

# Gateway Ticketing Systems

## Case Study



## Aquarium of the Pacific Saves Time and Boosts Efficiency with The Galaxy<sup>®</sup> Interface to the Raiser's Edge<sup>®</sup>

**Aquarium of the Pacific**  
Location: Long Beach, CA

### Key Challenges

- Needed a solution to synchronize membership data between two databases
- Wanted enhanced membership validation functionality at front gate
- Required more detailed information about member relationships
- Wanted customer's membership status to be visible in Order Entry

### Solution

The Galaxy Interface to the Raiser's Edge provided:

- Synchronization of Galaxy and The Raiser's Edge
- Ability to scan a member card and view and edit a snapshot of the member's record
- System installation & implementation within 8 weeks

### Business Results

- Seamless transfer of data between existing database, Galaxy, and The Raiser's Edge
- Simplified data maintenance
- More sales in less time using fewer resources

The Aquarium of the Pacific, located in Long Beach, California, features a collection of over 12,500 animals representing almost 1,000 different species. It focuses on the Pacific Ocean, highlighting three major areas: Southern California and Baja, Northern Pacific, and Tropical Pacific.

The aquarium has 1.3 million visitors each year; over 190,000 of those visitors are school age children. The facility has a volunteer staff of approximately 725 people who work in departments such as education, administration, husbandry and scuba diving.

### The Problem: Two Separate Databases for Membership Records

Prior to making the switch to Galaxy, AOP used another system for their ticketing, scheduling, and membership products. However, the membership development department uses The Raiser's Edge (RE) for their high-end members and donors. Working with two separate databases was both inefficient and taxing on limited resources.

To solve this problem, AOP began looking for either one system for all their ticketing and membership data or a system that had an interface to RE. With their previous setup, the IT department had to perform daily and weekly downloads between systems to ensure that the data between them was synchronized. This took time away from other, more pressing IT issues.

In addition to streamlining their databases, AOP also wanted a solution that had particular features that would facilitate the sharing of data between the ticketing, scheduling, and membership system and RE.

### The Solution Had to Have These Features

AOP had a list of features that they required the new system have:

#### 1) Enhanced Membership Card Validation

When scanning a member card, instead of just feeding back a valid or invalid status, an operator must be able to view or edit a snapshot of the member's record.

### The Solution Had to Have These Features, *continued*

#### 2) Membership Status Viewable in Galaxy's Order Entry

Operators must be able to view and update member information, membership status, relationships, and demographics in Order Entry. (*Galaxy's Order Entry is designed for advance ticket sales and bookings.*)

#### 3) Ability to Update Relationships in RE Through Galaxy

Including: Spouse/Partner; Parent-Child; Gift-giver-Gift-recipient

### What Were the Next Steps in Finding the Right Solution?

AOP gained a better understanding of how Galaxy interfaced with RE by speaking with other Galaxy and RE users through the Galaxy Interface to the Raiser's Edge focus group held by Gateway. Nicole Meek, Manager of Guest Services at AOP said, "After sharing information with some of the participants in the focus group, we realized that some of our requirements were similar to the requests made by current Galaxy users."

### An Additional Feature Was Born Of the Installation Process

"No change-over is going to be without challenges," Meek said. "Once we were live and things were chugging along, Gateway was very responsive to problems we faced. We all discovered that it would be advantageous to prioritize the data flowing back and forth in order to keep the data as up-to-date as possible. So a feature was added to allow users to set a high or low priority flag on records that need to go to the front of the queue," she said.

### Results: Selling More Tickets in Less Time with Fewer Operators

Meek reports that the Galaxy system is a great improvement over their previous setup. "The high-speed credit card processing is a godsend. We're able to sell tickets faster with fewer operators. The fact that the system is SQL is wonderful, too. Our previous system wasn't SQL, and fixing data was a constant challenge. Our IT department can now focus on other issues, because regular downloads between systems is no longer necessary," she said.

### Would She Recommend It?

When Meek was asked what she would tell other aquariums who are considering a new revenue management solution, she replied, "I believe Galaxy is the best product out there on the market for Aquariums, Zoos, and Museums, and so many organizations use The Raiser's Edge that it makes the most sense to use the Galaxy Interface to the Raiser's Edge."



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**-Nicole Meek,  
Manager, Guest  
Services**

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