



Testimonial



Grand Pacific
GROUP

Grand Pacific Group Charts Future Growth with Priava to Support Iconic Sydney Venues

Grand Pacific Group is one of Sydney's leading hospitality groups, specialising in contemporary and stylish venues located in historic buildings. The company currently operates The Tea Room QVB, Gunners Barracks, Sergeants' Mess and Dunbar House, all of which are known to be among Sydney's most impressive and iconic venues.

With a vision to create venues without compromise, all of Grand Pacific Group's properties combine stunning locations, distinctive interior concepts and impressive facilities together with restaurant quality menus and outstanding service.

"Every one of our venues has a story, a unique personality, and we see to it that they come to life the moment our customers arrive. Exquisitely beautiful on the outside and charming on the inside, the unique brand and personality of each location is paramount to our overall marketing," says Holly Orsman Smith, Director of Sales & Marketing at Grand Pacific Group.

A hallmark of the company's success is their focus on offering fine dining menus, matched with a high level of service and a generous staff ratio. All events have a ratio of one staff member for every 12 guests - this is what sets Grand Pacific Group venues aside from their competitors.



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“Offering a fine dining restaurant experience in an event environment is paramount to our success. We offer a very high ratio of service staff to guests and this ensures each guest’s experience is truly memorable,” says Orsman Smith.

Supporting this approach is a team of 15 passionate, dedicated and talented staff, all of whom work towards the same goal of delivering exceptional experiences for their guests.

Facilitating A Great Customer Experience

Five years ago, Grand Pacific Group installed Events Perfect to support the management of their venues and events bookings. The system replaced a manual spreadsheet and paper-based system and greatly improved the overall flow of information from the initial point of customer contact through to the event delivery and final invoice process. Staff could check venue availability and manage the incredible detail that goes into planning an event.

“We chose Events Perfect based on an industry recommendation and our own research. At the time, we needed to streamline our processes as we had just acquired the Sergeants’ Mess venue and our business was growing rapidly in terms of the numbers of events being confirmed and managed across the group.”

With a seamless deployment of Events Perfect, time and reporting benefits accrued and the potential for human error was also reduced owing to less manual data input. That said, recording client contact information and booking events in the system still required a cumbersome data entry process and users often had to duplicate content across various templates and applications.

Gathering data and providing operational reports to management also proved to be a time consuming exercise and this issue became more apparent as the company continued to grow. Grand Pacific Group now stages approximately 1,200 events annually, an increase of more than 600 events per year compared with five years ago. Orsman Smith says she receives more than 200 enquiries a week, 70 per cent of which come through the web.

As a result, the venue management team were frequently looking for ways to fine tune business processes in order to better manage venue occupancy, to effectively forecast sales and to produce reports that were relevant for their business with the aim of providing greater accountability to senior management.



We’ve been providing solutions in consultation with industry for over 15 years. When you choose Priava, you are giving your business solutions to problems that are tried and tested.



All our datacentres are ISO 27001 certified with PCI compliant technology infrastructure meeting the PCI Data DSS Level 1 standard. Our EU customers can rest assured Priava complies with the Data Protection Directive and is preparing for General Data Protection Regulation due for release in 2014.

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Transition to The Cloud

In 2012, Grand Pacific Group was informed that Events Perfect would be superseded by a new cloud-based venue and events management system, Priava.

“We knew change was coming but this news also came at a time as our business was growing,” says Orsman Smith.

Designed to add value and a rapid return on investment to venue owners and operators, Priava - a new purpose built enterprise venue and event management software solution - incorporates all the complexities involved with multi-venue availability, including event logistics, catering, equipment and resource requirements.

Offered in the cloud as a service, Priava enables venue managers to chart and plan future venue availability, review customer records and understand operational trends in real time. Venue managers can work on multiple events at the same time, quickly locate any event, contact or account record, manage calendars, and review confirmed events. The result is both a boost to the customer’s experience and increased efficiency from a venue management and operations perspective.

“For a while, we were very hesitant to move to Priava. Initially, we actually wondered if we really needed the solution and wanted to make the investment but all along we knew that we would have to make a change.

“As a result, we decided the optimal way forward would be to conduct some research to verify if moving to the cloud was in our interest and if there were any alternative solutions in the market that could potentially support the business moving forward,” says Orsman Smith.

Several issues faced Orsman Smith on her journey in reviewing the cloud-based platform.

“First up was the cost of deployment. I had to explain to management why Priava was a good platform for the company. At the same time, I was also facing resistance from our IT department who were advising us not to go to the cloud owing to perceived issues around potential data loss.

“However, I did my homework and reviewed several other vendors. We didn’t want to purchase old technology and found other products on offer were actually more expensive and more complex. By going into the cloud, there would be no requirement for investment in server technology and the costs associated with supporting these servers and the software

were also negated. Other competitors simply could not do this and Priava, overall, came across as a simple, flexible easy to use solution that can scale up and down in line with our business lifecycle.

“A key area of need that was addressed by Priava was the ability to customise set packages. This meant that we could package venue hire, food, beverage, and other saleable items into a group that has a total combined cost as well as a unit cost and sale price for each of the individual items that make up the



package. Another key finding from our research was that Priava was the only vendor that allowed us to multi-task by opening multiple tabs in our browser. My staff don’t just work on one thing at a time so this was a major point of difference.

“It must be said that we also knew the team at Priava and felt comfortable with their skills, their service, their reliability and their knowledge of our business and what we had to achieve. They are a true business partner. They had staff continuity with our team for



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many years and this was important to me as I was taking 15 staff with me on this journey. I needed a vendor who I felt comfortable working with,” says Orsman Smith.

Priava’s partnership with Oracle and Amazon was also important for Grand Pacific Group as it provided additional comfort in the on-going development, stability and availability of the overall product solution.

“Banks and telecommunications companies run on Oracle, and I took comfort that my business was going to benefit from the best technology in use in the industry,” says Orsman Smith.

Bright Skies Ahead

Following an extensive review period, and in order to sustain its business moving forward, Orsman Smith decided to deploy the new Priava cloud-based venue management system in mid 2014.

Once the decision had been made to transition to Priava, Orsman Smith decided to embrace the change in terms of establishing a concrete project management plan which included comprehensive staff training and an overhaul of its data records. More than 35,000 records were cleansed during the migration process and reports were both converted and transferred across to Priava.

As part of the transition to Priava, the venue management team participated in a week of training. This gave the entire team a strong

sense of confidence in Priava and, furthermore, meant that the management team were comfortable that the business would be able to operate as per usual.

With Priava now live across Grand Pacific Group sites, all venue and event booking information is centralised and easily accessible. The team can enter new opportunities, while crosschecking venue availability and, together with the pre-populated set packages, this has facilitated a faster quoting process.

“It was a involved journey, and it wasn’t without its challenges like having to make calls mid-migration that we hadn’t anticipated,” says Orsman Smith. “However, if we had moved to another product, it would have been even more disruptive to the business.



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“I am certain Priava will continue to deliver what Events Perfect has delivered and more. It is much more streamlined, faster and easier to use than Events Perfect. With every detail having to be documented in this business, Priava will now provide us with greater visibility into the business and we will be able to provide greater accountability to management. With Priava, a summary of all events and their associated financial details is available with the click of a mouse.

“In reality, Priava is the biggest part of our business and 90 per cent of our day is spent using the system. Planning for its deployment has already helped to drive cultural change in the way we operate. Our team will continue to be able to sell, coordinate, handle opportunities, manage contracts and provide end-to-end exemplary service. We will be able to sell ideas and service in every conversation,” says Orsman Smith.

Anticipated Benefits

- Reliable IT infrastructure - cloud-based system means data is secure at all times
- Improved reporting - accurate and real-time view of financials allows for strategic planning
- Centralised information – no duplication of data
- Ability to multi-task – switch between different screens and cross-check availability of venues
- Better response tracking - ability to determine what sources are generating new opportunities
- Flexible software - tailor venues and event types as required
- Enhanced customer service experience - faster quoting process
- Accessibility - system can be accessed anywhere, any time at any moment of need
- Software managed remotely - no need for on-site IT support
- Increased productivity – enable venue managers to not just manage events but become more involved in supporting sales and revenue generation