

New Derby Theatre Website

Objectives & Brief



PLEASE NOTE: please also see the accompanying Derby Theatre/University of Derby official tender document which provides additional and supporting information.

Our current website address is <https://www.derbytheatre.co.uk>

Introduction

Derby Theatre is the UK's leading professional, producing and learning theatre.

The Theatre has a long and rich history of delivery high quality drama to audiences. Through Derby Theatre's unique partnership with the University of Derby, and as an Arts Council England National Portfolio organisation, the Theatre has transformed from a traditional producing house to an organisation of training, mentorship and artistic excellence.

Our main strands of work include: **professional produced theatre, a varied and vibrant programme of received work, artist development, our relationship with the University and community engagement** (with schools, children, young people and the local community).

(Please visit the ABOUT US section on our current website at www.derbytheatre.co.uk for more information).

As the organisation continues to evolve, develop, and thrive, through all strands of our work, we need our communication channels and platforms to develop also, to reflect, highlight and showcase our rich breadth of work and the wealth of opportunities we offer to be entertained, engage, feel inspired, learn, connect and feel welcomed.

Through its appearance, usability and functionality, we would like our new website to feel enticing, accessible, easy to use and navigate, showcase all that we do; feel vibrant, bold, exciting and engaging – to maximise sales, donations and engagement.

More organically, the following are just a few words and phrases that have been used and shared with us to describe the Theatre and the work we do: **bold, brilliant, inclusive, ahead of the curve, diverse, enriching, welcoming, a place to thrive and get involved, a rich and diverse programme, innovative, an exciting place to learn, a place where everyone feels welcome.**

The Theatre was recently awarded with a high commendation in the Regional Theatre of the Year Awards category at The Stage Awards 2021 described as "**Few theatres are as sure of their civic purpose as Derby Theatre**" and "**Derby's not just a theatre – it's a marvel.**"

(More information here: <https://www.thestage.co.uk/features/the-stage-awards-winners-2021-theatr-clwyd-regional-theatre-of-the-year>)

Key Website Stats

- **Revenue:** In 2019, DT surpassed £1 million in revenue from online sales for the first time and wants to return to this growth and development after an 80% drop in online revenue due to closure in 2020.
- **Users:** In 2019, our website reached its highest user count within a year with over 315,000 total users. This decreased to just over 155,000 total users in 2020.
- **Device:** In 2019, 59% of users accessed our site on mobile, 29% on desktop, 12% on tablet. But more online revenue, 47%, came from desktop users, with 36% from mobile and 16% tablet, suggesting converters preferred to book on desktop over mobile. In 2020, 60% of users accessed our site on mobile, 33% on desktop, 6% on tablet. During this year, revenue on mobile and desktop had a more even split: 45% mobile, 46 % desktop, 9% tablet.
- **Page Views:** we saw a 58% increase in page views between 2016/2017 when a partial website update/refresh launched Aug 2017, then a 130% increase between 2017/2018. While this is partly due to increased traffic it is also skewed due to additional pages and clicks being added to the customer journey between site versions.
- **Proportion of Page Views:** In 2019, 90% of page views were What's On related (Event/Booking/Checkout pages) and only 10% from across all other sections. In 2020, this shifted to 82.5% What's On related and 17.5% from across all other sections.

Key Objectives

1. To develop a new design with three key elements – visual, responsive, cross-functional
 - A refreshed visual design that is vibrant, friendlier, warmer, accessible, and more welcoming.
 - A responsive design that adapts effectively to the user's browser or device, whether mobile, desktop or tablet.
 - A 'live' and cross-functional design with fluid navigation between sections across the site and on-page navigation.
2. Drive sales and donations, particularly on mobile, and deepen loyalty online to re-establish the organisation's growth and development.
3. To create a seamless user experience and customer journey from arriving on the site, viewing content, logging in and booking a ticket to aftercare, reducing the number of clicks and pages needed to accomplish desired actions.
4. To integrate the unique Learning Theatre brand more effectively within the site and increase the visibility and representation of each of our main strands of work beyond event sales (University, work with young people, artist development, community co-creation projects and the Theatre Café).
5. To have an adaptable, flexible and customisable CMS that is user friendly.
6. To innovate, maximise reach and future proof our organisation, particularly through new or enhanced digital functionality and optimisation, including being able to host paid-for online events (live streamed and on-demand).

Essential Requirements

Objective 1: Design

Refreshed visual design with new look, feel and tone

- A refreshed design and look that needs to be friendly, vibrant and feel warmer and more welcoming (lose the dark grey theme).
- To generate or convey a feeling of excitement when booking a ticket.
- Effective ways to use, display and show off production and learning imagery across the site.
- How can we show information in a visual or dynamic way and break up sections of copy?
- Elements of new design need to be incorporated and used consistently across social media and e-mail marketing content as well as the website.

Responsive design

- A responsive website that adapts more effectively to the user's browser or device, whether mobile, desktop or tablet...
- With easily accessible editing options in CMS to optimise this, for example being able to upload multiple image formats best suited for each device.
- How should the design and experience be similar and different for each device?

'Live' cross-functional design and navigation

- How do we create a more 'live' and organic feel with improved navigation between different sections of the site?
- How do people access the content most relevant to them quickly?
- Can we integrate the most updated pages (What's On, News, Blogs) with other more static sections of the website so related events or news tile links can appear on pages outside of the main What's On/News menus, encouraging clicks between sections?
- On-page navigation options (e.g jump to menu) for events or pages with lots of content or sections.

Objectives 2 & 3: Driving Sales & Loyalty / Improved User Experience

Customer Journey and Booking Path

- Must retain Spektrix integration and use their latest API integrations
- To develop an enhanced and streamlined customer journey with a faster booking pathway that is easily accessible, has less clicks to separate pages and is better optimised for mobile.
- To have the ability to up-sell memberships, donations, promos/packages, related events easily and clearly as part of the booking path.
- Enhance the ability to show in demand performances, accessibility options and the latest available prices when browsing.
- Easy and smooth customer account processes (log in, editing details, adding items to basket, continue browsing, resetting password).

Customer service

- Ability to host live chat function for direct and immediate communication between sales team and customers.
- How can we break down barriers for first timers?

Accessibility

- To retain integration with Recite Me toolbar
- Should meet and exceed DDA standards
- To follow guidelines as published in [Unlimited's accessible marketing guide](#) (point size etc) with clear options in CMS e.g to add alt text
- Clear filter options for accessible events in What's On listings and performance dates/times lists.
- How do we continue to break down barriers for accessing theatre and visiting our venue, and ensure the site is accessible for all?

Site Search

- The search bar should be prominent and site easily searchable. Filter options (e.g by date posted etc) are an essential addition as on the current site there is no way to filter or organise your search, which causes issues.

What's On – Event Listings

- Intuitive listings with clear details, call-to-action buttons, enhanced categorisation to group event types and improved filter options (for the user to tailor their searches) that are easy to use on all devices, particularly on mobile.
- Ways to highlight selected events of our choosing and drive customers towards them.
- How do we persuade/ lure people in or back when there's hesitation?

What's On – Event Pages

- To reduce clicks and loading, the performance dates and times list with booking buttons should be contained within the main event page rather than a separate page as on our current site.

Festivals

- How do we streamline the booking process for multi-show events like festivals and display and highlight them in the What's On?

Fundraising & Development

- We need to deepen engagement with potential donors and ensure donating online is user friendly.
- How do we drive donations and integrate fundraising and 'support us' messaging clearly but subtly, without bombarding, across the site?
- How do we highlight and show off the Friends membership scheme and benefits more effectively?
- How can we encourage repeat attendance and reward loyalty for frequent attenders and existing Friends members?

Food and Drink/ Merchandise

- Ability for Café and bar pre-order system to be integrated properly in its own Food and Drink section, with event specific packages and merchandise able to be integrated with the relevant event pages (in the What's On) and/or the booking path.

Speed

- The site should have fast loading pages and feel quick and responsive.

Objective 4: Learning Theatre and Strands of Organisation

Increased and enhanced profile of Learning Theatre brand and different strands

- A key objective is to look at how we can better integrate the Learning Theatre brand within the site and to increase the visibility and representation of each of our other main strands of work, particularly on the home page. This work generates half of our overall income so whilst it is not essential for ticket buyers it is for funders and participants.
- We are aware that we need to strike a careful balance as we do not want to overload or alienate general audiences just wanting to book a ticket. The key challenge to address is 'event sales and everything else'.
- Then, with the wealth of content and different strands how do we display all this information as clearly and concisely as possible so our different user groups can find the relevant information they need easily. Currently, we run the danger of too many separate, static sections that can easily become out of date or redundant quickly. Users may not be sure where to look so pages and content are missed.

Learning Sections

- To re-think and reimagine the purpose of the Learning sections of the site (currently Get Involved, University, Artists) and their calls to action, including moving any bookable school workshops and events to be part of What's On.
- In line with the Learning Theatre brand, should the main purpose of these pages be for users "to learn" by housing key learning resources, articles, videos and interactive elements to access, read, watch and engage with? How can the website design help us to achieve this?

Funded projects and community co-creation

- How can we collect and present all content related to a project and document the journey from beginning to end in an engaging way?
- How do we showcase the co-created work we do within the community and user generated content from projects such as Reimagine and Derby CAN on the site?
- How do we talk about, explain and present multi-partner, funded projects in a way that is accessible and relevant for audiences?

Artist Development/In Good Company

- How does the presence of our artist development scheme, In Good Company, evolve and relate to [IGC's website](#)?

Staff Team and Job Vacancies

- How do we use the staff page to convey our friendly and welcoming approach? What are the best ways to highlight what each role does and encourage people to get in touch?
- The format of jobs pages and how they are listed needs to be improved, including how people access documents and apply.

Objective 5: CMS

Usability and formatting

- Maximum control and access for DT staff to add/edit/update content, pages and navigation for all areas of the site internally, with support and training.
- CMS is clear and easy to use when adding new pages and content.
- Flexible and customisable – key to stress this so we do not quickly become tied down to strict formatting with parts that are out of date or redundant and cannot be removed if the organisation adapts or changes.
- An easily editable and customisable home page that is consistent with the rest of CMS.
- Options to control responsive site features and optimise for certain devices e.g uploading different image sizes for desktop, mobile etc.
- Batch uploading of images to avoid time consuming one by one uploads.
- Clear formatting tools for headings, sub-headings etc
- User system so that teams/individuals outside of marketing can have access to update specific content when needed.

Flexible Page & Content Creation

- We require a flexible landing page format or the ability to have several customisable page templates that can be used across different sections of the site.
- With a vast range of different strands to our organisation, it is important to have the flexibility to create the right format for each strand to showcase such different content, for different audiences and target groups, in the most effective way, while still maintaining a consistent feel.

Page Scheduling and Proofing

- Ability to schedule when any page (whether event, news, general etc) should go live and expire when needed, with proofing/approval process available before going live.

What's On – Event Pages

- When setting up an event page, we should be able to add and upload all the following content relating to the event (if/when it becomes available) from one place in CMS, with ways to show off and display the visual content.
 - Show Details – title, dates, times, prices, production company and/or byline, venue, genre tags, running time, age, advisories.
 - Show copy, cast and creative credits, accessible performance icons/info, Friends membership details (priority booking, discounts)
 - Reviews quotes and stars
 - Production shots, rehearsal images, trailers and videos
 - Behind-The-Scenes– link to blogs or news pages related to the events
 - Banners for urgent updates (cancelled, sold out, rescheduled, seats released)

Festivals

- We need a way to be able to represent programmes work of more coherently e.g Connections or Departure Lounge festivals... How do we display all their related events and content together, with booking accessible from the same place?

Archive

- How can we display archived content and resources for past events and projects, clearly distinguishing this from content for new and upcoming events?

Support & Development

- Clear agreement on the troubleshooting and fixing process when CMS and formatting features break with clearly defined down time and testing process for launch.
- We will require quick, direct support for urgent issues such as website downtime and ticketed support for non-urgent issues.
- On-going support and training options for using CMS and features to be discussed and agreed.
- Capability and options for continual development – if some essential or desirable criteria misses the launch window will we be able to add features as the website grows and develops?

Objective 6: Digital and the Future

Streaming and online video content

- Site should be adaptable and capable of hosting digital events.
- Optimised to host livestreams or on-demand video content – natively within the site if possible or embedded from YouTube/Vimeo behind a paywall through login to Spektrix theatre account.
- How do we present/display free video content better and have ways to collect and group series together?

Mailing List

- Sign-up form to be prominent on home page and before the footer on all pages.
- Sign up should include basic content preference tag options straight away e.g..
 - Event Announcements, News & Updates
 - Artist Network (workshops and opportunities for artist development)
 - Young People's Network (workshops and opportunities for young people)
- New email templates to reflect new website design and customer journey.

Digital Marketing Integration

- Retain integration with Google Analytics – audience, behaviour, acquisition, ecommerce etc set up to be fully linked with the site.
- Retain integration with Facebook pixel as this has helped us launch remarketing campaigns on Facebook.
- We would like to expand this so the website is linked with Twitter, DotDigital email marketing and Google Ads if possible so we can run remarketing using other platforms too.
- New integration with new SMS/Text service (potentially Crowd Engage)
- Retain and enhance social media integration – for sharing events or pages directly to user's news feeds and social media feeds embedded into homepage.

Search Engine Optimisation

- CMS features to support SEO – for example editable URLs and URL paths, taxonomy, ways to display pull quotes with keywords, clear places to add/edit headlines or meta tag descriptions that will display in Google search.

Desirable

Some other things we have thought about...

- Customer's theatre account – interested in hearing how logging-in could personalise the site for customers... Could we have three different profile types: audience, artist, young person?
- Is it possible to have the ability to embed printed documents such as brochures natively within the site for people to browse, rather than having to use external sites like Issuu?
- To have 360-degree image/virtual tour options within the site (for auditorium, studio, foyer, other spaces).
- Application forms (for jobs, call outs, opportunities) able to be built within website (rather than having to download attachments) for easy submission.
- Header images to have the option to scroll between multiple images or video.
- To have the ability to do basic image resizes and crops within the website.