go from A to Z in 20 or 30 minutes."

Results

Acteva helps increase conference attendance; provides "ideal solution"

While it's difficult to attribute the Association's rapid growth in attendance solely to Acteva, Dvorak certainly thinks it was a contributing factor. "We've always been growing but in the past three years, we've doubled our conference attendance," he says. "Acteva makes it simple for attendees to register and pay – it's in direct contrast to our previous system and I'm sure it's helped our conference grow."

In the coming years, Dvorak hopes to add more Acteva features to promote and market his event and attract more attendees in the region. "I'm very happy and I know our attendees are pleased with the options they have. In particular, being able to pay via Purchase Order is key. We work with a lot of educational institutions who prefer to pay by this method and they can receive instant receipts for tracking purposes – it's all been great."

Dvorak sums up his experience by praising the options and flexibility of the Acteva solution. "For me, Acteva takes the 'complex' out of planning and promoting an annual conference. Creating an online registration page takes very little time and selecting from a wide array of behind the scenes support services allows event organizers to sit back and manage their event - instead of the event managing the organizers!"

Experience that counts

Acteva is the trusted leader in online event registration, ticketing and payment management services. Since 1998, over 12,500 customers have used Acteva to manage more than 215,000 events and process more than 3.4 million registrations. Acteva's customers include Bausch & Lomb, Pfizer, SAP, Girl Scouts of America, Whole Foods, Craigslist Foundation, Lending Tree, and thousands of small to large-sized businesses and organizations.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Location: Houston, Texas

Primary Event: Annual Spring Meeting

Industry: Association

Products Used: Acteva Plus

Attendee Focus: Students, Event Alumni

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