

# EMS Case Study *Qwest Field, Seattle, WA*



## Background

“SODO”, the South-of-Downtown district of Seattle, offers a variety of sightseeing and entertainment options, which draw visitors not only from the Seattle area, but from around the U.S. and abroad.

One of the most recent additions to the SODO skyline is Qwest Field and Qwest Field Event Center. The two connected buildings are operated as one sports and entertainment facility by First & Goal, Inc., (FGI).

Completed in 1999, the Event Center hosts a diverse schedule of events each year, including trade shows, conventions, home shows and sports expos. Qwest Field, the home of the NFL’s Seattle Seahawks, opened in 2002.

One of the most technologically advanced sports facilities in the U.S., its \$15 million dollar control room gives it the same capabilities as a television broadcasting station. The facility’s aesthetics are equally impressive, with its eye-catching architecture and views of mountain peaks and Puget Sound. Not surprisingly, the facility is one of the most sought after event venues in the Pacific Northwest.

## The Problem

With Qwest Field set to open in less than a year, FGI was still booking space in the Event Center using a cumbersome system of spreadsheets, reports and

manifests. With the stadium’s playing field, meeting rooms and large plazas added to the rooms already being booked in the Event Center, there would be nearly 600,000 square feet of reservable space in the complex.

## Fast Facts

- Replaces spreadsheet scheduling system with EMS Enterprise; creates **cohesive** company-wide scheduling process
- **600,000** square feet of reservable space
- Schedules a **wide array** of events and meetings between the two facilities

“With our manual system, it was nearly impossible to keep all the different spreadsheets current and correct,” says one FGI staff member. “The transferring of information from one document to another was very time consuming, and there was a great risk of error.” In addition, she points out, “Without a true scheduling system as a focal point, we didn’t have any event management policies and procedures for our various departments to adhere to.”

# EMS Case Study *Qwest Field, Seattle, WA*

## The Solution

Knowing that the opening of the stadium would mean a dramatic increase in the number of events, the staff at FGI decided that the old manual system was no longer a viable option for event scheduling. "We needed one centralized place for our entire company - with departments spread throughout the buildings - to get the information they needed," says one staff member.

After a thorough research and review process, FGI selected EMS. "It had all the features we were looking for and it was easy to use," says one reviewer. "It was really that simple."

Once EMS was loaded on FGI's server, a system user then installed the software on client machines, defined the necessary data, and trained the FGI staff on how to use the system. "The fact that I was able to do it, with no computer training whatsoever, speaks volumes about the ease of installation," she says.

## From International to Intimate: Events of all Sizes

For First & Goal, no event is too big or too small. From weddings and birthday parties for a handful of attendees to NFL games, international soccer competitions and concerts for tens of thousands, the FGI staff coordinates them all using EMS.

One of the bigger challenges is the scheduling of the major events around the Seattle Seahawks football games. In April of each year, the NFL releases the schedule for the season. Prior to that, FGI solicits a list of preferred dates from what they refer to as the "Big 5," customers who hold large expo-type events in SODO each year. After the Seahawk's home games have been entered into EMS, the preferences of the Big 5 customers are considered.

## Setting a Standard

EMS Enterprise has proven to be a powerful motivating force for standardizing FGI's scheduling practices. "Before EMS, we didn't have any policies and procedures on event management," says an FGI staffer. "When we started configuring the system, we realized we were long overdue in making some decisions - company-wide decisions on how we were going to operate from that point forward. EMS helped us do that."

\*\*\*\*

For more information on Dean Evans & Associates, and the company's event management and master calendaring software products, go to [www.dea.com](http://www.dea.com) or contact the Sales department at [sales@dea.com](mailto:sales@dea.com) or 1.800.440.3994 ext. 863.

