

# CUSTOMER PROFILE

## ONYX CUSTOMER PROFILE

The Seattle Mariners have experienced enormous growth in ticket and non-sporting event sales. But this growth has had a down side. Lack of integrated customer records was beginning to stretch the club's ability to provide the level of customer service it desired. After consulting with other major league ball clubs, the Mariners drafted Onyx as the star CRM player.



### THE SEATTLE MARINERS USE ONYX EMPLOYEE PORTAL AND ONYX CUSTOMER PORTAL TO:

- Automate customer service and support activities.
- Manage season-ticket holder, suite, and sponsorship sales.
- Target new and existing customers and sponsors.
- Perform market analysis and organize tailored marketing promotions to specific customer segments.
- Integrate ballpark operations into Onyx to provide 360-degree information for total customer satisfaction.



## ONYX HELPS BUILD FAN AND SPONSOR LOYALTY FOR THE SEATTLE MARINERS

### THE COMPANY

Established in 1977, the Mariners have six different business areas that deal with fans, customers and corporate sponsors (sales, marketing, service, support, community relations and event management). Early in the baseball franchise's history, many customer service and sales personnel knew season ticket holders, corporate sponsors and other key clients by name.

### THE CHALLENGE

Over time, the organization witnessed an enormous growth in its customer base, which subsequently required a more formalized means of tracking customers. All six departments that have direct customer contact developed individual customer database. The unintentional result was that key customer information lay scattered throughout the organization.

### THE SOLUTION

By implementing Onyx Customer Portal and Onyx Employee Portal, the Mariners have the potential to set the standard of customer service for all of Major League Baseball. Providing a gracious customer experience is an important means to help grow ticket sales in today's increasingly competitive sports entertainment market.

### WHY ONYX?

The team wanted a system that could be customized to the customer service and product sales needs of their organization – and which would also offer a future path that could keep pace with the organization's technology direction.

*"Onyx has more experience than any other customer relationship management vendor...in serving professional athletic franchises. Using Onyx, we can integrate our processes and provide a better overall experience to fans and customers whenever and however they choose to interact with us."*

Larry Witherspoon,  
Mariners Vice President of  
Technology Services

"We visited all of the major league teams that were using Onyx, and we could see that the software could meet our present needs and grow exactly as we need it to," says Frances Traisman, manager of customer communications and senior account executive.

One of the most important aspects of why the Mariners chose Onyx is that the franchise did not have to change its processes to map to Onyx. Onyx met them on their own playing field.

Explains IS Director Dave Curry, "From a technology perspective, there were three things that we really liked about Onyx. The first was that Onyx had a Web-based client. That's important to us. The second key factor was that Onyx already was working with Ticketmaster. We knew that the customization to support that interface already existed. Third, Onyx was using Microsoft on the backend of its application."

### IMPLEMENTATION AT TOP SPEED

Once the Mariners made the decision to move ahead with Onyx, they orchestrated a rapid implementation. "We made our decision very late

in the year,” explains Curry. “Onyx stepped in and did an excellent job getting everything done by the due date.”

The Mariners’ six-week implementation timeframe was aggressive. The easier facet of the project, recalls Curry, fell to Mariners’ IT staff, who already had familiarity with the Microsoft-based technologies they were implementing. According to Curry, Onyx had the more challenging side of the project, since “the consultants had to learn our routines, our workflow, design the scope, implement and customize the system.”

“We found the kind of system flexibility we were looking for.” Curry continues, “If you’re doing a lot of things, Onyx makes it easy for you to do them. The system has everything, backed by a great support staff that has taken customer service to the highest level.”

#### CUSTOMER SERVICE AT THE BALLPARK

Here are just a couple of the many ways the Mariners are using Onyx to provide a standard-setting customer experience: If a customer says their seat is broken, for example an incident record is created in Onyx and it’s assigned to operations, which makes the fix.

Another seamless link is how the operations team gets their information for the season-ticket-holder birthday announcements that flash on the big screen during each home game. Operations pulls the name and date information right out of Onyx and automatically programs the screens to flash “Happy Birthday” on the appropriate dates.

The Mariners may even move food and drink venues based on customer information collected by their Onyx system. Here’s how: When a fan joins Compass Club, the Mariners’ fan rewards club, he or she is issued

a magnetic card that stores customer data, including seat assignments. As a Compass Club member purchases food and drinks during the game the vendor swipes the member’s card. Basic information about the fan’s purchase is automatically sent to Onyx. The Mariners can then aggregate this information to assign or re-assign venue locations most convenient to the sections where the bulk of the purchasers are sitting.

#### MARKETING AND SALES IMPROVEMENTS

With consolidated data, promotions and mailing campaigns are more productive for the Seattle Mariners. Before, the Mariners were not able to successfully track the results of a direct mail campaign – marketing had no way of knowing which purchased lists netted the most responses. Onyx eliminates this problem.

On the customer service side, they have been able to work with full details on each customer’s particular history and situation. Customization on both the sales and service sides is critical to continuing relationships with patrons.

Says Traisman, “Our main goal with the Onyx system is customer retention, because it’s much easier to keep a current season ticket holder or a 15-game ticket holder than to go out and find a new one.

“This is a sport based on passion more than anything,” continues Traisman. “If the fans feel disconnected from us and if they don’t feel we care about them, they’re not going to stay fans, and that affects the bottom line.”

In fact, an initial assessment shows a potential \$10 million revenue increase each year thanks to additional season ticket revenue.

Seattle Mariners Vice President of Technology Services, Larry Witherspoon, agrees with Traisman’s opinion about the value Onyx brings to the club. “Onyx has more experience than any other customer relationship management vendor we looked at in serving professional athletic franchises with the technology we need to be streamlined, strategic and able to share information across the organization. That best practice experience is important in an industry with many of its own subtleties and nuances. Using Onyx, we can integrate our processes and provide a better overall experience to fans and customers whenever and however they choose to interact with us.”

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