

As press officer of Dundalk Football Club, the team became more successful and there was a willingness to learn the stories of our players, our management team and about our club in general. To ensure this was the case, the club's accreditation system and process needed an overhaul to deal with the demand and exposure. Here is a case study on how it happened.

### **Objective:**

The primary goal was to optimise media access for Dundalk Football Club, ensuring efficient communication between the club, journalists, and the wider public to ensure the players stories could be heard.

### **Challenges:**

**Limited Resources:** Working within the constraints of a tight budget and minimal resources for facility enhancements or specialised training programs.

**Increased Media Interest:** With the club's growing success, there was a surge in media interest, necessitating a more streamlined accreditation process.

**Diverse Media Outlets:** Catering to a diverse range of media outlets, including local newspapers, national broadcasters, and online platforms.

### **Strategies and Actions:**

#### **Simplified Accreditation Process:**

Developed a straightforward online accreditation system accessible through the club press account manned by me.

Ensured the application process required minimal paperwork, reducing the administrative burden for both the club and journalists.

#### **Clear Communication Protocols:**

Established clear communication protocols for media inquiries, ensuring a designated point of contact for accreditation-related matters.

Provided a comprehensive accreditation guide outlining procedures, deadlines, and contact information.

#### **Tiered Accreditation System:**

Implemented a tiered accreditation system to accommodate the varying needs of media outlets.

Reserved a limited number of premium accreditations for major publications and broadcasters while maintaining open access for local and online media.

#### **Regular Updates and Reminders:**

Utilised email channels and regular updates on the club's official social media channels to remind journalists of accreditation deadlines and upcoming events.

Promptly addressed queries and provided assistance to journalists during the accreditation process.

#### **Matchday Accommodations:**

Optimised matchday accommodations by designating specific areas for different types of media outlets, ensuring a balanced and fair distribution of resources.

Implemented a system to facilitate efficient post-match interviews without disrupting the overall media flow.

#### **Responsive Accreditation Time:**

Established a dedicated accreditation process that promptly responded to inquiries, processed applications, and assisted with any challenges journalists faced during the accreditation process.

#### **Inclusive Media Engagement:**

Fostered an inclusive environment by extending accreditation opportunities to local bloggers, community radio stations, and emerging digital platforms.

Actively sought partnerships with diverse media outlets to enhance coverage and engage a broader audience.

#### **Outcomes:**

##### **Increased Media Participation:**

Witnessed a notable increase in the number of accredited media personnel, reflecting a heightened interest in Dundalk FC.

Strengthened relationships with both traditional and emerging media outlets.

##### **Efficient Matchday Operations:**

Matchdays became more organised, with journalists able to seamlessly carry out their responsibilities.

Positive feedback from media representatives regarding the improved accessibility and professionalism of the accreditation process.

##### **Broader Media Coverage:**

Achieved a more extensive and diverse media coverage footprint, with features and stories appearing in various local, national, and online publications.

Enhanced the club's visibility and brand reputation through strategic media engagement.

##### **Community Engagement:**

Strengthened ties with the local community by involving smaller media outlets, bloggers, and community-focused platforms.

In summary, the accreditation case study for Dundalk Football Club showcases the successful implementation of strategies to maximise media access within budgetary constraints. By simplifying processes, establishing clear communication channels, and fostering inclusivity, the club achieved increased media participation and enhanced coverage, contributing to a positive image and ensuring the club's story was heard across the continent.