

Case study 14 - live webcam stream

Using: iCode, livestreaming, website

Peregrine Falcons' Live Stream

Salisbury Cathedral offer a live web cam of their peregrine falcons:

<https://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/visit-what-see/peregrine-falcons-live-stream>

The peregrines have always been popular with visitors, and they have started to build them into their offer with signage and special tours (they live on the South Tower Balcony).

They are great for broad engagement and education engagement, and the live web cam is part of the Cathedral's regular offering, to keep their profile up and reputation high.

Peregrine cam consists of three cameras situated on the Cathedral balcony, allowing a glimpse into the private lives of nesting falcons. These lives have often been quite dramatic - adoptions, fights, hatching etc.

In normal years they stream two of the cameras live on their website, show one live stream in the cloisters and have all three streams available in the Tower for Tower Tour visitors.

On the Cloister screen and the Tower streams they have interpretation regarding falcons and their connection to the Cathedral. They also run weekly Peregrine Tower tours with experts once a week.

None of that could run this year, so they went totally virtual and once again linked up with Springwatch - featuring on their live Facebook programmes at 5pm.

Technology:

They use iCode systems to supply the stream and maintain the cameras. The stream is viewed on their website, and they also share the stream for a few weeks with the BBC.

iCode supply them with an iCatcher console which means they can pull off dramatic footage and stills to share.

Timeline:

They have been refining the system for over four years but to start from scratch, it would take research, a week's planning, a day's install and then you are good to go. It is very simple. You may need some training to operate the console.

One key factor to get right, is the security aspect of the cameras - they got iCode to talk directly to their IT supplier to ensure safeguards were put in place.

Cost:

About £2500 for three cameras (two basic static cameras, and one advanced camera) plus £30 per camera per month streaming and any hard drive maintenance.



Benefits:

There are no plans to monetise the webcam, it is used for PR and educational purposes and to encourage engagement with the Cathedral. However, the Cathedral has added a donation ask to the webcam page.

After ringing the chicks - the story was on the local TV news and Springwatch's 17.00 Facebook programme - they ran a voting and naming campaign, using names from the Cathedral's history to maintain awareness of their 800th Anniversary.

They have maintained interest by presenting a range of story types for different audiences. An important story to place within the context of Covid19 lockdown was the window on the world and mental wellbeing angles.

This was told by following up Facebook contacts and enlisting them as media champions and supplying viewer evidence. The pictures offered variety in a news agenda that was largely dominated by Coronavirus images.

Pageviews:

In May 2020 they had over 450,000 page views. On 10 May at 4pm, there were 516 simultaneous viewers of the streams, and in that one day, over 4200 different people viewed the streams.

Viewing has built year on year and month on month. If you compare March to May, when the eggs were laid:

- 1 March - 6 April 2019: 6,008 pageviews
- 1 March - 6 April 2020: 55,425 pageviews

Advice:

The peregrines provide the Cathedral with a way of connecting with people emotionally and encouraging the viewers to think of them as friends. They are a powerful education tool and the cathedral offer education worksheets along with the stream. They are also an excellent community tool and a way of staying in touch with volunteers through regular PR emails.

