

Cateys 2021: Best Use of Technology Award: 67 Pall Mall

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This year's Best Use of Technology Award is awarded to 67 Pall Mall for digitising its private members' club experience during the first national lockdown. The team quickly and innovatively reimaged its busy events calendar for a digital platform, offering global online masterclasses from top wine experts, covering the time zones of London, New York, San Francisco and Singapore.

Grant Ashton, along with a number of 67 Pall Mall sommeliers, developed a technique for rebottling wines, using argon gas to ship specially created 75ml bottles to attendees. For rare bottles, the team even modified a fish tank filled with argon to produce a zero-oxygen environment, while bespoke packaging was designed to keep bottles secure during transport.

As well as its masterclasses, 67 Pall Mall upgraded its online platform, including its events page, making it as easy as possible for members to catch up with content on demand. Actionable

tagged, allowing viewers to easily filter results to suit their tastes.

Meanwhile, the team properly implemented an ecommerce channel, moving from a laborious online order process involving forms and spreadsheets. The new system features software for product dispatch, management and reporting.

Since the launch of its online shopping platform in August 2020 to May 2021, the operator has sold nearly 7,000 items, 5,500 of which were from wine tasting kits. Meanwhile more than 1,000 virtual events were hosted between April 2020 and April 2021, bringing in £1.4m of revenue at a critical time for the industry.

If that wasn't enough for one pandemic, 67 Pall Mall also developed the world's first 4K wine and food TV channel, 67pallmall.tv, which launched in June 2021. This is supported by a state-of-the-art studio across the road from the club, with additional servers and improved network capabilities installed to aid the broadcast of live and pre-recorded content.

The club's digital efforts have not only resulted in increased revenue, but also the creation of several jobs through two new departments to support logistics and fulfilment and the media efforts. The 67 Pall Mall team used the pandemic to completely reinvent their digital offering, with functions that will be used for years to come.

What the judges said

"I loved the diversity of this entry – such a lot of technology implemented to deliver a new business opportunity during the pandemic. From rebottling wine to online enhancements and a TV channel, the vision and co-ordination of the project was impressive." - Jane Pendlebury

"It's an impressive use and combination of multiple technology platforms to deliver a great solution." - Michael Mrini

"An excellent example of technology being applied to the customers' needs – and the challenge accepted by the business of having to integrate and connect a number of separate systems and technologies to achieve this." - Carl Weldon

The shortlist

- 67 Pall Mall, London
- Cromars, St Andrews
- Dalata Hotel Group
- Sea Containers London

The judges

- Stephen Mirani, director, Moving Food
- Michael Mrini, director of information technology, Edwardian Hotels London
- Jane Pendlebury, chief executive, Hospa
- Carl Weldon, chief operations officer – Europe, Hospitality Finance and Technology Professionals

TAGS

Technology, Cateys, Cateys 2021 and 67 Pall Mall



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