# Case Study

**THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF GRAY'S INN**
**BANQUETING AND PRIVATE EVENTS**

## Gray's Inn breaks with tradition to benefit from a centralised, cloud-based events management solution

The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn is one of London's hidden treasures. It was founded over six hundred years ago, and offers an oasis of calm steeped in centuries of tradition. Gray's Inn is situated on High Holborn, at the City End, the nearest tube station is Chancery Lane on the Central Line or Holborn is a short walk.

As one of the four Inns of Court, it has a rich and colourful history in maintaining the independence, quality and integrity of the Bar and the Judiciary. Today, Gray's Inn offers the finest facilities and most impressive corporate conference and private function services in a magnificent and welcoming setting. This prestigious and exquisite venue is available for a wide variety of corporate and private events. The Inn has 8 spaces from The Hall, to the Large Pension Room, to 5 acres of secluded gardens "The Walks."

# Gray's Inn breaks with tradition to benefit from a centralised, cloud-based events management solution

## Key Challenge - Moving from paper-based event management to improve efficiency & reporting

Sales and Marketing Manager at Gray's Inn, Catherine Ortmayer explains, "In the past we were using a colour-coded paper-based system combined with applications such as Word, Outlook and Excel. Although this worked, it was far from super-efficient and involved a high duplication of effort and time-consuming activities such as inputting of data into different systems. We also wanted to create more in-depth management reports that would help us better understand areas such as occupancy and conversion rates, which in turn would contribute to a more strategic plan for marketing in the future."

## Comparing options – 'Priava was simpler, faster and most accessible to use'

The events team in conjunction with the IT manager reviewed over 6 products from different vendors, two of which were cloud-based. Catherine comments on why they selected Priava Cloud, "We could see the clear advantages of a cloud solution in that it would require no capital investment in terms of servers or in-house IT maintenance. As a former user of Events Perfect in the past, I was familiar and comfortable with Priava as a company, but in particular it was the ease of use of the system which convinced us they would be the best choice. Compared with the competition Priava was simpler, faster and more accessible to use." As The Inn has its annual shut-down in August, it made sense to move all the events records to the new system during this period, before their busy 'events' period began again in September. Within a month, the Priava team set up all the back-end data necessary, all the team were trained and the system then went live.

Priava took care of the set up of the back end of the system with rooms, capacities, pricing menus etc.



All our datacentres are ISO 27001 certified with PCI compliant technology infrastructure meeting the PCI Data DSS Level 1 standard. Our EU customers can rest assured Priava complies with the Data Protection Directive and General Data Protection Regulation.

> "Already we are seeing a significant difference compared with what we had before. With the old system, every booking was a laborious and long-winded process that entailed entering, recording and juggling information."

## The Results – "A significant difference"

Even though Gray's Inn has only been using the software for a few months they have seen some significant benefits says Catherine. "Already we are seeing a significant difference compared with what we had before. With the old system, every booking was a laborious and long-winded process that entailed entering, recording and juggling information between both paper records and various applications.



We've been providing effective venue and event management solutions for more than two decades. When you choose Priava, you are giving your business solutions to problems that are tried and tested.

With Priava, a new enquiry is created immediately within a centralised system. If we need to hold and then confirm a space this just takes a few clicks, whereas before we had to re-type details. We can also now ensure there are no double bookings and no longer need to rely on manual checks and observation. With Priava, everyone that needs it has access to the system and the data is always live and up to date." As well as the events sales team, The Inn also provides access to the other personnel from the Chief Executive through to the Chefs, Porters and Housekeeping, so they can keep abreast of all events and their specific responsibilities. Other Inn departments also have access to check the events diary. Generating quotes is also easier with Priava, "If we were organising a canapé reception using our old system we would have to manually type in all the menus, wines and prices every time, now we simply use the templates that are already there in the system" says Catherine.

## Optimising and converting opportunities into bookings

From a sales perspective, the new Priava solution has helped The Inn to track and secure opportunities more efficiently and also to monitor the success of marketing campaigns. Catherine says, "We can regularly update the team members with current opportunities so these are followed up promptly, leading to higher conversion rates. At the same time, through reporting, we can analyse what advertising campaigns have been successful due to the volume and type of spaces being booked. The additional management information really helps us to make more informed decisions about how

we plan our future marketing strategy. It's also far easier to simply run off reports for the management team on specific criteria such as the split between Internal/External events for the whole year." The Priava team has developed a series of customised reports for The Inn, which are now used on a regular basis.

## "We are using Priava from the minute we arrive in to the minute we leave"

Catherine says the system was well-received by staff, "At first there was some reluctance and fear of whether they would be able to get used to a new system. This was not simply a change in processes but also a shift in culture. However, once the training was completed and we got used to using it, there has been no looking back. Within the banqueting department we are using Priava from the minute we come in to the minute we go."

"The Inn is very traditional in many ways, but I think with the support of both our own in-house team together with Priava the transition went very smoothly."

Asked if the team would be prepared to return to the previous system Catherine responded, "They'd probably cry if they had to go back to the paper system."

## Summary

The benefits that Gray's Inn has achieved through the use of Priava Cloud so far include:

- Increased productivity of events team (a 60% rise is predicted within first 12 months)
- Faster and easier to use than previous system
- Saves time with faster reporting
- Ability to mulit-task – flip between different screens and availability of spaces
- Management reporting creates greater ROI for marketing campaigns
- Higher conversion rates
- Easy Management Information for strategic planning
- System can be accessed anywhere – can confirm bookings when out of office

Catherine concludes,
"The main benefits of the new system are productivity, efficiency and accessibility of information."
"The longer we use the system, the more efficient we become."
Favourite features:
"Our favourite features are the universal search button which allows us to find information using any key word, and the ready-made reports."

## Priava

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