

How Flexibility Fuels Evolution at Sonoma State University

4 MIN READ



For over 13 years, Sonoma State University has relied on AudienceView Unlimited to power their ticketing, event management, and numerous other campus operations. Megan Christensen, the Associate Director of Entrepreneurial Activities at Sonoma State, has been there from the start and remains deeply involved with all things ticketing. Talking about why they initially chose AudienceView Unlimited, Megan recalls, “We implemented AudienceView Unlimited specifically because it was white-label with micro-sites and custom branding, while keeping everything on the back end combined with a unified staff in one system. We needed to keep our systems segmented to serve various departments but also combined enough to work well together.”

From the very beginning, Sonoma State needed a platform that wasn’t just about selling tickets—it had to be flexible enough to handle multiple departments with their own unique needs. Whether it was their performing arts department or athletics, each area required customization while staying united under one system. And that’s exactly what they found with AudienceView Unlimited.

Thinking back to their final decision criteria in selecting a partner in 2012, Megan states that “AudienceView Unlimited gave us the flexibility to integrate with other platforms we needed. Along with our Ticketing Office, our Finance team was happy about it, our IT team was happy about it, and our PCI team was happy about it.” It wasn’t just a ticketing system—it became the backbone of countless operations across the campus.

Keeping Up With The Students

Let’s face it: students today live in a tech-first world. The days of paper tickets and slow processes are long gone, and Sonoma State needed a system that could keep up with this digital shift. “We can’t expect students to fax us something,” Megan laughs. “We’re a university campus, and our students always want the newest technology. Being able to deliver mobile digital tickets and enable technology like Apple Wallet has allowed us to meet our students where they are and bring them up to the next level.”



The move toward mobile-first technology was essential to stay relevant with students who are accustomed to instant digital experiences. Thanks to AudienceView Unlimited, Sonoma State made that transition smoothly, offering mobile tickets, Apple Wallet integration, and cashless payments, which Megan says are now a must. “AudienceView Unlimited has leveraged us to be able to go cashless,” she explains. “It’s hugely impactful for us for two reasons. First, it drastically reduces the people-hours required to run things, which really helps us on the back end, especially when we’re struggling with budgets. Second, nowadays, university students see cash and panic. They’re not used to paying with cash and want to pay with technology.”

AudienceView Unlimited’s continuous evolution not only keeps Sonoma State ahead of the tech curve, but also saves them time, money, and resources.

Prioritizing Security and Protecting Revenue

In a world where security is more important than ever, Sonoma State needed a system that would keep their operations safe, especially when it came to revenue protection. Megan shares, “It’s been huge for us from a security standpoint. AudienceView Unlimited ensures that only our students are able to get student discounts through single sign-on, which ensures we’re protecting our revenue.”

This feature helps keep tickets and discounts from getting into the wrong hands, ensuring that only legitimate students and faculty can access special deals and discounts. But it’s not just about security; it’s also about making the process easy for everyone involved. “We can create specific links forcing login prior to showing them an event,” Megan explains. “This has been especially helpful for our student clubs. Since students are already logged into SSU on their computers, it’s a quick and seamless online experience, ensuring the right people are getting through at the right time.”

This has made the entire process smoother, cutting down on customer support requests and freeing up staff to focus on more important tasks. By integrating these security features into their ticketing system, AudienceView Unlimited allowed Sonoma State to protect their bottom line while making things easier for both students and staff.

With cutting-edge technology, new ways for students to buy tickets, and single-sign on capabilities that ensure eligibility for discounts, AudienceView Unlimited has helped Sonoma State University grow their average ticket price by over 30% since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Campus-Wide Platform for Everyone

Over the years, AudienceView Unlimited has expanded its role beyond just ticketing for events. Today, the platform is truly the backbone of their entire ecosystem, and used by nearly every department at Sonoma State. “Our entire campus has come to use Unlimited,” Megan says. “Our center for performing arts, which includes our theater, arts, dance, and music, our student clubs, athletics, the Green Music Center, and really anybody else on campus—including miscellaneous setups for things like proctor tests, for example.” Even the art department uses the platform to sell materials to students, and the flexibility extends to hosting outside groups as a rental venue, such as the San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus, who rely on it for ticketing and event management.

No matter the department or the need, the platform has found a place at Sonoma State. And it’s not just about selling tickets—it’s about helping the university manage all sorts of activities and processes, whether that’s proctoring exams or managing club events. AudienceView Unlimited has become an indispensable tool across campus.

Making Smarter Decisions with Better Data

The insights provided by AudienceView Unlimited go beyond just ticket sales—they help Megan and her team make more strategic decisions. “It’s not just ticket sales. AudienceView Unlimited allows me to make better business decisions,” Megan explains. She recalls how the platform’s reporting features helped streamline their operations in a tangible way. “I was able to do an analysis on the timing of our ticket sales compared to the event time, and find that 30 minutes after an event started, we were overstaffed. Utilizing the reporting in AudienceView Unlimited, we were able to adjust our business hours and save money on staffing and in other areas.”

On the financial side, the platform’s integration with their accounting systems has helped make operations smoother across the board. “The fact that money comes in through AudienceView Unlimited on Monday and is recorded in our general ledger on Tuesday just makes all of the other operations move along more efficiently,” Megan says. “We can get things done and get money to the right people, and at the same time, we’re serving our community in a way that we weren’t able to before.”

Staying with AudienceView Unlimited for the Long Haul

After more than a decade with AudienceView Unlimited, what’s kept Sonoma State from switching to another platform? For Megan, it boils down to one key thing: flexibility. “Hands down, it’s the flexibility of the system,” she says. “It’s the fact that I can manipulate the system in any way, I need to accomplish any business model or process.”

This flexibility means they can make quick changes whenever needed. Whether it’s updating ticket prices, changing event dates, or even adjusting business hours on the fly, Sonoma State has the power to pivot. “The ability to make any change we need, in an instant, has been incredible,” Megan shares. “Being able to change ticket prices, event dates, and even business hours on the fly really enables us to accomplish our business

needs.”

For Megan and her team, the business intelligence capabilities of the platform have also been a game-changer. With accurate, easy-to-read data available at any time, they’ve been able to make smarter business decisions that have real impact. “The nerd in me loves all of the business intelligence capabilities,” Megan admits. “The ability to get information out of the system and easily read the data, being able to pull it at any point and know that it’s accurate has been a game-changer.”

In the end, it’s not just about managing events or selling tickets. For Sonoma State, AudienceView Unlimited has become an invaluable tool that helps them run their entire campus more efficiently, while giving them the data and insights they need to grow and the flexibility to pivot and evolve into the future.

