



# Customer Case Study

## The Customer: Sheffield United Football Club

Sheffield United Football Club (SUFC) plays at one of the oldest professional football stadiums in the world: the first football match staged at Bramall Lane was in 1862. SUFC's commitment to the game – and to the local community – has remained strong throughout its history. Located in a residential area, SUFC values its ties with its neighbours and runs initiatives that serve and enhance the lives of generations to come.

## Energy Cost Advisors (ECA) Group

Energy Cost Advisors (ECA) Group has been providing clients with expert business energy advice since 1988. It delivers a broad portfolio of services including energy procurement, invoice validation, query management, reporting, and conservation.

ECA has deep expertise with sports clubs and counts Manchester City, Sunderland, Blackburn Rovers and Saint Helens among its clients. ECA is proud to have worked with Sheffield United Football Club since December 2000.

## The Challenge

Sustainability is high on the agenda at SUFC: the club incinerates 100% of its refuse to heat public buildings and runs litter picking schemes. "We take conservation very seriously," explains Mr. Hicks, Head of Estates at SUFC, "and are concerned about waste."

SUFC's estate at Bramall Lane is sprawling, some of it dating back several decades. It includes offices and function suites as well as the football stadium itself. Half-hourly data showed the club's consumption was rising, but not where or how. SUFC ran energy patrols to turn off unused equipment, but wanted to be more proactive.

"We put together a comprehensive energy strategy," explains Mr. Hicks. "But with circuit boards all over the place we soon realized we couldn't pursue our strategy properly without detailed management information." SUFC turned to ECA. Having saved the club £161,000 in the past two years alone, ECA was a natural choice.

## The Solution

"We understood that SUFC wanted to take conservation to a new level," explains Steve Silverwood, ECA's Director of Client Services, "for which we needed SUFC's detailed consumption information. We partnered with NoWatt to meet these goals."

ECA took a methodical approach. With NoWatt installed, ECA and NoWatt ran a customised workshop for SUFC to discuss findings and propose actions. ECA then followed up with a client-specific report that contained detailed management information and specific recommended actions for SUFC.

"The information from ECA and NoWatt is spot on, and essential for clubs like us."

Mr. Hicks  
Head of Estates  
SUFC



## The Results

Using its deep experience of the sports sector, ECA is helping SUFC to track its electricity consumption in KWh per occupied stadium seat. Using data from NoWatt, ECA's reports highlight that match days add no more than 30% to expected consumption. Savings therefore lie in bringing down baseline consumption.

ECA identified £38,000 of potential savings by comparing SUFC's consumption to industry norms. "We found a host of problem areas," explains Mr. Silverwood. "Air conditioning continually left on, high consumption in empty offices at weekends and night-time usage that is almost double industry norms (38% of total usage rather than 20%)." ECA calculated that SUFC could save around £23,984 just by reducing its night-time usage, (£5,000 from night-time air conditioning in one bar alone).

Like many football clubs, SUFC sub-contracts the running of its function suites to outside companies. As a responsible landlord, SUFC wants to encourage its tenants to reduce consumption and ECA recommended that SUFC agree service level agreements (SLAs) for acceptable energy usage with its tenants – especially when the function suites are closed. "With NoWatt we can accurately measure adherence to these SLAs to drive the right behaviour," explains Mr. Silverwood. "It's one thing to identify changes to reduce spend, but another to control this. With NoWatt we can do this in a proactive way that is just not possible with half-hourly data."

## The Benefits

"The combination of ECA and NoWatt has been very successful," explains Mr. Hicks. "The detailed consumption information has helped us to raise awareness of conservation to our staff in a way we were unable to do before."

SUFC plans to implement NoWatt alerts so that its staff – especially the Night Porters and on-site electrician – can immediately investigate potential issues and take proactive remedial action.

As for ECA, the journey is just beginning. "We have long wanted to provide this level of information to our clients, but the staff costs have been prohibitive. NoWatt has solved this for us. The immediate £38,000 of savings for SUFC stemmed from monitoring just six areas of the stadium," concludes Mr. Silverwood. "The potential for savings are endless."

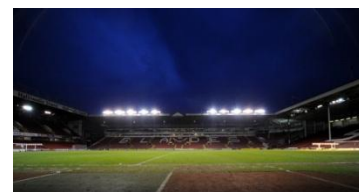
And SUFC's reaction? "I would definitely recommend ECA and NoWatt," confirms Mr. Hicks. "The management information is spot on, and essential for clubs like us. Now we understand how much work is ahead of us – but also the potential savings. We're focusing on specific areas of the stadium one at a time, incrementally building up a complete picture of the estate. It's our energy strategy in action."

With ECA and NoWatt on board, SUFC looks set to continue a tradition it started in 1862: leading the field.

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## BENEFITS

Measure consumption in KWh per occupied stadium seat

Compare day and night-time consumption against industry norms

Raise staff awareness of conservation with detailed consumption information

