

Digital transformations. Elcom makes these happen.  
See how we transformed the APF's website and membership system.



The Australian Parachute Federation (APF) is the peak body for the administration, regulation and representation of Australian Sport Parachuting.

The APF is a not-for-profit member organisation representing 3000+ licensed skydivers and 60 clubs across Australia.



## THE CHALLENGE

We have had an ongoing relationship with Elcom for many years. The team helped us build a custom website that serves as both our public website, and a membership system for staff at the APF and clubs we represent. Since then, we continue to make big strides on improving business and user processes on the website.

Previously we had membership cards that were printed. A key issue was the accuracy of these cards. Anytime a member's licensing arrangements changed, we needed to reprint the card from the APF office and post it out to them. These cards, which are shown to clubs when a member goes skydiving, was only as accurate as the version they had on them at that time.

The cost of printing physical cards, the administration processing time, and the environmental cost of using and sending out plastic cards, was also an issue. The eventual solution was to build a mobile app with membership details that could be shown on their phone immediately.

## THE PROCESS

When the opportunity came up to develop a mobile app, the IT Committee recommended Elcom based on timing of the project, price and quality of solution. Elcom could provide functionality that other vendors couldn't as they were able to integrate the app to our membership system. This meant members could go to a drop zone, show their app and qualifications to staff, and the data on the app and the club's system would be consistent.

The member app project was a significant piece, and it was fairly seamless. It was on time, on budget, and the deployment ran smoothly on both major releases. Our Project Manager was always responsive, and on top of that, we had direct access to the technical team. It really makes a difference when you can get answers and feedback quickly to help with decision making.

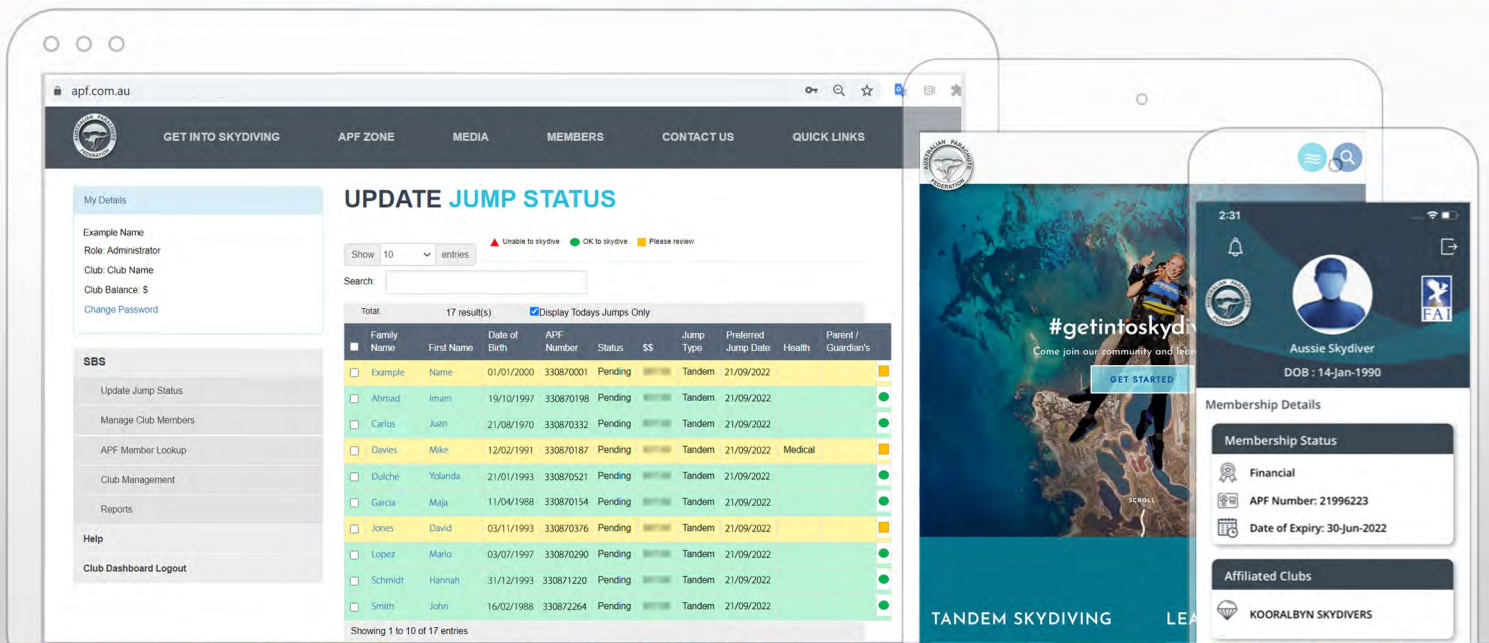
We don't have a dedicated technical team in-house at APF so the Elcom developers produced test files and wrote user guides for us so we could be assured we were implementing a solid solution. That was a step above what we would have otherwise expected from a vendor and this support is invaluable to us.

"The support we received from the Elcom team, the level of understanding and the immediate communication, was really what made the mobile app so successful. From a business point of view, the project will roughly pay for itself within the first year, which is an excellent ROI."

Richard McCooey,  
Chief Executive Officer







## THE SOLUTION

The mobile app has now replaced the physical card that members show at a drop zone to verify their qualifications. Members download the app and login. It then shows their membership details including status, affiliated clubs and qualifications. APF can also send push notifications to members through the website publishing interface.

Most of our website is custom built and serves as our membership system. Each club can access a dashboard which lists out which students will be arriving on a given date, along with member information and any account issues. Most of our clubs use this to manage their operational day.

Some of the bigger clubs have separate systems for day to day management. They utilise our API to integrate their system with our membership system. This means clubs can implement software that is best for their needs, and new student membership information on our database is immediately available in their system.

Forms and workflows are critical for us. We're able to write a database query that retrieves data and presents it in a form to the user. For example, members can select from a field which Chief Instructor should be reviewing their form. Our Chief Instructors can see forms assigned to them in their 'to do' box. Because it's coming from our database, the options in these form fields are automatically updated when appointments change.

The flexibility of the platform allows us to have three variations of the member search. The first is the member search on our public website. Because of privacy reasons, you need to enter exact personal identifying information. The second is the search available to clubs, which allows club staff to put in nicknames and wildcards. This is invaluable as we have members who are known only by their nicknames. Then we have our administration search, which has the same criteria but once you click through to the profile it gives you the ability to edit the data and view additional fields.



## THE BENEFITS

The mobile app has been the most high-profile project we've worked on recently since members see the most benefit from it. We had a really good take-up when it launched, and it's eliminated the need for physical cards. From a business point of view, the project will roughly pay for itself within the first year which is an excellent ROI. From a project's perspective, the app was delivered on time, on budget and is exactly what we want; it has a user-friendly design and works seamlessly for members. The support we received from the Elcom team, the level of understanding and the immediate communication, was really what made it so successful.

The website itself is integral to the business. It provides information to the public and is also our single source of truth for membership management. Our administration staff are logging in to manage member queries, look up members, and process applications. Sports Development is logging in to adjust the website or add events. Finance are checking for payments. Almost everyone connected to the organisation uses the website, the app or both, every day for their roles.

For smaller clubs, the custom dashboards are essentially their working world in which they manage their days. While larger clubs that work with us have the flexibility to implement their own software and integrate it with our member database. This automation between systems provides a seamless experience for clubs and members.

We're continuing to work with Elcom on improvements that make life easier for people who commonly interact with the website and app. We're developing a new automation piece that will provide a lot of value for staff, clubs and members. When a member fills in a form to apply for a type of qualification and pays by credit card, it will be processed automatically and applied to the qualifications tab in their account - all without office intervention. This will cut out the reasonable amount of time staff spend manually processing applications and the delay to members, making it faster and efficient.