



CUSTOMER

Charlotte Knights

CORPORATE PROFILE

Headquarters

Fort Mill, SC just ten miles south of Charlotte, NC

Type of Business

Entertainment, Sports

Number of Employees

15 full-time, 10-15 interns during season, 100s of part-time volunteers on game days

APPLICATION

Software

- ACT! for Windows

Number of ACT! Users

8

Database Information

26,000 records

Charlotte Knights Baseball Team Keeps the Turnstiles Spinning

The Charlotte Knights are the Triple-A affiliate of the Chicago White Sox Major League Baseball team. The team's sales staff uses ACT! to manage ticket sales for 55,000 group tickets and dozens of special events.



Replacing Old-School Prospecting

The Charlotte Knights needed to streamline their sales processes and institute disciplined, best practices in order to develop dedicated fans. Originally, the sales staff tracked prospects via index cards and wrote custom contracts for each case, providing very little consistency across the sales team.

"We'd scramble around, sifting through stacks of note cards to figure out who to call next or the history of the person calling us," said Sean Owens, director of group sales & ticket operations for the Charlotte Knights Baseball Club.

Productivity Begins with Clean Data

Over the years, the staff used various PC-based contact managers and earlier versions of ACT! to handle contacts. Reps would come and go, leaving a mix of business cards, index cards and unreliable data files in their wake.

Owens engaged ACT! Certified Consultant Andrew Kaplan of ARK Sales Automation Group to identify key strategies for improving productivity and leveraging ACT! to the fullest. The first step was

CHALLENGE

The Knights needed to streamline their sales processes and institute disciplined best practices in order to connect with 8,300 customers and prospects, and to develop dedicated fans.

SOLUTION

ACT! helps the Knights execute targeted marketing campaigns, track and service leads, develop customer relationships, sell individual and group tickets and manage special events.

RESULTS

The team's sales numbers have improved consistently every year, and its top sales person (now the sales director) increased his sales from \$30,000 to \$220,000 within a two-year time span.

"My sales went from \$30,000 to \$220,000 in my first two years, and ACT! certainly contributed to that. The whole team has consistently increased sales every year. ACT! makes us more disciplined, which we have embraced because it's a lot easier for us to make money!"

—Sean Owens
Director of Group Sales
and Ticket Operations
Charlotte Knights Baseball Club

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data importing and clean-up. Kaplan and Owens imported season ticket data from the Knights' standard database into ACT!.

"We had 30,000 accounts, and a lot of it was just garbage," said Owens.

"Andy and I would stay late at the office, scrubbing the data and finally whittling the list down to 8,300 great contacts."

"The key to any successful contact management deployment is clean data, and these new lists were like gold for them," said Kaplan. Kaplan also helped the Knights develop best practices modeled after the habits and processes of the top sales reps.

Big-Time Sales Production in the Minors

ACT! turned the Charlotte Knights into a finely tuned sales powerhouse. "We just type in a contact name, and boom we know every historical detail on the account," said Owens. "ACT! generates invoices, receipts, contracts and all the right paperwork for us. We organize our schedules for maximum productivity, and we never miss opportunities. Before, all kinds of leads would slip through the cracks."

Owens started as a sales rep with the Knights but was promoted to the director post within three years because he was able to boost his own sales with ACT! and spread its use within the sales organization. "My sales went from \$30,000 to \$220,000 in my first two years, and ACT! certainly contributed to

that. The whole team has consistently increased sales every year. ACT! makes us more disciplined, which we have embraced because it's a lot easier for us to make money!"

The Knights have eight sales reps who use a local network to access a shared ACT! database. "Some of the old-school reps wanted to stick with their note cards," said Owens. "But, it showed up in their sales. Their numbers were much lower than those who were using ACT!."

"ACT! helps us keep track of customer and prospect preferences, what events they've been to in the past, where they sat two years ago," added Owens.

"It builds a really strong customer relationship. Fans love the team and the organization as a result."

Reporting Keeps Sales Line-up Producing

As sales director, Owens uses ACT! to generate reports and drive productivity within his departments. He constantly examines the data and provides reps with information on hot leads, high margin accounts and lists of prospects that haven't been contacted lately.

"I can instantly create a report that shows me which reps are more aggressive than others and which prospects have been called in a given time period," said Owens. "As a data analysis tool, it's really powerful. Ultimately, it helps me manage my people better and deliver bottom line results."