



## Case Study: San Jose State University

# Campus Recreation Department Reduces Time Spent on Administrative Tasks By 75% and Saves Over \$5,000 Annually Using Web-based, Hosted Software

### Background

Located in California's beautiful Bay Area, San Jose State University is a metropolitan institution which offers more than 134 bachelor's and master's degrees to 29,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Nearly 4400 of those students are active members of San Jose State University's Associated Students Campus Recreation (ASCR) programs, which include 14 recreational sports, as well as outdoor adventures, fitness memberships and fitness passes. ASCR provides students, faculty, and staff with opportunities to stay healthy, have fun, and enhance their education and development experiences through recreational activities.

Facing budget challenges and limited resources, ASCR took a proactive approach to finding new ways to do more with less and became an early adopter of web-based, hosted technology in a campus recreation environment. They implemented ActiveNet, a web-based campus recreation software solution hosted by Active Network, and they have seen significant improvements and savings in the areas of activity registration, intramural scheduling and payment processing.

### Challenge

Prior to investing in campus recreation software, ASCR relied on a free team scheduling product and a FileMaker database to register students and organize recreational activities. There was no system in place for equipment rental, payment could only be made in person and all data had to be inputted manually. The process resulted in piles of paperwork and valuable staff time spent on tedious data entry. Without the ability to reconcile customer data, information was disorganized and riddled with duplicate entries. "We only had one person supporting the application on the back end," explains Randy Saffold, Interim Associate Executive Director and Campus Recreation Manager. "It was completely inefficient and we could not offer students all of the services we wanted to."

ASCR's goal was to move all registration and scheduling on to one web-based platform. Students could sign up and pay for recreational activities 24/7 through a virtual open door. Information and payments would be automatically collected and stored in a centralized database, making it easier to schedule recreational leagues and plan for facility usage.

### Overview

**Customer:** San Jose State University Associated Students Campus Recreation

**Solution:** ActiveNet

**URL:** <http://as.sjsu.edu/ascr/>

#### Key Benefits Gained

- ▶ **Significant Time and Money Savings.** ASCR saves approximately \$5,000 on data entry costs annually and up to a 75% time savings when processing activity registrations.
- ▶ **Increased Convenience for Students.** About 50% of ASCR's registrations are done online, intramural teams can organize schedules online, and check-in to the fitness center is now faster.
- ▶ **Greater Visibility.** Randy and his staff can pull real-time reports on any data that is in the system, anytime and anywhere they are located.
- ▶ **Excellent Customer Support.** "Active will not only work with you to address your problems, but will solve them in later iterations of software releases."

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- Randy Saffold, Interim Associate Executive Director and Campus Recreation Manager, ASCR

### Solution

After researching campus recreation software vendors, ASCR chose to partner with industry-leader Active Network and become one of the first universities to implement a web-based, hosted solution in campus recreation. ASCR selected Active's modular software solution, ActiveNet, specifically the Intramural Scheduling, Facility Reservations and Online Registration modules. The solutions were built to process online registrations and payments, simplify league scheduling, organize facility and equipment rental, and accommodate pre-sale items like recreational passes.

“We had zero trepidation about using a hosted solution,” notes Randy. “We absolutely did not want to handle cash—it is not worth the liability or the extra work. Plus, we are dealing with students of the new millennia. They not only want everything from fitness passes to league sign ups available electronically, but want to be able to pay for it without coming into the office.” ASCR only stores the data that students submit themselves, which is completely separate from the university's main database. This means that the campus recreational database is 100% opt in and has a high engagement rate from the students. All data is protected behind Active's multiple layers of security and firewalls, ensuring the information stays safely in the hands of Randy and his team.

### Implementation

ASCR opted to take part in Active's virtual consulting sessions. Randy and Rob Patchett, Assistant Director of Intramural Sports & Open Recreation, completed five straight days of intense, back-end training prior to the start of a new semester. “We loved our trainer, she was great,” notes Randy. “There was a lot of information to absorb, but the training was extremely easy and smooth.” Two weeks later when the students returned, Randy and Rob were on-hand to oversee front-end training with the cashiers. The cashiers had one week to practice mock transactions and then the system went live. “It took us a few days to knock off the cobwebs but it went well. We had the process down in no time.”

### Results

With Active's software up and running for the Campus Recreation department, ASCR immediately saw a drastic reduction in time spent on manual processes. Randy estimates that they save approximately \$5,000 on data entry costs annually and up to a 75% time savings when processing activity registrations specifically. What once took weeks now only takes a few hours. ASCR's staff also now has the ability to reconcile and track participation within the system, giving them visibility into who's doing what and where. “As a director, I have complete access and control, anywhere at anytime,” Randy explains. “I can pull real-time reports on financial, participants, and any data that is in the system.”

Randy and his team also appreciate the flexibility and mobility of the system. They can set up shop in the university plaza and instantly sell a fitness package, recruit members for leagues or simply market their department. When it's that easy for students to make a spontaneous decision, revenue and participation will organically increase.

The response from students has been very positive as well—ASCR currently has about a 50% online conversion rate for all of their activities. Students were happy to avoid bouncing back and forth between different offices on campus to submit and verify payments and registrations. Intramural teams only had to attend Captain's meetings instead of being required to show up in person to organize the teams and schedules. Check-in for the fitness center was quicker with only a Student ID needed for verification. Overall, the campus recreation software has saved the students nearly as much time as the staff.

An added benefit for ASCR has been Active's experienced, top-notch customer service. As part of Active's offerings to their clients, ASCR annually submits a list of software gaps or fixes that are needed to improve the products. Randy reports that he was pleased to see these items prioritized in succeeding product iterations. “Active will not only work with you to address your problems, but will solve them in later iterations of software releases.”

As an early adopter, ASCR broke new ground and has since set a standard for other universities looking to become more efficient and save money through automation of registration and league management. Plus, they are offering students a new, online option that is more convenient and sets the campus apart from its peers.