



Historic Rail Museum Relies on Doubleknot for All Online and On-Site Sales

Switching from Altru to Doubleknot helped increase bookings and donations

About the Nevada Northern Railway Museum

A registered National Historic Landmark located in Ely, Nevada, the Nevada Northern Railway Museum (NNRY) maintains the original railway locomotives, rolling stock, track, passenger station and buildings that served the historic copper mining region of Central Nevada for over a century. As the best-preserved example of a standard-gauge short-line in North America, NNRY has received multiple tourism awards and has been featured in seven episodes of The History Channel show *American Restorations*.

The Challenge

Visitors from around the world arrive at the Nevada Northern Railway Historical Site each year to view the machinery and grounds, enjoy a variety of rail excursions and participate in hands-on experiences that range from the two-hour “Be the Engineer” option to a week-long program where participants work on the railroad in every capacity. NNRY sought an integrated solution that met their unique requirements for ticketing, reservations, memberships, donations and merchandise sales, including reservations and discounts for multi-night lodging.

After using Altru for six years, NNRY was ready to find an integrated solution that better met their needs. Nevada Northern Railway Foundation advisory board member David Raber led the project to evaluate, select and implement a new system for all online and on-site sales. As a technology executive with extensive experience in museum ticketing, Raber knew that selecting the right system would lay the groundwork for NNRY’s continued growth and success.

“We needed a solution that could handle capacity management for our excursion trains and programs no matter where the ticket was purchased,” says Raber. “It’s important that online sales and cash register sales use the same capacity information so we don’t get overbooked.”

In addition, NNRY wanted to sell their popular gift shop merchandise online using a single inventory system so the total product inventory would be automatically updated no matter where the purchase is made. Because Altru doesn’t support online merchandise sales, NNRY was losing sales opportunities with every online transaction.

Other requirements included support for lodging and reservations for overnight programs; integrated email marketing, automatic waitlist management, payment schedules with automatic billing notifications and support for multiple kinds of discounts and promotions. After a period of evaluation, Raber and NNRY selected Doubleknot. “Doubleknot really understands our business,” says Raber.

Nevada Northern Railway Museum’s integrated donation request has quadrupled the organization’s online donations.



To book a reservation, visitors choose an option and select dates from the always-up-to-date availability calendar.





The Nevada Northern Railway Museum



The Solution

NNRY's new solution went live at the end of April, 2017, with Doubleknot powering all online and on-site ticketing, reservations, memberships and donations. At the ticketing desk, Doubleknot's Sales Station POS cash registers use the same database to ensure accurate capacity management, accounting and reporting. And, when visitors purchase a membership online or at the museum, they immediately receive their member benefits (including discounts) on their purchase, even if the new membership is part of the same purchase.

According to Raber, NNRY has significantly increased online donations using Doubleknot. "Our online donations have more than quadrupled, and that's attributable to Doubleknot supporting a donation request during the online checkout process." NNRY also appreciates how easy it is for customers to make reservations for overnight programs. "Our bookings for lodging and overnight experiences were up by 33 percent in the first three months that we used Doubleknot, and that's attributable entirely to Doubleknot," says Raber. "Our visitors can book multiple nights without a problem, and the flexibility of Doubleknot's forms helps us get all the information we need for each reservation." Other benefits include:

- **Greater support for their sales process.** With Doubleknot's flexible sales and checkout process, NNRY has precise control over upsell and cross-sell options and custom forms to capture information that can range from meal preferences to permission slips, disclaimers and liability waivers. "We are seeing a significant uptick in the percentage of revenue booked online vs over the phone," says Raber. "We attribute this to Doubleknot's checkout process being more customizable, so more sales are completed on-line." Raber also notes that "[Doubleknot] understands group bookings much better than Altru."
- **Responsive customer support.** Doubleknot's support team worked closely with NNRY during implementation and continues to do so after launch. According to NNRY President Mark Bassett, "How software is supported separates a first-class operation from a so-so operation, and Doubleknot is a first class-operation."
- **Better email marketing.** Raber reports that Altru's email marketing engine provides no analytics on email messages. Doubleknot's built-in reports for email include click-through analysis, message status summary, time-of-day analysis and data about each recipient who opened the message.
- **Improved Google Analytics.** "We struggled to fully implement revenue tracking in Google Analytics with Altru," says Raber. "Doubleknot has it built in. That alone is an amazing benefit."

Says Raber, "We are very happy with Doubleknot. It does everything that Altru does, and some things quite a bit better. The bottom line is that we would never consider returning to Altru, and I can't imagine any organization that would not be better off with Doubleknot." Bassett agrees, saying "We are very happy with our switch from Altru to Doubleknot."

Purchasing an Nevada Northern Railway excursion ticket on a mobile device



Purchasing a gift membership with options for a personal message and a future delivery date



Learn More

To learn more about Doubleknot's solutions for museums and other visitor-serving organizations, call (408) 971-9120, email us at sales@doubleknot.com or visit hello.doubleknot.com.