

Coacha app review

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Hi all. I'm new to the ConnectedCoaches community and have seen a lot of app/software review blogs posted on the site. I thought I would share with you my experiences of Coacha, which has made my life so much easier! I hope you find this review useful.

What is the app?

Coacha Software was created for amateur sports club management. It was designed to streamline most of the things that we already do as coaches, but that take up a lot of time. Coacha makes it easy for sports coaches/managers/secretaries to manage their clubs, people and finances. It helps monitor attendance and generates club statistics at the click of a button. It does all this whilst ensuring that member information stays safe and secure. It's straight forward and simple to use, but useful in all the right ways.

What sports or activities do you use it for?

I'm the program director, gym manager and a coach at Gloucestershire Cheerleading Academy (GCA). We are one of the South West's largest and most successful Allstar Cheerleading programmes. Cheerleading is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK and we're so proud of our athletes for being a part of that.

We pride ourselves on delivering high standards of coaching, training and the smooth running of our club. Coacha has been a big part of our professional journey so far.

What system of the app do you use Android/Apple?

Coacha is available on desktop, laptop, tablet and iOS. I've used Coacha on all these platforms. The simplicity of Coacha's layout makes it easy for me to access any information that I need, whenever I need it. Because Coacha is Cloud-based, it means that all my coaches can use it on their own devices and any changes they make are synced to Coacha automatically, making it easy for me to review classes and share the workload.

I use the desktop version of Coacha at home to manage my club finances. This is easy, fast and makes it a lot less-stressful to keep track of everything.

I've used the iOS app in my classes since its launch and have found it really useful for taking registers as it means I no longer need to print them off. It also gives me quick access to the information I would need in an emergency – before Coacha I would have had to search through paper records for this. I've been a Coacha user from the start and I told the Coacha team how an app would be fantastic and really helpful; so the fact that they listened to our feedback was really exciting.

The app is free, staying true to Coacha's constant reassurance of 'no hidden costs'. We loved how the app was designed to include only the key features, as this has made it even easier to run our classes and take registers.

How long have you been using it for?

We really feel like we've been on a journey with Coacha as we've been using as a beta tester since

August 2016 (although I'm aware it's been in development for the last 2 years). We have loved seeing it grow and can honestly say that every new feature update has been useful and based around Coacha's users' needs.

What were your first impressions of the app?

I first signed up for a 30-day free trial, as I had done with various other pieces of software. I remember liking the layout and noticing that it was easy to navigate around. I remember the Coacha team being extremely helpful whenever I had a query and they were always lovely to chat to. The team offered to set my club up for me for free, and with over 130 members this took a massive weight off my shoulders. Within a few days my club was up and running and ready for use in our classes. I knew after the first few classes that we were going to be subscribing when the free trial was over. All my coaches were thrilled with the functionality and how it made our lives a lot easier. Not only has Coacha completely minimised our club admin, but it's reassuring to know that our data is being stored safely and securely, making us one step closer to being GDPR compliant.

How do you use the app and how often?

We run various weekly classes (Monday through to Sunday) and Coacha has become essential to the smooth running of our club.

We use an iPad which we present at the front of our practice space. Before each session, we load up the register and lock the screen using Coacha's 'register lock' feature - this keeps all member details and other sensitive information secure while our athletes sign themselves in. After the class, even if I didn't coach it myself, I can log in and view attendance.

The initial set-up of our club was done by the Coacha team, completely free-of-charge. They're always kind, helpful and able to solve any queries that we may have in a timely manner. We are constantly assured that one of Coacha's main priorities is safeguarding our members; something which is vital for us in a management system. I took great comfort in the fact that all Coacha's team members are DBS checked and that they use the best servers to ensure the safety of my member's information.

On learning about the change in law from the Data Protection Act 1998 to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), I knew that we had to do something to prepare. We needed a system in place to ensure that all our data was stored safely in one place and was easily accessible when needed. Coacha has helped us massively in working towards becoming GDPR compliant and has really taken the pressure off us with storing, managing and processing sensitive personal data.

Coacha allows me to manage my members and coaches and store information such as emergency contact details and health/medical information. This means that in the case of an emergency, I can access personal details a lot faster than I could before we made the switch from paper to Coacha. It also has an area for 'Coaches' Notes', where my coaches and I can make notes about athlete's progress/behaviour etc.

Coacha's new member sign-up feature has made life easier for us again. Instead of manually inputting new member's data into Coacha, we can now send a link to the athlete/parent's email address that allows them to sign up - all we need to do is accept them into our club. This also makes for a great waiting list. We can get the potential members to sign up and accept them when we have space - this is great for use in a club as busy as ours!

Our members are set up into member groups. Classes have been created depending on these member groups. Registers then generate automatically without me having to do a thing.

We use the 'events' feature when we have a competition or social event coming up and find the broadcast feature really useful for contacting specific groups of our members! We've also used Coacha's new text broadcast feature, which works really well as a lot of our members prefer texting over email. We also find more parents reply to texts than to emails.

We also use Coacha to manage our finances through Stripe. Before we came across Coacha, I'd considered a few different pieces of software for club/money management and we had been using a direct debit system which was quite costly. Stripe's transaction fees are some of the cheapest I've seen, at 1.4% + 20p per transaction. PayPal in comparison charge 3.4% + 20p, so this was a big selling point for us. It was also reassuring to know that Coacha doesn't add to or make money off these fees, unlike so many of the other programs I had looked at.

We use Coacha's subscription plan feature to take monthly payments. This has saved us so much time chasing payments and makes it easy to see who's paid what. Even when a payment is missed or cancelled we are notified by email straightaway. Another great thing about this is that Stripe allows us to withdraw our cash on a daily/weekly/monthly basis, with a clearing period of only 7 days. With our previous system, which collected payments by direct debit, we had to wait 2 weeks before the payments were in our account. We also use Coacha's one-off payments feature which makes it easy to take payments for uniforms, kit and additional classes etc.

What functionality do you use the most?

Now that our club is set-up fully, we use all of Coacha's features. Our subscription payments are all automatic and I don't have to touch them unless I'm amending prices. I use one-off payments a lot for when athletes attend extra classes and find the broadcast feature extremely useful.

The feature I'd say we use most frequently is registers and statistics. With so many classes running each week, we're using Coacha's registers feature several times a day to record attendance. The system works seamlessly no matter how many of my coaches are logged in and using it at the same time, and the ability to track attendance is really important to us - not only from a club management point of view, but also for safeguarding purposes. Being able to review our club statistics and see which of our classes are performing the best, both in terms of attendance and financially, is essential in continuing the success of GCA.

How important is the functionality to your coaching and how would you rate the performance of it?

Coacha's functionality is a perfect match for GCA. We use every feature and every feature is a vast improvement on the system we were using before. Coacha was developed by coaches just like us, and so it was designed based on real-life experiences, requirements and situations - I think that's what makes it very special. I would rate Coacha the highest possible rating in terms of functionality, for this reason.

How user-friendly do you find the app?

The reason we were trialling different pieces of software initially was because we knew that we had to find a program that would help to reduce our workload, not increase it. So, it was vital that we made the right decision to ensure ease of use for our coaches. When we trialled Coacha, I could see almost instantly how easy my team found it to use; not only that, but it fit so well into our classes that it was almost as if it was made for our club. However, seeing the constant positive reviews online for Coacha from various sports clubs, proves that the design is dynamic and adaptable to all different sports and club setups.

Any cons?

Every time we think there may be a problem with a Coacha feature, it is resolved by an updated/new feature. I'll give you some examples:

- It was getting a bit time-consuming to input all our new member's data, especially at the beginning of a new season. In our cheerleading coaches' forum, we could see that other people were having the same trouble. The Coacha team clearly took this feedback on board, as within a few weeks, they had launched a new feature to allow athletes/parents to sign-up from their own devices, meaning all we have to do is accept them into the club.
- Some parents were unsure about us inputting their card details into our own devices to set-up their subscriptions/take payments – After we told Coacha, it wasn't long before they released a new feature to allow athletes/parents can pay from their own devices.
- Since speaking to a team member at Coacha, I know that a few different clubs have said that it would be beneficial for them to text their members – they've just released SMS broadcasting.
- An iOS app has been in high demand with Coacha users, which has now gone live, making ease of use even better.

Whilst I'm aware that Coacha can't take on every single bit of feedback given to them, they make a huge effort to find out what's important to their users and try their best to make life easier for us, whilst ensuring the safety and security of our data.

How important is it now to your coaching?

Coacha is essential to myself and all my coaches. It has stepped in and quietly made life easier for us all, something which has really become apparent to me whilst writing this article. We'd be stuck without it, now.

Would you recommend it to other coaches?

Absolutely. 100%. Without a doubt. I'd give it 10/10. Do it – you won't look back.

I hope you find this review useful. Please add a comment to let me know what you think.

Next Steps

You can watch the below video or [visit Coacha's website](#) to find out more about them. You can also follow them on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and Instagram (@Coachagram).



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