



## RESEARCH. MARCH 2015.

### TECHNOLOGY. FUNDRAISING. MARKETING.

**Adapt for arts wanted to get a sense of how arts organisations currently use their brand to best effect, and how technology is utilised to increase audiences and income.**

**We posed a few questions to development staff from nine diverse arts organisations based in different regions all over England, including a small craft organisation, an orchestra, a circus organisation and a large arts centre - here's what we found out:**

#### HOW WELL DO YOU THINK YOUR ORGANISATION IS REPRESENTED BY ITS WEBSITE?

78% felt the brand was strong and well-aligned with the organisation's mission, with the website representing the atmosphere and feel of the organisation.

However 67%, felt that the website is confusing and difficult to navigate. Respondents articulated that their organisations were complex and multifaceted, and trying to include all aspects on the website resulted in a mass of info and pages.

"You have to go through quite a lot of effort to navigate around [the website] and learn about [the organisation], even if you know what you're looking for."

One organisation articulated that their multi-demographic audience had formed the basis of their web strategy. Their website was strongly aimed at one particular audience, with other audience types (e.g. young people) being targeted through other means, such as social media.

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## DOES THE REPRESENTATION OF YOUR ORGANISATION BY ITS WEBSITE HAVE AN IMPACT ON FUNDRAISING?

33% thought their website didn't represent them as being a charity which they thought had a negative impact on fundraising:

"Charitable messaging is extremely low."

"The charitable message is immediately lost amongst the commercial/marketing messages overpowering the website."

"We're not branded as a charity. There is no giving message embedded on the website at all."

One organisation mentioned that on most areas of the website they have information about why their organisation may need to fundraise and the costs associated with running the activities they programme. However, they still reported limited online donations.

## DOES THE REPRESENTATION OF YOUR ORGANISATION BY ITS WEBSITE HAVE AN IMPACT ON MARKETING?

In contrast to the findings around fundraising, 89% of organisations said that the website has a positive impact on marketing.

"Our website is an incredibly useful way to market our programmes."

"The marketing opportunities on [the website] are endless."

"[The marketing team] are responsible for the website which is why there is quite a clear brand alliance..."

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## HOW SUCCESSFULLY DO YOU THINK YOUR ORGANISATION UTILSES TECHNOLOGY FOR MARKETING AND FUNDRAISING?

This question had the most mixed response. Of the organisations that identified with making good use of technology, most, gave examples where they used it for marketing purposes. This ranged from the promotion of programmes through social media to email-outs using mail chimp and similar services.

Some organisations raised concerns over the lack of audience development taking place via technology platforms:

"There is use of social media for marketing, but this is 100% selling rather than audience development."

"Maybe [the organisation] will [utilise technology] if they ever do a push into audience development but I don't think that's going to happen any time particularly soon."

Other than CRMs, and the odd mention of the DONATE giving platform, the organisations said very little about using technology to encourage fundraising or aid income generation, other than special one off events like a fundraising gala and silent auction.

"In terms of fundraising, we could be more effective."

"There is very little fundraising messaging that makes it onto social media."

One organisation admitted they don't use technology much at all, but raised an important point:

"The temptation is to just do everything everyone else is doing but we want to find the right thing for us and use the data we do have to tailor it to our audience."

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## THOUGHTS/LEARNINGS

So it seems, from a fundraising standpoint, the view is that organisations could be using their websites, and technology in general, more effectively when it comes to fundraising.

Whilst marketing is arguably just as important to revenue generation as fundraising itself, shouldn't arts organisations do more to capitalise on their charitable status in order to raise much needed additional income?

Crucially, many organisations seem to already be doing a better job when it comes to marketing, but possibly improvements in order to develop and diversify audiences could be made. Perhaps the key is to better use the resources that arts organisations already have available to them is a shared agenda between marketing teams and fundraising teams.

Ultimately, we think arts organisations can unlock a lot of potential, both in their marketing and their fundraising capabilities by making some educated choices when it comes to technology and online platforms, and this is certainly an area Adapt for arts will be focussing on in the coming weeks and months.

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