

1. CONTEXT

Live & Local's mission is to provide high quality, professional and diverse arts experiences to communities across seven counties of the Midlands, championing and developing great art and culture for everyone, and enhancing life quality, civil society, and local economies. Live & Local is also progressively engaged with a range of projects supporting:

- Community film screenings in Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon District, and Rushcliffe District (Big Picture Show, Moving Pictures, Big Picture Festival).
- Artist development (DART: Developing Artists, Arts & Audiences for Rural Touring).
- Rural Hub Towns – Creative participation in market towns. (New as of 2023/4)
- Arts in health & wellbeing, outdoor arts and festivals, creative participation, and tourism development (RAW: Rural Art Works, Discover: Story-trails, Live & Local LivingRoom).

Increasingly there are opportunities to use digital to fulfil this mission and to achieve this, digital will need to become a dimension of everything the organisation does.

2. VISION

Live & Local will focus its digital activity in areas that provide the greatest impact for existing and new audiences, for voluntary groups it supports, for existing and new Friends', for project engagers and for advocacy and celebration of the rural touring sector.

Live & Local will gain value by creating high-quality digital encounters, using audience data to improve experience and communications, and by embracing digital activity and developing digital skills across the organisation. Live & Local will improve services and empower its wide range of stakeholders whilst being efficient and cost effective.

Live & Local's audiences and partners will have digital experiences that:

- Promote the scheme, the networks, the programme, the projects, and the sector.
- Increase their enjoyment, engagement and understanding of the art and culture provision.
- Provide them with easy access to information.
- Present an elegant and functional interface whatever their device.
- Take place on the platforms and websites they use.
- Invite them to participate.
- Forge ever-stronger relationships.

3. DIGITAL PRINCIPLES

The following principles will guide Live & Local's approach to digital in the context of complementing our core mission and principles around live performing arts in community settings:

3.1 Audience centred and insight driven.

- Define current and potential digital audiences through qualitative and quantitative insight.
- Share this knowledge to shape better decision-making.
- Develop content around clearly defined audience needs.
- Ensure that digital content and services are accessible and usable to all, including those with visual, hearing, motor, cognitive or other accessibility requirements.

3.2 Well designed and architected.

3.3 Constantly evaluated and enhanced.

- Test on real users as part of development process.

- Analyse which channels are most appropriate to which audience needs.
- Launch with simple products, evaluate, and progressively enhance.
- Engage audiences in conversations and incorporate feedback.
- Adapt to evolving online behaviours, consumer expectations, competition for attention share and changes in levels of social media engagement.

3.4 Distributed across multiple platforms.

3.5 Open, reusable. and sharable

- Apply open standards and use open-source software where possible.
- Promote content reuse through partnerships.
- Share data sets where they will aid external researchers (within UKGDPR).

3.6 Sustainable and scalable.

- Balance digital ambitions with available resources, ensuring that every digital initiative is supported with a business case, setting out how it contributes to mission, resources needed to start and sustain the initiative and expected benefits.
- Build sustainable and scalable infrastructure to lay the foundations for future initiatives.
- Commission content with the whole user experience in mind.
- Ensure a single, shared infrastructure benefits all Live & Local Rural & Community Touring Networks, Community Cinema Networks, and projects.
- Implement processes that ensure content and technology is well maintained.

3.7 Entrepreneurial and innovative.

- Make innovative use of established and proven technologies.
- Respond to the rapidly evolving technology landscape through experimentation that informs future initiatives.
- Seek new partnerships and collaborations to increase capability.
- Explore optimisation of potential revenue streams, sponsorship, and fundraising.

3.8 Devolved and embedded across the organisation.

- Build digital mind-set in organisation through knowledge sharing and staff empowerment.
- Transform processes, guidelines and policies, software and hardware tools, induction, training, professional development, and performance management as required.
- Amend organisational job specifications to reflect digital responsibilities.
- Collaboratively author guidelines for the use of digital media - in particular, website, blogs and social media - with staff.
- Encourage experimenting with new digital approaches to drive excellence including use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI forms part of Live & Local's wider digital strategy. The use of AI is governed by the AI Policy & Strategy, which sets out approved uses, governance arrangements, risk controls and staff responsibilities.
- Embed digital into development processes for all projects and initiatives.
- Share the impacts and effectiveness of digital initiatives widely.

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 Experience

4.1.1 Exemplary digital communications.

Live & Local will continue a phased redesign of its web and social media offer.

Understanding audiences' better, building deeper engagement with existing audiences and responding to the interests of new audiences will remain at the heart of this online presence. Better promotion of the touring programmes will be delivered through greater prominence and a move to more sophisticated, personalised digital communications.

There will be a significantly greater use of multimedia and audience content to promote the experience of attending live performances within local communities, build brand loyalty, gain audience insights, engage in online dialogue, and cross-promote other content.

Live & Local will utilise distribution platforms relevant to target audiences.

Live & Local will continue to incorporate digital creative content into its web and social media offer.

4.1.2 Empower voluntary promoters.

Live & Local will provide resources that empower voluntary promoters to increase reach and promote events. and deliver inspiring digital learning experiences.

A new, integrated and consistent approach to digital learning resources is being developed and aims to be a 'go to' destination for existing and new voluntary promoters, artists and partners. Video resources, video call services, guided training webinar sessions, and new digital tools are all offered and will be expanded upon.

4.1.3 Explore creative practice.

Live & Local will explore the full potential of digital technologies to create opportunities for innovation in creative practice, both online and offline, through its DART: Developing Artists & Art for Rural Touring, Live & Local LivingRoom and RAW: Rural Art Works/ Discover: Story-trails projects.

Live & Local will explore new technologies through collaborations with artists and learning and educational institutions. inspire partner artists to build digital tools and digital thinking into their creative practice and to make use of digital elements/ pervasive media in the creation of new performances.

4.1.4 Share and celebrate experience.

Live & Local will invite audiences, promoters, and artists to share their experience and contribute their expertise around live performance.

4.1.5 Friends Scheme

Live & Local will develop the delivery of a high-quality and supportive experience for members of the Friends' scheme, acknowledging their role as fundraising supporters and advocates and ambassadors.

4.2 Culture

4.2.1 Organisational change

Live & Local will embed digital activity across the organisation. Increasingly managing and maintaining digital content and services will be devolved across the organisation. Through development of a user-centred approach to web and social media content development, new guidelines and policies, training and skills sharing, the digital aptitude of the organisation will be increased.

4.2.2 Effective gathering and use of data

Live & Local's digital activity will be guided by user data. New tools and metrics reports will be implemented to shape this activity alongside use of industry-wide tools (such as Culture Counts Impacts & Insights and other ACE related evaluation tools).

4.2.3 Data security

Live & Local will constantly address the need to appropriately and effectively protect confidential and sensitive information that is maintained in the various spheres of the organisations' administration. Properly protecting data is a fundamental obligation that is grounded in the values of stewardship, integrity, and commitments to the providers and sources of the data. All staff must understand and carry out their responsibilities related to data security. A dedicated Data Protection Officer from the senior management team, and appropriate training will be undertaken by relevant staff.

4.2.4 Data sharing

Live & Local will share its data openly within the limits of contractual and legal requirements. The digital strategy and associated policies and guidelines will be published online. Data sharing agreements for tracking and sharing audience and other digital insights will be put in place with appropriate organisations.

4.3 Infrastructure

4.3.1 Web presence

Live & Local's websites will move to a single, shared, mobile enabled open-source technology platform. If appropriate, discrete microsite(s) will be used to complement the broader parent website and offline activity and highlight specific projects or campaigns or target specific stakeholder personas. Optimisation of search technologies will be evaluated and enhanced to increase discoverability of web content. Live & Local will build on sector and international best practice and innovative methodologies.

4.3.2 Online ticketing

Live & Local will assess the viability of an integrated online ticketing and marketing system determined through: future-proofed functionality and fitness-for-purpose, with website, database, social media and network integration, smartphone and tablet optimisation, and user-friendly ease of use and process flow. ease of database and customer record interface/ migration with other in-house systems. effective analysis and marketing through data extraction and reporting mechanisms. installation, commissioning, training, and on-going support. competitive cost.

4.3.3 Management

This Digital Policy is the responsibility of the Engagement Manager. It is reviewed and updated annually by the Management Team.