

## Whole Foods

National retailer maximizes cooking class registrations with Acteva

### CHALLENGE

An all-inclusive tool to easily register attendees for cooking classes & run reports

### SOLUTION

Acteva Plus solution for tiered registrations with Waitlisting & MultiVent Options Enabled

### RESULTS

Added immediacy & accuracy to the registration process & increased class registrations

## Background

Beginning in 1980 with one small store in Austin, Texas, Whole Foods has grown to become the world's leading retailer in natural and organic foods. There are now more than 270 retail stores in North America and the United Kingdom. Select locations also include state-of-the-art culinary centers that offer both hands on and demonstration classes with renowned chefs, artisans, growers and in-store experts.

## Business Challenge

Establishing an organized, streamlined way to gather registrations

One such expert, Christine Carroll, serves as the Culinary Center Director at the Whole Foods Market Culinary Center in New York City. "We offer a wide variety of free and paid classes that incorporate Whole Foods Market quality standards and top-notch culinary expertise," Carroll says. "We also host a wide range of corporate events, birthday parties and other private events."

In 2008, the Culinary Center added Acteva Plus, the most comprehensive Acteva solution available, to help potential class attendees register and pay for events online. "The Excel spreadsheet just wasn't cutting it anymore," Carroll says. "And since most culinary centers are run by one person, we needed a dashboard-type view so we could see who was registering – and for which classes. The stores badly needed a more elegant solution for customers to register – that was the key."

In addition, cooking classes, which are held 6 days a week, typically sell out and are limited to a certain number of attendees – 30 for paid classes and 24 for free classes. "With so many events, we badly needed some type of waitlist functionality or else people would contact me directly and it would quickly become an administrative nightmare."

## Acteva Solution

Establishing an organized, streamlined way to gather registrations

Carroll now has the 'dashboard view' she's always wanted and an accurate, up to date status report of her class attendees. "Since we've been using Acteva, I've been able to login and see exactly what's going on," she says. "Who's registered, who's paid. It's the ultimate at-a-glance feature that keeps me informed on a daily basis."

As the director, she adds that Acteva is "The most powerful tool I have in my arsenal. With so many ongoing classes, it's essential to track and run reports on both registrations and payments on a daily basis. Customer service and other center managers really don't have the time so it's great that everything is bundled together in one location."

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**Christine Carroll**  
Culinary Center Director,  
Whole Foods Market

The ability to incorporate waitlists through Acteva has also been essential to managing such a high number of classes which fill up so quickly. "There are just too many classes and names to keep track of, and the waitlist ensures we don't oversell any of them," Carroll says. "I also love how we can make a distinction between the public events on the website and the private ones. I can easily mark certain events, such as corporate events or parties as "private" and they won't appear on the public website."

Carroll has also decided to use Acteva to collect email addresses, primarily for those who attend free events, so she can promote future events by sending them invitations via the Acteva Email Tool. "We mainly use emails for generating Culinary Center updates and to keep people aware of upcoming classes," Carroll says. "Some people just want to attend free classes but we want to let them know about the benefits of the paid classes."

Finally, select Whole Foods Culinary Centers are now utilizing the Acteva Plus MultiVent solution – a popular solution for those who run multiple events on an ongoing basis – or wish to offer a series of events within a specific time period or season.

It's notable that Acteva Plus MultiVent was primarily developed in response to requests from Whole Foods users. Customers using Acteva were pleased with the solution but felt it could be tailored even more to meet the needs of those who run ongoing classes. After working with Whole Foods principals and team members to gather feedback, Acteva Plus MultiVent was released in 2007.

How does it help Whole Foods with their cooking classes? Organizers can quickly set up and categorize events – by date, location or other criteria – for automatic display within their Advanced Go Page (an event listing page).

With the Advanced Go Page, prospective attendees now have several intuitive ways to navigate through detailed event pages, choose the classes they wanted, checkout and pay online. They also enjoy the convenience of registering for multiple classes in one streamlined transaction – for themselves or on behalf of one or more friends, family members or colleagues.

## Results

### Tiered registrations for multiple cooking classes, waitlists and at-a-glance event views

With Acteva, Carroll now has a reliable way to manage all of her classes – making her job easier and giving her peace of mind. "Acteva is a great safety net. It really allows me to maintain control over my classes."

She concludes by adding that she can already see quantifiable results since Whole Foods added Acteva to address her online registration and payment needs. "Because of Acteva," she adds, "we now have a prominent web presence for our classes. I'd estimate we've easily grown our class attendance by at least 10%."

## Experience that counts

Acteva is the trusted leader in online event registration, ticketing and payment management services. Since 1998, over 12,500 customers have used Acteva to manage more than 215,000 events and process more than 3.4 million registrations. Acteva's customers include Bausch & Lomb, Pfizer, SAP, Girl Scouts of America, Whole Foods, Craigslist Foundation, Lending Tree, and thousands of small to large-sized businesses and organizations.

### CUSTOMER PROFILE

**Location** – New York, NY

**Primary Event** –  
Ongoing cooking classes

**Industry** – Retail Grocery

**Products Used** - Acteva Plus

**Attendee Focus** –  
General public; food &  
cooking enthusiasts

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