



SWIPE CARD SYSTEMS: QUESTIONS FOR CLUBS TO RESEARCH

Before investing in a smart card system you need to smarten up your knowledge of what they can do for you and your members.

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More and more clubs today are making the decision to install smart systems within their club. The club secretary is often asked to obtain all the relevant details so that the committee can come to a decision on whether to go ahead and secondly what system to install. This article makes no attempt to look at the merits of different systems that are currently available but sets out the procedure the secretary should follow to obtain as many facts as possible so that he can advise his committee.

Try to impress upon your committee the need to research fully the different systems available so that the club is seen to be spending its money wisely.

Firstly you need to ascertain exactly what the club requires and ask yourself the following questions:

- ✎ Does the club have a high percentage of car park members?
- ✎ With which services in the club will members be able to use their cards?
- ✎ Do you wish to include security within the system, such as using the card for your members to gain access to the clubhouse?

You will need to decide whether to make the system compulsory or not. With security included, the system will need to be compulsory. With an optional system, it is unlikely you will get much response from those who do not use the services, only from the regulars. If you make it compulsory then you will need to call a Special/Extraordinary meeting to get the approval of the membership. This normally will only need approval on a simple majority vote in favour.

If possible try to include both bar and catering services within the system. If you engage the services of a franchise caterer this may create a few problems but you should be able to get round these. Another area in which the cards might be used is in the Professional's shop as this would be a further chance to encourage more members to take advantage of the service that could be provided. What, if any, discount would depend on the Professional but the system could also be used for entering club competitions and paying for green fees for members' guests. Most clubs give members a discount of between 5-25% on purchases and these can be adjusted on different items sold.

In some cases you may wish to provide a service for visiting societies who will pay up front for so many cards for their members on the day which they can then use in the clubhouse. A simple deposit on each card should ensure that they are all passed back to you at the end of the day.

You will need specialised tills for these systems, so remember that you must have sufficient points installed otherwise you will have both members and staff complaining about slow service.

Before embarking on this project you need to look carefully at all the services provided by the club to see in which areas Smart Cards could be used, not only to the benefit of the Club but also the membership.

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