

Enabling Diversity in Greater Manchester

Published by Arts About Manchester

March 2003

This report provides an overview of learning points from the Enabling Diversity - Greater Manchester project. This initiative sought to develop and provide relevant and sustainable audience development activity with culturally diverse communities in Greater Manchester. The objectives included securing active involvement of member organisations, building market intelligence and delivering marketing activities to specifically targeted communities.

The Audience Agency is a not-for-profit organisation created out of the merger between All About Audiences (formerly Arts About Manchester) and Audiences London Plus in 2012.



Enabling Diversity Greater Manchester

Final Report

March 2003



arts about manchester



INDEX

1. Context	3
2. Activity	3
3. Results	4
3.1 Supply/demand	4
3.2 New Audiences	5
3.3 Marketing Techniques	5
3.3.1 Word of mouth	5
3.3.2 Generic brochure	6
3.3.3 Marketing lists	6
3.3.4 Distribution	7
3.4 Testing Marketing Lists	7
3.5 Attendance Behaviour	8
3.6 Community Organisation Consultation	9
3.7 Collaborative Projects	11
3.8 Networking & Current Arts Discourse	12
4. Evaluation	13
5. Recommendations	15
5.1 Funding Bodies	15
5.2 Deliverers/venues	15
6. Budget	

1. CONTEXT

The aim of Phase 1 was to apply the learning outcomes from the Arts Ambassadors Unit pilot project (1998-2001) to develop and provide relevant and sustainable future service in the audience development of culturally diverse communities in Greater Manchester. To achieve this, a Project Manager was appointed in July 2001.

The objectives were:

1. To secure active involvement of members in programme of work
2. For AAM and members to share information to build market intelligence of target groups
3. To deliver marketing activities direct to target communities
4. To develop and support joint marketing collaborations between members

Success in meeting these objectives was to be measured by:

1. Levels of participation in programme of work
2. Data gathered and analysed, and information disseminated to members
3. Quantity and quality of marketing activities taking place
4. Collaborative campaigns take place

2. ACTIVITY

Over the period from July 2001 to March 2003, the Project Manager co-ordinated or worked in partnership on a number of projects as part of the work programme:

1. Acts of Achievement Black History Month (AoA) 2001 & 2002
2. Diversity season brochure, 2001
3. Cultureshock Commonwealth Games NW cultural programme 2002

4. Dance of Black Origin festival (DBO) 2001 & 2002
- 5.** Comic Book 'What in the World' project, 2001-3
6. Integrating AAM databases, 2002
7. Data collection, 2001-2002
8. Community organisation consultation, 2002
9. Integrating AAM distribution services, 2002
10. Cultureshock data analysis, 2002-2003
11. Testing marketing lists, 2003

3. RESULTS

Key results and findings from project activity are listed below. As the activity is new, there are no existing recognised benchmarks against which the results can be compared. This project has been very much about *establishing* benchmarks so that future work can be contextualised and hence understood in more meaningful ways.

Some aspects of the activities are testing assumptions and findings of work completed earlier in the programme. Their impact has a life span that extends beyond the timescale of Phase 1. Their on-going nature makes definitive analysis of findings not possible at this time. As they are creating a legacy for the New Audiences project, they are strategically very important to future practice.

3.1 Supply/demand

AAM worked with several festivals over the course of Phase 1: Acts of Achievement, Cultureshock, and Dance of Black Origin.

There are concerns that as festivals and programmes of work present a lot of similar product in a concentrated time, events are competing for audiences who are forced to choose in a way they would not if that product was spread across the year. Festivals are useful for highlighting themes and attracting media and public attention, and for offering audiences opportunities to see work that otherwise would not take place, but they must be supported by programming throughout the year.

Some communities feel current programming does not reflect their interests. Ambassador surveys conducted for Cultureshock revealed considerable concern amongst Pakistani and Muslim communities that the majority of South Asian programming in Greater Manchester was relevant to Indians and Hindus. Suggestions of relevant events that could be programmed include: Sufic music events, Islamic art exhibitions (including calligraphy, mosaics, tiles), 'qawwali' events, and for younger people Bhangra and Bollywood music and dance events.

Deliverers should be aware of the balance of their programming over a period of time. Cultureshock for example had x5 as much South Asian programming as African/African Caribbean. This imbalance was reflected in the audience profile where there were x4 as many Asians as Black attenders.¹

3.2 New Audiences

Project activity has generated many new audiences for the arts in Greater Manchester. Precise figures can not be calculated as there is no constant or consistent data captured at events that are unticketed such as free events or exhibitions, or where box-office systems are not capable of recording that type of information. However, it is possible to review statistics based on audience surveys at events. The table below includes figures from data:crunch™ analysis as a benchmark of performing arts attenders.

EVENT	NEW TO VENUE	NEW TO WORK
Cultureshock 2002	39%	23%
DBO 2000	47%	49%
DBO 2001	50%	33%
DBO 2002	81%	80%
AoA 2002	69%	70%
data:crunch™	34.5% ²	

¹ Cultureshock Evaluation Report: Impact on organisations, audiences & the city, N. Andrews, 2002

² figure for period 31/8/00 - 31/8/01

3.3 Marketing Techniques

Here we consider communication channels that have been demonstrated to have most impact, and for this reason are recommended as areas of focus for the future.

3.3.1 WORD OF MOUTH

Research shows that word of mouth is the most common way people find out about events. Audience surveys at Cultureshock events substantiated this. At 46% it was considerably higher than attenders to cultural festivals in Manchester from 1994-1997, where word of mouth accounted for 22-35%³. 45% of attenders to AoA 2001, 42% to AoA 2002, and 38% of attenders to DBO 2002 events found out through word of mouth. These figures indicate that word of mouth is a very significant information route for audiences interested in culturally diverse work.

When events have a long run, word of mouth or consensual marketing by attenders occurs automatically. One-off events, those with a short run and work by new artists benefit from Ambassador campaigns, because they are effective at generating word of mouth marketing.

3.3.2 GENERIC BROCHURES

Season listings brochures for culturally diverse work are very popular with the public. The Diversity brochure contained a mailing form, which included several research questions. In response to the open question 'What do you think of this brochure' 83% said it was brilliant, excellent, good etc. and 91% said it was very informative and useful.

They are an effective communication channel: it was the second highest method selected in the Cultureshock and DBO 2001 audience surveys. 13% of Cultureshock attenders found out about events through the generic brochure, 16% of DBO 2001 attenders (up 10% from 2000) and 11% of AoA 2001 and 2002 attenders.

Continuity is important for maintaining contact with target communities but securing long term funding for publications is difficult. Many new and one-off initiatives such as Cultureshock and decibel produce their own generic brochures. Co-ordination is required so print duplication is avoided and marketing lists are shared so audiences continue to be targeted effectively and efficiently.

³ Report for Manchester City Council on the Economic Impact of Cultural Festivals 1994-1997, AAM 1998

3.3.3 MARKETING LISTS

Dance of Black Origin, Acts of Achievement, Diversity and Cultureshock activity succeeded in attracting a total of 4428 new contacts to AAM Arts Attenders database.

Direct mailing is particularly effective when the target already has some familiarity with the venue, and has enough consumer confidence to be motivated to attend with just this stimulus.

11% of Cultureshock attenders found out about events through mailing lists – the third most commonly cited route. 19% of DBO 2002 attenders (up 12% from DBO 2001) and 15% of AoA 2002 attenders.

3.3.4 DISTRIBUTION

Most organisations do not have the budgets to conduct extensive distribution campaigns that cover mainstream and specialist points. The tendency has been for organisations to only focus distribution in Black and Asian areas when they are promoting a product which they deem to be of specific cultural interest to these communities.

To address this and to encourage crossover in attendances for events, AAM piloted the integration of some key distribution points from Black and Asian runs into the AAM grassroots network, so that these outlets would receive regular deliveries of print.

80 outlets were visited and asked whether they would like to receive regular drops and have a display unit. 30 key outlets were selected, they regularly receive print for community events and many are also ticket agents, and so are recognised community information points.

Racks were installed where space allowed and the sites revisited 5 months later. Some racks need upgrading as the ones installed – the small card racks, proved to be unsuitable for some sites i.e. cafes, takeaways and hairdressers where humidity levels are high. There was also an expectation from some outlets that they should get something in return for displaying print. Arrangements have been made e.g. free runs for outlet print and 2-for-1 vouchers for events.

The sites have been divided into those that receive fortnightly and monthly print.

The majority of outlets were pleased to now have something tidy to keep print in and were pleased to be displaying mainstream print in addition to the usual culturally specific print.

AAM employed someone from the Black community to conduct the initial research, but we feel it important that personal relations between the distribution staff and outlet staff are now being developed. As they had not previously come into contact with each other, there were some prejudices and misconceptions on both sides that are now being dispelled through the distribution activity.

Asian outlets are under-represented in this pilot and should be the focus of future activity.

3.4 Testing Marketing Lists

It has become increasingly apparent to AAM that targeting potential attenders solely on the basis of their ethnic background is an unsophisticated and simplistic approach. It does not take into account cultural interests, lifestyle and lifestage profiles that are generally recognised in the marketing industry as key factors in defining and determining leisure time decisions.

The AAM data capture form has fields for artform and style interests, and so through our Arts Attenders database it offers the possibility of targeting people by the type of events they are actually interested in. However we had not rigorously tested the field definitions or our assumptions about this approach being more effective.

We mailed over 3000 people on our Arts Attenders database information on up to 20 events from 15 venues, according to their stated interests. A response form was included in the package, which asked people to specify whether the information received was for events of relevance and interest to them.

Analysis of the responses shows that this is an effective way of targeting people: 69% of respondents said they were interested in all the information received, 14% were interested in most and 12% were interested in some. AAM could look at tightening up some of the field definitions, and consider ways of updating attenders details so that changes in preferences can be accommodated.

Analysis of audience surveys conducted at Cultureshock events shows that 39% were first time attenders to venues and 23% were seeing types of work for the first time. To build on the legacy of Cultureshock with regard to maintaining contact with new audiences and audiences interested in culturally diverse work, AAM has given our Cultureshock attenders database of over 2000 names to our members.

3.5 Attendance Behaviour

Data:crunch™ analysis of box-offices shows that 86% of performing arts audiences book in advance. However the results from Cultureshock ambassador surveys with people in communities showed 37% generally book in advance. The audience surveys placed the figure at just over half of all respondents. This means that a substantial number of attenders for culturally diverse work do not have their data captured by box-office systems when they attend events. This has implications for venues maintaining contact with new and culturally diverse audiences, and targeting them with information about other events.

Analysis of the arts market through data:crunch™ shows that 78% of attenders are loyal to one venue. However only 23% of respondents to ambassador surveys and just 13% of respondents to Cultureshock audience surveys at venues said they had attended one venue only in the last 12 months. The majority therefore visit several venues, which indicates joint marketing campaigns between venues could be very effective.

The indication from both these analyses is that audiences for culturally diverse work do not conform to traditional arts attender behaviour. As these findings have major implications for venues, AAM recognised that additional data was needed to confirm or repudiate the findings from the surveys. Our data collection procedures were re-assessed and a project to analyse Cultureshock box-office data was developed. The results of this analysis are still in the process of being collated but early indications are that the audience survey findings are indeed valid. This information is useful but AAM has identified the need to cross reference data with information that venues hold.

The Cultureshock box-office data analysis report will include: total expenditure at Cultureshock events, average number of tickets bought, how far in advance people book, audience profile, where bookers came from, crossover of attendance at participating venues, and so on. All of these can be compared to the norm to demonstrate whether Cultureshock actually attracted a different audience or not. In addition, MOSAIC profiling and lifestage analysis etc. undertaken by artform, enables us to compare audiences for specific types of culturally diverse work to the benchmark. The results from this activity will be extremely useful in informing the way audiences are targeted more effectively and accurately in future.

3.6 Community organisation consultation

An initial AAM aim was to facilitate the setting up and piloting of community consultation panels with venues.

This was to build on the ambassador work by linking senior managers with people in target communities so that needs could be understood, expectations managed and learning applied.

Due to the unanticipated impact Cultureshock had on the workload of both AAM and member venues, movement towards this has been slow although some research has been undertaken. Models for community consultation currently in use have been reviewed to gain some understanding of what factors need to be in place for consultation to be a successful exercise for all parties involved. This review is on-going but for venues, being open and honest about what is and is not possible so that expectations can be managed is vital for building trust. There is a danger to starting something if it can't be sustained, as many people are quite cynical about the consultation culture in contemporary society. There also needs to be a commitment by senior management to attend any consultation sessions and to seriously consider what is being said. Although it is necessary for them to distinguish interest groups and minority/extremist views from genuine community needs and average opinions, senior management need to embrace the plurality of meaning and see different interpretations as valid versions of reality even if they do not subscribe to them.

An interim step towards the setting up of panels was identified: auditing what kind of communication and relations currently exists between community organisations and our member venues.

AAM has 281 organisations on the Arts Attenders database, with details such as organisation type (e.g. health, welfare, arts), region where active (i.e. Greater Manchester, NW, national, international), target group for organisation (e.g. young people, old people, women, disabled, specific ethnic groups). All the organisations were contacted and asked to complete a survey. This gave us information on which venues they receive arts information on, in what format, and whether the organisations attended any events as a result.

Of the 281 contacted by phone, email, post or in person, only 52 responded. Of those that did engage with the research, 67% currently receive information from arts venues, although the amount of information and number of venues varied widely. 54% said they attended arts event, although not necessarily the events they were sent information about. 60% said they were interested in having a

closer relationship with arts venues, e.g. exchanging views with senior management about their service provision.

The number of people/groups interested in developing relationships with arts venues through community consultation exercises is very encouraging, and provides AAM with a strong foundation to build on this year.

As a first step the interested organisations were sent Open House CD-Roms⁴ to give them an idea of the sort of collaborative projects and the type of venues and organisations AAM work with. All who had viewed the CD-Rom said it was very good and was insightful.

AAM conducted a second phase of research with 18 organisations interested in developing closer relations with arts venues.

Our research raised questions about the power of main contacts of organisations to either allow arts information to be passed on to their users or not. All organisations contacted as part of the second phase confirmed managers only displayed information they thought would be of relevance to their members. Word-of-mouth was the most effective way that information was passed around and interest generated in events.

All but one organisation were interested in receiving outreach visits by venues, where members/users could view tasters of work or participate in workshops. They were also interested in tours or open days at venues, if travel expenses could be covered. Just over half the organisations had been involved in outreach and tour activities before and reported positive experiences.

The organisations were presented with possible models for community consultation/advisory panels, and all 18 considered the models workable.

Concerns were raised, mainly by Asian organisations. These included the cost of travelling to events (particularly Asian women's groups as most of them don't drive) and the need for women-only events. Scheduling was also an issue: it is difficult to organise trips after school hours with Asian girls because their parents tend not to allow it. Day events were also preferred by Asian elders.

Generational differences were also apparent. There are some English language barriers with older generations (particularly Asian elders), and attitudes towards the arts. Older generations (1st and 2nd

⁴ This was an AAM co-ordinated project that involved working with community organisations to look at why they participated in arts activities but were under-represented as audiences to venues

generation Asians) do not appreciate the value of the arts to the same extent as younger 3rd generation Asians who are more integrated into British culture. Despite young Asians interest in the arts, some Asian parents do not encourage their children especially girls to participate in arts activities.

There are clear differences in artform preferences between the generations. Elders prefer more conservative, classical and traditional arts presented in a more formal style and young people prefer informal events with a high entertainment value.

There is a clear need for venues to increase their contact with community-based organisations as there is a general lack of awareness with members/users of what is currently available, despite the amount of print being sent to organisations.

3.7 Collaborative Projects

The project activity involved AAM working in partnership with other organisations and clusters of member venues. The experiences varied across the projects, with some relationships working easier than others.

The schedules of collaborative projects with several partners have a tendency to go adrift. The timetable for analysis of Cultureshock data was set back several months as some partners took longer than anticipated to confirm their participation and then supply their data, which held up the whole project.

When undertaking a collaborative project, at the heart of which is sharing and aggregating data, the support that needs to be given to venues should not be underestimated. The process can be much simplified however by briefing all relevant staff on the project and what it is aiming to achieve by producing standard documentation on the process such as data extraction routines. The key difficulty continues to be the ability of participating organisations to manage additional demands on their time when they are already extremely busy. In addition, project organisers are required to continually support participants by explaining and outlining the importance of such projects and what they will achieve, i.e. highlighting what the direct benefit to participants will be.

This suggests that there is a wider educational issue about the value of

data and more particularly sharing data and collaborating with other venues. It should be noted that such issues invariably affect the timescales of such projects and contingency should be built in wherever possible.

The critical success factors are:

- A project co-ordinator in place to lead the project, keep track of partners' activities and manage the budget
- Regular and efficient communication between partners to keep the relationships alive
- Explicit agreement between all parties on project aims and objectives and partners' roles and responsibilities, made at the start and reiterated throughout
- Partners buy-in wholeheartedly to the project aims and objectives
- Differing views discussed objectively and dispassionately at meetings to arrive at conclusions that can be accepted if not shared by all
- Egos kept in check!
- Timescale contingencies built in to project schedules

3.8 Networking & Current Arts Discourse

Attendance at regional and national conferences, seminars and workshops relating to cultural diversity has enabled Nadine Andrews to network with professionals working in the arts and other sectors. The exchange of ideas and views has been essential to placing the findings and experiences of AAM activity in a wider context. Some of the conferences were organised by non-arts agencies. With regard to current discourses on race, identity politics and social inclusion, interaction with e.g. sociologists, cultural historians and those working within welfare and health care has proved very illuminating and has informed the direction AAM is taking with regard to the cultural diversity agenda.

Gary Younge said at the 'Connecting Flights' conference at the British Library in November 2002, in reference to making connections with people: "Identity is a great place to start but a terrible place to end".

And Stuart Hall at the same conference acknowledged the paradox of people from 'diasporic cultures' having the "urge to be treated different and be treated the same".

Both these quotes highlight the complexity of working within cultural diversity. Culturally specific events are useful for attracting some types of non-attenders and work to satisfy the demands of some communities but not all. Some people resent being targeted for events on this basis and also opt not to supply information about their ethnic background. Of the 654 respondents to audience surveys administered at Cultureshock events, around half chose not to answer questions about ethnic identity. The tension between the need for segregation and integration is a dynamic one – it is in a constant state of re-negotiation.

Whilst defining people purely on the basis of ethnic background is crude, simplistic and can be divisive, not including power relations and economics in the debate is equally problematic.

4. EVALUATION

The degree to which the Phase 1 objectives have been met is discussed below.

Active involvement of members in programme of work

AAM members have been involved in several collaborative projects. Dance of Black Origin festival involves a core cluster of 3 or 5 members. 14 members regularly participate in Acts of Achievement (Black History Month). Almost all our members were involved with Cultureshock.

The 'What in the World' comic book project is an AAM coordinated collaborative project with 9 museums and galleries. These venues actively participated in collaborative decision-making and took responsibility for their individual roles within the project.

AAM and members share information to build market intelligence of target groups

Through data collection activity at member venues, AAM has been able to gather a large amount of data for analysis. The Cultureshock data analysis requires venues to share box-office information with us. All this information is in the process of being compiled for dissemination to our membership and beyond.

Other activities have also contributed to building up our market intelligence. The integration of AAM databases into a central Arts Attenders database has had a big impact on the way information is housed and used.

AAM deliver marketing activities direct to target communities

AAM has conducted ambassador campaigns for The Lowry to Asian communities and for Cultureshock and Dance of Black Origin to Black and Asian communities.

We have also carried out several direct mailings based on individuals' stated artform and style interests. The database can store information about ethnic background, but we do not use this as a search criterion, but rather as a monitoring device to check our database is inclusive.

In order to address gaps in distribution provision to culturally diverse communities and to encourage crossover in attendances for events, AAM integrated its marketing distribution services. Previously, the specialist run focusing on Black and Asian communities did not receive much mainstream print as the majority of clients did not have the budget for both the main leaflet racks and specialist runs. 29 key outlets were selected where owners were supportive of the distribution activity, and appropriate display units installed to suit the outlet. These outlets now receive fortnightly deliveries of regular and targeted print from various venues. We are monitoring the pick-up rate of print from each distribution point to test venue suitability and the interest of target groups in regular print.

To develop and support joint marketing collaborations between members

Generic brochures are a good example of collaborative marketing, Acts of Achievement and Cultureshock both produced festival brochures. Dance of Black Origin 2002 produced generic flyers and also featured in the Dance Directory autumn season brochure. DBO events are branded as such in the brochure to highlight that aspect of the dance programme to readers. Generic brochures encourage audiences to visit different venues. The dance directory in particular encourages

crossover in audiences for mainstream, traditional and dance of black origin.

There was little joint marketing between venues on Cultureshock. This was partly due to late confirmation of programming and demanding planning schedules, but it has been acknowledged that it was a missed opportunity for venues to augment rather than compete for audiences. With hindsight, AAM could have been more instrumental in working with Cultureshock to bring venues together and promote the value of joint campaigns more strongly, as it is clear that venues need much more support and encouragement than we thought. This learning will be applied to future initiatives such as decibel and the North West Diversity Festival (organised by North West Museums, Libraries and Archives Council).

The 'What in the World' comic book project is a joint audience development collaboration that promotes the collection-holding museums and galleries in Greater Manchester to culturally diverse families through community groups and organisations and agencies that work with young people.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are based on the learning and findings presented above.

5.1. Funding bodies

1. The legacy of New Audiences projects must be built on through further funding schemes that are not short-term project based. The findings in this report clearly show where future work should be focussed, and it would be damaging for the arts sector if our relationships with new audiences were not to be strategically developed and strengthened over the long-term through appropriate funding schemes.
2. Market intelligence is crucial to achieving market growth; continued support by funders to audience development agencies is necessary to ensure the bank of intelligence continues to be developed, updated and maintained. This is particularly important for audiences for culturally diverse work whose details are not captured at box-office. The value of data and sharing data and collaborating with other venues has to be recognised and promoted by funders to organisations.
3. Awareness of the balance of programming across funded events and organisations is crucial so that overall all communities of interest are catered for.
4. Strategies for ensuring arts provision in the UK represents all communities and encompasses all forms of cultural expression must allow for a more sophisticated approach to categorising people than merely ethnic background or identity. Cultural identity becomes more complicated the more it is analysed because it is about feelings; culture is in a constant state of motion. The arts sector needs to be able to respond to the ever-changing dynamics of culture. Lifestyle and lifestage are key factors to include in the equation.

5.2 Deliverers/venues

1. Festivals should support the year-round core programming by venues, by presenting work that audiences otherwise would not have opportunities to see. Festivals could present tasters of work to stimulate interest for new work that could then be presented in full later in the year.
2. Where festivals have overlapping presentation periods, efforts should be made to co-ordinate marketing activity; this need not compromise individual brand identity.
3. Maintaining contact with new audiences and with audiences for culturally specific events through targeted campaigns is crucial if they are to be developed into regular attenders. Similarly, mechanisms need to be put in place so that the links with communities created through project work are maintained.
4. As audiences for culturally diverse work tend to visit several venues, joint marketing campaigns that help to direct audiences between events and venues would be very effective in augmenting as opposed to competing for audiences.
5. There is a clear demand for venues to develop closer relationships with community-based organisations, this could include outreach activities, inviting groups to venues for tours/open days, and forming community consultation/advisory panels
6. A logical progression of project work with communities is to look at how the learning gained is applied internally, and how organisational changes are implemented and managed.
7. Programming should reflect the need for segregation and integration by presenting both culturally specific work and work that transcends ethnicity and difference, and shows the connections between cultural traditions.