



Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse Simplifies Booking Birthday Parties and Group Visits

Historic playspace improves customer service with online availability calendar and reservations

About the Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse

Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse, located in Philadelphia's East Fairmount Park, is situated on its original historic landscape—six and a half acres of open fields, wooded terrain and sloped hills—and is home to the century-old Ann Newman Giant Wooden Slide as well as other unique pieces of play equipment. Smith strives to be Philadelphia's foremost resource for play by providing opportunities for unstructured creative play for children 10 and younger.

The Challenge

With more than 800 children's birthday parties booked each year and as many as 18 parties in a single weekend during the summer, managing party reservations was a challenge for the Smith staff. Previously, Smith took party reservations over the telephone, which was an inefficient use of staff time and resources, especially during the summer busy season, when reservation requests often monopolized all available phone lines. And, without a real-time availability calendar, sometimes time slots were accidentally double-booked. Smith wanted to streamline the reservations process for customers and reduce the staff's administrative burden for managing bookings for birthday parties, field trips and group visits.

The Solution

Smith needed a real-time online availability calendar to clearly show customers the open dates and times for each party space. Dena Driscoll, Development and Communications Director, had additional requirements for the reservations solution: she sought a company with a proven track record; a clean, streamlined interface; seamless integration with Smith's existing web site; and a variety of online payment options for customers. At the end of the evaluation period, Smith chose Doubleknot. "Doubleknot met our needs for making reservations easy for customers, and for matching our existing web site," says Driscoll.

Implementation

According to Driscoll, implementation was easy. "We sent in the paperwork that describes our reservation process, and Doubleknot built it out. We had 30 people book birthday parties in the first week that we were online. And, Doubleknot was very receptive to our comments as we worked out the nuts and bolts of setting up online reservations for group visits."

Benefits

Smith's new online reservations system delivers a range of benefits to customers and staff:

- *Increased customer satisfaction.* Customers can make their reservations online 24/7, not just during business hours, and they can check availability for any party option on any date to choose the booking that best suits their needs.
- *Flexible payment options.* Because of Smith's popularity, birthday parties and group visits are often booked far in advance. With Doubleknot, Smith can take a deposit at the time of reservation and send automatic billing reminders when payment is due, freeing staff from the task of researching upcoming and outstanding payments and manually sending payment reminders. With support for credit cards, e-checks and PayPal, customers can choose the most convenient way to pay.
- *Improved business processes.* Doubleknot's real-time availability calendar eliminates double bookings and makes it easy for staff to view all upcoming parties and group visits at a glance. Customers must agree to the rental terms and conditions before completing the booking, so staff doesn't have to track down missing forms, and online payments minimize the amount of time spent on bookkeeping. As a result, Smith can worry less about administration and focus more on what really matters: delivering great experiences for children.

"I think Doubleknot is a great platform," says Driscoll. "I love that it works for both small and large organizations. As we grow, our solution will grow with us."

Learn More

To learn more about Doubleknot's integrated solutions, including membership management, ticketing, admissions, reservations and registration, contact us at (408) 971-9120 or Sales@doubleknot.com.