

Area 6
Online media in new audience development

Print is an old, tried and tested information technology. It doesn't work in the same way as web, email, mobile phone, interactive TV – these are somewhere between a private conversation and watching TV – listening in to what's going on.

No longer an ear to the ground, it's an ear to the air. Almost nothing about online media is the same as print. Those organisations that treat online media as if they were the same as print are wasting time and money, and losing customers for whom it's becoming second nature. It's not new media any more – it's the way we live now and a vital way of building new and stronger relationships with audiences and participants.

Keeping existing audiences, broadening their habits

People expect to find what they're looking for on the web – and they expect to be able to buy tickets, books, pictures etc. Increasingly they expect to be able to get information on mobile phones, even buying tickets, poems and images by SMS.

Keeping pace with your current audiences' habits to include use of ICT is important – don't let them leave you behind.

The attention people give websites and personal messages (email, SMS) is different from that given to flyers. Make sure every word counts – use language each audience sector will feel good about. Tailor clusters of messages for target groups, especially if you're trying to get them to taste new experiences. Short statements. Don't use ten words where two will do!

Reaching, attracting and keeping new audiences

Research how your new target audiences use ICT – and reach them where they are. Don't just build a website; the DOME scenario - "if we build it they will come" - really doesn't work. If you don't need a website, don't have one. Use your precious budget and human resources wisely - if it will work best to get a viral competition of text messages among local school kids, get some involved and helping. If it's a musical event, get local (or even national radio, if your target audience listens to it) to run a competition for tickets by SMS. Get advice on the technology from your ICT partner – get one now!

When you've got 'em, hang on! If your target audience for a new production is teenagers – and you get them – keep them interested by following up in the same – and other – media. Cross-platform connections are most effective at getting people's attention and keeping it.

<p>What media?</p>	<p>12 headlines in thinking about ICT and marketing, promotion and distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website – yours. Information, tickets, downloads • Websites – other organisations'. • Email – your general newsletter... • Email – your personalised newsletter... • Email – other organisations' newsletters • Mobile SMS – competitions, bulletins, viral campaigns • Mobile WAP – downloads, images, tunes • Interactive Digital TV – minor channels needing content... • Ebay – ticket sales, online shop • Cross-platform links – from local radio or newspaper websites to you • addresses on your usual flyers and in all your adverts • Get together with other organisations to share mailing lists (assuming your members/contacts have agreed to allow their information to be shared) and share costs of managing distribution 	<p>10 ways to use new media to build audiences and relationships with consumers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Email people with information they have told you they want to receive 2 Text people with information they have told you they want to receive 3 Piggyback news about your event on a website your target audience look at 4 Get your event mentioned on local radio 'with more information on the website' 5 Get local radio to run a SMS competition for tickets 6 Add news about your event into a local email newsletter 7 Build a website for your organisation 8 Build and maintain your own email contact list – and send only interesting and useful news to people on the list 9 Make it possible for people to book tickets/buy your product online 10 Find out what your audience want from your online media and do what you can to provide it 	<p>What media do your audiences already use – and expect you to use?</p> <p>Print - flyers, posters, tickets, programmes, newspaper ads and features, magazine features, local newsletters</p> <p>Radio & TV - mentions, interviews, competitions for tickets, features</p> <p>Word of mouth...</p> <p>How could you make the most of them using online media?</p> <p>Email – personal, newsletters</p> <p>Websites – yours, others...</p> <p>SMS messages – mailshot or psst-pass-it-on!</p> <p>Interactive TV – desperate for content</p> <p>What are you doing when you use online media?</p> <p>Offering invitations</p> <p>Offering things and experiences</p> <p>Making contact</p> <p>Making connections</p> <p>Building relationships</p> <p>Bridging between media</p> <p>Creating networks</p>
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<p>When is online media of benefit to new audience development?</p>	<p>But why are you doing this....</p> <p>You need to have a clear strategy for the investment in information communications technology. What is more this strategy is likely to cut across a range of different responsibilities and may require considerable changes in behaviour.</p> <p>Developing the strategy Involve colleagues – use the process to identify communications or distribution issues and see how far new ICT based approaches can help.</p> <p>Consult with stakeholders such as users, members or other stakeholders.</p> <p>Make objectives - specific, measureable, realistic, achievable, and timelined</p> <p>Build on experience – talk with people that have been down the road you are taking.</p> <p>Explore whether resources are available – are there special grants?</p> <p>Be inclusive – ensure that someone involved in the project really understands the implications of making the site available to disabled people.</p> <p>Think about value for money and fitness for purpose – don't get swept up in a grand design that will never bring added value back to the organisation.</p> <p>Don't assume knowledge in your board or senior managers for making decisions on the strategy – you journey will introduce you to lot of jargon and new knowledge – be clear about what they need to know and keep it simple and concentrate on costs and benefits</p>	<p>5 pros</p> <p>Online media are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick and cheap for sending emails • Simple to keep people up-to-date • Accessibility compliant – or should be! • Offer full colour images, audio and video samples to entice them to your event • Good for building relationships through regular contact <p>5 Cons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites can be expensive to set up and maintain • You need someone in your organisation who understands it isn't print – and DO NOT call in favours from inexperienced web designers – it can go badly wrong for all concerned. • Unwanted emails become spam • Must be maintained, kept fresh • If your target audience don't use new media or don't know that you do, it's a waste of time 	<p>Five Golden Rules</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Data Protection Act – you must keep people's information secure and confidential or throw it away (properly). 2 DDA – make sure you know who you're talking to and are meeting their needs. The good news is... if you build websites that meet DDA requirements it should also make everyone else happy. 3 Ask the right questions when they sign up – so you can target material properly later... and send something regularly. Keep it short and sweet and link to further information on a website – whether or not they do is a test of your persuasiveness as a writer. 4 Make sure you have copyright clearance for any material you send out 5 Make it easy to unsubscribe from any newsletter
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<p>Copy in online media</p>	<p>The voice Keep it short, sweet and simple.</p> <p>Just because a web page can be infinite doesn't mean your text should be.</p> <p>People scan – a bit like looking at TV listings, not reading... until they find something interesting, then they print it out.</p> <p>Write text for the web - DO NOT copy from print brochures or flyers. It won't have the right rhythm or style, and will be too wordy.</p>	<p>5 ways to improve your approach</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Research the right media for targeting your audience 2 Think about how you're going to get people to find you online 3 Think about what your target audience will want to do if/when they reach your website 4 Be absolutely clear what YOU want THEM to do there – and make sure it's easy 5 Don't clog the experience up with redundant information. If it works well once, they may come back 	
<p>Design in online media</p>	<p>The Look</p> <p>Design is not just graphics. It's about what works, what you can do with it...</p> <p>Don't sacrifice the ability of a visitor to find their way around the site to the look of the thing... you are an arts organisation, but you are also a service provider and part of the communications industry</p> <p>People expect to be able to find things easily, get in touch, get information and buy tickets. If your ICT doesn't do these things, it's not good design.</p> <p>Good design will enable your audience to behave in ways (e.g. buy tickets) that meet your objectives for online media</p> <p>Good design should start with a commitment to the inclusion of people with disabilities - it is core not an add-on.</p>	<p>What is an accessible website?</p> <p>It's a misconception that you have to make 2 sites, one for visually impaired people - or that a fully compliant website is dull for everyone else.</p> <p>www.w3c.org/wai gives the rules for compliance. Your web developer must deliver a compliant site if your budget is to be well spent.</p> <p>Compliance means future-proofing your content and having something ALL sections of your audience can see and use. Why would you pay for anything less?</p> <p>And – it's the law!</p>	<p>What should be in a design brief?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on the purpose and function of the website • Clarity about target audiences, users and management commitments from both parties • Clarity about expectations of content, editorial responsibility, and copyright • Sharing information about schedule, specific deliverables • Agreement on outline user function requirements • Shared understanding of budget • Agreed process for managing specification and ongoing maintenance contracts • Know what you have bought in terms of Intellectual Property

<p>Distribution in online media</p>	<p>What do you want to distribute and why?</p> <p>Don't think of websites, email or SMS as simple distribution mechanisms. They're very personal and can be experienced as intrusive if things arrive that aren't wanted – managing email and SMS can cost £ and the last thing you want is to alienate potential audiences by making them pay for your blunders.</p> <p>Only send things people have already indicated they want – ask them. Encourage correct completion of forms by offering prizes, running competitions, having humans in your venue talking to the audience and gathering customer information. When people are sure the relationship is with your organisation as a whole – and that you have a friendly face – they'll be happy to hear from you.</p>	<p>Different methods of distribution –different motivations</p> <p>Community and participatory arts organisations are increasingly building ICT into their project plans. Communities are being facilitated to produce web sites and occasionally interactive TV. This work can attract funding from new sources as it is helping to reduce the digital divide. Poorer communities generally have less individual access to computers and the web – but significant government and lottery investment has put in place community-based access points. The web can be really useful for linking communities of interest - so that for example a project with a travellers' group in the East Midlands could, with the right support be linked to other groups around the world. This would allow the community arts project to have a new audience. It will not just happen as a result of posting a web site of course.</p> <p>Performing arts organisations are most likely to be using ICT to get people to buy tickets, to commit to attend. The box office is an important part of the income and can make or break a budget. The combination of attracting new audiences and retaining old ones makes the web a useful ally. One of the advantages for organisation that have invested in getting clean lists of e-mail contacts is the ability to do tactical ticket offers and promotions.</p> <p>Changes in schools mean that teachers and educationalists are more likely to have regular access to the web and e-mail. This means that approaching schools and education groups is easier. It is also possible to place curriculum support materials and other education materials on the web. The web can support family friendly approaches by having information suitable for young people for each performing arts event.</p> <p>Museums and exhibitions are likely to use the web for attracting audiences, but increasingly they are making merchandising available from books to gifts. Artists are increasingly promoting their work to potential purchasers through the web through galleries, through on-line directories and directly.</p> <p>Literature can be made available easily via the web, as all applications deal with words better than pictures. Small presses and book sellers can use the net to promote the sale of books.</p>
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Promoting your web site	Tell people you have one Put your web and email address on everything you print, mention it every time you're asked about your work.	Help them find it Make sure it's accessible and linked to by all the other websites in your area that people will go to – ask for reciprocal links with other arts organisations, tourism portals, hotels, local newspapers, bars etc...	Go professional... Search engines work in many ways – but you can help yourself by getting lots of people to link to you. The more people link and visit you, the higher up the search results you'll be. If you get good at this you can sell your services to others!
Summary	Short-term impact Nurture your in-house talent. You can make a big difference to your reach by gathering email addresses and starting a newsletter – this week! If it's good, they'll want more. Beginning your brand extension by email is a good start...	Medium term impact Building websites or running an SMS campaign takes thought, time and money. If you're going to spend, do it wisely. Unless you're a big organisation, don't spend lots on big technical stuff you can get elsewhere. Only grow as big as your brand warrants.	Long term impact The web hasn't been around long but already it's commonplace. Becoming online-savvy now is a good investment for the future. And if you become innovative and expert, as Kirklees Media Centre did with SMS projects years ago, you'll be more flexible than the big guns and could lead the field. The long term may be a long haul – so keep it simple, keep listening and responding to your online and offline audiences be consistent, don't overstretch yourselves or your budget, and you'll grow to a perfect size.
	Performing arts issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional material may have copyright restrictions • Each event may have a different target audience and require a new approach – don't alienate sections of the audience by inappropriate targeting • Assess the value of the investment for a short run – there may be better ways of getting the target audience there • Find a way of selling tickets online • Use interviews with performers to give audiences a personal insight into what they're coming to 	Participatory arts issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you target potential participants accurately • Give clear advance information in emails and offer to answer questions • Encourage participants to contact each other – but be careful of data protection issues • If SMS suits your event and is used by the target audience, use SMS messages to remind people what's happening • Be as inclusive as possible – ensure accessibility requirements are met 	Visual and media arts issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the multimedia opportunities on the web – piggyback onto radio and tv if possible • Get copyright clearances • Offer unique musical downloads via other download websites or ring tone providers – do a deal. You never know – you might build new audiences there online • Consider your online audience as attending another venue – what can you offer them? Can they help your organisation? • Build an online gallery!

	<p>For anyone to try Viral marketing – send emails or SMS messages to known potential audience members with a motive for forwarding to others – e.g. a message tree or competition to get the most responses.</p> <p>Make sure you have the staff to manage what happens next</p>	<p>For more experienced practitioners Be creative – what other websites, radio shows, SMS relationships can you piggyback on? How can you get them interested – what can you offer? If you can build those media relationships to everyone's benefit, you can build audiences!</p>	<p>May need specialist input Online ticketing – you don't need your own website to do it but it needs some careful thought.</p> <p>If you're determined to have your own website, make sure you know why you want it, what it's supposed to achieve and be ruthless in making sure it does it.</p> <p>Stay naïve! It won't help you understand your audiences if you go web-native.</p>
<p>Legal and ethical issues There are a number of Intellectual Property / Copyright issues embedded within this work. It is important that you are aware of the legal position. If you plan to relay performers work on your site you need to be aware of the Rights issues and the position of the Entertainment Unions (such as Musician's Union, Equity etc) in this regard. Find out what you need to do to comply with the Data Protection Act – and don't collect more data than you need.</p> <p>The Disability Discrimination Act applies online too.</p> <p>Material suitable for children When developing web sites – especially ones that include message boards and discussion groups- ensure that you have thought about the moderation of the site and the safety of young people. You have a clear duty of care to ensure that young people on your web based projects and activities are as safe as possible. You should have parental consent for any images of young people used in your print and new media distribution.</p>			
	<p>Low cost and time</p> <p>Add email and web addresses to all print media – posters and flyers.</p> <p>Get a local web/media company contact to become your online media guru in return for small regular fee, tickets – and potential future business.</p>	<p>Medium cost and time</p> <p>Build media partnerships with organisations who already have the facilities you need – share resources with them; use external ticketing facilities.</p>	<p>Resource Intensive</p> <p>Manage and maintain databases to ensure Data Protection Act and personal preference compliance, accuracy and relevance of data (checking correct spellings, still at old addresses); build your own website with all necessary bells and whistles.</p>
<p>Useful web links</p>	<p>www.useit.com/ www.rnib.org.uk www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/ www.w3c.org/wai/ www.nmk.co.uk/ webmonkey.wired.com/ www.artsmarketing.org/ www.designspring.co.uk/articles/web-design-brief1.htm www.fuel4arts.com/ www.tickets.com/</p>		