



Bright IT solutions
from Data Factors



Data Factors is spurred on to win

Data Factors named Innovator of the Month for its Java-based ticket booking system for Tottenham Hotspur

Box office applications specialist Data Factors has been named the winner of the April CRN/Syscap Approved Technology Innovator of the Month award for its design and delivery of a real-time web-based booking system for Tottenham Hotspur Football Club.

The Suffolk-based company – which has only 15 staff in total – developed the Java-based system for the football club’s owner, ENIC, over the past year, after deciding to put its ticket booking system onto the web.

The company now supplies Spurs with a managed ASP service through which club supporters both book seats online and view the precise angle from which they will see the game.

By logging onto the web site (at www.seat-booker.net/thfc), the user downloads a small Java applet that displays a view of the seating plan of available seats. By clicking on any particular seat, fans are given the view they will see of the game. “If you don’t go to a ground regularly it’s very important to know where to sit so that you get a decent view,” said Pat Bernstein, managing director of Data Factors.

The system then updates the information every five seconds so that supporters can see which seats have just been booked and look for others.

Simon Clark, Data Factors’ marketing director, and Phil Baldwin, chief technical officer at the company, were presented with the award at the club’s White Hart Lane ground.

Matthew Collecott, finance director at ENIC, said he expects the system, which went live in March, to be a big hit with Tottenham fans. “So much of what we do relates to us getting tickets to people expediently, and that’s why this is such a beautiful solution,” he said.

As well as enabling fans to book their seats for the game, the system will also help Spurs to deal with the surge in demand when tickets for big matches at White Hart Lane go on sale. The online facility will enable the club to cope with demand more easily, and as the seat bookings are updated so regularly, every fan will have the best chance of getting the seat that suits them best.

Another advantage for the club is that the service is managed and run by Data Factors, and Spurs pay only for tickets sold. The Data Factors



Colin Barker, editor of *Computing*, Phil Baldwin, Simon Clark and Phil White.

Below: the Spurs web site

online booking system is believed to be the first in the UK to allow supporters to see a view of the pitch from each individual seat.

The Spurs system is for members only; the club has about 30,000 of them and often has 12,000 seats available for its games. Supporters of visiting sides can also use the system to check the view of the game from their allocated seats, but they are unable to book tickets online at present.

Data Factors is now planning to take its system to a wider market. The company has a patent pending on the technology it has developed for the system and Bernstein is now targeting the lucrative US market.

Phillip White, sales director at the award's sponsor, technology finance and leasing company Syscap, said the system shows that the scheme recognises innovation in suppliers of all sizes. "Data Factors is a small solutions provider but it has done a fantastic job for ENIC by developing a system that innovates in two areas: by providing real-time seat availability and the 'view from seat' facility, and delivering clear benefits and cost savings for the customer," he said.

White added that this is exactly the kind of solution that the Technology Innovator of the Month award designed to encourage. "We applaud Data Factors for its work and we would like to urge more users to put their resellers and solutions providers forward. Where technology is being used to best effect – to achieve real benefits and maximum returns to the customer – it should be recognised and encouraged."



SUMMARY

- » **Data Factors has won this month's Approved Technology Innovator award for its design and delivery of an online booking system for Tottenham Hotspur Football Club.**
- » **The Spurs system is for members only, although visiting fans can also use it to check their view of the game.**
- » **Data Factors is planning to take the system to a wider market and is targeting the lucrative US market.**



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