Cleveland Browns, Aramark Sports + Entertainment, and Wicket Take Frictionless Technology to Next Level with Large-Scale Deployment of Express Access Concessions

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PHILADELPHIA--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Oct. 1, 2024-- Building on the success of the **Cleveland Browns'** award-winning Express Beer concept, the club, along with Aramark Sports + Entertainment and Wicket, a privacy-first facial recognition software provider, have collaborated with technology partners Tapin2 and Mashgin to take frictionless technology to the next level with a large-scale deployment of **Express Access** concessions at Huntington Bank Field.

"As the sports industry evolves, so must the gameday experience. Fans want to enjoy everything their stadium offers without missing any action," said Alicia Woznicki, Vice President of Design and Development, Aramark Sports + Entertainment. "The success of Express Beer at the Browns' stadium showed us that fans are interested and willing to enroll in the digital age verification process, which gave us the confidence to expand on a much larger scale and introduce a comprehensive food and beverage program with the same capabilities."

New for the 2024 NFL season, the Express Access offering ensures building-wide coverage, allowing fans to utilize the innovative, grab-and-go concessions model no matter where they are seated in the stadium – changing the game by reducing wait times, increasing efficiency, and driving revenue.

"Express Access has become a critical part of amplifying our fans' gameday experience and making sure we're getting them into Huntington Bank Field and through concession lines efficiently and seamlessly," said Brandon Covert, Vice President of Information Technology, Cleveland Browns. "We're thrilled to expand this program and looking forward to continuing to work with our partners at Aramark Sports + Entertainment and Wicket as well as Mashgin and Tapin2 on this stadium-wide enhancement this season."

Express Access: Key Facts and Stats

- **Award-Winning Technology.** Express Beer earned the 2024 VenuesNow Excellence in Concessions Award for Best Technology and a nomination for Technology Collaboration of the Year on SportsBusiness Journal's 2024 Sports Business Tech Awards list.
- **Building-Wide Coverage** ensures fans can use Express Access from any quadrant within the stadium to purchase both food and beverage.
- **Facial Authentication** used for payment for both food and beverage and age verification on alcohol purchases for guests 21+ using a valid, government-issued ID.
- **Increased Efficiency.** On Sept. 8, **11%** of all transactions at the 12 active Express Access locations were processed through this new system. During the peak period prior to kickoff, an impressive **24%** of transactions were processed through this system at the two Pilot Fast Favorites locations.
- **Reduced Wait Times.** In 2023, Express Beer, a partnership with Lava.ai and Tapin2, was introduced at 6 locations throughout Huntington Bank Field, cutting wait times by **more than 30 seconds** on average.
- **Repeat Usage.** The quick and easy user experience is demonstrated by the **30%** of customers who purchased more than once via Express Access during the home opener.
- **Seamless Integration.** Fans already using facial recognition for ticketing were early adopters of Express Access. In fact, **65%** of fans who enrolled in Wicket's facial ticketing this season also enrolled in payments.
- **Frictionless Transactions at Entry.** Beverage portables stationed at the Express Access entrance gates offer a convenient option for enrollees to complete their first transaction as soon as they arrive at the stadium.

"Wicket is committed to enabling a sensational event experience, and the Express Access program at Huntington Bank Field is a prime example of this," said Alastair Partington, CEO, Wicket. "Partnering with Aramark Sports + Entertainment to enable frictionless transactions at more locations throughout the stadium allows fans to spend less time in line and more time enjoying the action on the field."

Images and Video Available Here.

About Aramark Sports + Entertainment

Aramark Sports + Entertainment serves more than 150 award-winning food and beverage, retail, and facility service programs in premier stadiums, arenas, convention centers, cultural attractions, performance venues, and unique entertainment destinations across North America. The company has received accolades for industry innovations including autonomous markets, dining concepts powered by artificial intelligence, and high-profile events like the MLB World Series, MLB at Rickwood Field, and NBA All-Star. Aramark has been recognized on FORTUNE's list of "World's Most Admired Companies," The Civic 50 by Points of Light 2024, Fair360's "Top 50 Companies for Diversity" and "Top Companies for Black Executives," Newsweek's list of "America's Most Responsible Companies 2024," the HRC's "Best Places to Work for LGBTQ Equality," and earned a score of 100 on the Disability Equality Index. Learn more at www.aramark.com and connect with us on LinkedIn, Facebook, X, and Instagram.

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