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Squash Facilities Network

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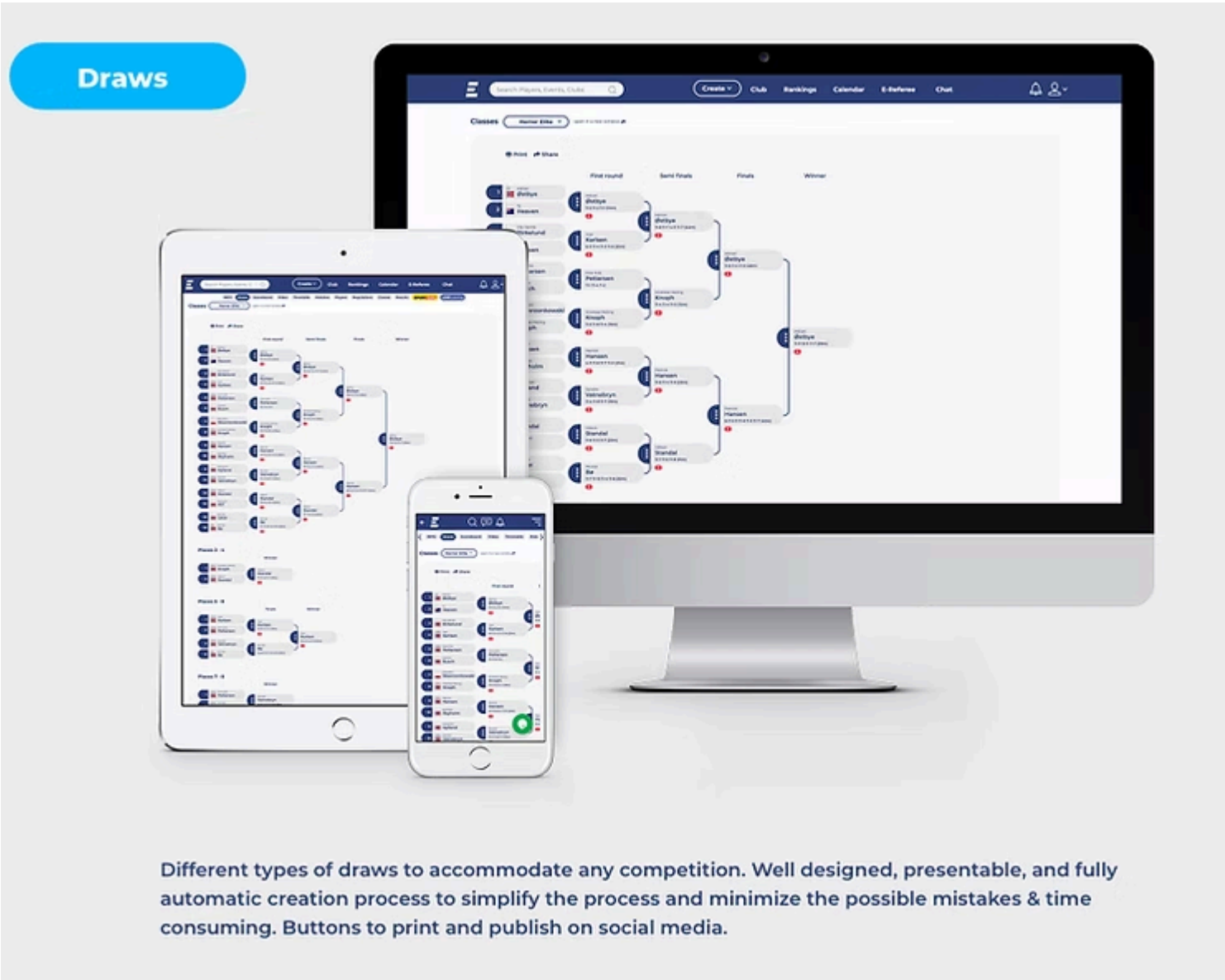
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The Right Software for Facilities – A Quick Guide for Operators (Part 3)

A Deep Dive into Competition and Community Management

Different types of draws to accommodate any competition. Well designed, presentable, and fully automatic creation process to simplify the process and minimize the possible mistakes & time consuming. Buttons to print and publish on social media.

In addition to booking systems, specialized software solutions for competition and community management are becoming increasingly essential for the efficient operation and sustainable growth of squash facilities. These systems not only streamline event organization but also create opportunities for fostering a vibrant community and enhancing player engagement.

Furthermore, many facility owners still depend on coaches or regular staff to plan and run competitions—a task that can sometimes lack sufficient motivation or time on the part of these individuals. Modern solutions like Rankedin, however, allow facilities to tap into their most enthusiastic players, letting them assume the role of tournament director. This not only alleviates the workload for staff but also empowers dedicated community members to take ownership of events, creating an even more vibrant and dynamic squash environment.

To achieve these goals, it is crucial to help new and existing visitors integrate into the facility's ecosystem. This includes matching them with suitable playing partners and introducing them to offerings such as box leagues or tournaments. A key factor in this process is accurately
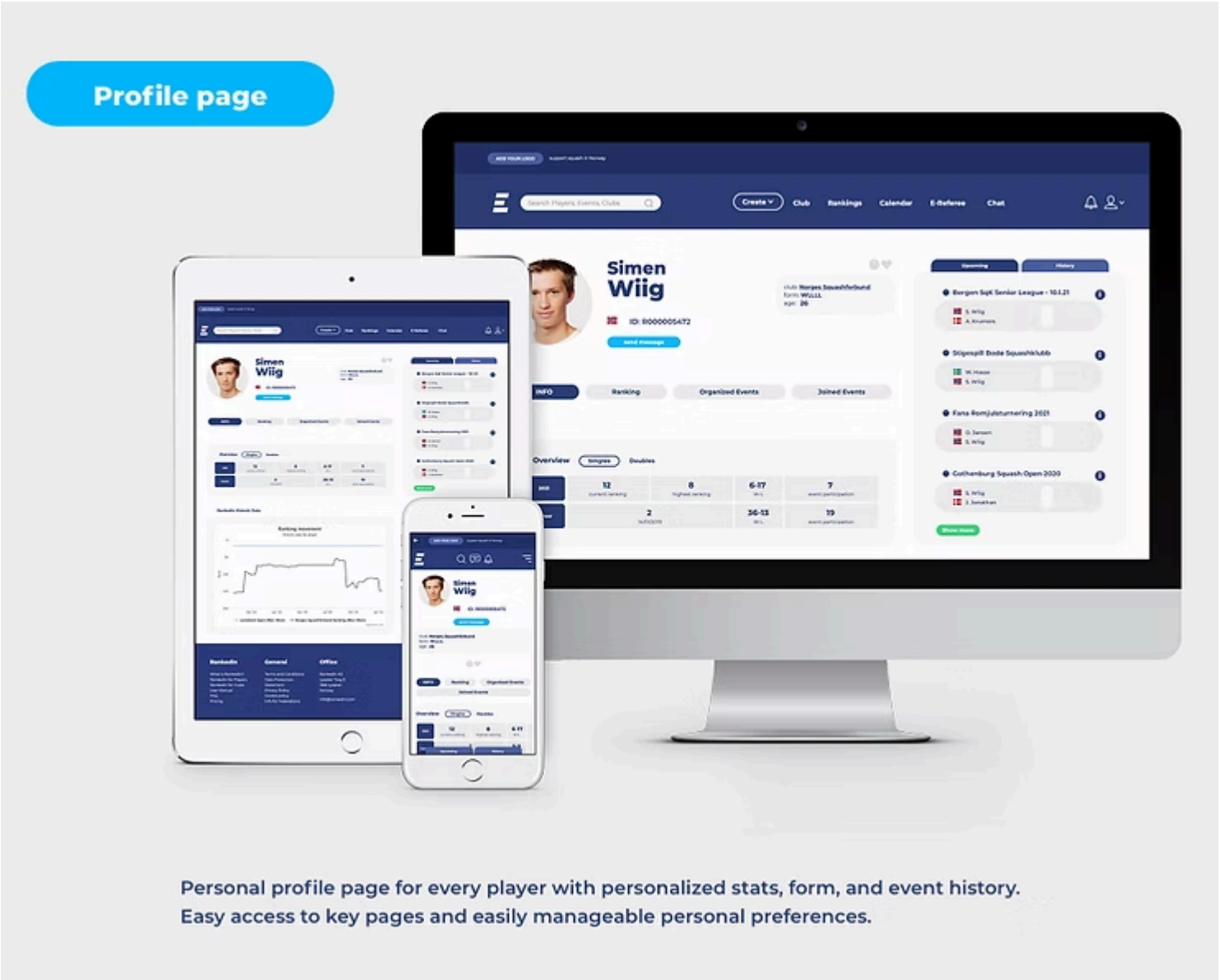
assessing players' skill levels to ensure balanced matchups, enabling participants to enjoy a competitive yet enjoyable experience. By prioritizing this inclusivity, facilities can foster stronger connections among players and build a loyal community.

Diverse Systems with Regional Variations

A wide range of software solutions is available to manage competitions and foster community-building in squash facilities. Leading applications in this space include Rankedin, SquashLevels, Sport HQ, and Tournament. These apps primarily focus on competition and community management, though they also offer additional features. These systems often exhibit regional variations in adoption, influenced by the partnerships between national squash federations and specific software providers. In some countries, federations collaborate closely with particular platforms, creating regional standards that squash facilities tend to follow.

Some tools concentrate on ranking and skill assessment, others focus more on event management, while a few offer integrated systems that extend to features like live streaming and facility administration.

Such diversity highlights the importance of flexibility for facility managers. Key factors like cost-effectiveness, ease of use, and player inclusivity must be carefully considered when selecting a system. By balancing these priorities, squash facilities can ensure that their chosen software aligns with local practices and enriches the player experience.

Personal profile page for every player with personalized stats, form, and event history.
Easy access to key pages and easily manageable personal preferences.

To further explore this topic, the Squash Facilities Network (SFN) interviewed Kiril Srbinovski, a business development and sales specialist for RankedIn. This conversation provides a deeper understanding of how innovative software solutions are transforming the landscape of squash facilities.

Expanding the Ecosystem Through Competition Management

One of the key insights from our interview was the idea of open-ended competition management. Certain platforms allow not only official clubs but also independent organizers and even corporate groups to create tournaments and leagues without needing a dedicated physical location. This lowers the barrier for grassroots-level growth:

"You could just rent the courts and organize a box league or any type of competition that you want. […] The idea is to give anyone the option to create a tournament or any type of competition within a club or facility." - Kiril

By removing these barriers, software of this kind enables a more organic expansion of local squash communities. Enthusiasts can organize events, bring in prize sponsors, or run social competitions that cater to casual players looking for flexible matchups.

Flexible Options for Facilities and Independent Organizers

While many software solutions primarily serve traditional club administrators, RankedIn supports a variety of user types:

- Club-Based Competitions: Squash facilities can host larger tournaments and box leagues with integrated scheduling, draw creation, and results tracking.
- Independent Event Organizers: Individuals can leverage the software to mobilize participants, arrange venues, and manage competitions without a fixed "home" facility.
- Corporate or Specialized Groups: Some organizations (e.g., a military unit or a private company) use these platforms for internal leagues and events.

This versatility helps ensure that newcomers easily find ways to participate while seasoned players stay motivated through regular play and structured competitions.

Building Connections: Communication and Inclusivity

An emerging trend is the integration of built-in communication tools. Rather than organizing matches via phone calls, emails, or separate apps, many platforms now include chat functions or messaging systems that keep players and organizers connected:

"A chat feature lets people communicate without having to share phone numbers. Organizers also appreciate having questions funneled into one place rather than scattered across personal channels." - Kiril

By streamlining communication, these solutions not only reduce administrative hassle but also foster stronger community bonds. Players can schedule practice matches, discuss strategies, or simply socialize, all within the same platform.

Ranking vs. Rating: Two Paths to Better Matchups

It is crucial to help new and existing visitors integrate into the facility's ecosystem. This includes matching them with suitable playing partners and introducing them to offerings such as box leagues or tournaments. To get information about the playing level of each participant, several software providers offer more than one way to measure and compare player performance.

Two common approaches stand out:

1. Ranking
   - Participants earn points based on where they place in tournaments or leagues.
   - Points accumulate over time, encouraging continued participation.
   - Straightforward for organizers to use when seeding new events.

2. Rating
   - Uses a match-by-match algorithm that evaluates performance by comparing expected outcomes to actual results.
   - Can provide a more nuanced skill metric, automatically adjusting with each match.
   - Often available as a premium or optional feature for those seeking detailed analytics.

These two systems address different needs. Rankings encourage more frequent play and straightforward event seeding, while ratings help organizers place players in the most accurate tiers for competitive balance.

Cost Structure and Freemium Model

When adopting new software, cost is a core consideration for many facilities. Almost all providers offer a free model as well as a premium model for a free. This can be influenced by factors such as the size of the user base, the range of features offered, or even regional agreements and partnerships. One common approach in this niche is the freemium model, which generally includes:

- **Free Core Features**

  Essential functions—such as setting up draws, entering match results, or basic scheduling—are typically available at no cost. These features often cover the fundamental needs of smaller clubs or independent organizers, enabling them to test the platform's capabilities without incurring additional expenses.

- **Premium Upgrades**

  Advanced functionalities may include live streaming, integrated email marketing, or detailed rating algorithms. Access to these premium features typically involves subscription fees, pay-per-event pricing, or bundled add-ons. This allows software providers to accommodate organizations requiring more sophisticated tools for player engagement or administrative management.

This layered structure keeps the initial barrier to entry low, appealing to a wide range of facility budgets and organizational sizes. At the same time, it provides clear opportunities to scale if user engagement expands or if a facility's competitive ambitions increase. Many freemium-based platforms enhance this model with:

- **Custom Branding Options**

  Facilities can incorporate logos, color schemes, or sponsor branding into the software interface, helping them establish a distinct identity and potentially attract local partners.

- **Flexible Payment Schedules**

  Monthly or annual subscription plans can simplify budgeting for many clubs, while event-based fees may be ideal for organizers hosting occasional tournaments.

- **Enterprise or Federation Packages**

  Larger entities, such as national associations or multi-branch sports centers, can often negotiate custom contracts that bundle premium features at a discounted rate. This approach is particularly beneficial in regions where a specific platform is standardized through partnerships with national federations.

Ultimately, the freemium model balances accessibility with scalability, allowing facilities to adopt fundamental features at minimal cost and then expand their functionality as player numbers and community engagement grow.

Best Practice: Inclusivity, Flexibility, and User Experience

Modern software solutions for community building and player engagement in squash facilities aim to:

- Streamline Organization: Reducing overhead for scheduling, results management, and communication.
- Foster Community: Providing features like chat functions, live leaderboards, and tools for social engagement.
- Balance Skills: Offering both rankings and ratings to ensure fair and engaging matchups.
- Stay Accessible: Using a freemium model and intuitive design to welcome new facilities, independent organizers, and corporate groups alike.

By adopting these platforms thoughtfully—taking into account factors like regional partnerships, cost, and the specific needs of their players—facilities can create a vibrant, inclusive environment that benefits everyone involved. As this article series continues, we will look at additional examples and best practices, helping you make informed decisions for your facility.

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