

University of Manchester Q-Step Summer Project 2016

Ref: #17 UoMQStep 2016 Oldham Coliseum Thermal Mapping

Organisation Name: Oldham Coliseum Theatre

Address: Fairbottom Street, Oldham OL1 3SW

Provisional Title of Project:

Thermal Mapping Index of Performances at Oldham Coliseum Theatre

Abstract:

Thermal mapping examines the popularity of zones within the theatre, determining in what order seats fill, when sales are made and to whom. We will chart hot and cold spots within the auditorium across all performances by examining data collected at point of sale, determining customer behaviour across different genres of work (theatre, music, comedy etc.); correlating this with: customer preferences (frequency of visit, attendances across genres); demographics (age, gender, eligibility for concessions, postcode); and occupancy (% capacity used). The project will determine future pricing policies designed to influence customer behaviour, ensuring that the auditorium always feels busy, enhancing our customer's experience.

Key Words

Theatre, marketing, pricing, sales, business planning, behaviour, demographics, influence, choice, quantitative, evidence, analysis

Essential and desirable skills/courses that the student would need to have

Essential

- Numerate
- Experience of data analysis
- Knowledge of statistical analysis
- Self-motivating and able to work to deadlines

Desirable

- Interest in theatre and the performing arts
- Basic knowledge of the purpose of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems

Where will the work be carried out

Oldham Coliseum Theatre – Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm

Preferred selection method

Interview at Oldham Coliseum Theatre

Support and training offered by the organisation

The project will be supervised by the Executive Director of the Coliseum, David Martin B.Sc., D.Phil., MBA. Although now working within the theatre executive, David has academic training both as a research scientist and in business administration. Day-to-day liaison would be with Sue Fletcher, Head of Marketing and Communications and David Salkeld, the Box Office Manager. The student would be offered specific training in using Patronbase: the theatre's computerised CRM (box office) system.

Issues of Confidentiality/IPR that would need to be resolved

The student will be working with sales information, which is commercially sensitive and customer records, which are subject to data protection legislation. The student would therefore be expected to maintain confidentiality and all outputs and research generated would remain the property of Oldham Coliseum Theatre. The Coliseum undertakes to work with the student to facilitate the dissemination of the project's results in a manner that does not compromise either commercial sensitivity or individual customer's records.

Supporting Information

Oldham Coliseum Theatre provides a wide variety of distinctive and high-quality theatre performance and participatory activities for people of all communities in Oldham, Greater Manchester and nationally.

The theatre delivers this mission by:

- Ensuring the Coliseum and its work is an integral part of the cultural and artistic life of its community and is a resource for all
- Making live theatre that is both popular and inspiring
- Building community cohesion through participation and outreach projects that explore cultural identity and common ground

- Developing opportunities for a wide range of participants to learn through theatre and develop their theatre skills across all areas of the company
- Acting as a focal point for the social and economic regeneration of Oldham

The student will have a key role in collating and interpreting data from our CRM system that will give us a far better understanding of our customers' booking behaviour.

The interpretation of these data will actively inform future pricing policies: how price bands are organised; the timing of when different zones of the auditorium go on sale; etc.; and it is our intention to influence customer behaviour to control how an auditorium fills. This is particularly important in those shows that attract smaller audiences.

We wish to encourage smaller audiences to sit close together in close proximity to the performance taking place, whilst still offering customer choice. We believe that this will improve the experience of both audiences and performers.

The project will provide key information that will directly inform future audience development. The student will have a key role in writing the report alongside the Executive Director and will be invited to co-present the report to the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team and Coliseum staff team.

Further information about Oldham Coliseum Theatre and its work can be found at: <http://www.coliseum.org.uk>