



## Christian Centre Trust Requires Multi-Location And Centralized Diary Management

# NHS

The Christian Centre Trust (CCT) operates The Hays, High Leigh and Belsey Bridge Conference Centres. The aim of CCT is to provide an exceptional welcome to Christian, charitable and business conferences throughout the year, offering the highest standards at affordable prices.

The Hayes, in Swanwick, Derbyshire, provides residential and day conference facilities for up to 400 delegates and has been the market leader as a Christian conference center since 1911. They offer a flexible range of facilities to insure all meeting-goers' needs are met and host international, national, regional and local conferences; in fact several organizations have used the center on an annual basis for over 40 years.

Since 1921, High Leigh in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, has offered residential and day conference facilities for up to 220 delegates. Set in 40 acres of lawns, parkland and woodland, with easy access to rail, road and air, the centre is popular for both national and international conferences.

Belsey Bridge in Ditchingham, on the Norfolk/Suffolk border, provides residential and day conference facilities for up to 110 delegates. Located in over 20 acres of ground, just 12 miles from Norwich, the Centre is well known for its locally sourced fresh produce and its provision for special diets; factors that see some groups returning year after year.

### Moving away from a paper-based system

Prior to the implementation of Rendezvous, all CCT venues were using a paper-based diary and a combination of Word and Excel to deal with new enquiries, bookings, administration and billing. This approach, whilst being labour intensive and involving duplication of data entry, was generally workable but their market has changed from single, larger events to having to manage multiple events and clients on a single day, each with their own individual requirements. Operating a manual diary-based system in these situations can be challenging at many levels; from the need for multiple staff members to have access to the diary, to keeping all the required changes up to date, and, most importantly, to handling all communication with clients.

The key driver for change as far as CCT venues are concerned was the recognition that the most efficient way to deal with the booking process was to have a system with full integration between the client database and the booking process. Moving to a computer-based diary management solution across multiple sites would offer great benefits to both the staff and the clients of the venue.

### The search for an integrated solution began

Having analyzed the changing nature of the market and gained a better appreciation of the benefits of an integrated booking solution, Grant Farrant, Business Development Manager at CCT, started to investigate which alternative booking solutions were available, including the consideration of developing a customized solution for the Group.

"Our search led us to look at a number of hotel solutions, which tended to focus on guest room booking and billing, but the needs of a typical Christian center are different, and in many areas more complex," comments Grant. "One of the key considerations is often, 'can we feed the group and offer them the right combination of meeting spaces and bedrooms?'"

"By coincidence," he continues, "we received a mailing from NFS Technology showcasing their Rendezvous events management software, which seemed like a better starting point than a hotel-based solution. We engaged with NFS and fortunately both parties were able to see the benefit of undertaking some development work to provide the combination of meeting space, restaurant and bedroom functionality that would work for a Christian center."

After six months of a challenging and exciting development program, CCT created a solution that would work for them and also many other Christian centers.

"This was a great partnership, as NFS already provided event booking solutions to many Christian centers and now we were going to be able to provide the complete solution, including EPOS for handling cash related to retail and hospitality," comments Luis Desouza, CEO of NFS Technology "The vision and leadership provided by the CCT team was a key success factor in the creation of a useable venue management solution," he adds.

### How will Rendezvous benefit CCT and other Christian facilities?

CCT are now using Rendezvous for the booking of events, bedrooms, meeting spaces and restaurant capacity across all three of their facilities. The main benefits for CCT are:

- A single, browser-based platform for booking all facilities, with a single client database for ease of cross-selling and access to the software from any location via a browser.
- Being able to manage the complete event in a single system, eliminating duplication of data entry and also having convenient and instant access to all client information, including booking history and revenue generated for past events.
- Excellent diary functionality, to be able to view capacity for rooms, dining capacity and other resources, so that the right decisions can be made on taking a new booking.
- A powerful client database, capturing all relevant customer data including source of enquiry, contact details and event related details.
- The ability in future to be able to use appropriate customer information to offer a better service and also promote venues to new clients more effectively.
- Full integration between enquiry handling, booking, billing and sales management.
- Valuable reports to help with better planning of facility and people development.

### Grant Farrant's perspective on the value of Rendezvous to CCT

Across the three centers, CCT has over 530 bedrooms and over 75 function rooms. The Rendezvous platform has enabled these resources to be effectively managed so that the user can easily see dining space, bedroom availability and meeting room availability before taking a booking. With a client database of over 2000 organizations and bookings being taken up to five years in advance, it is vital to have an effective management platform. The Rendezvous package achieves this with its integration of managing dining, bedrooms & meeting rooms within one product – contact management being at the heart. For this reason I would highly recommend Rendezvous as an affordable, scalable and flexible option for any residential conference center.

### Other Rendezvous users in the Christian Center market

Rendezvous is used by a number of other venues with strong connections to the Christian center market, including Action Centres and Church House Conference Centre.

"We are very excited about the potential we see to help Christian Centres gain the benefits of our integrated technology platform and the wide range of solutions we offer in the hospitality and leisure market," states Luis Desouza, "Christian centers will now have the tools to better manage, grow their operations effectively, and also be at the forefront of new developments as customers seek to do more with online facilities for enquiry handling and booking."