



Article



wicket

Evolv and Wicket Software Combine to Help Venues Address the Ticketing Bottleneck

The surge of fans entering sports venues often proves to be an operational challenge. Even when security screening is streamlined using solutions from Evolv like Express and eXpedite, ticket scanning can create bottlenecks that negatively affect the fan experience. Paper tickets were once the most common culprit.

But even in today's fully mobile environments, the scanning process still can fail to cope with the volume of attendees, leading to queues and fan frustration. These issues are exacerbated when venues try to combat ticket fraud and scalping by performing identity verification.

How the Cleveland Browns are Using Wicket + Evolv

Huntington Bank Field, the home of the Cleveland Browns, overcame these difficult operational challenges. In a move that revolutionized the traditional entry process, the stadium shifted from legacy ticketing systems to touchless ticketing powered by Wicket Software facial authentication technology. The Haslam Sports Group (HSG), which operates the venue, deployed Wicket Software in 2020 during the COVID pandemic, and has been utilizing Wicket in conjunction with Evolv since 2022.

Wicket Software transforms the ticketing experience for fans by eliminating mobile tickets. Instead, Wicket employs facial authentication to confirm guests' tickets in a process that takes less than a second. Wicket is highly accurate (99.76% accuracy across all ethnicities, making secondary scans virtually nonexistent), opt-in, and fully encrypted for privacy. The system works by pairing a ticket with a guest's face, allowing quick and seamless entry and accommodating multiple tickets with a single scan. The system can even be used for fan payments and age verification and works just as well for staff and other credential holders, who can use their face instead of key cards and credentials.

So too does Evolv Express transform the guest entry experience, with the objective of significantly increasing processing throughput and reducing the need for guests to empty pockets and bags.

The two systems are ideal complements, since the complete entry experience can only be as fast as its slowest component. Using the systems in tandem does not require hardware or software integration. It is simply a matter of stacking them together at ingress points—something that can be easily accomplished given each platform's small and flexible footprint.

Best Practices for Getting Full Value Out of Wicket and Evolv Joint Deployments

As the Evolv, Wicket, and HSG teams assess lessons learned from the Browns deployment, and a similar operation at Lower.com Field in Columbus, OH (home of the HSG-owned Columbus Crew Major League Soccer team), the three groups have identified best practices for other organizations seeking a joint Evolv and Wicket Software deployment.

- Once fans sign up for Wicket, it is important to communicate where they should go for ingress and what they need to bring with them (or not bring with them any longer).
- The portability of Evolv and Wicket Software systems enables venues to optimize entry flows to align with their specific setup and configurations. Ticketing-first and security-first configurations work with equal efficacy.
- Because Express systems are designed to scan thousands of visitors per hour, four to eight Wicket sensors per Express system is ideal to maintain a corresponding pace.
- Ticketing scanners should be deployed at least 40 feet from the Evolv Express® system to ensure a backup in ticketing does not adversely impact screening.
- Clear signage about bag policies, prohibited items, and other logistics is critical.

Browns Fans Embrace the Approach

Approximately 43,000 Browns season ticket accounts have enrolled in the Wicket Software program, which is called Express Access. At every game, about 13% of all attendees come through Wicket. Fan feedback has been very positive, with the process scoring a 9.6 out of 10 on fan survey. "It is a combination of Evolv and Wicket technologies that make this possible," says Brandon Covert, the Browns' Vice President of Information Technology.

Potential Use Beyond Sports Venues

The potential applications of Wicket's facial authentication and Evolv's advanced security screening technologies extend beyond sports venues. For example, theaters, performing art centers, and event centers can harness this system to streamline access for their patrons. Just as with stadiums, arenas, and ballparks, the key to success is just the desire to deliver an optimal experience for every guest.

For more details on the deployments of Evolv and Wicket at Huntington Bank Field and Lower.com Field, [download the case studies](#). To get in touch with Wicket, visit www.wicketsoft.com/contact. To get in touch with Evolv, visit <https://evolv.com/contact>.