

STANFORD MOBILE TICKET SALES RISE

Stanford University has seen the number of football tickets sold through mobile jump 33 percent after overhauling its mobile web platform this season.

The Cardinal worked with its software provider, Spectra Ticketing, to revamp the mobile web design for its ticket buyers by using larger buttons, a map of the stadium, and new searches for events, dates and prices that made the mobile website easier to navigate.

Stanford initiated the request for a better mobile experience after realizing that its mobile ticket sales weren't growing like many other e-commerce sites. That was especially troubling since Stanford's fans are considered among the most tech-savvy because of the school's location in Silicon Valley.

Once Spectra created a new design template for ticket buying and Stanford blessed it earlier this year, Spectra switched all of its 120 FBS clients to it in time for football season. A month into the season, the percentage of tickets sold via mobile across all of Spectra's clients has doubled this season, rising from 10 percent the year before to 20 percent this year.

"As we looked at e-commerce in general before the season, we saw purchases on mobile going up everywhere else," said Tommy Gray, Stanford's associate athletic director for external relations. "But we weren't seeing any corresponding upticks in our mobile ticket purchases here. So that raised our eyebrows and made us take a closer look at the whole mobile experience, and it frankly wasn't very good."

Stanford, specifically, has benefited from upticks in several other metrics, especially conversion rate. Based on this season's sales, the number of people who visit the Cardinal's mobile ticketing site and follow through with a purchase is up 37 percent versus last year. That's an important category because ticket buyers have traditionally shopped via mobile, but bought on a desktop or laptop, Spectra said.

Across all of its schools, Spectra continues to see mobile purchases on the climb — conversion rates have gone up 8 percent. The average order value across the schools is up 19 percent, showing that fans are willing to make larger purchases via mobile.

"We've made it take fewer clicks and just, in general, easier to use," Spectra COO Kim Damron said. "We did eight different designs before we got to the version we're using at Stanford. The revenue and conversion stats are all up, and those are the home-run stats for us."

At Stanford, mobile visits are up 14 percent and ticket revenue through mobile is up 17 percent.

One of the categories that most interested Spectra was the average order value, Damron said, because consumers don't typically use mobile for larger purchases. Stanford's average order value is up 8 percent.

Tickets are still delivered in an email or with a bar code on the site.

The next step that Stanford hopes to take with Spectra is to integrate the mobile buying experience into the school's Go Stanford mobile app. Currently, Stanford fans can click on a link inside the app that takes them to the mobile web home for tickets. But Gray hopes it can be fully integrated into the app.

"The app is more responsive and just a better experience," he said. "And after a purchase, the ticket's bar code can simply live inside the app. That's something we'd like to see."