

ASSET - Vienna

Research and Segmentation of Theatre Audiences

Tuesday 29th January, 2019

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The Audience Agency

 the audience agency

Understand who your audiences are.
Discover who they could be.

Who are we and what are we doing here?

ASSET

**Audience
Segmentation
System in
European
Theatres**



Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union

Asset

Partnership between theatres in 5 cities

- Helsinki
- Prague
- Sofia
- Vienna
- Zagreb

Project led by Arts and Theatre Institute Prague

Research led by The Audience Agency, UK





Research into theatre audiences

20 theatres (4 x 5 cities)

Training

Segmentation of theatre audiences

Audience development initiatives

European Theatre Night

Evaluate and disseminate outcomes

1. The purpose of audience research

- What are we trying to achieve?
- How can audience research help us?

2. The process of audience research

- The methods and techniques of audience research
- Strengths and weaknesses of different approaches

3. The implications of audience research

- Understanding the data
- Segmentation
- Actions and next stages



Who we are and why we're here

 the audience agency

About

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Insight

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Tools

What we offer



Helping the cultural sector to build
reach, relevance, and resilience
through research and insight

Our mission is to give the public a voice in shaping a vibrant, relevant culture



Who are you?



The purpose of audience research

 the audience agency

Understand who your audiences are.
Discover who they could be.

What's the point of audience research?



Merry Wives of Windsor, Gdansk Shakespeare Theatre, 2017

Possible approaches to your audience

1. Pretend they don't exist

“I’m interested in putting on art, not on whether or not people come and appreciate it”

“We know who our audience are and we know what they like.”

“Marketing is just about dumbing down and the lowest common denominator.”

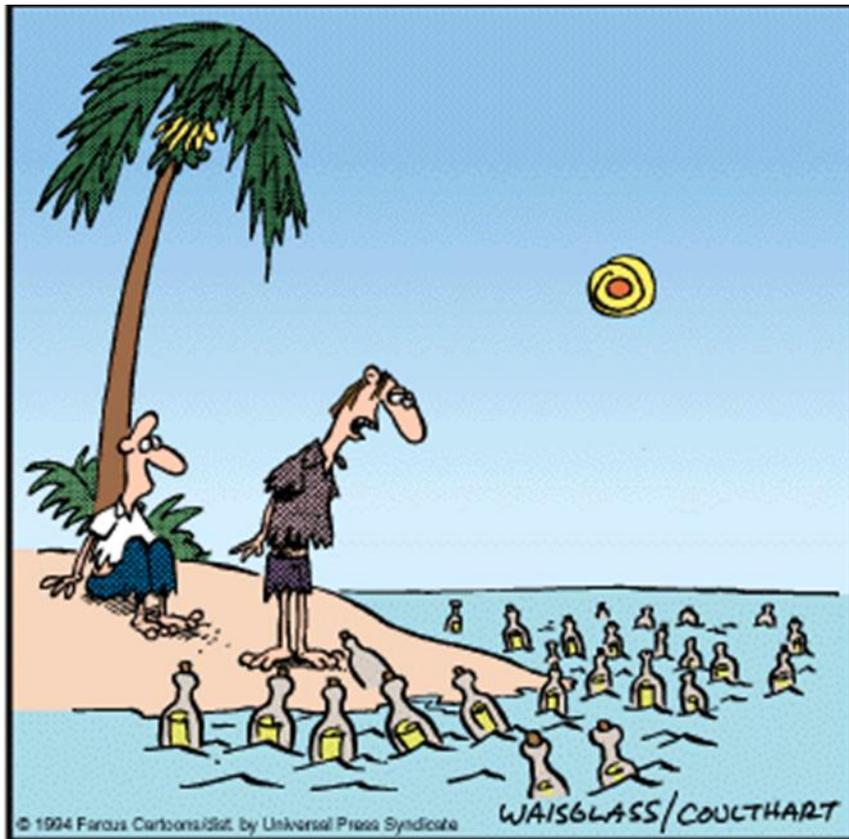


Which means ...

- No responsibility is required
- Success or failure is a complete surprise and mystery and blame or praise can be attributed to whoever we want - the marketing department, the public, the bad weather, the education system, lack of funding etc etc
- No change is involved - so everyone can go on as before and stay in their 'comfort zone'

Possible approaches to your audience

2. Tell as many people as possible about what you're doing



“We must be on a mailing list.”



Which means

- Lots of busy marketing and communication officers working long hours wearing themselves out and turning into alcoholics
- ‘Innovative’ use of new techniques and methods and great looking publicity
- Again, success or failure is a surprise and blame can be attributed to whoever we want - the audience, the director, the bad weather, the lack of time and staff and the web designer who never does what we want
- No change is involved - we can just keep doing the same thing and stay in our comfort zone



Which means

Compared to the first approach it is more likely to be successful ...

→ Because we're great communicators that know how to use Facebook and Instagram and are good at making our websites mobile ready, optimised for search engine optimisation etc

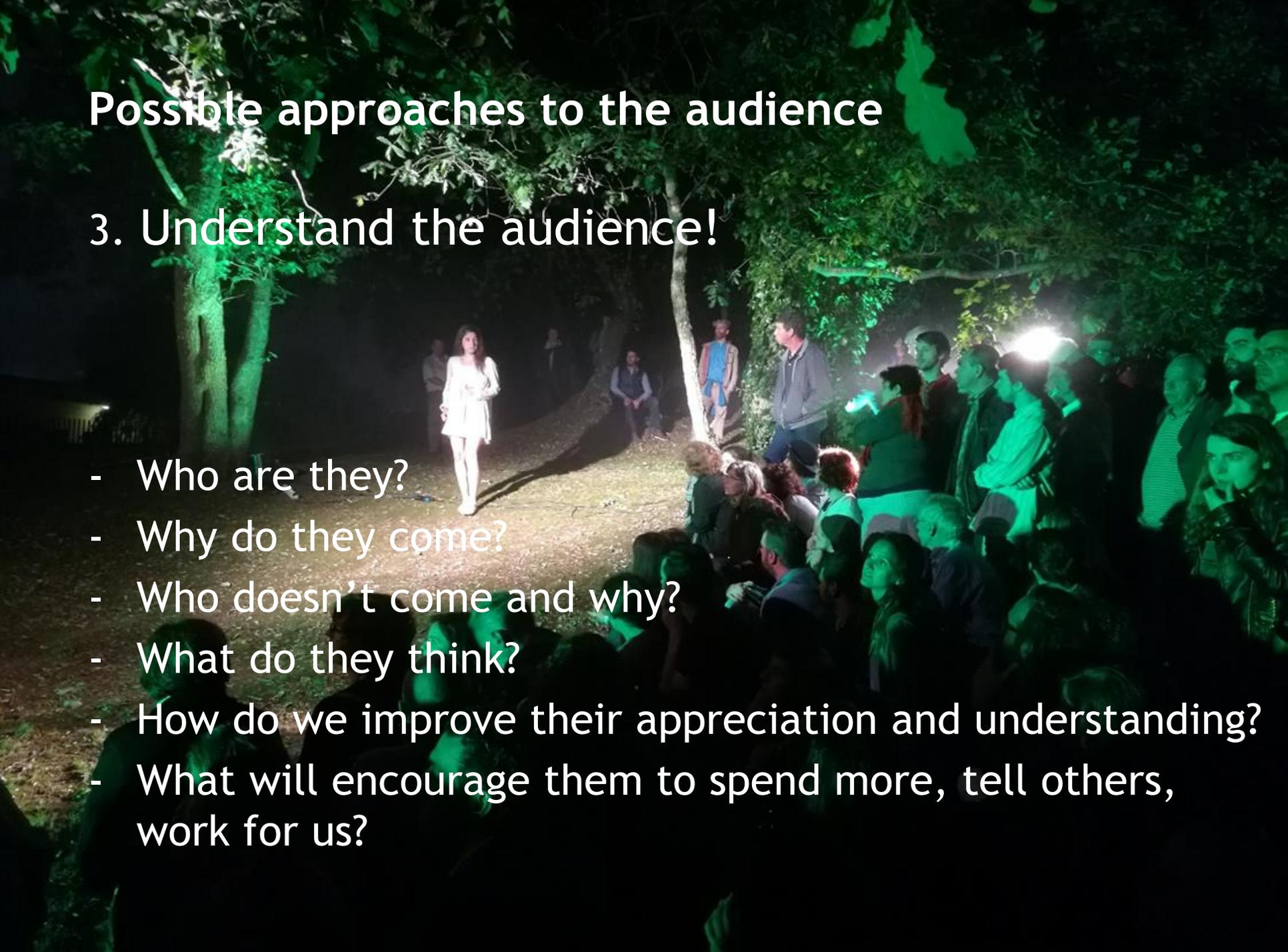
→ And if you throw out enough good information it will work for some people

.. But it still has its problems ... because it's based on a 'hit and hope' mentality ... it's not very efficient



Possible approaches to the audience

3. Understand the audience!

- Who are they?
 - Why do they come?
 - Who doesn't come and why?
 - What do they think?
 - How do we improve their appreciation and understanding?
 - What will encourage them to spend more, tell others, work for us?
- 
- A woman in a white dress stands in a wooded area at night, illuminated by a spotlight. She is addressing a crowd of people who are gathered around her. The scene is set in a forest with trees and foliage visible in the background. The lighting is dramatic, with the woman and the crowd being the primary focus.

Which means

- Success or failure is not a mystery and
- You will be successful more often - so you don't need to blame anyone

Plus

- It will be more efficient
- It will improve audience satisfaction
- It will provide you with ideas
- It will help you to meet other objectives, social, financial, political, artistic
- It allows you to be open and accountable

... and you don't need to become an alcoholic



Not just about reporting but about understanding



Seachange Arts, Great Yarmouth, England, September 2017



Something that makes a difference



With insight comes better work which is more satisfying, relevant, impactful, powerful, rewarding, artful and engaging

Possibilities for action

*Not everything that is faced can be changed,
but nothing can be changed until it is faced*

James Baldwin (American writer)

Looking with more clarity



Research enables us to get beyond the superficial, balance out our biases and gain better depth and detail

Big and small data



Big data truths

- What proportion of English households attend theatre?

40%

- What proportion go at least twice a year?

15%

- How old are they?

52 years old (average)

highest age category **65-74** years old

Source: Taking Part Survey / Audience Finder (2016)



Differences with implications

Comparing the habits of different demographic groups in England

- attenders over-65 years of age are the most organisation-loyal and frequent arts engagers visiting the same venue multiple times
- attenders under 65 (and more so for under 35s) are more likely to try out different venues and will also be less likely to attend the arts in general

→ What are the implications?

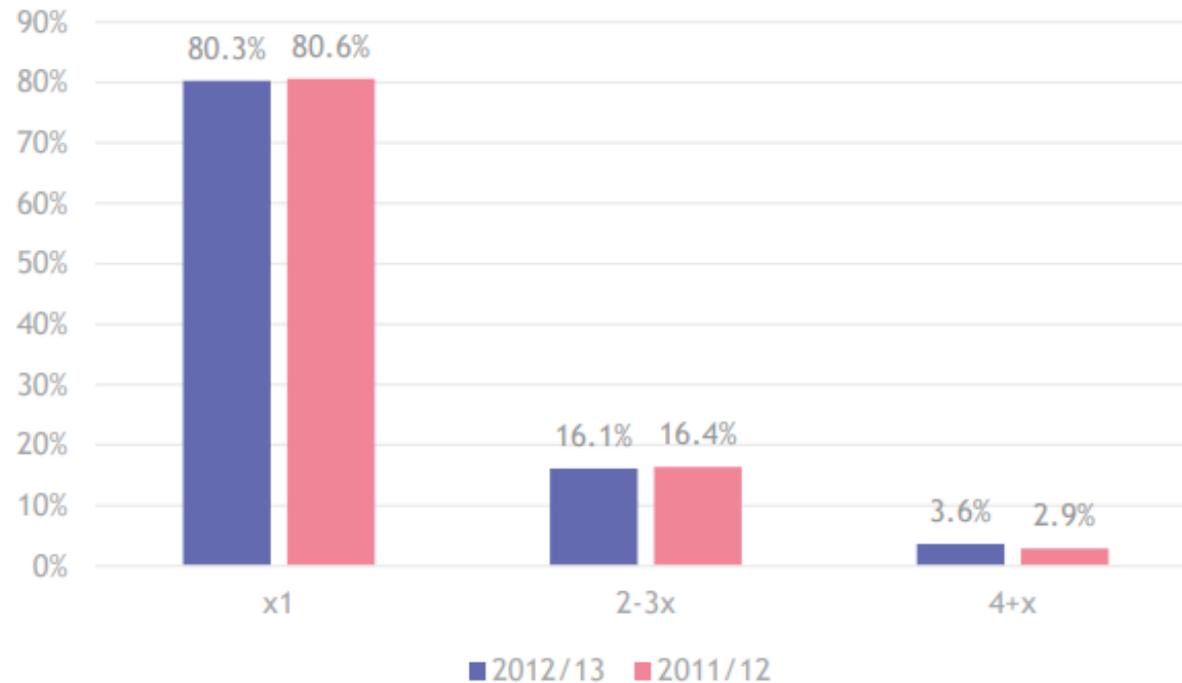


For individual organisations?



Ticketing data helped establish attendance habits

Frequency of attendance



ART MEETS LIFE



WHAT'S ON

-  ALL EVENTS
-  CHRISTMAS SHOW
-  CLUBS
-  COMEDY
-  FAMILY
-  MUSIC
-  SPOKEN WORD
-  THEATRE & DANCE
-  WORKSHOPS
-  YOUR COMMUNITY



SEASON LAUNCH

[BUY TICKETS](#)

Date: Tue 04 Sep
Venue: J3 & Foyer

Time: 6pm
Price: Free (ticketed)

[Description](#) [Tickets](#) [Reviews](#) [Event info](#)

Celebrate the start of the new season with our regular launch evening.

Hear about what's on this autumn and sample some of the upcoming acts.

Featuring:

What do you know / what would you like to know?

Discussion (groups)

- What would you like to know about your audience and why?

Beyond demographics

You are not purely defined by your date of manufacture

Ken Robinson



Attitudes and behaviour



*I like to be led round the museum.
I want to be told a story. (from
Focus Group)*

*We stumbled upon this place ...
(from Trip Advisor)*

*Love the monthly Saturday
activities. Could we have more?
(from Survey)*

*I feel these places aren't really for
me*

(from Focus Group)



Attitudes and behaviour



Not everyone attends for the same reasons or acts in the same way

Some don't engage at all

Some are our best friends

And some people just want to use the toilet

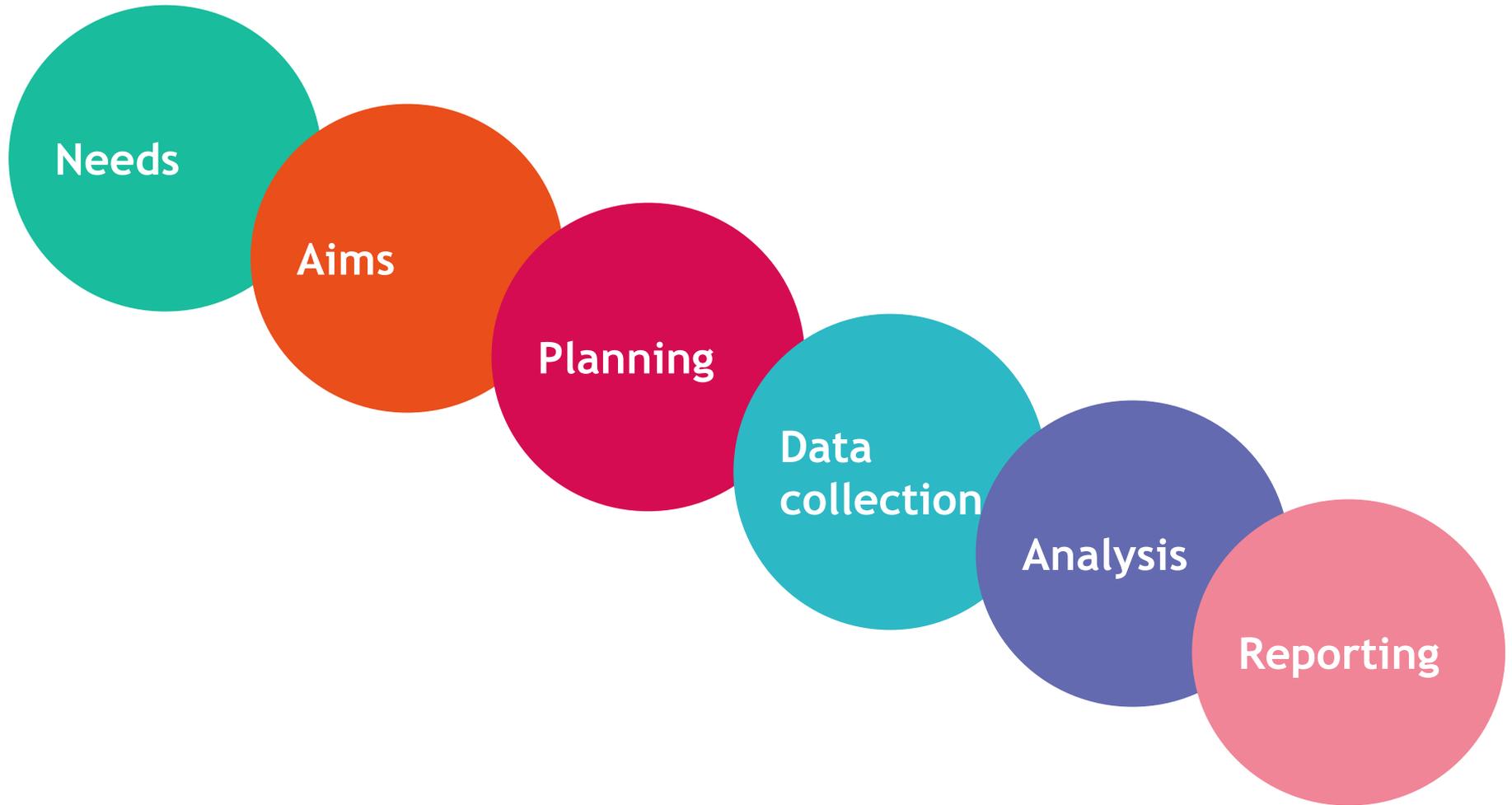
→ So how can we begin to understand this?

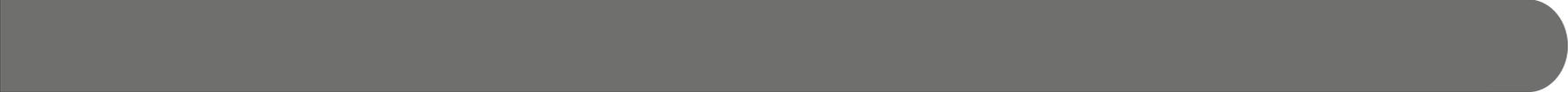
The process of audience research

 the audience agency

Understand who your audiences are.
Discover who they could be.

Research process



- 
- Image of people interviewing
 - How did we get here?

If our objective is...

To demonstrate the value of our comedy programme to a local authority...

...we might need to know

Locals

Who is coming?

What benefits do they feel?

Visitors

How many are coming?

Where are they coming from?

Why do they visit Vienna?

How much do they spend?

Our research will be...

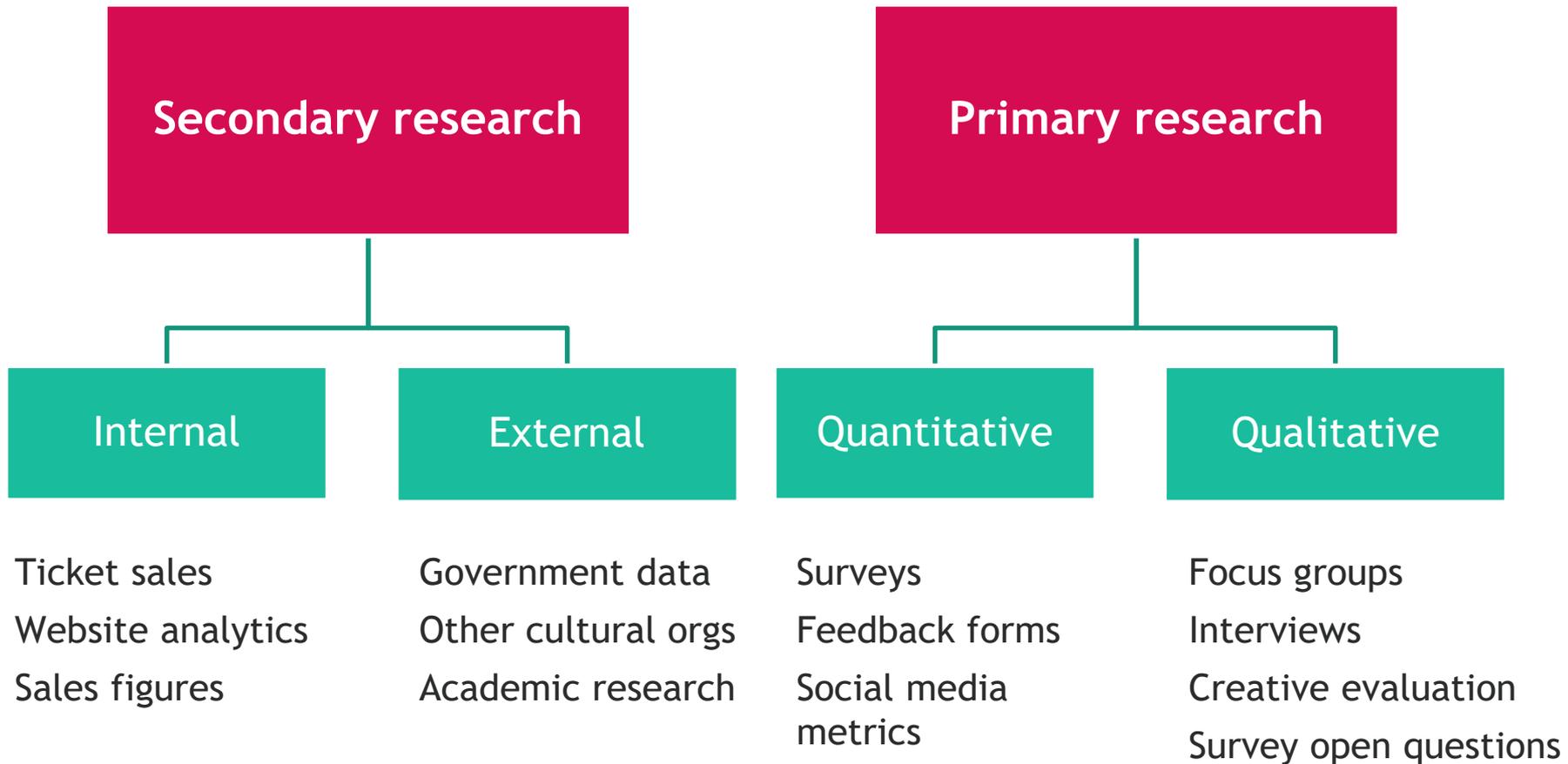
- Primary
- Quantitative
- Our comedy audience
- Sample size 400
- E-survey
- Emails collected through booking process
- Prize to incentivise
- Presentation and tables

Choosing your methodology

- Needs/aims - what do you need to know?
- What sort of outputs do you need?
Numbers? Opinions? Stories?
- What resources do you have?
Time, Skills, Budget?
- Practical considerations
What is likely to work with your audience?
What type of performance/activity is it?
- How robust do your findings need to be?
- Is this new research, follow-up, in-depth?



Research methods



Primary: Quantitative vs. Qualitative

Quantitative

- Numbers
- % change
- Comparison
- Measurably accurate

Qualitative

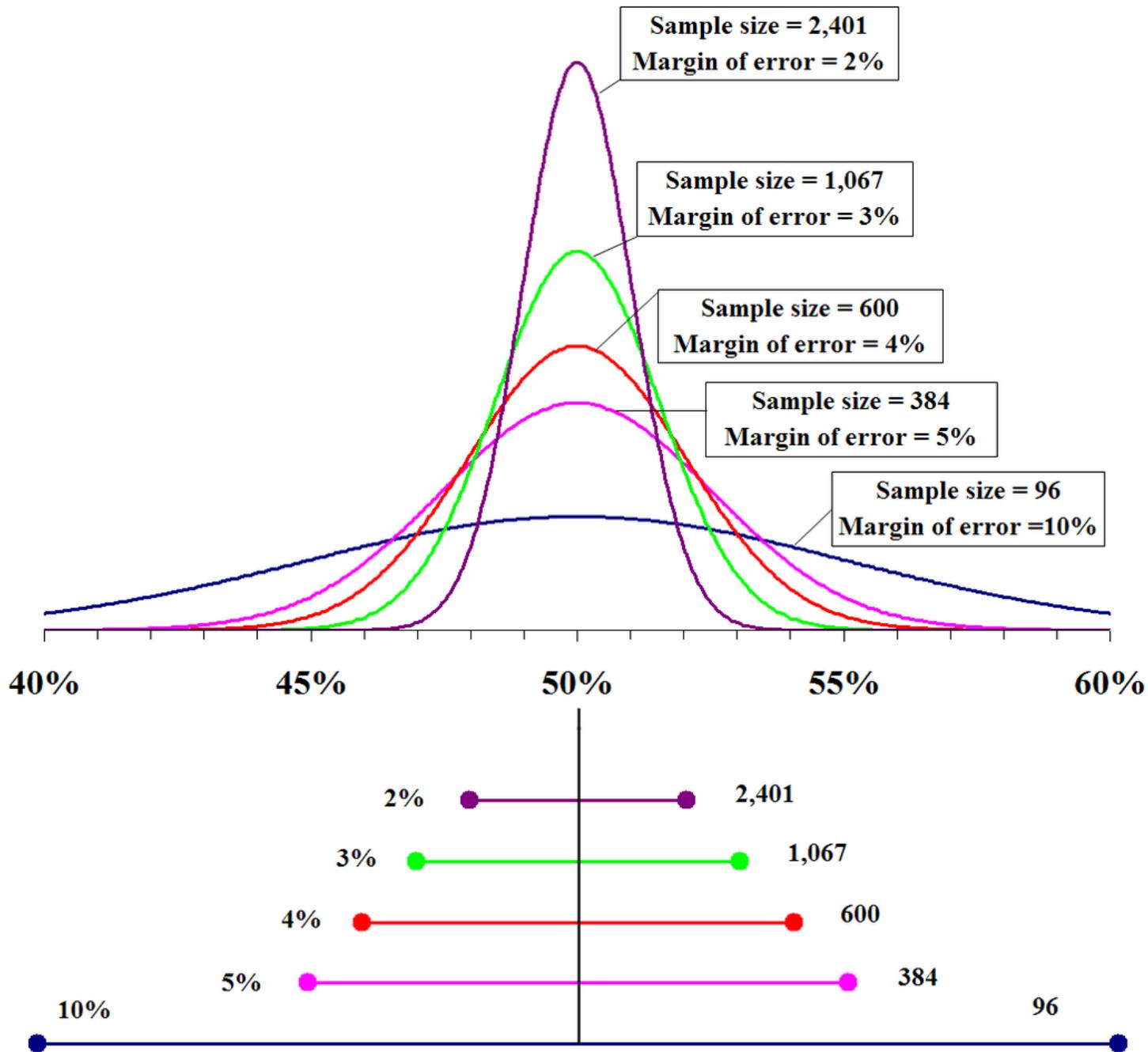
- Open
- Unexpected
- Deep
- Engaging

Our research will therefore be...

- Primary
(because the data doesn't already exist)
- Quantitative
(because we want to show the results to the local authority and they understand figures + we're mainly interested in understanding the big picture)

Who are you trying to describe?

- What / who is the overall set of people we are interested in? - ‘the population’
- How much and what sort of data do we need for us to understand this population? - the representative ‘sample’
- How are we likely to be able to find them/target them in a way that they are likely to respond?



Sample size

The number of people you should speak to varies depending on population size and required margin of error

- Sample size of c. 100 = $\pm 10\%$
- **Sample size of c. 400 = $\pm 5\%$**
- Sample size of c. 2,500 = $\pm 2\%$
- **The more people you speak to, the more sure you can be of your findings...**
- **But a representative sample is even more important**

Our research will be...

- Primary
- Quantitative
- **Our comedy audience**
- **Sample size 400**

Before you choose your methodology

- What resources do you have?
 - Time
 - Skills
 - Budget
- Practical considerations
- How robust do your findings need to be?

Questionnaires (surveys)



Pros and cons of questionnaires

- Robust
- Quantifiable
- Easy analysis
- Repeatable
- Comparable

- Sample size
- Bias
- Time consuming
- Dry
- Privacy

Face to face vs. e-survey

Face to face

- Quality
- Representative
- (Somewhat) unexpected
- Labour-intensive
- Training
- Limited window for collection?

E-survey

- Efficient
- Retrospective
- Convenient
- Use email address
- Biased?

Our research will be...

- Primary
- Quantitative
- Our comedy audience
- Sample size 400
- **E-survey**
- **Emails collected through booking process**

Creating your questionnaire

- Start from your objectives
- Consider comparisons
 - Sector benchmarks
 - Government data
 - Previous research
- Consider the experience
 - Objective and unbiased
 - Depth required
- Trim the fat
 - Only ask questions you can and will use
 - Need to know vs. nice to know



What type of question?

- Closed?
- Open?

What type of question?

- Closed

Have you visited this venue before?

Yes

No

Not Sure

- Open

How would you describe this venue to a friend?

Creating your questionnaire

- Types of question
 - Single response
 - Multiple response
 - Scale (agree-disagree, a lot-not at all, 1-10...)
 - Open
- Appropriate wording
 - Unambiguous
 - Mind your language
- Appropriate answer codes
 - Clear
 - Room for 'other' responses



Question types

Have you visited this theatre before? (*Tick one only*)

Yes

No

How important are the following elements to you when choosing what to see at the theatre?

	Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know
Easy to get to	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The writer	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The genre	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Question types

Which of these did you hear about this performance from?

And which convinced you to visit?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theatre programme | <input type="checkbox"/> This theatre on social media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Posters about this performance | <input type="checkbox"/> Someone else on social media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Posters about this season | <input type="checkbox"/> Something in a newspaper/magazine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flyers | <input type="checkbox"/> From a friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emails from this theatre | <input type="checkbox"/> Banners outside the theatre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> This theatre's website | <input type="checkbox"/> Other - _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Another website | <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't hear anything - someone brought me |



Question types

Is there anything else you would like to say about your visit? *(Please describe below)*

Nice café

What is your ethnic group? *(Tick one only)*

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple ethnic background | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White other* | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British | <input type="checkbox"/> Other* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say | *What other? <input type="text"/> | |

Questions

Considering what you would like to know about your audience, what questions could you ask in a survey?

Open or closed questions?

What answer categories do you want?

15 minutes to write down three or four questions and answer categories



The implications of research

From data to action

So, we've implemented our research and got the results.

What will we do with them?

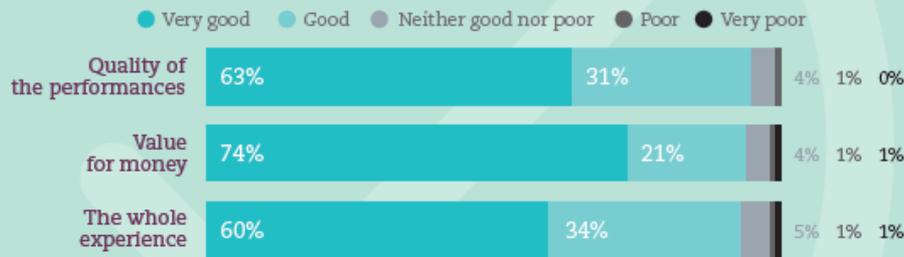


Some results will stand on their own

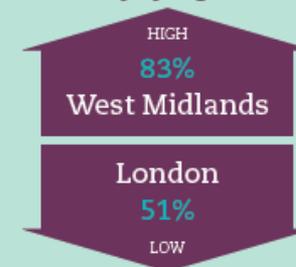
What do they think?

Satisfied customers

Visitor experience ratings for Outdoor Arts are **extremely positive**.



Satisfaction levels vary by region:



Value for money scores especially highly

94% of visitors rate their overall experience as "Very good" or "Good"



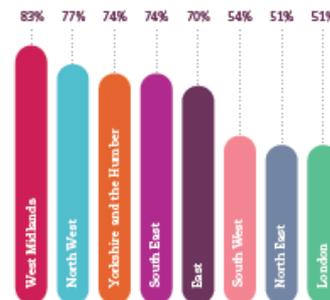
Repeat visitors express greater satisfaction with events than first timers: Repeat visitors: 72% First time visitors: 63%

Satisfaction % by age

Satisfaction levels increase steadily with age.



Satisfaction % by region:

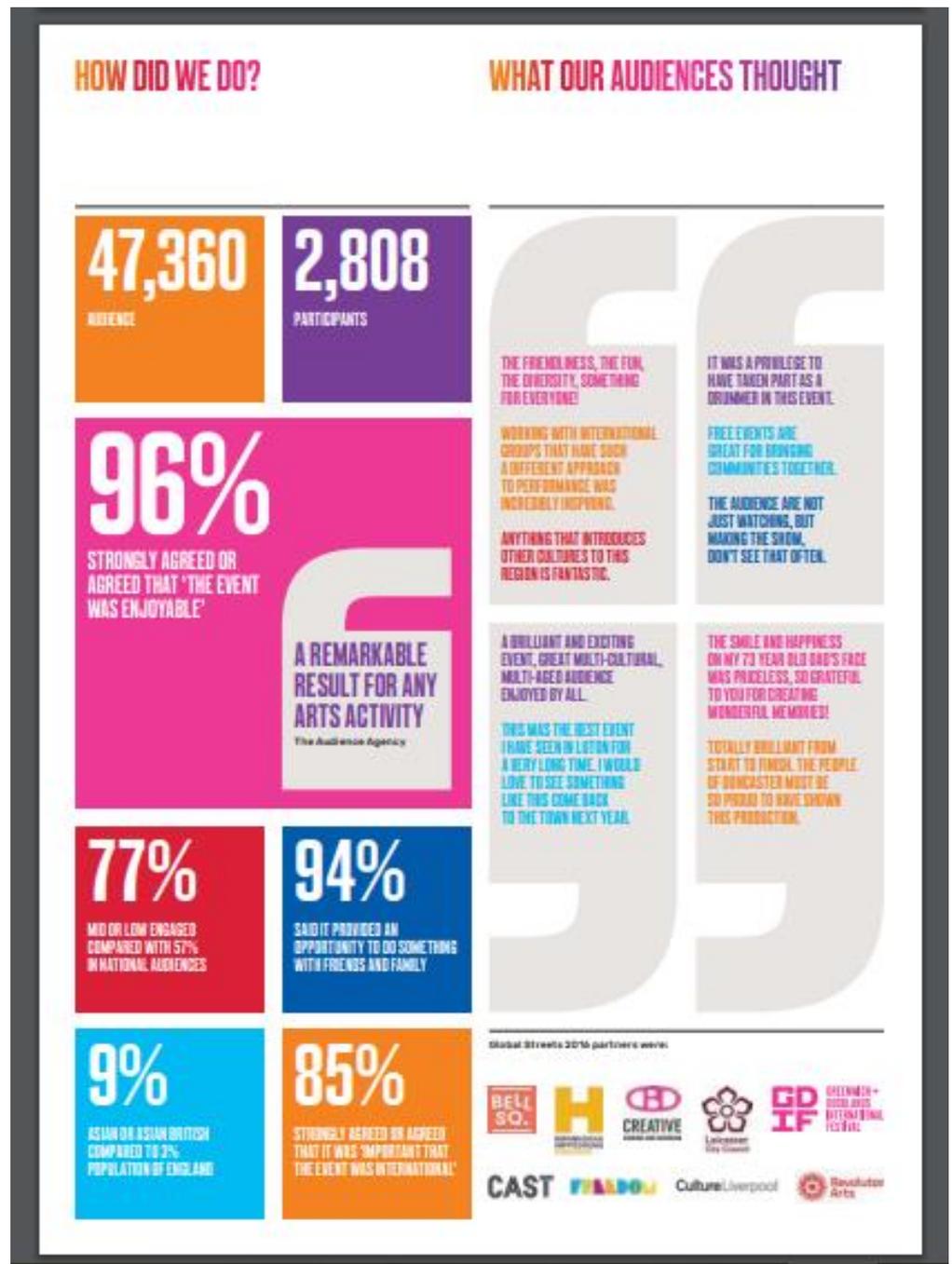


"It was a complete delight that had me grinning like an idiot from the time it started to several hours afterward."

Which you can use to shout about the work

Global Streets Project 2016

Based on research by The Audience Agency



Consider this

So supposing these characteristics of European Theatre Nights attenders are discovered at your theatre in 2019

- 50% of attenders go to other events at your theatre
- 30% of people only go to European Theatre Nights but they are returning attenders (they came last year)
- 20% are new attenders

Would you be surprised?

What sort of campaigns would you want to work on?

What further research would you do?



Other ways of using research

Data can be used in fundraising

- Demonstrate who your audience is for funding bodies or sponsors
- Find the people in your audience most likely to donate money or join a scheme

Data for fundraising?

THE ROSES



Mid-scale theatre, regional, mixed theatre programme

Data for fundraising?



- Used information about its audience - who they were, where they lived, what they did, to target businesses in those areas
- Sponsorship opportunities linked to groups of the audience

The Roses could help them to increase their brand awareness to X number of audience members per year, within X geographic areas, and to a customer base that exactly matches their own target market.



Data for fundraising?



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Support

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Acknowledgements

Corporate Opportunities

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Give As You Live

Corporate Supporters

We are grateful to each of the following for their ongoing support. Each helps The Roses in their own way and we are grateful to each:



Aquatots Swimming Ltd



CB, Chartered Accountants
& Business Advisers

CB Chartered Accountants

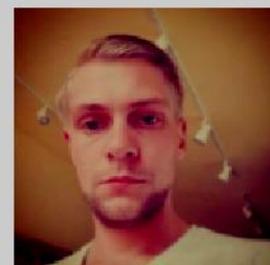
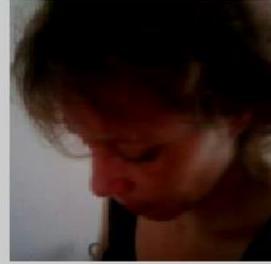
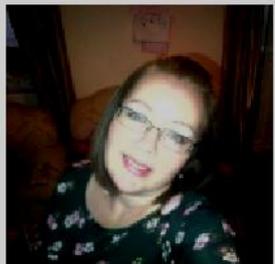
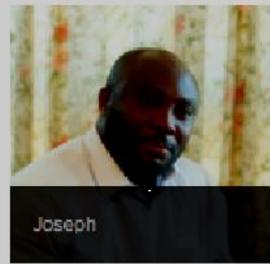
Clive Woolford
Motor Engineers Ltd

Clive Woolford Motor Engineers

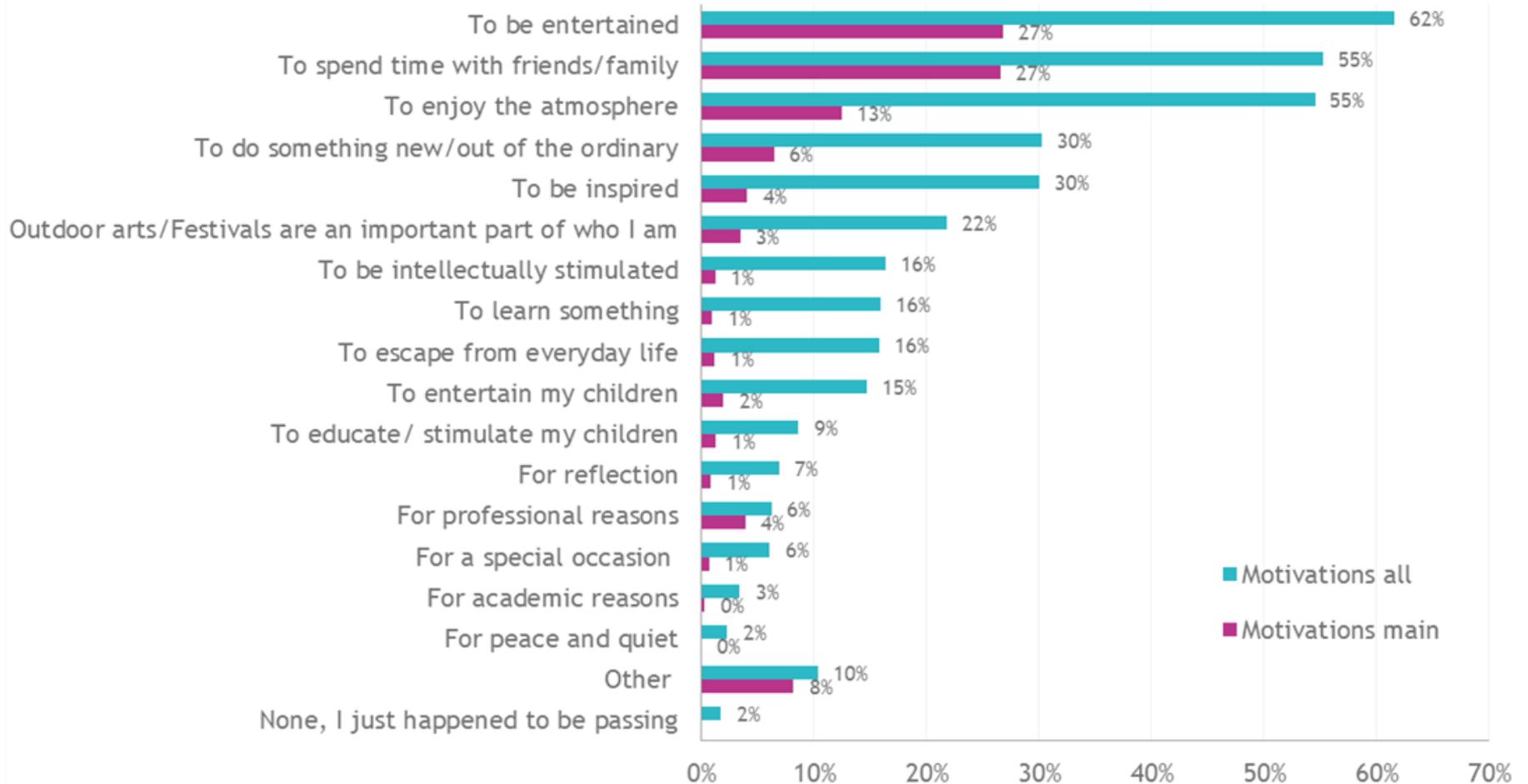
So what about segmentation?



People are different



They go for different reasons



They act in different ways

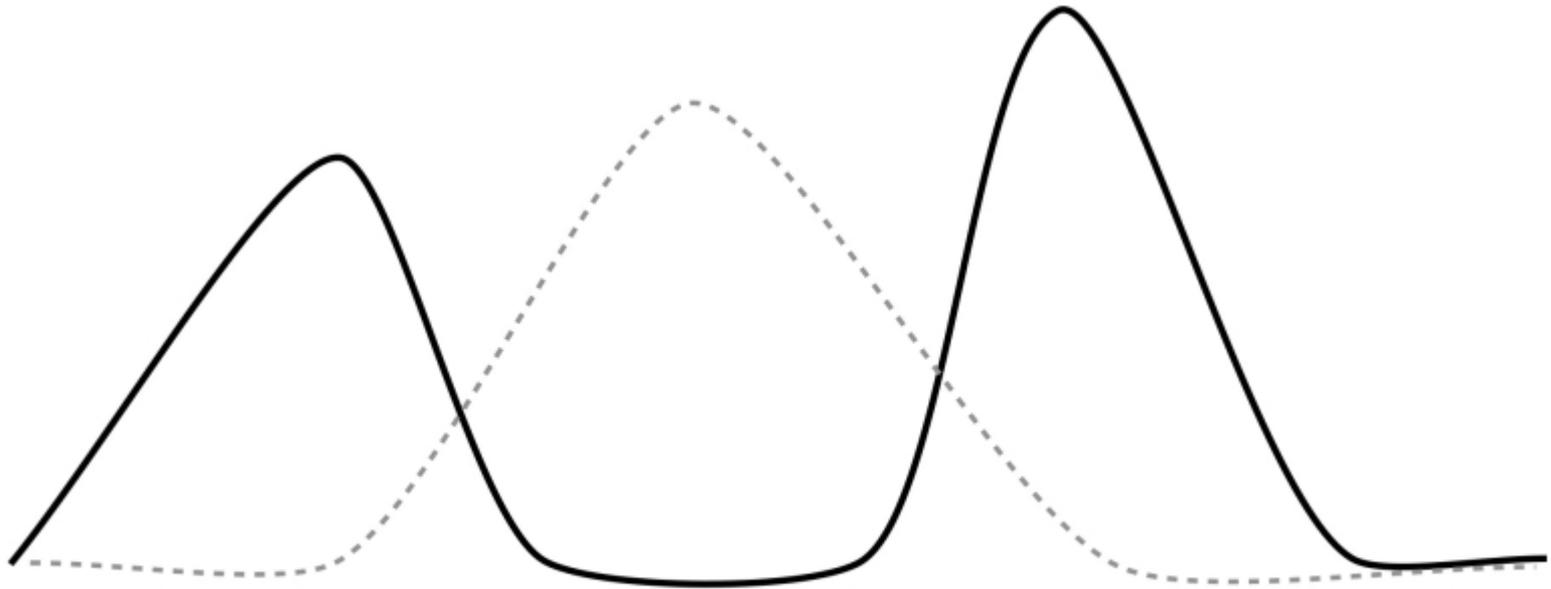
People are looking for different ways of engaging with culture

- Attending, participating?
- Intellectual, entertainment, social, keep children quiet
- Free or paid for?
- Whole day out or a small visit?
- Want to be guided or make their own way?

etc



The problem with averages



The black line shows two groups of interest

The grey dotted line is the false average, where no one is happy

Reproduced from Seth Godin's Blog, September, 2017

What do we do about this?



Speak to one person?

Good at matching needs and interests but expensive and inefficient

Speak to everyone (the mass)?

Cheap and efficient but generalised and bland

Speak to groupings?

best of both worlds - people with common needs and interests

Targeted and efficient.

One event - different groupings

Consider an event like this - it's for local people, cultural professionals and cultural tourists



Out There Festival Great Yarmouth, UK, 2017



What is segmentation?

- Grouping your audiences/ customers by similar needs, wants, or demand characteristics.
- Recognises that not everyone is the same, and helps you to manage that challenge.
- It makes financial, artistic and social sense.

Segmentation - taking a creative leap

There is no set criteria for the creation of segments

- It requires interpretation of data, knowledge of your organisation and history and a good idea of the area(s) or context
 - It needs an assessment of your resources - what it is that you can actually do?
- Then it needs some thinking and discussion around ways in which people are similar or different
- These characteristics need to be tied to things you can actually measure and find out
- It will be necessary to have a way of using this as part of your strategy. How will you distinguish them?



Data + Intelligent Consideration = Segment Groups



Beyond demographic categories

It's easy to start off with demographic categories but how useful are they?

- Young people between 18 and 24?
- Retired people with grand-children?

These are broad categories embracing a wide range of people and useful as an overall descriptor but what do they have in common?



Same segment?



Born 1948
Grew up England
Married twice
Successful, rich
Holiday in Alps
Likes dogs
Likes music



What might your segments look like?

Thinking about your audience and the public of Vienna

- What do you think are likely to be the groupings within your audience?
- What makes them similar, what makes them different from each other?

How many groupings do you think?

How might you define them (and research them)?

Thoughts, questions, ideas?

 the audience agency

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Discover who they could be.