



technology



# The Venue Leaders Handbook 2021

Your guide to greater business success by NFS Technology, providers of Rendezvous venue management software.

# It's time for a change

- ▣ The venue industry is going through a massive reset as it reopens and responds to the massively changed needs and demands of customers.
- ▣ There's been a seismic shift in the way the world does business as a result of social distancing, remote working and the uptake of digital technologies such as Zoom, Teams and online booking options. Flexible working and hybrid events look likely to remain a major part of everyday working life.
- ▣ So it's time to re-think every aspect of your venue business, from the way you engage with customers to how you run your operations and create events. And change brings opportunities as well as challenges, so you need to be in the best position to create success.
- ▣ In all of these endeavours, technology is the partner your business needs, working hard to support your efforts and open up new revenue streams.
- ▣ That's why we at NFS, suppliers of Rendezvous venue management software, are delighted to share with you this Venue Leaders Handbook, packed with tips and advice, based on working with so many leading venues.

# The changing meetings landscape

Hybrid events will be popular, but they have disadvantages for venues when it comes to revenue generation, and of course do not give delegates the most valuable networking experience.

You want to be your clients' first choice - but here are 4 things you need to provide to encourage delegates to return in person or online.

## **Great communications**

The way you interact with clients is going to be more important than ever – see our tips later on encouraging online and late bookings.

## **Better audience participation**

Provide the right technology to enable enhanced engagement, for both in person and online.

## **Inspirational catering**

Provide offerings that will entice the delegate and enhance the customer experience. Today green credentials, lighter dishes and veggie/vegan options could be winners.








## **Flexibility**

Your venue needs to be flexible enough to respond quickly to requests for small and late meetings, and offer a great customer experience every time.

# 7 ways technology gives you the competitive edge

Technology offers you the tools to make a real difference in both winning new business and delivering a great client experience.

**Here are the key things that successful venues are addressing**

-  Providing an online booking experience to complement email and phone enquiries.
-  Streamlining your processes to free staff time to truly engage with your clients.
-  A clear focus on sales and marketing and engagement with customers in new ways, including connecting with venue channels for new business.
-  Integrating with other digital technologies, for example, digital signage.
-  Building your clients' confidence through clear policies on venue safety.
-  Creating the best customer experience from the start of the enquiry process.
-  Creating new revenue streams, hybrid events for example.



# Online and live booking

- The events industry was once reluctant to allow customers to book online, feeling events always required the human touch.
- But clients are now used to accessing everything from hotel accommodation to restaurant reservations via the internet – and giving them the option to book online means your services are available 24/7, 365 days of the year.
- For your staff, it means less tedious manual admin and more time to do what they do best – engaging with your customers.

# Streamline your processes

With the right venue management platform you will have one single point of truth, streamlining processes within all departments to ensure accuracy and confidence in information, while reducing ongoing operational costs. [Read more](#)

Forget spreadsheets – all departments should be able access up-to-date event information in real time. Features like a service tracker app to inform and update departments in real time can be invaluable. [Read more](#)

## Operations

Your operations team need to have clear visibility of “what’s next” on a busy day and tasks need to be assigned/updated automatically to ensure events can be flawless. This is particularly critical for last minute changes. [Read more](#)

## Finance

A fully integrated finance solution as part of the venue management platform supports accurate billing and full revenue capture. Deposit and final invoice creation ensures all revenue can be easily collected. In addition, full integration with a finance/ERP system may be the ideal approach to solving the complexities of event billing such as split billing and stage payments. [Read more](#)

## Remote Event Co-ordinator

With many event staff now working remotely, it is even more critical for staff to have managed access to the venue management platform as well as for clients to be able to engage online. Digital technologies such as online enquiries, e-proposals, e-signatures and 3D venue presentations online can be particularly beneficial to ensure high level of conversion.

Newcastle Civic Centre, have found it is not only internal communications which have improved, thanks to Rendezvous the client experience has been enhanced too. Using Rendezvous, the team can send client quotations, contracts, stage payment deposits and final invoices all automatically out of the system within minutes and all for electronic signature – saving hours of admin time while improving customer service and substantially increasing their conversion rate.

[Read success story](#)

**Read on to discover how a leading events hotel are using technology to save time, increase sales and gather valuable management information**

*“When we’re planning events we can put everything into the same format at the same time, giving our operational team all the information required for an event which is very time effective for our staff. The venue management system also makes sure organisations never miss out on following up any valuable sales leads, and makes billing far simpler and more accurate. Comprehensive reports give the venue organisers an end-to-end view of their business in real time. The system captures our sales leads effectively and puts them all in the same format, which means not only do we never miss a lead, we can also log statistics and monitor what’s working.”*



**Robert Wright,**  
General Manager,  
Farnham Castle

## Here is what one of our long-standing clients has to say about how Rendezvous has increased efficiency and driven sales conversions

*"With Cardiff Castle and Cardiff City Hall being two of Wales busiest venues with so much going on across the two venues, what pleases me most about Rendezvous is the way its activities aspect allows us to keep our diary clean and clear. We can take a booking and then forget about it. The software does all the thinking and remembering for us, prompting us into action at exactly the right time. It keeps us on top of the whole customer management scenario. Rendezvous enables us to convert enquires into business, prompting us when we need to move forward on any project. It prevents us from double-booking rooms, and keeps us on top of all booking and enquiries. Efficiency like this becomes a revenue generator in itself."*



**Alexandra McIlquham-Jones,**

Conference and Events Manager,  
Cardiff City Hall and Cardiff Castle

# Rendezvous at a glance

NFS Technology have been providing venue management software to leading venues for nearly 20 years. Our Rendezvous platform, used by leading UK venues and catering companies, supports venues in many ways.

## Here are the solution highlights

- ▣ A single view of an event with full data capture.
- ▣ Integrated billing for complete accuracy.
- ▣ Automated proposals and contracts.
- ▣ Streamlined event documentation.
- ▣ Powerful functionality for sales and marketing.
- ▣ Reminders and follow up activities.
- ▣ Online enquiries, bookings and event payments 24/7/365.
- ▣ Integration with Venue Directory.

# Boost sales and marketing and engage with customers in new ways



For the larger venue a highly optimised CRM system such as Microsoft Dynamics could provide the competitive edge in sales lead nurturing, marketing tools like integrated social media and highly customisable and professional proposal and event management functionality.

## By integrating with Microsoft Dynamics, Rendezvous provides

- ▣ Enhanced enquiry handling.
- ▣ Automated lead nurturing.
- ▣ Better sales management – your team always knows where a client is in the sales cycle.
- ▣ Integration with Microsoft Office.
- ▣ Social media campaign management.



# Integration with other technologies

Today an integrated venue management platform delivers the best solution in terms of sales and marketing, finance, digital experience for clients and visitor management.

Rendezvous' integration with leading digital technologies provides your venue with the tools to create professional and informative digital experience for your clients. These range from impressive reception welcome screens and digital wayfinding guides, meeting room panels to Epos adverts and live streaming of venue information or newsfeeds.

It's a great way to make sure your clients get a great impression when they arrive and throughout their visit – and gives them an experience they will want to repeat.

# Build your clients' confidence

In our post-Covid world, making guests feel safe and secure is crucial. The ways in which this can be achieved are:



## **Touchless check in and out**

A safe, quick and convenient experience at reception. Guests can be asked to fill in health questionnaires prior to arrival if required.



## **No paperwork**

Passing paperwork from hand to hand can create a health risk as well as potentially lost documents.



## **Wayfinding**

Digital signage means delegates can find their way straight to their meeting or event.



## **Data security**

GDPR requires client personal details should not be printed for all to see on desks, reception and event notice boards. The NFS Rendezvous solution complies with GDPR guidelines.

# Create the best customer experience

Your customer's journey starts from the minute they look you up online – and every moment from then on needs to be both efficient and “customer friendly”, if you want to gain and retain their business.

In these competitive times, building a brand they trust is more important than ever. A robust venue management platform supports the client experience in the following manner:

- ▣ A fast response to their enquiries.
- ▣ Great visitor management.
- ▣ Clear processes and policies.
- ▣ Easy two-way communication with feedback.
- ▣ Accurate billing.
- ▣ Great reviews that build your reputation.
- ▣ Repeat business, based on a great event experience.



# Grow new revenue streams

As venues re-open, they are already seeking out the opportunities that the changing market has revealed.

Organisations are likely to have reduced office space needs because of flexible working, and while they are locked into leases, they may repurpose unused areas for events.

However - if they downsize, they may need external meeting space or even desk space more than ever. No matter how distributed a workforce is, there will still be times when teams need to get together.

Many venues are looking again at their own space, with a view to offering flex working space that organisations can book at short notice so their colleagues can collaborate.

Coupled with an inspiring catering offering, it's a great new revenue stream that venues can take advantage off.

Many public sector organisations and government departments are looking for ways to make sure they are utilising their property portfolio to get the most bang for their real estate buck.

We find they struggle to co-ordinate meeting rooms, technology and event, conference spaces in a way that provides what staff and visitors need while keeping costs low. Ad-hoc methods such as using spreadsheets and Outlook prove inefficient with no mechanism to prevent no-shows or to invoice for chargeable resources.

Rendezvous is the perfect solution for driving efficiency, encouraging flexible working, reducing real estate costs and running external events with the minimum of admin and fuss.

At NFS we serve the venue and corporate meeting markets. Our technology for managing flexible space is now benefiting our existing clients who are creating desk and other agile workspaces for both venue staff and clients.

[Check out this mobile booking video](#)

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**rendezvous**  
Meeting Room and Workplace Technology

**The Rendezvous mobile app**

Confidently book a space allowing you to work safely.  
Check in and out using a zero-touch approach.

**Your step by step guide to booking a desk using the Rendezvous mobile app**

# Make your venue greener

- Many venues are now focused on better defined environmental policies. Technology is one of the leading routes to delivering a greener venue experience.
- Not having to print event sheets and reports cuts your use of paper, photocopiers, toner cartridges, leasing costs, electricity and consumables. It also reduces delivery costs and the associated carbon output.
- In addition, a cloud-based solution like Rendezvous technology is a major saving on your electricity bill and carbon footprint.
- Rendezvous Events green credentials have made it the booking system of choice for Centre of Alternative Technology where their mantra is  
  
“ All emissions that can go to zero must go to zero – as rapidly as possible. Not just from electricity, but also from heat, transport, industry and land-use.”



# Planning your #venue2021 model

- ❑ In the changed post-pandemic market, venue management technology is foundational to the success of your business.
- ❑ It provides new ways for your clients to find and book your spaces, builds your brand, drives up efficiency and ensures an incredibly convenient and pleasing customer experience. It even supports new uses for your space, providing the data that takes all the guesswork out of planning decisions.
- ❑ Add in the astonishing power of a great CRM system such as Microsoft Dynamics, and integration with the digital technologies that enhance the entire client journey, and you're on a sure-fire ride to new and repeat business.

## NFS solutions have supported British Airways i360 in streamlining processes and driving future growth with actionable data

*"The system has enabled us to multi-task. As a small team, this is brilliant as it allows us to jump from one project to another, whether it's checking availability of a room, or checking a contract for a client or even issuing an invoice, the system has worked really well for us. The reporting is a blessing because now we know what provisional business is on the books, as well as what tentative and contracted business is confirming."*



**Sophie Shepherd,**  
Sales Manager,  
British Airways i360

Welcome back, venue leader. With technology at your fingertips,  
the future looks bright.



## Your 7-point venue checklist

- ☑ Invest in technology that provides online booking and captures valuable data.
- ☑ Drive efficiency by streamlining operations.
- ☑ Enhance sales and marketing with CRM.
- ☑ Build your brand with great customer service.
- ☑ Engage with your clients using two-way communication.
- ☑ Re-think your space to respond to new needs.
- ☑ Reconsider your catering offering.



# We're here to help, want to know more?

Our website is packed with further resources and tips to help venue leaders. And our expert team is ready and waiting to answer any queries or provide free demonstrations.



**Get in touch today**

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