



3 tech trends that will redefine sports and live events

tec:agency



Digital transformation continues to disrupt the world of business and bring change to consumer expectations.

Looking at how quickly Airbnb challenged travel or how Uber redefined the taxi experience, we know that not investing in a digital experience is as catastrophic as Blockbuster failing to foresee a Netflix style service.

Sports and live events are no less insulated with technology driving transformative distribution in areas like ticketing and more disruption on the horizon. Today, almost every sports business article talks about the opportunities or threats of emerging technologies such as cryptocurrencies and NFTs. Indeed, the notion of live sport or music events being hosted in the metaverse is not in the realms of fantasy.

Through this lens, we examine three of the biggest tech trends that will redefine the sports and live events sector. Some are here now, having been accelerated by COVID. Others are rapidly evolving to solve long-standing issues that make event attendance safer and more accessible.

3 tech trends

Trend 1:

Re-imagining the traditional Media Centre for a virtual audience

Trend 2:

Augmenting the hospitality experience with technology

Trend 3:

Adapting ticketing to the new reality



Trend 1:

Re-imagining the traditional Media Centre for a virtual audience

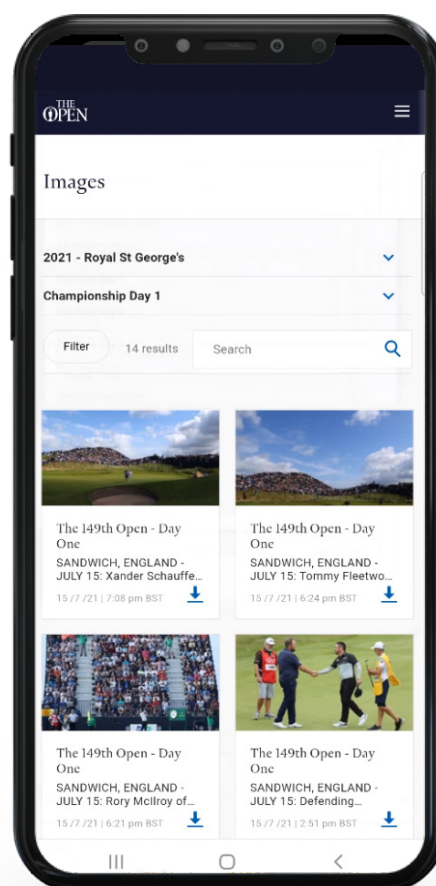
image courtesy of The R&A

The convergence of technology, 4G and social media has fuelled the global expansion of sport and entertainment. This has created a 24/7, instantaneous demand for content about teams, athletes, and events. This has in part been met by social media, but, at its core, the narrative is still led by traditional media sources, along with their vast physical operations.

COVID greatly restricted these operations but, with people stuck at home, also served to heighten the demand for content. For example, if a Spanish media giant like Marca wanted to cover the fortunes of leading Spanish golfer John Rahm at The Open, they would have had to rely on UK-based journalists or content from newswires. Organisers had to face the challenge of mitigating COVIDs impact on the media and giving them the access, they needed to meet demand. This challenge gave birth to a new solution to support global media owners – the Virtual Media Centre (VMC).

10,000+

images, videos and interview transcripts were downloaded via The Open's VMC



Above: The Open's Virtual Media Centre provided quick, mobile access to images of the latest action around the course.



Simultaneously meeting the demands of 100s of international media outlets

image courtesy of The R&A

A VMC serves as a central online platform that serves multiple media demands. For instance, it offers remote access to media and content created at a tournament and augments it with information like weather forecasts. It also replaces the need for journalists to attend player interviews in person. Instead, the VMC allows journalists worldwide to access the interviews remotely via a live video feature. The moderated sessions also enable questions to be asked as if in person. Additionally, post-interview, the transcripts and the videos of the interview are available in minutes.

The Open's VMC

TEC built a VMC for The Open in 2021 to ensure that the worldwide golf media had full access to interviews, highlights, photos, transcripts and scoring statistics. The fully mobile responsive platform gave remote access to journalists who could not attend. It also ensured that those who walked the course could access a myriad of content to enhance their experience. With speed of access to content a priority - the platform allowed users to set content alerts such as individual players, so journalists could, in turn, feed their audiences.

The results

Throughout the Championship, more than 10,000 images, videos and interview transcripts were downloaded via the VMC, ensuring golf fans got the best possible coverage. Feedback from the media was extremely positive leading The R&A to re-use the solution at the AIG Women's Open and their amateur events.

The future

While the VMC may have been born out of necessity, in a post-COVID world, it will become the mainstay of all major events. With the financial benefits of reduced travel costs aside, it arms rights holders with the ability to provide instant access to content to global audiences and expand the footprints of their brands further.

“ The VMC quickly became an essential tool for R&A staff and media alike with the ability to serve our global media partners with up-to-the-minute access to video footage and access to player interviews. TEC have built a solution that is easily customisable, scalable and is one we will use across multiple events in 2022. ”

Karen Lyttle
Head of Digital Technology
The R&A

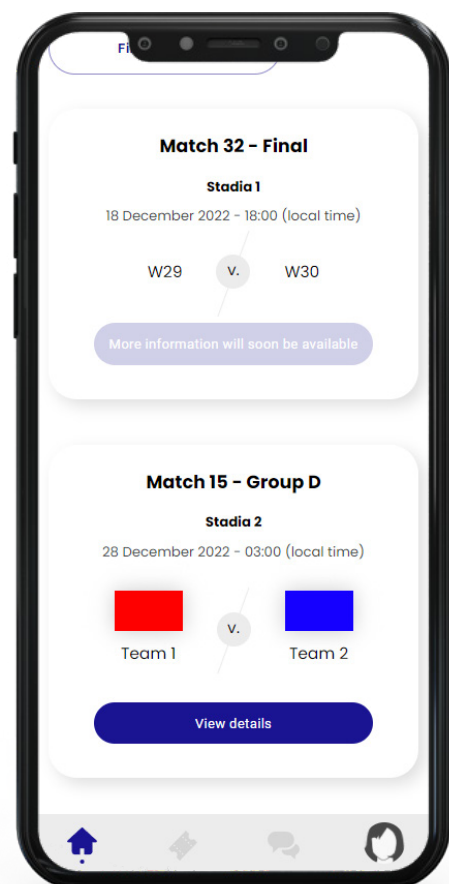


Trend 2:

Augmenting the hospitality experience with technology

Hospitality has long been a vital commercial component of any major event and attracts global audiences of high-value attendees and VIPs. Key to the success of hospitality is creating a memorable experience that begins well before the event itself. This includes curating numerous touchpoints for ticketing, travel, accommodation, transportation and security protocols. The challenge for organisers is managing multiple platforms and resources and trying to surface them into a single, engaging digital experience.

While extending the concept of a digital concierge, increasingly prevalent in the hotel sector, to sports/events hospitality seems logical - sporting events have some fundamental differences that need to be catered for in order to succeed. For instance, tournaments can spread over non-consecutive days in different cities and countries. Organisationally, this means that any event hospitality app must manage and process information from even more third-party tech sources that exponentially complicate creating a single, engaging digital experience.



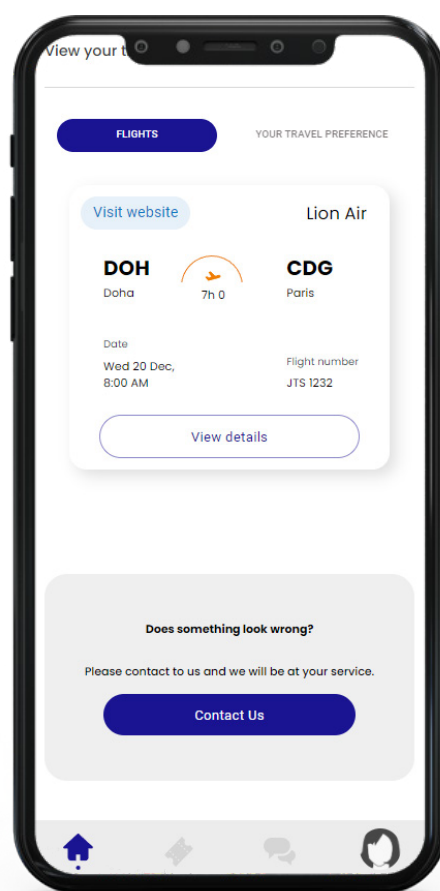
Above: The app allowed users to access important match and ticket information on the move.

Next Page: It also enabled them to access travel and accommodation details, pulling in real time information from 3rd party providers

A real-time digital concierge to manage the VIP experience for a global sports event

TEC: Agency was recently commissioned by a major sports federation to design an application to solve these challenges for a global sports event held every four years. We created a mobile application that allows guests to have a single destination to access flight information, hotel bookings, access tickets, request ground transportation while simultaneously simplifying the process for admin staff.

Improved communication with the guest services team was another critical application requirement. By offering guests the ability to provide feedback in real-time via mini-surveys and a live chat feature, we delivered the improvement the client wanted. In addition, the mobile application has been built to adapt to new events and integrations with minimal development overhead.



Delivering operational efficiency and increasing customer satisfaction

Adoption and usage of the mobile app were fundamental KPI's of the project. At a recent test event in November 2021, the usage was more than 80% and positive feedback was received from all users. Operationally, the ability to deliver digital ticketing delivered increased efficiency and a smoother process for guests attending matches.

The future

Mobile technology will continue to provide more integrated and seamless experiences for event VIP's and empower organisers to manage their guest's event journey better. Furthermore, with pent up demand for the return of major music festivals, such mobile applications will bring greater efficiencies and allow organisers to differentiate their customer experiences further.



Trend 3:

Adapting ticketing to the new reality

The global pandemic accelerated the next phase of technological development in the events industry with measures needed to minimise contact, monitor health status, and improve attendance flexibility.

Putting flexibility at the core of a ticketing platform

As a result of Covid, the 2020 editions UNTOLD and Neversea in Romania were put on hold. The immediate challenge was to develop a ticketing offering to cope with the cancellation and greater flexibility around attendance. Naturally, the organisers turned to TEC Agency, who had worked with both festivals for six years to develop their technical infrastructure and digital experiences.

A platform that handles 15,000 transactions in less than 30 seconds

Within six weeks, we created a solution that allowed fans to swap tickets for vouchers that could be used for future events. The vouchers could also be used for either festival.

TEC's solutions facilitated the sale of over 50,000 tickets for UNTOLD - the first pre-sale allocation of 15,000 selling out in less than 30 seconds - and allowed 40,000+ online check-ins and more than 20,000 successful online top-up transactions. The benefits for the fans were greater flexibility to the event they attended, but it also provided the festival organisers with a much-needed revenue stream. We also delivered all the sync processes required for their RFID system to support access control and cashless payments onsite.

A platform that handles 15,000 transactions in less than 30 seconds

TEC + UNTOLD =

50,000+

tickets sold annually

40,000+

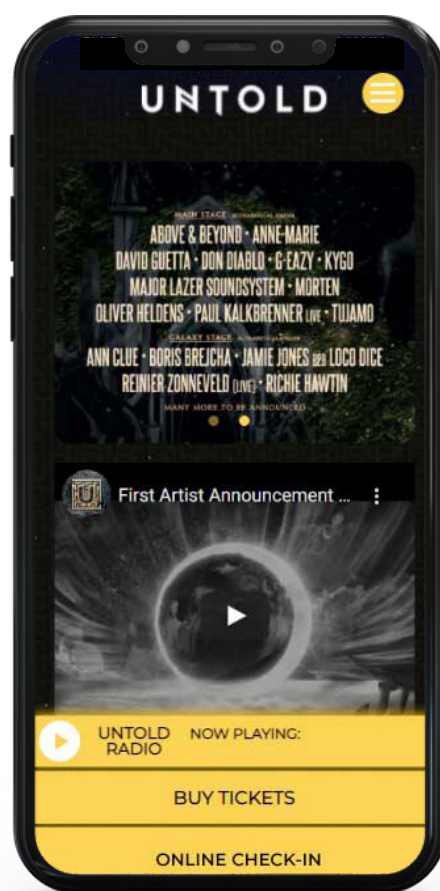
annual online check-ins

20,000+

successful online top-up transactions

“ We’re delighted to be welcoming the music fans back to UNTOLD in a safe establishment and secure cyber space, thanks to our partner, TEC, who provide the online check-in and online top-up infrastructure, special sales campaigns, and all the support we need from a tech provider during these challenging, but exciting times. ”

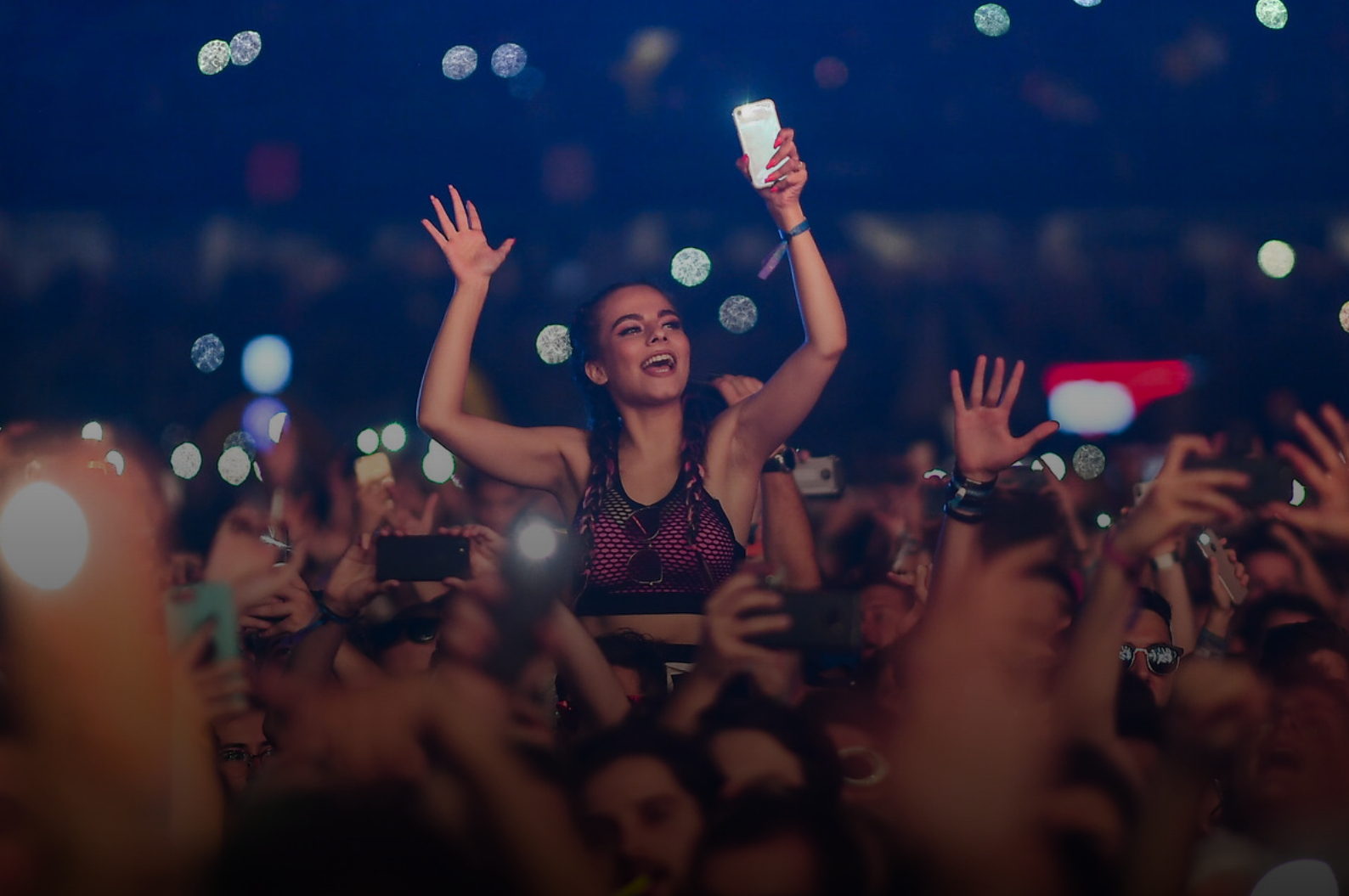
Edy Chereji
Head of Communication
UNTOLD



Above: The mobile version of UNTOLD’s website made it easy for fans to buy tickets and to check on arrival at the event.

The future

Expectations around speed of service, flexibility and security are not only ubiquitous, but they will also increase further. Festival organisers who desperately need fans across the summer of 2022 must-have these features as part of the digital experience and must continue to innovate further to attract and engage a global festival audience.



The next era of event experience

COVID showed us all just how much we missed the opportunity to come together and enjoy the experience of live events. This experience had been shaped by a combination of technological factors and now, as we look to move on from the global pandemic, the new expectations of society and the continued technological disruption of commerce will redefine the event experience once again.

We have shown here just three of the innovations that are changing the event landscape and how they can be employed to improve attendance for different stakeholder groups. As specialist in sports and live events technology, TEC are committed to supporting the next of era of event experience. Think of TEC as your digital pit crew, primed to solve your live event problems with innovative tech solutions, through a creative and collaborative approach. We are working with leading rights holders around the world to meet the challenges event organisers face today and define the digital disruption that will shape the future of the industry.

We are your team behind the team. We are TEC.

Contact us today to find out how we can improve your event experience.

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your digital pit crew

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