



BLINDER CASE STUDY

Fremantle Football Club

“Being able to schedule interviews, have everything sent out automatically, then get a recording, certainly assists with our day to day management.”

Luke Morfesse, General Manager - Media and Communications,
Fremantle Football Club.



The Fremantle Dockers streamline media interviews and protect athlete privacy with Blinder

Organising media phone interviews used to entail a lot of back and forth for the comms team at Fremantle. Issues included having to remind players before every call, as well as having no means to see if calls had or hadn't happened until staff followed up with the players.

Arrangements were also being made for some players who did not want their phone numbers being given out to the media, meaning additional leg work for everyone and restricting an increasingly time-sensitive media from speaking with their top talent.

When the opportunity came up to trial Blinder as a secure, centralised system to manage all media interviews, the club jumped on it and have found it hugely beneficial for all parties. Fremantle now avoid sharing players' phone numbers, save significant time each week and produce higher-quality, faster-turnaround interviews.



**Athlete privacy
protected**



**More efficient
and time saving**



**Higher quality
interviews**

Fremantle FC and the AFL at a glance

The Fremantle Football Club, nicknamed the Dockers, is a professional Australian rules football team that competes in the Australian Football League (AFL).

The club is based in the port city of Fremantle at the mouth of the Swan River in Western Australia and has over 51,000 season members.

When it comes to sport in Australia, the AFL is the biggest show in town with a total of 875,000 season members spread across 18 teams.



FREMANTLE
DOCKERS



CHALLENGES

With over 1,000 media engagements to arrange and manage each year and an increasingly time-sensitive media, Fremantle's media and comms manager Luke Morfesse was acutely aware of three key challenges.

Organising phone interviews was inefficient and time consuming

Arranging a media phone interview with a player involved a lot of back and forth between all parties. This included agreeing the best time and number to call on, then sending all the required information to both parties and reminding players individually before each call. If arrangements changed for any reason, both player and journalist needed to be updated individually by email and / or text message.

Players would sometimes forget / not answer their phones to journalists

The standard practice at the club was for journalists to be given the players' personal mobile numbers, so they could call them for interviews. Journalists preferred to be the ones to call, as busy athletes couldn't be relied on to call them, however this practice meant there was little constraint over who could call the players and when.

There was also no way for players to differentiate between incoming calls from journalists and other unrecognised numbers. This meant that despite the comms team trying their best to give individual reminders before every call, players would sometimes forget, or not answer their phones due to being unsure who was calling.



Respecting players' privacy impacted their ability to deliver quality content, to a time-sensitive media

Some players were not comfortable having their numbers shared with the media due to receiving an increasing amount of unarranged calls. This meant they either had to remember to call the journalists at the agreed time and withhold their number, or a staffer needed to be with the player to receive the call on their phone and pass it over. Neither of those options were ideal and ultimately both created more work, slowed things down and risked the interview not going ahead.

SOLUTION

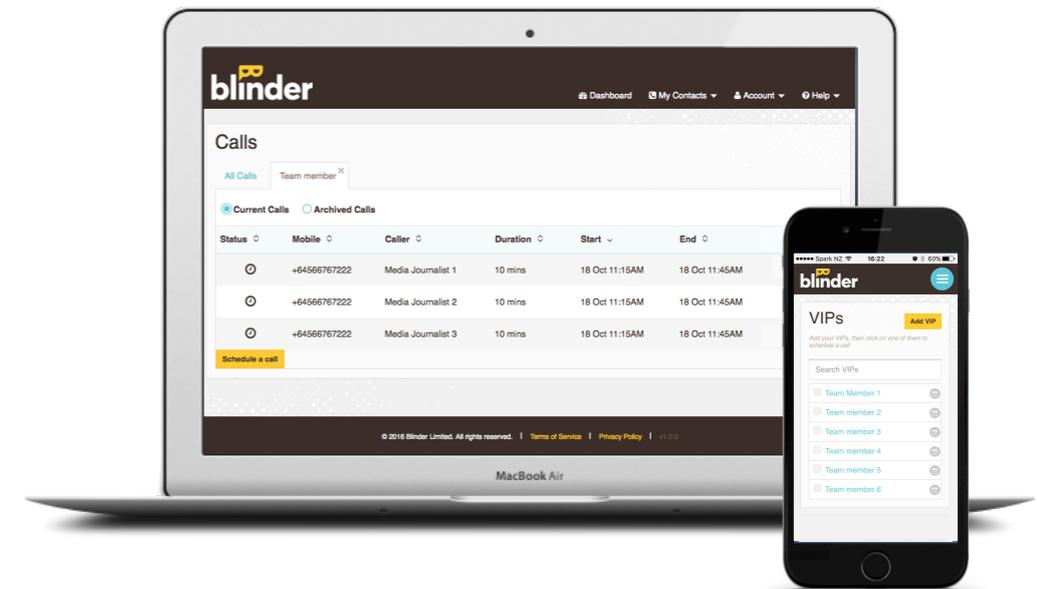
Fremantle were not actively looking for a new system for conducting media interviews, but when they were presented with Blinder and given an opportunity to trial it, they could clearly see its value to them.

With Blinder, players still receive calls from journalists on their mobiles, but without sharing their numbers

Blinder gives the team a special phone number which can be routed through to any player's mobile phone. Journalists simply dial the number then enter the unique 4-digit code they've received for the call from Blinder, which puts them through to the correct player. Each code will only work at (or close to) the agreed time for the call. This ensures all calls are arranged through the Fremantle comms staff, personal phone numbers are never shared, and players only talk to the media when they're called via the trusted team number at the agreed time.

The comms manager schedules interviews in a few seconds, then all details and reminders are sent automatically

Once a time is agreed for an interview, the comms manager adds a new call via the Blinder web dashboard. Both player and journalist receive all of the information automatically via text message and email. All parties, including the comms manager, then receive a reminder 10 minutes before each call is due to take place, meaning once a call is scheduled there's nothing more to be done.



Calls are tracked in real time, and audio can be recorded and downloaded

Luke and the comms team can see when calls are in progress and have been completed in real time, meaning they no longer have to chase up athletes to check if interviews have gone ahead, and they can respond to any issues immediately. The comms team have the option to record calls, which happens in most instances. The content is great for avoiding misquotes and is often re-purposed elsewhere, as well as used for media training.

RESULTS

A new level of professionalism, higher quality interviews and happier players

As all interviews have to be arranged via the comms team and they take place at the agreed times following automated reminders, players are always properly briefed and ready for every call. This plus the media training now possible using call recordings, has resulted in higher quality interviews. Since the switch, athletes have been free to change their phone numbers, knowing their new number won't be shared, leaving them free to focus on doing what they do best - playing footy!

Faster turnaround interviews, fewer missed calls and happier journalists

Fremantle's comms team can now agree a time for a call and send out the details to all parties in a matter of seconds. Additionally, the issues around facilitating interviews for players who didn't want their numbers given out are a thing of the past, allowing more flexibility and getting quality content out to the media faster. The media like that arrangements are clear and that players are always prepared for calls and answer their phones.

Significant time saved each week for the comms team and a record of everything

Whilst difficult to quantify, Luke will attest that Blinder saves him and the comms team significant amounts of time during most weeks, leaving them free to focus on what they do best - facilitating higher quality media coverage for Freo.

What Luke has to say

"Since we started using Blinder, the instances of players forgetting interviews has reduced to zero. The media seem to appreciate the clarity it brings and that players answer their phones at the agreed times."

Luke Morfesse, GM, Media and Communications, Fremantle FC

Want to know more?

If so, [click here](#) to request a demo, or get in touch via the below contact.



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