



XTRIA™ Renaissance® System

Xtria is an information technology leader, creating knowledge management systems developed using the most current technology and designed to provide usability, accessibility, and Section 508 compliance. Designed by meeting planners, for meeting planners, Xtria developed and manages a sophisticated Web-native conference management database system called Renaissance®.

Built in Oracle 8i and incorporating JSP coding and an HTML front-end, Renaissance® enables clients to manage, in real-time, the extensive data involved in tracking an individual throughout the stages of a conference, including status of mailings and other contacts, submissions, peer reviews, and registrations. Each “track” of the database system features advanced filtering and report-writing functions, including standardized and client-created customized reports. Because the system is Web-enabled, data generated from any track is up-to-date and in real-time.

CONTACTS MANAGEMENT

The “Contacts Management” track is the heart of the Renaissance® system. The primary data fields include contact references, such as attendee name (full, nickname, and name for badge), address (work and home), telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses. Additional data fields from the other tracks are also summarized within Contacts Management and include data on attendance history, presenter status, paper submission status, peer review comments, registration and logistical data, and session scheduling. Renaissance® provides easily retrievable information that can be used to develop targeted mailing lists and generate specialized reports. Additionally, the collected data can be used as a planning tool for future conferences and events. To guarantee security of the data in Contracts Management, this track was built with security access permitted only by project staff. While contact data updated by staff or individual users in any of the seven other tracks is also updated within Contacts Management, only project staff may view or edit records contained within this track.

PEER REVIEW

The “Peer Review” track is both a subset of the “Contacts Management” track as well as the first of four publicly updateable tracks. Individuals interested in participating in a conference peer review are able to register for the review using the Renaissance® system. Registration includes setting up a unique user name and password, adding and/or verifying contact information, and inputting detailed expertise and discipline information. This expertise and discipline information is used in the automatic matching of reviewers to submissions as outlined in the “Review Assignments” track. Once assigned, a reviewer is able to log in to the system and then view and review his or her assigned submissions using the online review system. This capability drastically reduces the amount of “paper” materials distributed to reviewers as they only need to receive the URL address for the online review site. Since the system is login- and

Peer Review

Use of this track of the system increased nearly 30% in two years, with 90.1% of reviewers completing reviews entirely online.



Submissions

During its second year, Xtria actualized a 98.4% user rate for this track – an increase of 11.5% from its debut year.

Review Assignments

Use of this system has decreased staff processing time from two weeks (80 hours) to approximately one day (8 hours).

Registration

Use of this track has increased 17% in two years.

password-secure, reviewers are given access to only those submissions to which they have been assigned, and as such, we are able to conduct a “blind” review in that both the reviewers’ and authors’ anonymity is maintained throughout the process.

SUBMISSIONS

The Renaissance© system permits online submission of both the basic application information and the conference submission itself, drastically decreasing the amount of “paper” submissions received. As the second of the four publicly updateable tracks, a submitter sets up a unique user name and password to enter the system, adds and/or verifies his or her contact information, and inputs detailed information about the submission. This information includes the type of submission, title, keywords or topics, the authors and their contact information, the abstract, and any anticipated audiovisual required for presentation. A submitter may then “upload” his or her prewritten summary to be saved to Xtria’s secure servers. The submitter is then prompted to review and verify the submission, and upon final submission, he or she may view a summary of the submission. The “Submissions” track contains several internal “error check” functions including ensuring all required data is present prior to submission, ensuring the uploaded document is in a correct format able to be saved to our servers, and preventing an author from resubmitting the same submission twice.

REVIEW ASSIGNMENTS

Once the submission deadline is reached, the Renaissance© system uses an innovative matching technique to pair the most highly qualified reviewers to the submissions based on the reviewer’s expertise(s) and the paper topic(s). Staff set the parameters of the match based on the criteria necessary for a particular project. For instance, staff may select a particular number of reviewers for each submission, specific reviewer roles or requirements, or specific organization considerations for which the system will search. Once calculated, the system alerts staff to the number of reviewers and submissions successfully matched. Staff may review the system’s matches and approve or disapprove of the selections. Additionally, staff may hand-select reviewers for a particular submission, “close” a reviewer or a submission whereby that reviewer or submission is skipped in the match process, and continue the match until satisfied with the results. Using this method of matching enables a one-step assignment process for the reviewers in that once a reviewer has been assigned a submission, they have immediate access to that submission. Should a reviewer be unable to complete a review, staff may reassign that submission and provide immediate access to another reviewer.

REGISTRATION

Renaissance© enables Xtria to provide online registration functions, including processing credit card transactions, via our secure web server. This is the third of four publicly updateable tracks allowing an attendee to set up a unique user name and password, add and/or verify his or her contact information, and complete the registration form online. The system tracks intended attendance by individual event permitting more precise event guarantees, as well as any special needs a registrant might have. Additionally, the system requests emergency contact information for the attendee, which is deleted from the system one week after the conference. The data can be manipulated to create a variety of registration and other meeting-related reports necessary including name badges, tent cards, invitations, and evaluation forms. Payment is processed via VeriSign through Chase Merchant Bank, and the registrant receives immediate confirmation from VeriSign that his or her payment has cleared.



Data are returned from VeriSign to the Renaissance© system to complete the attendee's registration, and once completed, the system sends an e-mail confirming the registration.

PRESENTATION ACCEPTANCE

The "Presentation Acceptance" track of Renaissance© allows individuals who submitted presentations for review to formally accept the invitation to present at the conference. This is the fourth of four publicly updateable tracks whereby authors are able to log into the system and complete all necessary forms related to each submission accepted. These forms include: an agreement to present form, an audiovisual request form, a form for revising of the title and/or abstract of the presentation, a form for revising the names or contact information of authors named for the presentation, and a form to designate the individuals who will actually present the paper at the conference.

Presentation Acceptance

This track was debuted in 2004 and earned a 98.6% user rate.

CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT

The Renaissance© system's "Conference Management" track enables project staff to select and assign presentations to a specific day, timeslot, and room based on expected attendance at the session, speaker assignment, room set or audiovisual equipment required, or other requirements designated by the presenters or by project or Federal staff. The system includes internal "error check" features to alert staff of any conflicts or duplicates with room assignment, session assignment, or presenter assignments so that staff may correct or modify the schedule appropriately.

UTILITIES

The Renaissance© "Utilities" track enables staff to maintain tables, dropdowns, and general datasets referenced by the other seven tracks. This maintenance includes features such as e-mailing a user his or her user name and password, updating deadline dates and "system shut-down dates" for submission or review deadlines, and maintaining state and country lists. This feature enables project staff to "troubleshoot" portions of the system as necessary for their deadlines.

FOR TESTING

http://essdemo.xtria.com:8100/hsrctestdemo/submission/submission_login.jsp

User name: admin

Password: admin



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ABOUT XTRIA

Xtria is an information technology solutions and services, research, and logistics and program support company conducting research and evaluation of child and family service programs, federal program support in federal, state and local government agencies as well as private sector partners. Headquartered in Richardson, Texas, with a significant presence in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, Xtria's solutions focus on improving point-of-service excellence, increasing IT efficiency and effectiveness.