

## CASE STUDY

# How Computop Took Premiership Rugby Over the Line to Refund Ticketholders

Premiership Rugby, the English professional rugby union competition, started in the 1997-98 season. The Premiership consists of the twelve clubs that represent the top division of the English rugby union system. Premiership clubs qualify for Europe's two main club competitions, the European Rugby Champions Cup and the European Rugby Challenge Cup. Currently the Premiership is sponsored by Gallagher.







# THE CHALLENGE

The Gallagher Premiership Rugby final, which in 2020 was originally due to take place on June 20 and then re-scheduled to take place on October 24, attracts huge crowds to the 82,000-seater stadium at Twickenham. Because of the government's COVID-19 advice, and the requirement to play the Final between Exeter Chiefs and Wasps, a decision was taken to play the game behind closed doors.

## SAFETY FIRST

The Final is the pinnacle of the season, and thousands of tickets had already been sold, however, the safety of spectators and the teams was paramount.

A significant number of fans had requested to transfer their tickets to the

2021 final but with the configuration of the stadium for the 2021 final unknown, or even the likelihood of it taking place, Premiership Rugby made a commitment to refund all tickets sold.

## REFUNDS NOT POSSIBLE

As the process started, it became clear that approximately 600 tickets had been purchased using credit or debit cards more than 12 months before the event and this meant that refunds using the card number could no longer be done.

With the traditional practice of refunding money removed, and no way to retrieve the vital data from the cards, Premiership Rugby had to find a way to pay back its fans and in a timely fashion.



# THE SOLUTION

After reviewing a range of options, none of which were suitable, Premiership Rugby turned to its payment service provider, Computop. Ordinarily Computop processes the organisation's card and PayPal payments, however Nick Sonnex, Computop's International VP of Sales suggested a solution based on its Payment By Link service. This would allow it to capture the credit and debit card data from ticketholders whose refunds were still outstanding.

Payment By Link is used primarily by specialist retailers who want to send customers a link by email to pay for goods. However, Computop was able to reverse the process to create a route for processing refunds.

## ENABLING PAYMENTS

Using Computop's in-built analytics program, Premiership Rugby set up payment links with individual reference data that traced the credit or debit card data to the original order. The link was inserted into branded, secure emails sent out by Premiership Rugby that notified ticketholders of the refund process they would need to use.

As the links were used by customers to refresh card information it enabled Premiership Rugby to link the updated card details back to the original order and then upload it to Computop Paygate for processing. Within a few days of updating their details ticketholders received their refunds.



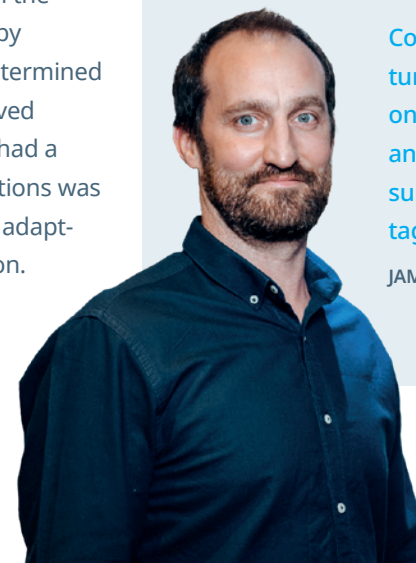
# THE OUTCOME

As a means to secure card data that, due to the time that had passed, was lost to Premiership Rugby's system, Computop Payment By Link was a robust solution. It was unconventional and would require perfecting if it was to be used on a regular basis, but in the unprecedented circumstances presented by the pandemic, it solved a complex issue simply, comprehensively and quickly.

## ADAPTABLE THINKING

The value of the refunded tickets was approximately £164,000 and given the importance that Premiership Rugby attaches to its loyal fans, it was determined to ensure every ticketholder received full repayment. What could have had a negative impact on customer relations was averted by the quick thinking and adaptability of Computop and its solution.

"The effort that the Computop team went to in order to find an answer to the challenges we faced in refunding so many of the ticketholders to this match was hugely appreciated," commented James Tyler, Head of Marketing at Premiership Rugby. "Computop went the extra mile to turn an existing solution almost on its head so we could safely and securely refund our loyal supporters. They lived up to its tagline – the payment people."



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JAMES TYLER, HEAD OF MARKETING



## **ANY QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT US:**

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