ACCREDIT
Solutions

Your Definitive Guide to Event Accreditation
Why you need it, and how to do it.

With contributions from accreditation experts working with some of the best known sports teams, sporting competitions, stadiums, venues and live events in the world today.

Introduction

Accreditation. It's more than badge printing.

When accreditation is done badly, the consequences can be grave. Accreditation, security, operations and media managers are grappling with yet another spreadsheet of staff from the catering contractor. Background checks aren't made on workers. Temporary staff roam freely because access zones aren't used. And badges are easily forged. Security is compromised, operations is inefficient, legal requirements are ignored, and the accreditation team is at breaking point.

But a robust accreditation procedure will stop all of that.

Accreditation should be an end-to-end solution, and is a procedure that the most progressive sports clubs, leagues, live events and venues in the world are now understanding and implementing.

When done properly, the impact for your business is far-reaching. It will automate and simplify labour intensive tasks. It will improve operational efficiency and event security. It will save you time and money. It makes sure you process data legally. It stops you employing illegal workers. It helps you to fulfil a duty of care to workers and visitors. And it can lower insurance premiums.

There are many accreditation managers out there who know what they should be doing. But don't have a plan, or the tools and resources to do it.

So the purpose of this guide is to take the pain away. We'll walk you through the steps you need to take to implement a world-class accreditation procedure, and show you exactly what you need to do it.

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About Accredit Solutions

It was always been our mission to build the best accreditation platform in the world, but technology is just one part of that. What the team brings is a level of experience and knowledge that can make a real difference to our clients.

Members of our Team have managed accreditation teams, defined accreditation procedures and installed accreditation systems for some of the world's largest and most challenging events, including the Cricket World Cup, Rugby World Cup, Commonwealth Games, Olympic and Paralympic Games. Together we bring a broad and deep understanding of the accreditation procedure. We understand the pain points, and know how to take them away.

In 2019, the Accredit Platform was been used for 322 sporting fixtures including the ICC Cricket World Cup, Hong Kong Sevens, FIFA eWorld Cup, New York Marathon, all fixtures at Twickenham Stadium, and all home matches for Cricket Australia, New Zealand Rugby, Arsenal, Chelsea, and Manchester City FC.

Head quartered in London, with additional offices in Dubai, Melbourne, North Carolina and Lisbon, we are lucky enough to have current projects running from New York to New Zealand.

Accreditation is all we do, and we love it.

See who else we work with at www.accredit-solutions.com/clients

Where to start

1. Look at the big picture – what do you want accreditation for?

You need to decide on your priorities as this will affect who needs to be involved, and how the entire system is set-up. Do you need a solution to collect and manage your data more effectively? Is the priority to make the movement of staff around the event more efficient with badge scanning and access controls? Maybe you want to reduce threat levels by doing background checks? Do you want to make the process of accreditation much faster?

Maybe you want to achieve all of these things, but make sure you decide what you want your accreditation procedure to do before you do anything else.

2. Consult all departments affected

Keeping a venue or major event safe is a team effort. A robust accreditation procedure will need input and buy-in from venue and event managers, security, IT and operations teams. If everyone understands the benefits of a better accreditation process, and knows who is being accredited and why, it will save everyone a lot of questions further down the line.

This is something that will benefit everyone, so tell them!

3. Map out your access control zones

Visualise your venue. Get a floorplan and map out who needs access. Where do they need to enter? Where do they need to get to? Where should they not be allowed to go? Consider everyone that isn't a ticket holder – building contractors, catering teams, stewards, security officers, venue staff, cleaners, event organisers, retail outlet staff, volunteers, members of the media and VIP guests.

Use this information to map out your matrix zones and areas that need controlled entry, and build a list of who needs accrediting and what access permissions they should have.

4. Find a software supplier

Gone are the days of spreadsheets, endless emails and uploading sets of data to a badge printer. To do accreditation effectively and efficiently, you need the right software from a technology company that specialises in accreditation.

Here are some things to consider when comparing solutions:

- What do you need the system to do? What functionality do you need?
- What experience do they have of similar projects?
- Is the system cloud-based so you can access it from anywhere, from any device?
- How do they keep data and files secure?
- What level of customer support can you expect? How quickly do they respond to client queries, and what time zones do they operate in?
- Can they integrate with other systems, such as access control, workforce management and security services?
- What do their other clients think? If their clients are happy, they will introduce you
- How long will it take to get the system set-up?
- Do they have a development team that can adapt the platform for your future needs?

Quick system functionality checklist:

- Easily set up unlimited bespoke online forms
- Ability to upload an unlimited amount of data, images and documents
- Use of group / responsible organisation accounts where contractors can manage their own set allocation of accreditation passes, send invitations, add data and if required, re-use staff data event-to-event
- Customised, branded login and landing pages for users
- Set permissions on what data users and see and what actions they can perform
- Automated communications via email and SMS
- Unlimited badge templates and designs
- Print badges in bulk / individual mode
- Matrix manager to control registration types and access
- Ability to clone an existing matrix to quickly set up accreditation for a new event
- Easily edit access permissions and user roles for individuals and groups
- Creates a complete historical record of activity for every contact created
- Ability to export all data
- Ability to search data by any input field
- Multiple languages
- Ability to quickly view and edit uploaded photos within the system
- Ability to re-register and/or invite staff from previous events
- Ability to integrate with 3rd party software
- Ability to produce bespoke reports
- Access control solution via mobile app / mobile scanning devices

"The key to any accreditation platform is end user accessibility. The system needs to be simple enough to use that staff can apply for an accreditation without too much assistance. Coupled with this, the platform needs to offer efficient functionality for the administrators so that they can carry out their tasks in a timely manner, including; application review; pass production; access control; and reporting."

Jamie Betts

5. Build your accreditation team

Find yourself a champion of the accreditation process. Whether it be a dedicated accreditation manager, or someone from within your security or operations team, they need experience, they need to work well under pressure, they need to be a good project manager, and they need to be able to have conversations at a senior level and across all job functions. For large events and tournaments, many experienced accreditation managers operate on a freelance basis as they move from event to event. If you find this to be the case, then consider employing someone on a temporary basis to develop and implement your accreditation procedure, and build a team who can then manage it on a full-time basis in the future.

"A great accreditation manager will need resilience, patience, attention to detail, and the ability to handle robust conversations at all levels."

Darren Jootun

"The main ingredient to a successful accreditation procedure is the platform that hosts the process. If this is set up correctly then you can run the majority of your procedure through this central hub."

Jamie Betts

"I can tell you my findings over the years have been that accreditation is generally not being done well. Staff are being employed without adequate background checks...People security is the most easily overlooked aspect of protecting an event. And yet employing someone who is a threat to you is one of the most dangerous risks your organisation can take."

Chris Phillips

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Using your accreditation system

Get training

Make sure you understand the ins and outs of the system at an early stage. Then if any product development is needed to fulfil your requirements, it can be scheduled in with the development team well in advance of your go-live date.

And make sure you have a 'super-user' – someone who uses the system day in day out, who can help other users and third-party group account managers get the best out of the system, and liaise with the software supplier when needed.

Set-up your system

Your software supplier may well do this for you for your first event on their platform, but you're going to need to know a few things:

- Who is using the system internally, and what do they need to be able to do? Get together a list of staff needing access and agree what they need to do so that access permissions can be set.
- Define your privilege matrix – who is being accredited and what access permissions do they have?
- Put content together for all of your communication templates. These might include emails and SMS messages inviting people to register, approving and rejecting applications, distributing documentation, consent forms, terms and conditions, and reminders to submit documents.

Collecting data

You're going to want to be able to get data into your accreditation system in three ways:

1. **Via online forms where people apply for an accreditation pass**. Make sure you can set up unlimited bespoke forms for the various groups of people that you need to accredit. You're going to be asking media a different set of questions to volunteers, so make sure you can easily and quickly create new forms when you need them. Make sure you are able to invite individuals to register via an encrypted link, or via a bulk upload whereby you can send invitations to multiple individuals at once.

You'll need to decide who needs a group account set-up.
Get a list together of all of your third-party contractors and organisations who will manage their own accreditation requirements. They will use their own account within the system to upload data, send invitations to register, add documents and approve staff. This alone will take an awful lot of work away from you.

2. **Import data and files via spreadsheet**. You may have historical data to add, or a list of pre-approved people. Make sure you can easily import them, along with the corresponding documents and files if required. You don't want to have to upload 1,000 photographs or permits to work individually. You want to be able to upload them in a single zip file that will then map them to each corresponding contact.

3. **Using historical data**. Once data is in the system, it will save everyone a lot of time on future events if group account managers can assign new and multiple events to existing individuals.

Accreditation forms: Ask the right questions, get the right answers

In the world of accreditation and venue security, you often have to ask intrusive questions and gather sensitive documents. Contractor licenses, insurance documents, worker IDs, photos, permits to work, qualification certificates...there is a lot of information to collect efficiently, and store securely if you are going to know exactly who is in your venue, and be sure that they are safe and legal to be there. What is the best way to set up an accreditation form?

Make it simple

It's all about the user. A simple-to-use front end user interface is paramount. You're potentially asking them a lot of questions and asking them to upload documentation, so the entire application process needs to be easy for the user to access and get back into – a password protected login portal should allow users to update details and add documents when needed.

And let's not forget photos. If you want photos on badges, then they have to be a certain size, and must follow certain criteria. If your system has the ability to re-size and crop photos once uploaded, and give you the opportunity to accept or reject them you'll be saving a lot of time.

Ask the right questions

The actual questions to be asked and the documents to collect via an accreditation form will be driven by operational and security requirements, and will need to be GDPR compliant.

But contractors, workers, security personnel, sporting teams, broadcasters, journalists, volunteers...they all need a slightly different vetting process. So your accreditation system needs to be able to accommodate different categories of personnel with unique applications forms. Only ask what you need to know, and always explain why you need it.

Keep information secure

Gathering sensitive information isn't something you can take lightly, users trust that you won't lose it or abuse it. Make your privacy policy clear, encrypt information where possible and make sure your systems are protected against cyber-attacks.

"Accreditation software will reduces the need for paperwork and spreadsheets, automates the straightforward tasks allowing you to focus on the more complicated ones. Clients can submit data directly into the system, meaning that you don't need to be involved in the transaction of data, which is more secure as well as saving time. And it creates one source of truth, and stores in one easy to access location historic event information as a basis to plan for the next event."

Darren Jootun

"You know your accreditation procedure is working when everyone knows what is happening. Organising staff, contractors, volunteers and media all have a clear idea of the entry procedure and access requirements for the event. Without this, there will be confusion and changing requirements, presenting a lot of challenges for your operational, security and event management teams."

Edwin Saayeng

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Managing contractors

Contractors present particular challenges. The timescales for employing them are often relatively short, and there is potential for security arrangements to be confused or overlooked due to sub-contracting. But on a busy event day you need temporary staff and volunteers to be able to do their job. You need to know who they area, that they are legally allowed to work, and aren't suspected criminals or terrorists This is easier said than done when you're working with multiple contractors and agencies. So how do you make the accreditation of contractors easy?

1. **Make your staff screening procedure clear from the outset**. It is important that contractors have the same level of pre-employment screening as permanent employees. Contracts should outline the type of checks required for each post and requirements cascaded to sub-contractors. Where pre-employment checks – or any other personnel security measures – are carried out by the contracting agency, a detailed account of the checks to be undertaken and the standards achieved must be incorporated into the contract. Furthermore, the process conducted by the contractor should be audited regularly.

2. **Make it easy for your contractors to give you the right information**. Use accreditation software that will allow you to set up an account for each contractor or agency. Then assign a single administrator for each account who then has the ability and responsibility to import their staff data, send application invitations, update worker details, and control their own allocation of passes and zone restrictions. You want to be able to allocate a set number of passes per account and monitor their usage in real time. No more spreadsheets, de-duping or bits of paper. Just a single database that you can view anytime, on any device.

3. **Define access zones and required documents for each type of attendee**. Define the different groups entering your venue (press, catering, VIPs, security, first aiders, players) and tag access zones against each group within your accreditation system, to keep people where they need to be. Define the documents you need to be able to approve applications (permits to work, ID photographs etc) and use a system that will allow applicants to upload the required information as part of the application process, and store it securely for review and reference.

Finally, issue accreditation badges to all temporary workers and stipulate that they must be worn at all times. To keep staff moving efficiently around your venue, but ensuring restricted areas remain secure, scan badges at each access control point. Find an accreditation system that integrates with your existing access control solution, or use a mobile system for real-time scanning and approvals.

What you should know about the people working at your event?

If you attend a music concert or major sports fixture, you are used to needing a ticket and being faced with bag searches, metal detectors and police dogs when you enter. But what do you know about the staff and contractors you employ? Because knowing the right information solves two problems.

Firstly, it minimises security threats. Some criminal or terrorist activity could rely upon the co-operation of an 'insider' and this could be any employee, contractor or member of agency staff that has access to your premises.

Secondly, it gives attendees, staff, contractors and VIPs efficient access to the right areas of your event.

So what should you know about your workers? And how do you use this information to improve operational efficiency?

1. Verify their identity

Confirm their full name, date of birth and address with supporting documents such as current passport or driving license. And check for any criminal records. A conviction may not be a barrier to employment, but ask for details subject to local laws – particularly if the post involves working with children or vulnerable adults, in which case you are also going to want to check and collect their DBS accreditation.

2. Verify their right to work.

For non-citizens, ask to see their national identity card or passport and documentation confirming immigration status and permission to work. And collect any information useful to their role such as relevant qualifications, security certificates or first aid certificates. Make it a contractual obligation that contractors validate the identities of their staff and ask them to submit photo ID for everyone needing entry.

Collecting personal information and applying security procedures to prevent criminal activity may be seen as unwelcome or intrusive. But if you have the correct systems in place to store and process this data securely, and communicate any changes with staff ahead of implementation, they should understand the risks and accept the measures taken to mitigate them.

Managing approvals

The first step to approving someone for an accreditation pass must be whether they are eligible to work for your event. Do they have a history that could cause a problem to your operation? Are they a security risk? A decision needs to be made on whether any flagged individuals can participate.

The second step is to decide whether the default access provided meets the requirements of their role. If they need additional access, then authorisation needs to be sought by the relevant parties involved to accept or reject additional privileges.

Communications

Sending communications via an accreditation system will soon empty your inbox.

It should also mean that you can automate messages to individuals or groups according to actions defined within the system. And for other ad-hoc communications, set up message templates that you can send at a click of a button. Someone has not uploaded a suitable photo? With one click you want to be able to send them a personal email asking for an alternative.

Other considerations: Integrations

If you have existing access control hardware, online security checks with the local police, workforce management systems, facial recognition software or vehicle access checks, then see if your accreditation software supplier can integrate with existing systems to create a seamless journey for the customer. API's can pull data in and push it out of your accreditation system to third parties.

> *"The accreditation process keeps things simple. Your project is clean and organised, your data is in a single platform, your event is safe and secure, and by automating labour intensive tasks, it drastically reduces the amount of manual intervention required to deliver the event."*
>
> **Edwin Saayeng**

Producing your badges

The end result of your accreditation process will be a printed badge or credential for everyone needing access to your venue or event. This can often be a pain point for organisations just before event day, so use a system that does the hard work for you. If you can send badges to print in individual or bulk mode to a laser printer directly from your accreditation system, that will save you a lot of time. Make sure your system can carry multiple badge templates and merge on all details you need to display, such as names, companies, bar codes and access zones.

Most importantly, you want to be able create, manage and edit these badges at the touch of a button from within the same system. You'll never look back!

Best-practice design

Your marketing team need them to reflect brand guidelines and your security team need the ID and access permissions to be clear. A correctly designed badge that contains anti-counterfeit measures and the right information will give your contractors, staff and media efficient access to your event and help keep illegal workers, ticket fraudsters and potential criminals out.

Branding. Badges are the gateway to your event, so you want them to look good. Make sure there is room for your logo and try to incorporate brand colours where possible.

Photo. A quick and easy way for your security team to check whether a person is who they say they are.

Credentials. Make sure there is sufficient space to print someone's name, plus job title and company if required.

Badge type. Different groups of people will have different privileges, so add an icon or a colour strip to signify whether someone is media, a VIP, or part of the catering team.

Access permissions. Whether it's a green dot to signal backstage access, a dinner plate icon to get into the kitchens, or an initial to indicate a specific access zone, make sure access permissions are clear on the badge.

Unique ID. Hide a unique ID number for every person in a bar code, QR code or RFID chip and a quick scan at your access control points will instantly tell you if that pass is valid, and whether that person can gain entry into a specific area of the event.

Anti-counterfeit measures. The addition of a hologram, black light ink, micro printing or thermal ink make it very difficult for anyone to forge a badge or ticket.

Finally, use large badges to make the ID of photos and access zones easy for your security team.

"Use good practice for badging staff. Ensure that badges are used. Include a photo, add access permissions, use anti-counterfeiting measures, add a unique ID and change designs regularly."

Chris Phillips

7 things you can do to stop your badges being forged

Go to you-tube and you can find plenty of videos demonstrating how easy it can be to enter a high-profile event by forging badly designed badges. These are usually fans finding images of credentials online and trying their luck getting into an event they want to be at. But the risk is real and the consequences potentially deadly if you allow illegal workers, criminals or terrorists into restricted areas of your event.

1. **Stamp out the Insider Threat.** A proper accreditation procedure will tell you exactly who the workers and temporary staff entering your venue are. You'll know they are legally allowed to work, have the necessary qualifications and are not suspected criminals or terrorists. Do this and you'll drastically reduce the chance of an Insider helping others to forge credentials.

2. **Use a unique identifier.** If you hide a unique ID number for every person in a bar code, QR code or RFID chip, a quick scan at your access control points will instantly be able to tell you if that pass is valid, and whether that person can gain entry into a specific area of the event. Don't allocate ID numbers until the last minute and you'll cut the risk of an Insider being able to leak information.

3. **Prohibit the sharing of badge images online.** Make it company policy – your staff, contractors and volunteers need to know that they are prohibited from sharing images of their credentials online. If you catch them bragging about their next job at Sunday's rugby match, they need to go.

4. **Put something on the back.** Put something on the back of the pass. Maybe a map of the venue, or important timings. When people share photos of their badges online, they almost always display the front. No one knows what is on the back.

5. **Release badges as late as possible.** At large multi-venue events, it's often easier to ask contractors to collect and distribute the badges to their workers in advance. But do this as late as possible to keep designs confidential and make sure that they give you a record of exactly who is in possession of their badge and who is not.

6. **Keep new designs confidential.** It's a good idea to change designs periodically – a simple change in background colour will do, but keep the change confidential until you need to print and distribute badges.

7. **Add anti-counterfeit measures.** A strip of micro text, or use of a hologram, black light ink or thermal ink will make it virtually impossible to forge a badge correctly. Just make sure your security and access control teams are briefed on what to look for and how to check badges are the real deal.

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Printing your badges

You want to be able to print badges in bulk and individual mode, and have the ability to re-print or create new badges onsite. And check your badge stock. Is it robust enough to look good for the whole event? Will it withstand rain? Can it be recycled? And don't forget to check toner and ink levels in your printer!

Using the right accreditation system and printer, you will be-able to print all badges in-house. If you need a 3rd party to do the printing, then make sure you can export all of your badges into an easily exportable PDF≈file.

Distribution of your badges

At large multi-venue events, it's often easier to ask contractors to collect and distribute the badges to their workers in advance. But do this as late as possible to keep designs confidential and make sure that they give you a record of exactly who is in possession of their badge and who is not. Use your system to generate a sign-in and sign-out sheet, or utilise a 'collected' function in your database for easy reporting.

For everyone else, they'll need to collect their badges in advance from an accreditation point. Make sure your accreditation team is present to deal with queries and make decisions on new staff and re-prints.

Access control

Check ID and access privileges each time a worker enters a new access zone by scanning badges – names, photos and access levels can be checked on the spot to receive instant approvals or rejections. This ensures that restricted areas are kept secure and that only persons with valid permits will be allowed access.

Use an accreditation system that can integrate with existing access control hardware to avoid having to invest in new systems and scanners.

"Accreditation processes are at the forefront of venue security and a robust accreditation process allows a venue to control the flow of people into and around their venue. The application process allows you to vet all staff before any accreditation is issued. On event days your access control system enables you to control and monitor all staff access into a venue and with accreditation zones or access areas you are able to further control where within the venue staff can access ensuring that key areas are monitored closely."

Jamie Betts

"Large venues or recurring events are sure to have a high churn of temporary staff. Don't issue 'season' badges. Changing the colour of your badge for each event will make it easy for your security team to see if anyone is re-using old passes. Even better, issue a new unique ID for staff at every event and a quick scan of the badge will tell you if their pass is valid."

Chris Phillips

Future-proofing your accreditation procedure

Implementing a proper accreditation procedure is a real achievement. But the accreditation team needs to be committed to future-proofing it to ensure it remains a robust area of the business.

Make sure you have the right software partner. This is why you want a best-in-class supplier. A company that puts 100% of it's time into an accreditation solution will be constantly developing it to ensure it stays the best. They'll be experts in their field, regularly updating their product and with the ability to integrate with 3rd party technologies to produce a seamless customer journey.

Trends to watch out for :
- Facial recognition
- Software integrations – we are seeing this more and more. You're going to need a supplier who can integrate with 3rd party software and hardware as products develop, such as access control, time attendance, incident management, HR systems, security checks etc

"You must have a clear plan of what you are using accreditation for, and what you need your accreditation procedure to achieve. Understand who the accreditation process applies to, and why it is needed. Finally, you need to know how you want the physical accreditation to look and operate for the event."

Edwin Saayeng

"When looking for an accreditation platform, get a demo and make sure the system is intuitive and easy to use. Ask what experience they have with similar events and make sure the system is secure and easy to access. Find out how well they work under pressure and what level of support they offer. Check that they are future-proofing their product with continuous development and that you'll benefit from regular upgrades. Finally, try to speak to someone else that is using them and ask for honest feedback."

Edwin Saayeng

NOTES ON: Managing media accreditation like a pro

Any major live event is going to attract a lot of media attention. To ensure that you have the right media in the right places at the right time, it's important to direct members of the media through an accreditation process. This ensures you have the right press covering your event, can control their access in an efficient and secure manner, and aren't giving passes away to people who should be paying to attend.

1. Confirm your restricted areas
You'll need to know the capacity of each area to ensure you don't approve one to many cameraman requests. And it's important that are areas set aside for media are clearly defined, signposted and entry controlled by the security team. It's not just about controlling the movement of media, but protecting them from external threats so that they can carry out their job safely.

2. Set clear guidelines to attract the right media
Media often get access to restricted areas of a venue to get closer to the action and access to VIPs, and so accreditation must be strictly reserved for those who represent a bona fide media organization. This doesn't include non-editorial contacts from publishing companies, PR agencies, or communications professionals from NGOs or corporates.

Do you want to see a commission letter from the Editor-in-Chief? Do they need to have had an article published in the last month? Does their website need a minimum amount of traffic? Does their blog need a certain number of subscribers?

Define your entry guidelines and display them clearly on your website where you are asking media to apply for accreditation.

3. Ask media to complete an online accreditation form
Set up an online accreditation form on your website that gives media the ability to set up an account (that they can access again to update/edit information) and submit all of the documents needed to approve a media badge. This will give you a GDPR compliant way to collect data, and keep all of your applications and supporting documents secure in a single system.

What information should you collect? Think about the information that your media, operations and security teams need to fully assess an application and prepare for their requirements.

In additional to basic contact information, other Information that you may want to collect:

- Photo ID
- Commission letter
- Details of whether the applicant is a journalist, photographer, cameraman, blogger etc
- Information on a publication such as circulation, frequency, readership
- Website traffic and audience size for blogs or social media accounts
- Proof of previous coverage
- Evidence of recently published articles
- Public Liability Insurance certificate for photographers

If you have a large amount of press attending from a particular broadcaster or media outlet, then use a system that will allow you to set up a group account for them to upload contacts and manage an allocation of passes.

4. Send clear instructions before the event
For successful applicants, give them all of the information they need to do their job. What events they have been approved for, timetable of activity, map of the venue, where to collect their accreditation badges, where the media centre is, and who they should contact for questions.

5. Issue badges and put security first
Don't email or post out badges in advance, this opens up the possibility of them landing on the wrong desk or being forged. If you have room, set up a dedicated media accreditation desk at the event and make sure press know where and when to collect their badges.

NOTES ON: Keeping accreditation on track when stadium use changes

More often than not, stadiums are built to house sports clubs and host sporting fixtures. Week in week out, stadium operators are able to use the same credentialing software, access control zones, user groups, badge design and accreditation forms.

But what happens when the venue use changes? Or different tenants take over? Large and new stadiums are now multi-space venues that are routinely hired out to third parties for concerts, theatrical productions, awards ceremonies and corporate hospitality. This brings new event organisers, contractors, access zones, badges...

Regardless of the tenant, stadiums must still be secure. So make sure that the accreditation system installed for your regular timetable of sporting fixtures is adaptable to cover events held by third parties.

If you work within a multi-space venue, there are some key things to consider concerning accreditation when your stadium is used by someone else.

Contractors will change. For example, concerts will need AV companies, riggers, stage build crews...if your accreditation software utilises group accounts for contractors to submit security documentation, then set these new user groups up well in advance and make sure new contractors are au-fait with the procedure and documents required before you need to start processing applications.

Your access control zones may change. You might suddenly have backstage areas, dressing rooms, VIP suites, pitch-side bars...Top up high security areas with a mobile access control solution to make sure all of your workers and staff are in the right spaces.

And pretty obvious but your badge artwork will change. As will the access zones to include, badge types, and perhaps security features. Liaise with the concert organiser and security teams well in advance to get this right.

NOTES ON: Accreditation challenges for tournament organisers

When you think about who needs access to a sporting venue in addition to ticket holders, the numbers can be staggering. The 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup processed close to 80,000 accreditations.

And tournaments present a unique set of challenges for accreditation managers.

Intense media attention and the presence of large crowds in restricted areas have made sporting events prominent terrorism targets. Tournament organisers have had to commit to heightened security measure not just inside the stadiums and arenas, but also in fan zones and high-traffic areas for people and vehicles.

The number of temporary workers and volunteers to accredit at a multi-venue tournament can be an impossible task without a refined and strict accreditation procedure. The FIFA World Cup in Russia hosted 64 football matches across 12 venues. Every single game would have needed thousands of temporary workers and volunteers across multiple security, hospitality, catering and stewarding teams. The Olympic Games in Rio employed more than 70,000 volunteers.

And venue infrastructure can pose operational challenges. You need to get people into each venue safely and efficiently, but rarely do tournament organisers operate the venues. Stadiums are hired along with whatever infrastructure is in place at the time. Wifi connections, ICT systems, venue managers, security teams, access control technology and contractors will often be different each time.

A central online accreditation system that can be used by all contractors, venue and security teams across all stadiums and matches will solve many of these challenges.

NOTES ON: How accreditation keeps you on the right side of the law

Operating a large venue or organising an event that hosts tens of thousands of people brings huge responsibility. From GDPR compliance to preventing illegal workers, here are four ways the accreditation process can help keep you on the right side of the law.

Illegal workers

For large venues and events, there is no way of avoiding the employment of contractors and temporary staff and this leaves organisers vulnerable to illegal workers. The current fine in the UK is up to £20,000 per person for employing illegal workers and that includes students with expired visas, as well as people who work on a visit visa. So it's imperative to be sure that everyone working within your stadium has a right to work.

Identities must be verified, immigration status confirmed and it's important that contractors employ the same level of screening. An accreditation platform will provide an incredibly efficient way to collect this information by allowing applicants to securely submit documents for further verification. It will also produce alerts when documents are due to expire or need updating.

Duty of care

Venue operators are obligated to protect members of the public from terrorists and provide a safe and secure environment for staff and workers.

Use an accreditation to assign security levels, access zone privileges and produce badges with this information clearly visible. Scan badges or check details each and every time someone needs to access a secure zone. This ensures that restricted areas are kept secure and that only persons with valid permits are allowed access.

Data protection

GDPR imposes strict requirements on the way data is collected, stored and processed. At a basic level, GDPR requires you to know where all of the personal information and data you have collected from people is stored. Businesses must consolidate all of their documents holding personal data in a secure space or cloud storage. It also recommends proper encryption to protect data information from exposure and unauthorized access.

If you are collecting accreditation applications via email, or have spreadsheets flying in from contractors, you could be breaking the rules. Accreditation software will take this headache away by allowing workers and contractors to submit registrations through a secure system, record all processing activities and store data in an encrypted environment.

Data collection

The personal data you collect must be 'adequate, relevant and not excessive.' The accreditation process invariably means asking for sensitive information and documentation, but the information you need from someone needing access to a restricted area may be very different to the information you need from a steward outside the stadium. An accreditation system should allow you to build different application forms for different groups, meaning that your accreditation forms are only collecting relevant information.

Accreditation in a Crisis: COVID-19

Well at time of writing this report, the sporting and live events industry is up against it. But one of the reasons why we love working in the events business, is that the people that work in these industries are resilient and problem solvers. We have been working with our clients to explore the ways in which we can use our existing platform (with a tweak here or there) to help them confidently plan for a new kind of event season and support them with the huge operational challenges this presents.

We've pulled some of these requirements together, and here are a few ways that your accreditation procedure can be adapted to track your workforce, contractors, media and broadcasters, keep symptomatic people out of your events, shield the vulnerable and manage new venue capacities; restrict access to areas, and trace who has been in close proximity if there is a reported case.

1. Collect useful information

You might want to know if your workers have knowingly been in close contact with someone who has had the virus, undertaken international travel, are symptomatic, visited a high-risk area, or have already tested positive. Add these questions and request temperature readings, medical information and documents to your application forms, allowing you to reject those that may pose a health risk.

2. Invitations and notifications

Send out invitations and notifications to your workforce and contractors to submit certain information daily, to communicate detailed instructions for the event such as procedures they need to follow at the venue, and any inductions they need to undertake prior to arrival.

3. Issue certificates of immunity

If the government deems that an immunity certificate or a health passport is the way forward and someone has already tested positive for antibodies, then you can add this information into the person's record and add an icon to their badge, or issue a certificate of immunity to confirm they are not a COVID-19 threat.

4. Track and trace with access control

Scan all passes with an access control solution at each control point to give you a record of exactly who has been where and at what time – vital if someone at the event tests positive and you need to trace those with whom they have been in close contact.

5. Manage capacities

Social distancing may mean you have to limit the number of people you have in particular areas, set strict access zones and put a limit on the number of applications that can be approved for each area to avoid overcrowding. Set access by groups so only people who need to be in the areas are, and link this with access control scanning to control movement and adhere to social distancing rules.

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