DSB001 Digital Skills Bootcamp: Final evaluation exercise: Client Report
Project: Theatre Royal
Group: JUME
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1. Intro

Our group has been tasked by the Theatre Royal to commission a study regarding attitudes to theatre and theatre attendance in the UK. Along with offering our advice, based upon analysis of available data, regarding ways in which they can use the new application to increase interest and attendance at the theatre.

2. Analysis: Attitudes to theatres and theatre attendance in the UK

Impact of Covid
The world has been impacted by the outbreak of Covid which had a devasting impact on the theatre industry as a whole. In the recent studies it has been shown that "The number of UK theatregoers and arts attendees actively booking tickets for post-lockdown shows has dropped in the last month and is now at only 15%"[1].

Several recommendations were made by the government to support the industry including changes to the theatre layouts in order to enable for the seating to be socially distanced.

Theatre perception across the UK demographics
An upward trend has been observed with regard to the popularity in going to the theater amongst younger generations of 64% vs 60% of baby boomers. "Going to the theatre" has also been considerably more popular with women than men 76% vs 47% [2].

Diversity & Inclusion
Theatres across the country have been working on their D&I strategy which resulted for example for in National Theatre to have 36% female directors and 50% female performers in their theatres in 2021-22[3]. Whilst people feel more represented and are able to identify with creators and performances, they are more likely to attend.

3. Features we implemented to increase interest in attendance at the theatre

Accessibility
The Theatre Royal application we created can be accessed by both customers and clients 24/7. Given the increase in online spending compared to the traditional shopping, we believe that our platform will be the main source of revenue generation.

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[1] Woods, N., "The theatre industry during coronavirus: where is it now and what is its future?" online at https://www.afterdigital.co.uk/insights-and-updates/blog/theatre-industry-coronavirus-future accessed on 11 December 2022

[2] https://yougov.co.uk/topics/society/explore/activity/Going_to_the_theatre accessed on 11 December 2022

[3] https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/about-the-national-theatre/diversity/on-our-stages, accessed on 11 December 2022

We built the system where there are no limitations on the number of shows that can be listed or restrictions on the variables of performance such as number of dates and start times.

The ability to provide listings in a concise and easily accessible way which is to the customers preference be that by show or date which would significantly increase the user engagement as suggested in "Five ways to make ticketing more accessible"[4].

Security
Our design includes the use of encryption meaning that all the information we store with regard to payments is stored securely in our system. "Security of storage" was one of the features referenced in the success story of the Event Cinema highlighted in the Arts Council England Analysis of Theatre in England [5].

Diversity & Inclusion
We have clearly stated concession prices to further support the Diversity & Inclusion of the theatres.

4. Recommendations and final remarks

The Financial Times recently reported that spending on smartphones is now so high it has overtaken spending in shopping centres[6]. We would, therefore, recommend as the next step to alter our web page so that it is more accessible and user friendly on smartphones.

We would make sure that our web page is accessible for screen readers to use along with ensuring all the images on the page have all the text added. The show description could be built upon by also providing a star rating along with reviews of the show to give the customer a deeper insight when choosing which performance to book [7].

Adding the option to join a mailing list at the end of a customer's booking is a great way to keep them up to date with future performances coming to the theater and encourage a future booking that they otherwise would not be aware of[8]. To build on retaining customers and future bookings a Loyalty program could also be implemented alongside the application, recording a customer's purchases to offer rewards or discounts in the future[9].

With a strong online presence, we believe that theatres could regain their attraction levels from the pre – Covid times and further attract new audience which perhaps were not exposed to theatres' current offerings and experiences they provide. Our application in the end state would be fully customizable so that the Theatre Royal can benefit from innovative ways of attracting and retaining customers.

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[4] https://accessiblebydesign.co.uk/journal/five-ways-to-make-ticketing-more-accessible/
[5] Nylor R., Lewis B., Devling G., Dix A., Arts Council England Analysis of Theatre in England, https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Analysis%20of%20Theatre%20in%20England%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf accessed on 11 December 2022).
[6] https://www.culturehive.co.uk/resources/why-digital-dependence-could-be-the-key-to-growing-ticket-sales/ accessed on 11 December 2022
[7] https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2008/may/23/theroleoftheatrereviews accessed on 11 December 2022
[8] https://www.spektrix.com/en-gb/blog/how-theatres-can-increase-ticket-sales-from-email-marketing-us accessed on 11 December 2022
[9] https://www.shopify.com/blog/loyalty-program accessed on 11 December 2022