

Families and social media

Headlines:

- Not much research is available on how families use social networking, especially within the cultural sector. It's therefore important organisations closely monitor whether and how their family audiences engage through the social networking platforms they use to make best use of resources, i.e. it might be worth running a low maintenance FF campaign and monitoring the response you get to assess whether to invest in these platforms to promote your FF activity.
 - It's all about communicating not selling, so provide information that is useful and interesting – social network audiences are very sensitive to being marketed to.
 - Clearly signpost information as relevant to families, like creating a family tab on Facebook or using a family hash-tag on Twitter. **Note:** we will agree a common Twitter hash-tag to clearly mark tweets as relevant to families at the next Family Friendly Forum for organisations to start using from June onwards.
 - Develop positive relationship with local family bloggers to review your events or programmes.
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Agenda:

1. Kids in Museum report "Family Ticket Watch"
2. Social media and families
3. Family Friendly update from AAA
4. Family Friendly update from all attenders
5. Any other business
6. Attenders and contact details

1. Kids in Museum report "Family Ticket Watch"

At the previous Family Friendly Forum (FFF) we discussed best practice when running family events and ticketing came up as one of the key 'make or break' issues. Right on time, Kids in Museums have brought out a report specifically looking at this – you can find a copy here: <http://www.keepandshare.com/doc/2409718/kim-report-137k?da=y>

2. Social media and families

Netmums and **Mumsnet** are among the two most popular forums/websites aimed at mums – Netmums (www.netmums.com/home//manchester) was considered the most useful for mums in terms of practical advice, i.e. suggestions for days out, recipes for toddlers etc. Each area will have its own specific site, i.e. Netmums Manchester, and for each you can find tabs like 'Places to go' or 'Things to do' for organisations to list events in. Horse & Bamboo Theatre (Rossendale) for example regularly registers all their events on their local Netmum website.

Tip: Netmums also has a local regular newsletter where you could promote your event/venue: <http://www.netmums.com/home/Newsletters.4496/>
You could also post details on the local board: www.netmums.com/local//manchester

Mumsnet (www.mumsnet.com) - Some organisations reported being cited on Mumsnet, i.e. Gallery Oldham. Here's also an interesting example of when IWMN was criticised on Mumsnet and how they responded to this: <http://www.mumsnet.com/Talk/politics/1023678-AIBU-to-write-to-the-Imperial-War-Museum-about-factual>

Tip: If you spot any negative criticism towards your organisation on any social media platforms, always make sure you respond to it within that public space. If it continues though, encourage the relevant individual to continue the conversation privately with you by email.

Other useful forums and websites

Other useful forums and websites that were cited as popular and useful:

- Babycentre: <http://www.babycentre.co.uk>
- Ivillage: <http://www.ivillage.com>
- Family info service: www.familyinformationservices.org.uk
- Where we can go: www.wherewecanwego.com
- Young Bolton Life: www.youngboltonlife.org.uk/YoungBoltonDefault.aspx
- Babies in the city: www.babiesinthecity.co.uk

Tip: Organisations like Netmums, Babiesinthecity and Early Learning Centres are also on Twitter – it could be worth following them on Twitter to track current topics as well as getting their clout when re-tweeting.

Some examples of different uses of social media channels:

Manchester Museum does little trailers for their events – here's an example:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCx_uRZCwRQ

This is done through Animoto: <http://animoto.com/>

Touchstones & Bolton Museum use Twitter for 'On this day...' features.

IWMN run Flickr competitions asking members of the audience to upload their own pictures.

Final thoughts

Before investing lots of energy in engaging families through your social media platforms, do check they are using the platforms you communicate through, e.g. check Facebook 'View insights' etc.

Here are also some more interesting links if you want to further your research on families and social media:

- Index of British parent blogs: www.tots100.co.uk
- The profile of parent bloggers: www.slideshare.net/tots100/tots100-parent-blogging-benchmark-study-2011-7088334
- Social networks for children: www.mashable.com/2010/10/11/social-networks-children

Tip: Finally, never ask parents to register to find out information – you need the information to be accessible quickly and easily.

3. Family Friendly update from All About Audiences

- We are now running Family Friendly Forums throughout the North West in Lancashire, Merseyside, Cumbria and Greater Manchester – you're welcome to attend all of these, details can be found on our website:
www.allaboutaudiences.com/projects/familyfriendly/familyfriendlyforums
- Don't forget we also have an online Family Friendly Forum where people can ask questions or upload any interesting information or news:
<http://www.allaboutaudiences.com/forums/familyfriendly>
- Finally, we'll also be launching at the beginning of April a new Family Friendly Film Club programme. The programme will include a list of 20 themes from which you will select 12 to show over the next twelve months. Each Film Club DVD has a running time of around an hour and in addition to this you get suggested activities to run with the screening. For more information please contact Ruth Williams (ruth.williams@allaboutaudiences.com) or Nicky Colclough (nicky.colclough@allaboutaudiences.com).

4. Family Friendly update from attending organisations

John Rylands Library

They will be taking part in Museum at Night and they have organised Doctor Who themed events for Friday 13th and Saturday 14th May.

They are also hoping to run a Storytelling Festival in 2012 to celebrate the 200 years of the brothers Grimm's tales – if you're interested in taking part, please get in touch with Jacqui Fortnum (jacqui.fortnum@manchester.ac.uk)

Bolton Museum

Their half-term events will be themed 'Around the world in seven days' and each day they will be looking at a different continent.

Chinese Art Centre

A new exhibition has opened at the Chinese Art Centre called 'Human Error'. For more info:

<http://www.chinese-arts-centre.org/main-gallery/human-error-by-household-and-dario-utreras/>

Manchester Art Gallery

Here are details of upcoming events for families:

<http://www.manchestergalleries.org/families/events-calender/>

Bridgewater Hall

The hall has programmed to show a movie with live music this summer to coincide with the Family Friendly Film Festival.

IWMN

They will be holding a children exhibition from February 2012 "Once upon a war time", currently held at Imperial War Museum London.

Touchstones

They've been running a project looking at engaging under 5's and working with children centres.

Manchester Museum

They are continuing their Big Saturday events and their current exhibition 'China: a journey to the east'. They are also preparing to open their new gallery 'Living planets':

<http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/yourvisit/galleries/livingworlds/>

Manchester International Festival

This year programme will be announced on the 17th March and will include about 4 family events.

Oldham Gallery

They have a new family friendly exhibition coming up on 'The Language of flowers'.

Halle'

They have 3 family friendly concerts a year. Before each concert they have a workshop available. Following a review of their family offer they've now amended their ticketing structure and amended their age recommendations. For more details:

http://www.halle.co.uk/f_familyconcerts1011.asp

5. Any other business

National Family Week 2011 – celebrating family life in the UK

30th May to 5th June 2011

National Family Week aims to celebrate family life in the UK and connect millions of families with the organisations, good causes and services that support them.

Register your involvement online and benefit from free promotion through the National Family Week Event Finder as well as access to free materials and branded merchandise such as posters, balloons, stickers and goodie bags to help make your National Family Week event all the more special.

For further information on National Family Week, ideas, toolkits and other resources to support your involvement, please visit www.nationalfamilyweek.co.uk and register for the Partner Zone

Family Friendly Forum Topics

Please do let me know what you'd like to see discussed at the next Family Friendly Forum by emailing me at Ginevra.jacobucci@allaboutaudiences.com

6. Attendees & contacts

Contact	Email
Gin Jacobucci Audience Development Coordinator, AAA	ginevra.jacobucci@allaboutaudiences.com
Rachel Witkin Online Marketing Officer, AAA	rachel.witkin@allaboutaudiences.com
Ruth Williams Family Film Club Development Coordinator, AAA	ruth.williams@allaboutaudiences.com
B Hunter, Digital Development Manager, AAA	b.hunter@allaboutaudiences.com
Rachel Witkin, Online Marketing Officer, AAA	rachel.witkin@allaboutaudiences.com
Lizzie Carter, Press Officer, Oldham Coliseum	lizziecarter@coliseum.org.uk
Amy Whitehead, Learning Officer, Salford Museum & Art Gallery	Amy.Whitehead@salford.gov.uk
Jacqui Fortnum, Public Progeammes Manager, John Rylands Library	jacqui.fortnum@manchester.ac.uk
Jennifer Vickers, Access & Interpretation Officer, Gallery Oldham	jennifer.vickers@oldham.gov.uk
Trevor Chan, IT & Communications Assistant, Chinese Arts Centre	trevor.chan@chinese-arts-centre.org

Alex Bond, Marketing and Sales Officer, Library Theatre	a.bond@manchester.gov.uk
Emma Cunliffe, Learning and Participation Manager, Bridgewater Hall	Emma.cunliffe@bridgewater-hall.co.uk
Catherine Teague, Marketing Assistant, Manchester Art Gallery	c.teague@manchester.gov.uk
Alethea Wardle, Marketing Officer, Manchester International Festival	awardle@mif.co.uk
Liz Robinson, Marketing & Press Officer, Halle'	liz.robinson@halle.co.uk
Beth Wells, Marketing Intern, Halle'	marketingintern@halle.co.uk
Corinne Leader, Press and Marketing Officer, Manchester Museum	corinne.leader@manchester.ac.uk
Sam Howard, Marketing & PR Co-ordinator, IWMN	sahoward@IWM.ORG.UK
Helen Romaniszyn, Development Assistant, Bolton Museums	helen.romaniszyn@bolton.gov.uk
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Next Forum is Thursday 9th June 2010, 2 – 4 pm
 RSVP to Gin (ginevra.jacobucci@allaboutaudiences.com)