

## AVOID “A COMPLETE NIGHTMARE”

### RAISE FUNDS FOR YOUR CHARITY WITH CP TERMINALS ONLINE PAYMENTS AND CHIP & PIN



*“We found having the Chip & Pin facility ensured that money could be taken on the evening (raffle prizes, auction bids) as well as allowing our guests to use their credit cards to purchase drinks at the bar with minimal effort.” – BEDSA Ball Committee ”*

Brinkworth Earl Danby's School Association has for 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive years held an annual ball to raise funds for the lower and upper schools in the village of Brinkworth, Wiltshire. In 2008 funds raised from the ball provided new computers and a play area for the upper school. In 2009 with the credit crunch well and truly upon us the ball committee had to be careful that sufficient interest was generated and money was received on time to ensure that the ball could continue to take place as in previous years . The ball has always been a black tie event, held in a marquee, with champagne reception, a three course candle lit



Picture provided courtesy of: Piers Photography

dinner and live entertainment, normally held around the time of Valentine's Day. This year the committee elected to change the theme from romance to spring, denoting a sign of hope in these turbulent times. So the event was launched as the “2009 Spring Ball”. The committee responsible for organizing the event also introduced changes in the way money was collected for tickets, pre-ordering wine, buying drinks and paying for auction items.

Charity Business provided CP Terminals and Chip & Pin facilities to the BEDSA Ball to assist them in modernising the collection of funds before and during the night.

Introducing the ability to pay for tickets and register menu choices for guests online through the use of a facility called “CP Terminals” provided a number of advantages:

- Reduced the amount of paperwork (cheques & menu choice forms) to collect;
- The money was received quicker;
- Convenient method of payment for guests both before and at the event;
- The website provided an email acknowledgement of payment for tickets and wine;
- Saved time previously spent chasing payments;
- The reporting facility allowed for easy reconciliation of tickets versus payments;
- Guests for the first time were allowed to pay for purchases on the night by chip & pin, avoiding the need to bring cash with them.

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In all 353 tickets were sold, 53% paid online for the first time, with the remainder paying either by cash or cheque. In previous years guests filled out the application form with their guest's names and menu choices, but they did not always return their application form with the money. Time was wasted chasing ticket money, furthermore the ball organizers ran the risk of losing out on further tickets sales if the provisional booking did not pay or was cancelled late in the day. The online route not only resolved this issue but also provided an instant connection with the principle guest because in order to complete the transaction an email address was required. No more phoning around – a simple email would resolve any queries and all guests answered quickly and easily to requests for further details if they had provided insufficient information.

Not only did electronic payments have a huge impact on the organization but it also helped to deliver higher average spending per person. Average spend per person during the evening in 2009 was £46.46; compared with February 2008 where the average spend was £43.43. The Ball raised a total of £10,066.44 for Brinkworth Earl Danby School, the proceeds of which will go towards new library facilities for the children. The feedback received from the guest satisfaction survey was excellent. Below are a few of the comments received from attendees and those involved with the event.

“Firstly to say we got home tired but happy at 5.00am this morning from your exceedingly well organised ball, filled with delightful people who seemed to know how to enjoy themselves. We attend numerous functions up and down the country but yours really does rate in the top ten of events we have had the pleasure of working at.” Jonathan Hilder – Piers Photography.

“After attending for 11 years via cheques and paperwork it is great to see everything on-line as it makes life so much easier for everyone” - Guest

“I was told by the previous treasurer that getting the money for the tickets and pre-ordered wine was a complete nightmare – having online payment processing took away all the hassle” - Frances Mancktelow – BEDSA Ball Committee Treasurer.



Picture provided courtesy of: Kirsty Stretton-Cox

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