

Rockville Football



Rockville Football Exchanges Paper Forms and Checks for User-Friendly Online Registration System

Background

For 43 years, the Rockville Football League (RFL) has been providing a safe and wholesome opportunity for youths ages 5-14 to learn and compete in football and cheerleading. The League is an independent 501(c)3, not-for-profit organization that operates in partnership with the City of Rockville, Maryland. Under the leadership of a volunteer Board of Directors, the League is funded through collection of playing fees, snack bar profits, sponsorships and donations, and offers scholarship programs for youth that meet the City and County assistance requirements.

Challenge

With over 1,300 participants to register each season, Eric Heckman, President of RFL, admits that the registration process used to be "a mess." Coaches were responsible for collecting paper forms and checks from new and returning players, which often led to over-populated teams and late payments from parents. **Ten days before the season started, all of the paper forms and checks were turned over to the Board for processing and roster creation.**

The League implemented its first online system five years ago. "The system was basic, but it worked. Then the provider went out of business." From there, the League offered basic online registration through Active.com [RegCenter], but still offered walk-in registrations. "Active's basic online registration worked fine for us, but we really wanted a system that provided reporting functionality."

Solution

Eric was already familiar with online registration provider Active Network, Sports, as RFL had been using Active's eteamz.com application for its Website. "When I looked into online registration possibilities, I did look at other options, but quite honestly, Active was most responsive to my request, the price was very competitive, the online registration tool tied in to our existing Website, and we already had a great relationship established with the Active team."





Success Strategies

To promote the new online registration system to its hundreds of families in a short time period, RFL purchased local newspaper advertisements and disseminated flyers through the local schools and directly to residents. However, Heckman notes that it was primarily word-of-mouth that the league relied on. "We provided rosters to coaches and held them responsible for calling new and former athletes. Even pulling those rosters used to be a huge undertaking. Now with Active's Thriva, pulling the rosters out of the database is fast and simple."

Results

In its **first year offering online registration through Active.com, 50% of RFL participants registered online.** Following the switch to the **Thriva registration solution, 75% of participants registered online.** Now in its **third year using Thriva, 100% of RFL registrations are processed online.**

"We have yet to have a single complaint about the online registration system. For us, the selling point is even more than the registration functionality itself; it's the ability to pull reports, send e-mail blasts, and give coaches permission to view rosters online. We're so pleased with the sophistication, convenience, reporting and accuracy of the whole package."

Rockville Football's Advice for Leagues Implementing Online Registration:

Promotion: Word-of-mouth works best in youth sports to get the word out to families about online registration.

Fees: Pass on the transaction fees for the online registration and payment processing. Our parents know they're getting charged a few extra dollars to register online, but we receive absolutely no complaints. The convenience is worth it to everyone.