



ONLINE REGISTRATION HELPS SMOOTH OUT THE WATERS FOR SAMMAMISH ROWING ASSOCIATION.

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BACKGROUND

Based in Redmond, Washington, is home to one of the largest rowing organizations in the Pacific Northwest. The only rowing program on Seattle’s Eastside, this nonprofit 501(c)(3) serves a wide range of community members from youths to adults. SRA has some 200 teens aged 13 to 18, and 100 master or adult rowers who train on beautiful Lake Sammamish and compete in local, regional and national regattas. SRA’s multifaceted program boasts more than 2,000 registrations a year. SRA’s mission is to spark and nurture a passion for the sport of rowing in people of all ages.

In the fall of 2010, Hanna Floss took on the mantle of registrar for the Sammamish Rowing Association. The volunteer position came after Hanna had served on the group’s board of directors for many years. She saw a need for change in the organization’s back-office functions; with that came a move to online registration with ACTIVE Network. We spoke recently with Hanna to find out how the change went and what things are like now.

INTERVIEW WITH HANNA FLOSS, REGISTRAR, SAMMAMISH ROWING ASSOCIATION

Q: HOW WERE YOU HANDLING REGISTRATIONS PRIOR TO COMING ON BOARD WITH ACTIVE NETWORK?

A: I had felt for some time that the registration process wasn’t as efficient and smooth as it could be. So when I completed my term with the board and decided to volunteer in the office, my goal was to set up a “real” registration system. I researched our options, and ACTIVE Network seemed like the perfect fit. We’d done online payments before, but they were a nightmare of Excel spreadsheets. To manage membership and keep track of all the details meant there were sure to be errors, lots of information to cut-and-paste, etc. ACTIVE Network gave us a solid database to use when automating all of these components. We don’t have a large office staff or elaborate computer system, and now with ACTIVE we don’t need to!

WHAT'S YOUR ACTIVE?

Q: WHAT FEATURES STAND OUT FOR YOU?

A: The wait-list feature is a great tool for our classes. Registrants are kept in chronological order. When a slot opens up, they are automatically put on the roster. And they aren't charged registration fees until they are actually dropped into the program. It's perfect. We just did our second implementation and it's running well. ACTIVE Network's customer support is so good that even when you find a glitch, you can get immediate help. If I had to list three features that make working with ACTIVE Network top tier, I'd say it's the online payments, email communication, and account database/history. These are crucial.

Q: HOW DID MAKING THE SWITCH TO ONLINE REGISTRATION WORK FOR OTHERS?

A: People have picked up on the online process quite well. There are still a few for whom I do the actual inputting, but mostly people love being able to pay by credit card and do the electronic "paperwork" themselves. The convenience definitely offsets the small processing fees. We have spring/summer/fall seasons. We even have small winter classes. But it's not just classes. We do team racing, regattas, so we have a lot of registration needs. ACTIVE Network worked with us to address our various requirements. It's fabulous: no separate programs, just customized separate financial options. We even have an option under overall registration for regattas, so we didn't have to set up an entirely new or different component for those.



Q: DOES HAVING AN AUTOMATED DATABASE SYSTEM SAVE YOU TIME?

A: We can collect fees more easily and in a much timelier manner now. With a small office staff, collections had been challenging for us. Working with ACTIVE Network has freed time for other organizational needs. Plus the direct deposit means less staff time at the bank. We've actually adjusted class fees to absorb some of the transaction cost and implemented a \$15 annual registration fee, which also offsets costs. Nobody has complained about it. I think they just enjoy how easy it is.

Q: WOULD YOU RECOMMEND ACTIVE NETWORK TO OTHERS?

A: Working with ACTIVE Network has been a game changer, so we'd absolutely recommend them. In fact we have done so with a new club that was looking into online registration. Our club does things a bit differently from the overall rowing community, so it's nice to have a company that works with us to do it our way.

GET STARTED

Learn more about ACTIVE Sports.



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