

Case Study: University of Minnesota Athletics

Gophers leverage AudienceView technology to create first ever integrated shopping experience in college athletics

The Client

The University of Minnesota Athletics Department, a NCAA Division I affiliate and proud member of the Big Ten Conference and the Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA), is one of the nation's premier intercollegiate sports programs. Located in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota Athletics sponsors more than 700 student-athletes competing in 25 sports and is a consistent top-25 finisher in the annual Learfield Directors' Cup standings. Minnesota Athletics also boasts a proud academic tradition and has produced more than 100 Academic All-Americans.



The Partnership

Minnesota Athletics has been an AudienceView client since 2006 and signed a five-year agreement at the end of 2010 to extend the partnership. Over the course of the last year, the partnership has been expanded through strategic collaboration to further push the envelope in college athletics. One strategic initiative between AudienceView and Minnesota Athletics has been the launch of two highly successful websites – MyGopherSports.com and GoldenGopherFund.com – which have dramatically improved the fan experience and driven exponential revenue for the Athletics Department.

Minnesota has chosen to segment their fan offerings into multiple brands designed to create effective and targeted experiences for all types of customers – donors, season ticket holders, single game buyers and even fans of visiting teams.

The user experience is also improved because fans can interact on either website using a single login. In addition to the simplicity of a single login, fans and donors can access all of their personal information and a history of their transactions when logged into their online account.

MyGopherSports.com

The first of its kind, MyGopherSports was launched at the end of 2010 by Minnesota Athletics to create an online portal that was dedicated to anything and everything related to attending a Golden Gophers game or event – from event discovery to ticket purchase to parking information. In less than a year, the website has eclipsed four million pageviews and has received tremendous feedback from season ticket holders, donors and fans since it was launched.

GoldenGopherFund.com

Emerging from the success of the MyGopherSports brand, GoldenGopherFund.com was launched in April 2011 to inform, educate and inspire donors and fans to support Gopher Athletics by contributing to the Golden Gopher Fund. GoldenGopherFund.com allows donors to access their giving history, use interactive benefits charts and learn about the stories of student-athletes and fellow donors in one place.

When presented with the option of selling merchandise alongside tickets, memberships, gift cards and donations – compared to a completely separate fan experience – the choice was easy. MyGopherSports and Goldy's Locker Room joining forces has been great for our fans and our fan relations efforts.

Jason LaFrenz
Associate Athletics Director at the
University of Minnesota

The Situation

In an effort to further engage all Gopher fans, Minnesota was looking to leverage the concept of one-stop shopping for anyone looking to make a purchase with Minnesota Athletics. Never before has anyone in college athletics chosen to integrate their entire online store with the ticket purchase experience. In the early stages, it was abundantly clear that AudienceView was the only solution in the marketplace that could make this a reality. AudienceView was eager to help Minnesota break new ground in college athletics.

The Decision

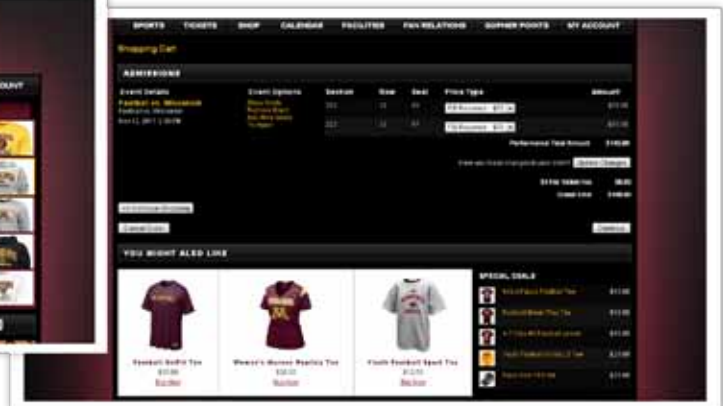
Minnesota Athletics decided to leverage its existing relationships with AudienceView and Gold Country, Inc. / Signature Concepts to integrate the shopping experience for tickets, merchandise and donations into a single fan experience.

When approached with the idea, the key vendors – AudienceView as the software partner and Gold Country for merchandise – jumped at the opportunity to collaborate on the project. All three parties involved quickly understood that the one-stop shopping experience would result in new opportunities to drive exponential revenue through up-selling and cross-selling tickets, donations and merchandise when the consumer has already committed to making a purchase. The decision to migrate Goldy's Locker Room onto MyGopherSports to create the first ever one-stop shopping experience in college athletics was unanimous.

Moving Goldy's Locker Room to the Audience-View platform has been a great experience for us and has been an instant success. The first few months have been tremendously successful for all parties involved because it has provided us with the opportunity to put merchandise offers in front of fans who are buying tickets or making donations – activities in which their emotional connection with the Gophers is very high.”

Ron Leafblad

CEO at Gold Country, Inc. / Signature Concepts



All three organizations directly benefit from the benefit from the one-stop shopping experience

- » Minnesota Athletics now offers a truly integrated shopping experience to better serve Gopher fans as well as collect and analyze even more data within the AudienceView CRM solution.
- » Gold Country has strengthened their marketing capabilities on a website that sees an average of 11,000 page views per day.
- » AudienceView demonstrates to the college athletics marketplace that their solution can serve as a single transaction engine for all fan interaction, and that a one-stop shopping experience results in exponential revenue growth.

The Results

In the first month of offering fans the ability to purchase merchandise in the same transaction as buying a ticket or making a donation, merchandise revenue increased by 124% and the average order size increased by 233% (when compared to the same period in 2010).

Beyond the large increase in merchandise sales, the ability to consolidate multiple products into one transaction enhanced the customer experience because it allowed fans to use a single account to make and track purchases. Fans no longer have to use multiple logins on different sites to support the Gophers through donating or the purchase of tickets and merchandise.



124% Increase in Merchandise Revenue*

233% Increase in Average Order Size*

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*In first month as compared to the same period in 2010

In addition, Minnesota has utilized AudienceView recommendations to upsell merchandise based on targeted customer behavior. Scores of fans have acted on these recommendations by adding more to their shopping cart and, therefore, spending more money with the Gophers.

About AudienceView Ticketing

AudienceView provides a fully-integrated, web-based ticketing, CRM and fundraising solution to more than 140 sports, arts, entertainment and non-traditional ticketing organizations worldwide. Supporting both in-house and hosted ticketing models, AudienceView's white-label solution offers the ability to create unlimited online brands, control venue and event data, access real-time business data and interact directly with your customers. AudienceView's leading-edge solution opens the door to superior venue management, an enhanced customer experience and, ultimately, increased revenue.



get more from your tickets

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