

CASE STUDY

Sonicbids Gets Easier PCI Compliance and More with Recurly



Sonicbids

Sonicbids is growing rapidly by offering a unique and outstanding service: a career management and promotional tool for more than half a million music acts. Sonicbids also serves as the exclusive booking platform for major music festivals such as SXSW. And they use Recurly to help them do it all.

Sonicbids members create an online presence on the site, using Sonicbids' own invention, the [Electronic Press Kit \(EPK\)](#). Instead of assembling and mailing scores of physical press kits, artists use the features of the EPK – including unlimited high-quality music and video uploads – to position themselves for festivals, gigs, TV and movie work, studio sessions, licensing, and more.

As an act gains traction, new analytics tools from Sonicbids help build momentum. *“Sonicbids members can now infuse their EPK with important social media analytics, such as their hard-earned Facebook likes, Twitter followers, and Soundcloud and YouTube plays,”* according to Joshua Ellstein, President and COO of Sonicbids.

Sonicbids serves as the application portal for major events and festivals – and promotes artists who attend. More than 250 Sonicbids artists will attend the June edition of NXNE. That's North by Northeast, in geographical counterpoint to the very popular SXSW gatherings, which Sonicbids also [sponsors](#).

Using Recurly Since

2013

Subscribers

400,000+

Benefits of Recurly

- ▶ Seamless integration with existing systems
- ▶ 8% of credit card transactions recovered monthly
- ▶ Recurly.js Javascript module - powerful and modifiable
- ▶ Strong support for PCI compliance
- ▶ Excellent customer support

Choosing Recurly

After evaluating several subscription billing providers based on customer support, product functionality and system performance, Sonicbids selected Recurly. *“We chose Recurly because we were impressed with the company’s customer service. Recurly has proven that it is a customer-focused company,”* according to Michael Felman, CFO of Sonicbids. *“In addition, Sonicbids relies on having clear visibility into our business, and Recurly provides a variety of useful reports relevant to our subscription business.”*

Sonicbids runs a technically complex service, cutting across major issues such as big data storage, community, searchability, online promotion, payments, and security. Yet each artist pays a fixed monthly fee, so efficient, scalable solutions are crucial to Sonicbids.

And, when you’re taking on complex technical challenges, even the best-designed software may only be as good as the quality of the support behind it. Felman tells the story: *“We had an issue with hops between a third party’s data center and Recurly. A third-party ISP was dropping half of the data packets. We had emails flying between our developers, their developers, and Recurly’s CTO. It took us two months to resolve, but we fixed it. The support we’ve had has been beyond expectations.”*

Focus on PCI Integration

One big issue for Sonicbids is PCI compliance. PCI DSS, or Payment Card Interchange Data Security Standard, is a set of rules to help companies “harden” online payment systems against intrusion. Companies that comply with PCI DSS increase their chances of surviving a digital attack. Companies not in compliance risk data loss and hefty penalties.

“For us, Recurly’s status as a Tier 1 PCI Provider, and the ability to use and customize Recurly.js, are really important,” said Felman. *“Recurly’s suite of*

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Javascript libraries helps keep credit card data flowing through our system. Beyond that, we are 100% dependent on Recurly services like dunning and integration capabilities.”

Recurly.js is central to Sonicbids’ implementation of Recurly. Recurly.js calls Recurly-hosted code to accept online payments, meaning the host system never sees nor stores credit card data. This approach removes a great deal of complexity from PCI compliance for merchants who use Recurly.js.

“We found Recurly’s solution to be complete and well-proven,” according to Ellstein.

ABOUT RECURLY

Recurly provides enterprise-class recurring billing management for thousands of subscription-based businesses worldwide

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