



Case Study: Rolling Meadows

Affordability and Convenient Citizen Options Make The Active Network's Web-Based, Hosted Software a Top Pick for Rolling Meadows Park District

Background

The Rolling Meadows Park District lies in the northeast corner of Illinois. The Park District offers recreational programs for tots, seniors, and everyone in between at its 12 parks and eight recreational facilities. Managed by a staff of approximately 250 full and part-time people each season, it is the mission of the Park District to maximize the recreational leisure opportunities of its residents, thereby enhancing their quality of life. The Park District's desired result is to deliver superior quality programs, facilities and parks, accommodating the assessed leisure needs of all residents.

Challenge

Adhering to its mission of providing desired and necessary accommodations, the Rolling Meadows Park District Board determined that the time had come to offer online registration services to its more than 55,000 residents. In the past, residents filled out paper registration forms and then mailed, faxed or dropped off the forms at their local recreation center. Once received, Park District staff members entered the information into a software program and the resident was finally registered. Recognizing a need to eliminate redundancy and improve conveniences for its residents, the Park District began its search for software that enabled online registration access.

Solution

Greg Gannon, the Superintendent of Finance and Human Resources for the Rolling Meadows Park District, teamed up with the Park District's Executive Director and they took a survey of park districts in Illinois to determine what software programs were most utilized. After collecting referrals for several software providers, they evaluated each software package to see if the software met their needs and budget. The selection was narrowed down to four software providers and each was invited to present a software demonstration. In the end, the Rolling Meadows Park District selected The Active Network's ActiveNet software for its solid reputation with other park districts, data storage and security capabilities, user-friendliness and affordability.

"Other software providers would have required us to buy another server," explained Gannon. "With ActiveNet, we knew there would be no extra equipment to buy and we wouldn't have to invest in IT consulting time. From the cost-perspective, ActiveNet was, by far, the best solution."

Customer at a Glance

Customer: Rolling Meadows Park District

Solution: Online Activity Registration, Facility Reservation, Membership Management

URL: www.rmparks.org

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Benefits of ActiveNet:

1. Quick and easy installation and training
2. No extra equipment or IT consulting investments required
3. Easy to use and maintain
4. 24/7 online registration access
5. Minimal upfront implementation costs
6. Enhanced customer services and conveniences
7. Improved automation and operational efficiencies
8. Secure data transactions and storage
9. Real-time information access
10. A proven company with a solid reputation

Within two months, Park District staff members were trained and ready to go live with the new software and online registration service.

Implementation

The Rolling Meadows Park District launched online registration in August 2006. To get the word out to residents, the Park District added a link to its Web site, rmparks.org, and included information in its seasonal program catalog mailed to every resident of Rolling Meadows. More than 4,000 residents took advantage of the online option right away.

To keep the momentum moving forward for the spring season, the Park District hung banners at each of the facilities and, once again, included information in its seasonal program catalog with a computer symbol next to each program reminding participants to register online.

Results

Today, approximately 7,500 residents take advantage of the online option, saving time for both participants and staff members.

"Our residents are no longer burdened with driving to our recreation centers and waiting in line to register for an activity," said Gannon. "They now have the ability to register when and where it's most convenient for them on a system that is very easy to use."

As for the future, the Park District is considering ActiveNet to offer facility reservations online, as well as using its pass system for entrance into community centers and the ice arena.

"Offering online registration is a no-brainer for a customer-focused industry such as parks and recreation," said Gannon. "Online registration benefits citizens directly and they are the most important group to keep happy. At the end of the day, we have thousands of residents that are able to quickly register for an activity and then move on to do something else with their time. A software program that enables us to deliver that level of service and convenience to our community is a pretty powerful tool."