

# Digital Registration: What Athletic Directors Are Saying About The Importance of Digitizing The Student Registration Process.



# Overview

For nearly 40 years, ArbiterSports has been at the forefront of high school and collegiate sports with products that manage and coordinate sporting and scholastic events, their tracking, record-keeping, and payment processing. In the last year, for instance, Arbiter has impacted over 65 million Americans, one in every five of us, through SaaS solutions for online **Registration, Scheduling and Digital Payment Software**.

Over the last several years, Arbiter Registration (formerly FamilyID), the leading software solution for digitized student registration, has grown to become an integral solutions provider to athletic departments across the country. In this ArbiterSports Research Report, we'll take a closer look at two different types of feedback platforms that Athletic Directors provided to Arbiter; (1) Voice-of-Customer Research (VOC) and (2) a national webinar on digital registration that yielded input from two primary esteemed panelists, Eric Scott and Kevin May, both high school Athletic Directors in Massachusetts and both technology proponents.





# Voice-of-Customer Research From High School Athletic Directors and Administrators

In June of 2022, Arbiter asked high school Athletic Directors and School Administrators their thoughts on digital registration. The questions and their responses are as follows:

## ***Let's start at the end. Would you ever go back to the manual registration processes of the past?***

100% of the respondents said they would never return to any part of the past's manual processes. Nearly all respondents mentioned that it was inconceivable to even imagine existing in today's environment without digital registration, particularly with COVID, other health care concerns, constant statewide issues of compliance, reporting, archiving, and legislation.

One respondent described their former process this way, *"I have 12 pages of paperwork in my athletic department per student; 4,800 pages require scanning; the school scanner breaks down about every 2,000 pages and requires service at a significant cost, plus the cost of downtime (these are not industrial scanners, but scanners on copier machines); scanned pages are placed in Google Drive; then a student ticket of acknowledgement needs to be printed and signed by the student; then the paperwork needs to be delivered to the coaches; paperwork is sorted by complete and incomplete and then is returned to the student for the parent to complete, in full; the completed paperwork goes back to the scanner, then the paperwork is delivered back to the coaches. And that's in my small school in Kentucky."*

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## ***What is most striking to you about the registration process within athletic departments?***

By far, our respondents mentioned that it was "shocking" how much paperwork they had to shuffle, let alone how time-consuming it was. Almost all of our Athletic Directors who were questioned said they never imagined that this would be part of their job, and this reference was not a positive one.

Typical comments were akin to this, *"I had no expectation or training in the amount of paperwork I had to shuffle around. I had to substitute calls to the local newspaper for interviews about our championship season for calls to parents to please complete a form or complete it correctly and fill-in all the blanks."*



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100%

# Voice-of-Customer Research From High School Athletic Directors and Administrators

***As an Arbiter Registration user, how much time do you save using their software as opposed to the manual processes of before?***

On average, our respondents said they saved between 160 and 240 hours of staff time, just in the fall sports season. This equates to about six-weeks of time in one season alone. For the most part, Athletic Directors found it difficult to calculate the time-savings for an entire school year, but most agreed it was several hundred hours per year.

***And can you calculate the money-savings that has resulted from your transition from a manual process to a digitized process?***

Most commonly, Athletic Directors indicated that the hard cost savings were a little over \$10,000 per year. This included paper, printing and copying costs, scanning, wear and tear on machinery, and other factors. **Many respondents indicated that the cost-savings were far greater than the annual cost of Arbiter Registration.**

***If you could narrow it down to just one significant benefit to digitized registration, what would that one benefit be?***

The majority of our respondents indicated that Arbiter Registration changed their job significantly. Most said it alleviated a tremendous amount of aggravation and stress, while others said it provided them with the time to address more pressing job needs like working with student-athletes, mentoring coaches, and teaching parents about the virtues of sportsmanship. These are the needs that drive Athletic Director's job satisfaction, not shuffling paperwork.



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# 5 Key Takeaways From The Arbiter Webinar On Digital Registration

On August 2, 2022, ArbiterSports, in conjunction with *Coach & AD Magazine*, conducted a national webinar titled: “How digitizing the registration process saves hundreds of hours each year in athletic departments (Psst...and makes the lives of Athletic Directors so much better!)”

The webinar featured three esteemed panelists including Eric Scott, Athletic Director at Medfield High School, Medfield, Massachusetts, who is an innovator in the world of high school athletics serving as an AD and teacher for many years. He is a fan of the digitized registration process in athletics. Kevin May, Director of Athletics at Oxford High School, Oxford, Massachusetts, who has served as a Coach, AD and teacher for decades and understands the role of technology in making the lives of ADs much easier and rewarding. And Clark Evans who serves at the Vice President of Business Development for ArbiterSports, and has been with the company for nearly 30 years and has been involved in all facets of the company’s growth. Clark is a true expert in technology and software as it relates to Registration, Scheduling and Payments in high school and college sports.



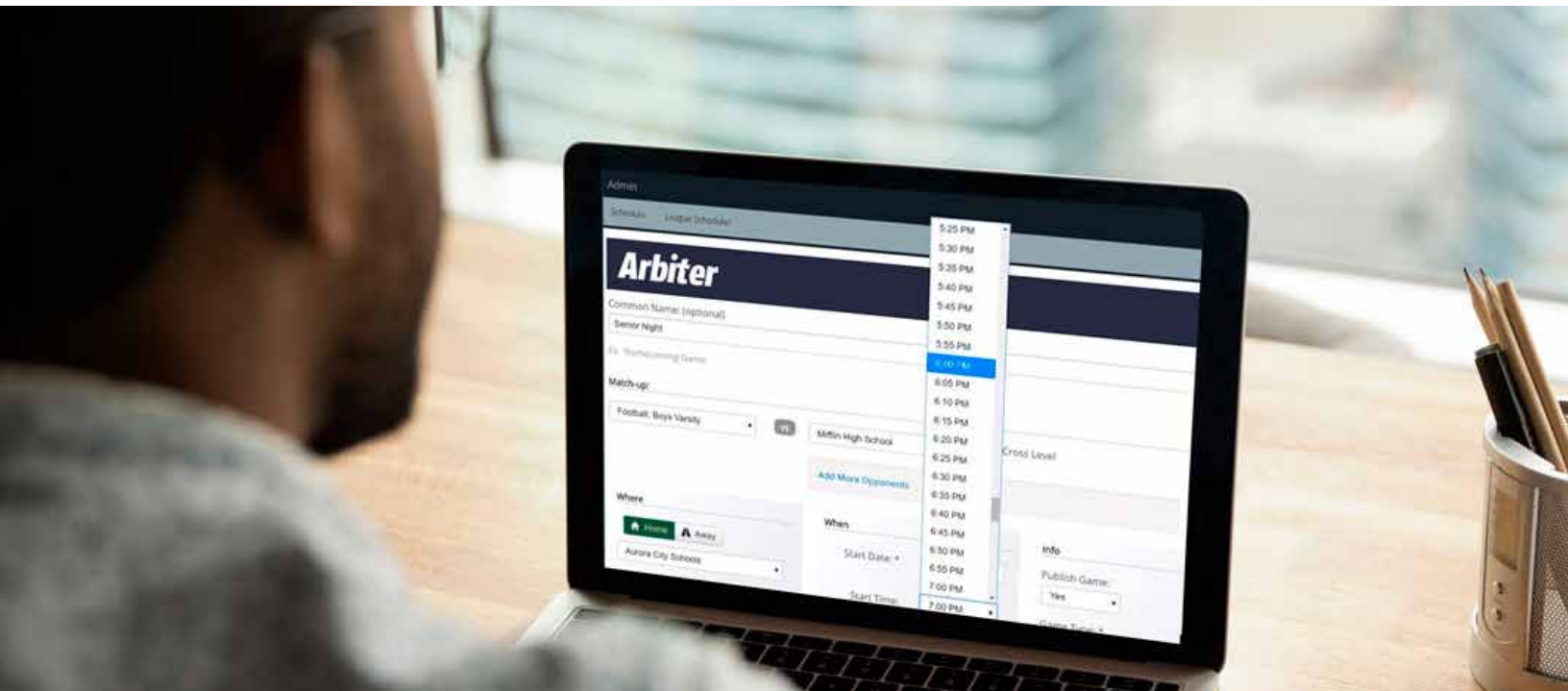
**Eric Scott**  
Athletic Director  
Medfield High School  
Medfield, MA



**Kevin May**  
Director of Athletics  
Oxford High School  
Oxford, MA



**Clark Evans**  
Vice President of  
Business Development  
ArbiterSports





## 5 Key Takeaways From The Arbiter Webinar On Digital Registration

### 1 *Placing forms in a student's backpack is like tossing paper into the wind.*

Our panelists all agreed that in the old days, or the current days if you're not using digital registration software, placing paperwork in a student's backpack to bring home to their parents is asking for nothing but trouble. It's not so much about pages getting lost as much as it is how many pages WILL get lost, how many pages won't be filled-out completely or correctly, and how many pages will be folded, wrinkled and beyond repair.

The follow-up process for incomplete forms is absolutely brutal for Athletic Directors and their staff, assuming they even have a staff, but locating lost pages and forms makes the task even more difficult. This might be the single most time-consuming aspect of manual registration and the frustration level it causes is incomprehensible.



## 5 Key Takeaways From The Arbiter Webinar On Digital Registration

### 2 *There are so many uses for Arbiter Registration beyond the athletics department.*

Our panelists all agreed that Arbiter Registration can be used throughout a school or school district, but did mention that furthering its scope beyond athletics did require buy-in from other departments and administrators. Currently, our ADs are using the registration software for associated purposes like transportation and bus ride approvals, travel forms and documentation, and various waivers and consents. It was determined that perhaps this is the best place to start the process of expanding Arbiter Registration to other aspects beyond direct athletics and to create customized forms for associated events and occurrences as mentioned above.



## 5 Key Takeaways From The Arbiter Webinar On Digital Registration

### 3 *With Arbiter Registration, enrollment in subsequent athletic seasons is as simple as scrolling and signing.*

Let's face it, parents want the registration process to be easy, they want simplicity, and the path of least resistance. So do Athletic Directors, their associates, administrators, coaches, and everyone else in the ecosystem of high school sports. In fact, every single person in the U.S. who uses technology wants simplicity, but most technology companies can't provide it. Want to know why? Because the complexity of simplicity is, well, complex. But ArbiterSports is a company that has roots in making the complex simple for its users; in this case, it's the parents who use Arbiter Registration.

And here's a great example of what our esteemed panelists explained to us and the webinar attendees about the simplicity of Arbiter Registration. They said that parents love being able to register for the next sports season, regardless of their kids being in sixth grade, middle school or high school, by simply scrolling down to the bottom of the appropriate form and e-signing the document. In most cases, there's no need to start over and fill-out new forms for each season. It's really as easy as one, two and three with three being submit. **Now that's complexity of simplicity and ArbiterSports has it down to a science.**

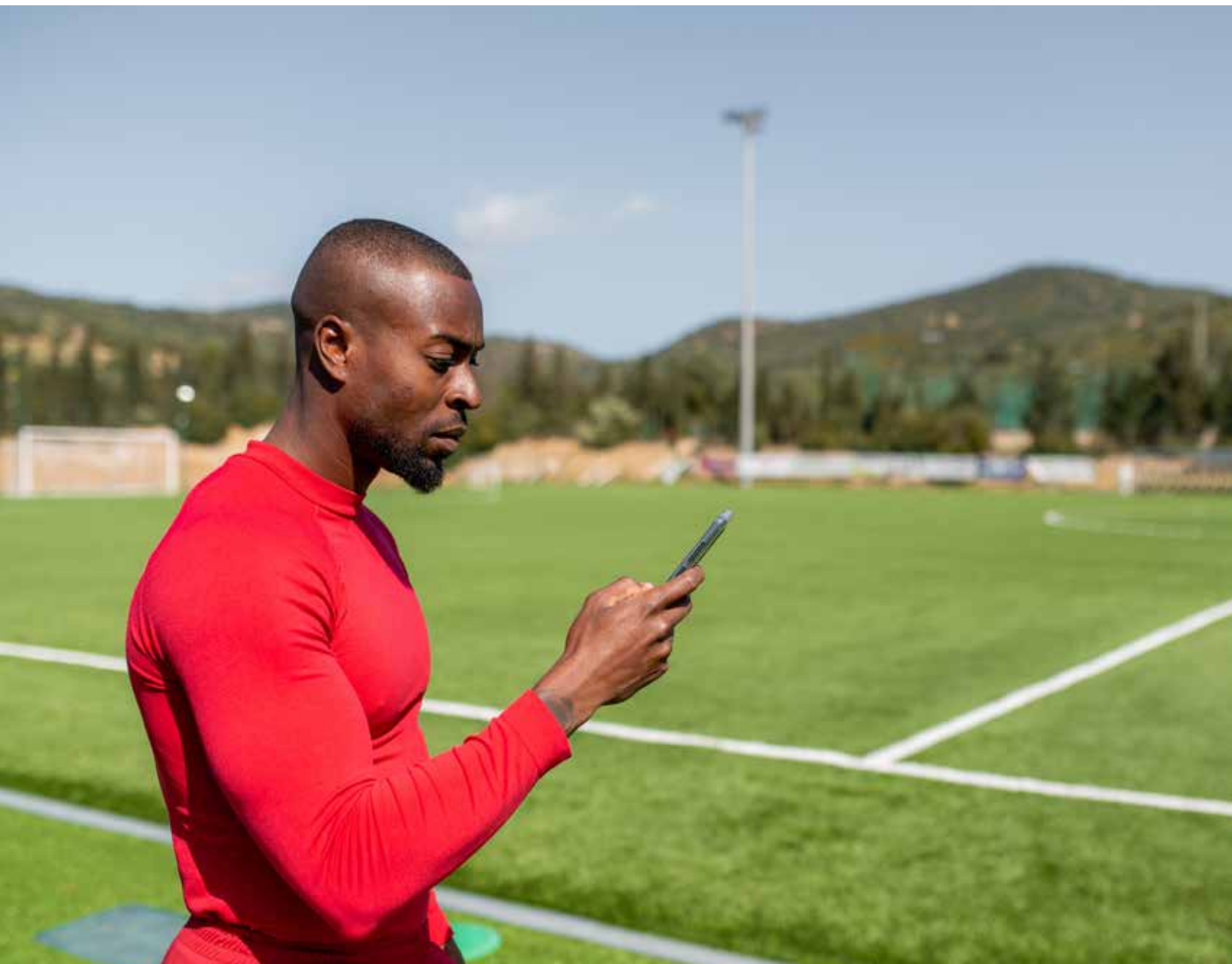




## 5 Key Takeaways From The Arbiter Webinar On Digital Registration

### 4 *The Arbiter Registration app isn't just a difference-maker, it's a game-changer.*

Our panelists eloquently spoke about how the Arbiter app really has changed the way digital registration takes hold in schools today. From ADs and associates, to coaches and their assistants, the app literally puts all the information and the actions in the hands of the people who need it the most. They also mentioned that so many companies now have apps it seems almost mandatory at this point in time, but truth be told, some companies that offer registration products, don't offer an app.



## 5 Key Takeaways From The Arbiter Webinar On Digital Registration

There were five critical takeaways from the webinar that we would like to share with you.

### 5 *Recordkeeping is painful and cumbersome, but with Arbiter Registration, it's a breeze*

The majority of our respondents indicated that Arbiter Registration changed their job significantly. Most said it alleviated a tremendous amount of aggravation and stress, while others said it provided them with the time to address more pressing job opportunities like working with student-athletes, mentoring coaches, and teaching parents about the virtues of sportsmanship. These are the opportunities that drive Athletic Director's job satisfaction, not shuffling paperwork.

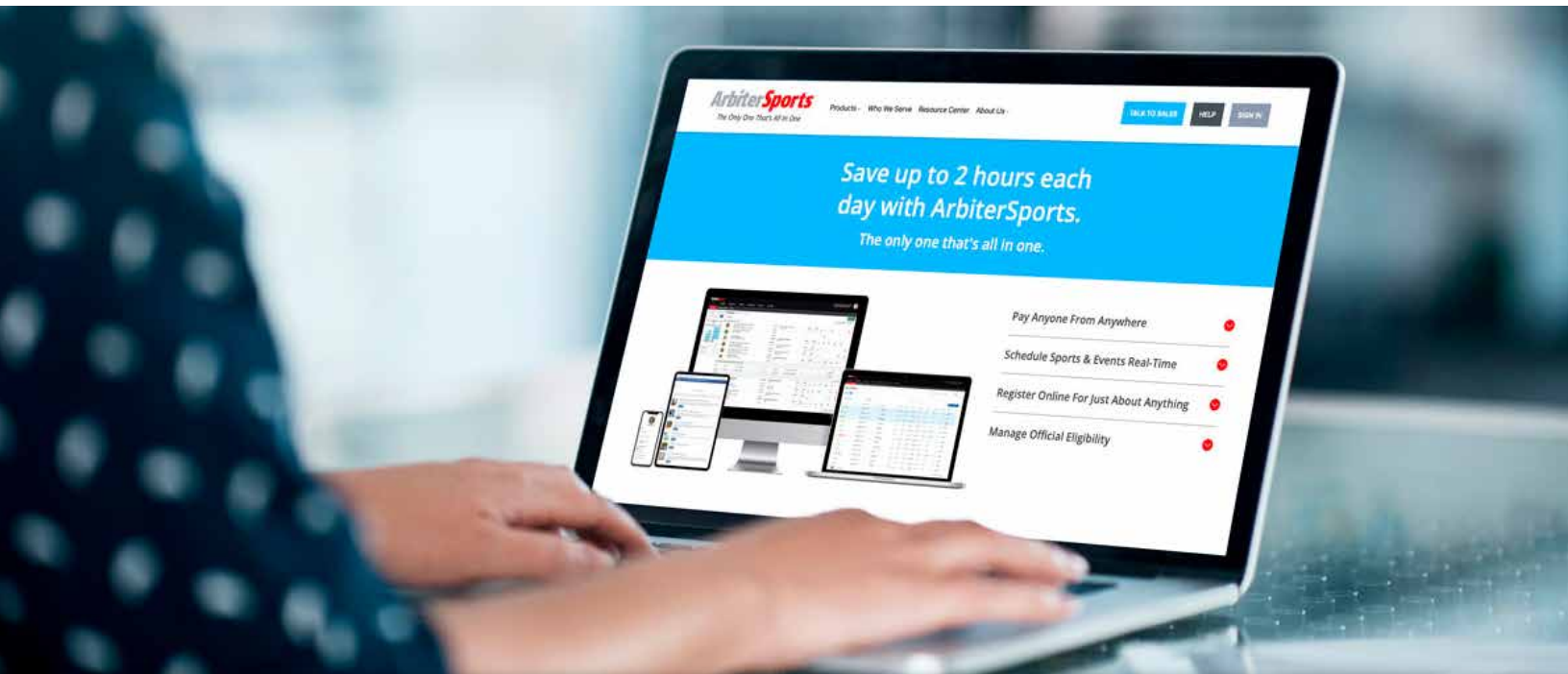


# Summary and Conclusions

The industry is moving forward with digital registration products and there is little acceptance for the manual processes of years past. Schools and school districts that haven't joined the fold will continue to fall further and further behind as companies like ArbiterSports continue to add new innovations and features to their registration software. It seems, at least from Arbiter's extensive research, that athletic departments are leading the charge in the acceptance of digitized registration solutions and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. In many instances, it's the athletic department that is providing the impetus for other departments within a school or school district, to expand registration to other departments.

In the end, the feeling is that Arbiter Registration provides enormous benefits to Athletic Directors and athletic departments by:

- Saving up to 240 hours of labor during the fall sports season alone. That's six-weeks in fall and maybe as much as 2-3 months of labor savings in a year.
- Many Athletic Directors said they save as much as \$10,000 in hard costs by implementing Arbiter Registration. That's quite a bit more than an annual subscription of the product. Yes, it can pay for itself in a matter of months or less.
- And, our Athletic Director respondents said that Arbiter Registration completely changed their jobs and eliminated a tremendous amount of aggravation. In fact, ADs mentioned that they now have time to focus on what they believe their jobs were originally intended to be: Working with student-athletes; mentoring coaches, dealing with issues of sportsmanship and sports specialization; and focusing on transitioning coaches from being transactional to transformative.



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