

Developing audiences at Tate

Will Gompertz, Director of Communications at Tate, describes several projects that have developed new audiences for Tate

Developing new audiences is central to four of Tate's strategic aims:

- develop new audiences within and beyond the galleries;
- create new means to reach new audiences;
- visitor audits to inform Tate's approach to improving future visitor care;
- create new ways into Tate through their programmes – both large and small scale.

Here are three case studies which illustrate how Tate are doing it.

Late at Tate Britain

Tate Britain lost a lot of younger visitors during the re-branding which happened at the time of the opening of Tate Modern. The perception was that Tate Britain was stuffy and boring compared with Tate Modern. 'Late at Tate Britain' aimed at appealing to a younger audience and at attracting the local community and businesses. On the first Friday of every month young people are invited to the gallery – it's the only time the gallery is open after 6pm. These visits are accompanied with live music and alcohol and the price of exhibitions on those evenings is halved.

The marketing department set a budget of just £150 to get people in. Flyers were printed which were handed out on the streets, posters and postcards were distributed to community groups, businesses, local cafés, bars and university campuses and one tiny advert was placed in *Time Out*. In two years a regular visitor base of 3,000 has been built up, 80% of whom had not been to Tate Britain before. The perception of Tate Britain has altered within the target market, and it has attracted sponsorship. There are plans to roll this out throughout the Tate outlets.

Raw Canvas

The objectives of the *Raw Canvas* project were to:

- enable young people to perceive and understand art in their own right;
- encourage intellectual access and break down elitist stereotypes; and
- target a traditionally difficult age group (13–24).

The inspiration for this project came from the words of Cicero: 'if you want to persuade me, you have got to think my thoughts, feel my feelings and speak my words'. The 'product' of *Raw Canvas* was a combination of workshops, drop-in, all-day events, debates, and practical activities such as DJ try-out sessions, video production and print-making all linked to Tate collections or

Tate Modern © Tate Photography/Andrew Dunkley



exhibitions. A youth advisory team of volunteers was recruited, aged between 15 and 23, who undertook a 14-week training course. The advisory team shaped the programme and communications and created a *Raw Canvas* sub-brand.

In terms of marketing, the volunteers wrote the copy in the appropriate tone of voice for their own age-group and created club flyers which were mailed out to schools and colleges. They helped create a website and sent out monthly e-mail updates. Each advisory group member also acted as an advocate recruiting new young people to the project.

As a result, 3,400 people participate in *Raw Canvas* every year and the age group feels welcome in the gallery. As well as creating a new set of advocates for Tate and art generally, the volunteers' personal CVs are strengthened by involvement in the project.



Tate Liverpool © Tate Photography



Tate Britain Photocredit: Tate Photography

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Turner and Venice

This main show was programmed at Tate Britain in autumn 2003. The combination of one of the world's best-known artists and one of the world's favourite cities was a clear, simple and popular programming choice. Target audiences were first Tate Heartland – over 45-year-old ABs living in London and the South East, and second, the more difficult Cs/Ds in London and the South East, families and London/urban 25–35 ABC1 singles. The message was that this was an accessible, must-see, blockbuster. This warranted a serious budget (our main sponsor was Barclays) which allowed for planning both above and below the line activity. However, partnerships were also concentrated on to get as much free coverage as possible. Media, promotional and retail partnerships were formed using the collateral of the sites, the website, Tate magazine and educational and interpretation output.

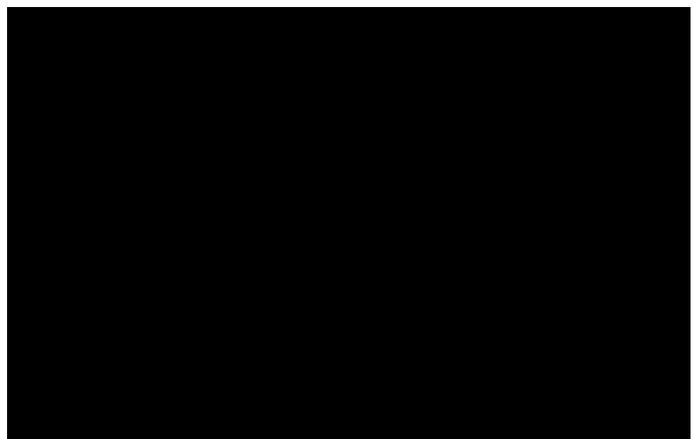
Tate's media partner was Associated Newspapers; the *Daily Mail* was an ideal choice to target the C1s to Es and promotions were targeted at different groups: for example, advance tickets were targeted at older people and free prints at younger people. Specially programmed events such as Readers' Evenings attracted first-time visitors from as far away as Manchester. The *Evening Standard* was helpful in targeting the 25–35 year olds. Results of this partnership were impressive; there was a significant uplift in advance ticket sales and high recognition of the show from the target groups.

In partnership with sponsor Barclays, Tate programmed a Venetian Carnival day for families. The building was dressed in Venetian carnival style by set dressers from the National Theatre and actors from Commedia del'Arte were roaming the building doing acrobatics. In addition, Pizza Express came in with ovens and taught children how to make pizzas. Fifteen thousand people attended.

Other partners included Caffè Nero where there were point-of-sale marketing materials and the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) which enabled heartland stations to be plastered with posters.

In summary

Tate's success at developing audiences comes from the fact that they put art and artists at the centre of everything they do. They are driven by a fresh eye and an independent spirit with a conviction to think about, collect, conserve and present art in a way that challenges and explores their view of the world. They aim to deliver an experience that invites, engages, stimulates and surprises whilst increasing knowledge, appreciation and understanding of art. ■



Tate St Ives © Tate Photography

These case studies are taken from the keynote speech given by Will Gompertz, Director of Communications at Tate, at the AMA Museums and Galleries Marketing Day, Tate Modern, February 2004. A full copy of the speech and the report are available for AMA members to download for free from the AMA website at: www.a-m-a.co.uk/publications.asp