



Case Study: Kansas City Zoo

Integrating Doubleknot's online sales with existing systems simplifies administration, increases donations and delivers more options for visitors

About the Kansas City Zoo

Founded in 1909, the Kansas City Zoo is an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and home to approximately 1,700 animals. The zoo's mission includes instilling a respect for nature by entertaining and educating visitors. The zoo is guided by a master plan based on six strategies, including becoming ultra-family friendly and enhancing real connections between guests, animals and staff through increased keeper interaction and education programming.

Challenge: Flexible Online Sales that Integrate with Existing Systems

The Kansas City Zoo sought to offer online sales and registration for their full slate of ticketing options, memberships, special events, education programs, fundraising campaigns, facility rentals and more. In addition to supporting the different information-gathering needs of every department, the solution needed to integrate with their existing ticketing platform (Gateway's Galaxy™) and donor management software (Blackbaud's The Raiser's Edge®).

The zoo's first foray into online sales relied on Gateway's eGalaxy™ Web Store, which presented several challenges. Because the solution wasn't web-based, it was difficult to change information, options and pricing, and updates weren't immediately reflected online. And, the system simply wasn't flexible enough to meet all of the zoo's needs—for example, it didn't support online reservations, so booking any guided tour, birthday party, field trip or keeper-for-a-day experience required calling a reservationist during business hours. To meet more of their administrative needs, the zoo wanted to supplement Gateway's ticketing platform with a flexible online sales system that would share information with the Raiser's Edge.

The Solution: Doubleknot + Doubleknot Connect for Gateway and Raiser's Edge

After recommendations from industry colleagues, the Kansas City Zoo selected Doubleknot to extend their online capabilities. By adding Doubleknot Connect for Raiser's Edge and Doubleknot Connect for Gateway, the zoo was able to integrate Doubleknot's flexible online features with their existing ticketing and membership management platforms. As a result, the zoo can:

- Sell Gateway tickets online that leverage Doubleknot's features including discounts and up-sell opportunities. Gateway tickets issued through Doubleknot use Gateway ID numbers and capacity management features, and can be scanned at the gate with Gateway scanners.
- Sell memberships with Gateway ID numbers and barcodes that can immediately be scanned at the gate and are automatically recorded in The Raiser's Edge.
- Integrate all online purchases into a single transaction. Customers can purchase admission tickets, register for events and programs and buy merchandise in a single transaction with a single receipt, and receive all the discounts that they're entitled to including member discounts and promotions.

Overall, the zoo reports satisfaction and success with Doubleknot's solutions. According to Josh Hollingsworth, Membership & Marketing Manager, "Joe [Garappolo] and the team have been helpful with listening to our concerns, thinking through the processes and coming up with a system that really works for us."

Increased Online Donations and Memberships

According to Hollingsworth, nearly 30 percent of memberships in 2015 were purchased or renewed online in Doubleknot. He also reports a significant increase in online donations, especially through a donation request that's displayed during every membership purchase. He estimates that the integrated donation request has yielded in more than \$100,000 in additional donations.

Other online donation programs include a Donate Now button on every page for donations to the annual fund, several options to purchase commemorative plaques on donor walls throughout the park, and Adopt a Wild Child, the zoo's animal adoption program. "We couldn't support online animal adoptions before," says Hollingsworth. "We appreciate being able to set different kinds of recognition for different donation levels for the same animal."



Flexibility for Every Department

One of Doubleknot's benefits for the Kansas City Zoo is the ability to support the different registration and reservations needs of different departments. Says Hollingsworth, "Our departments do a lot of customization, because each organization within the zoo is different, and they all have different sales processes and requirements. For example, our education programs aren't like our special events—registration can be more complicated because we need to make sure that documents like waivers and permission forms are completed, and sometimes we even need information about T-shirt sizes." Some of the features that departments rely on include:

- **A searchable online availability calendar** for all kinds of group reservations and birthday party options. In 2015, more than 2,400 reservations were managed in Doubleknot.
- **Capacity and waitlist management.** Administrators can set the maximum number of registrants per registration as well as the overall capacity for an event. In addition, events can have optional waitlists of any size. Waitlists can clear automatically as space becomes available, and administrators can override event capacity as well as waitlists.
- **Registrant ratios and requirements.** Administrators can set up different registrant types with different prices and age restrictions. For example, the zoo's popular Science Adventure Club requires at least one adult on every registration.
- **Custom forms** collect important information about each registrant or group, and can add costs for optional items. Forms can be assigned to individual registrants and registrant types or to the overall registration. Mandatory forms like emergency contacts, liability waivers and photo releases must be completed before submitting a registration or reservation, and conditional logic ensures that visitors only see the questions relevant for their registration.
- **Payment schedules** can be customized for any event, program or reservation and **automatic billing reminders** can be sent on a custom schedule for different events or reservations.
- Any purchase can be set to accept **online and offline payment options**, while **early registration discounts** and **late fees** encourage timely payments.
- **Comprehensive reporting** includes dozens of standard built-in reports, a custom report writer and an ad hoc query tool to create and save reports that contain exactly the information needed by any department.

"It's been a positive experience," says Hollingsworth. "The relationship has worked out well, and we look forward to becoming 'advanced' users. We would definitely recommend Doubleknot to other organizations."

Discounts and Promotions

The Kansas City Zoo uses Doubleknot's discounts feature to offer multiple discounts and promotions throughout the year. With Doubleknot, the zoo can discount any membership, registration or reservation based on different criteria; automatically apply member discounts; and create different discount codes attached to special promotions. Hollingsworth reports success integrating promo codes with outbound email and social marketing campaigns. "Doubleknot gives us a great way to do analytics on those promotions and see what the results are," says Hollingsworth.

Looking Toward the Future: Sales Station POS and Sales Station Mobile

With Doubleknot's recent release of Sales Station for POS and mobile sales, Hollingsworth anticipates implementing Doubleknot solution to support sales throughout the zoo as well as online. Says Hollingsworth, "We look forward to Sales Station POS and Sales Station Mobile so we can manage all of our online, front-gate and on-site sales in the same system. I appreciate that Doubleknot took the time to gather our input during the development process and make sure it meets our needs."

Learn More

To learn more about Doubleknot's solutions for zoos including event and program management; group reservations and party bookings; membership management; ticketing and admissions; online donations; and the Sales Station POS and mobile sales solution, contact us at (408) 971-9120 x203 or Sales@doubleknot.com.