From Mission to Measures – an interactive workshop on evaluation design

March 2018

Aims of the Workshop

An interactive workshop on evaluation design and delivery, developed for the festivals and events which made up the Without Walls Associate Touring Network and Without Walls in 2018. The workshop aimed to provide inspiration for:

- An evaluation approach which measures success, and provides layers of evidence for advocacy, planning and reporting.
- Effectively integrating and embedding evaluation across all activities and events.
- Interactive and creative approaches to evaluation which connect with audiences.

Speakers

Penny Mills – The Audience Agency

Tony Bhajam – DOINK, which is part of the Beatfreaks Collective in Birmingham, who describe themselves as a Do and Think Tank humanising data to tell better stories and facilitate better decisions. DOINK convene artists, technologists and researchers to produce insightful experiences. www.beatfreeks.com/welcome-to-doink/

James Macpherson – Artizani, was working on his PHD in contemporary UK Outdoor Arts with particular focus on their relationship with public space. The main methodology James was using involved creating time-lapse videos of outdoor events and analysing the ways audiences, artists and public space relate to each-other over time. https://artizaniresearch.com

Summary of the Workshop

Artizani presented their Rhythmanalysis and The Vox Pop Velociped during the workshop, more information can be found on their website.

Why collect data?

- What are you doing and why are you doing it? Think about what success means to you. Once you know this you can tailor your methods to reach these results.
- Be realistic about what audiences / towns / artists are expecting from evaluation experience and then how you can find out what you need to within these expectations.

- Evaluation tools as measures of success, they help you to get what you need for your organisation.
- How to engage different kind of people in the conversation: DOINK will give ideas on how to facilitate conversation and how to articulate it, and have impact as piece of research.

Common challenge around how to get people's attention if you provide information but they don't use it or feel they are not allowed to use it.

- Don't be afraid to use instructions
- Journey times between sites: make sure they are adapted to slower audiences, not just your own walking speed. This allows the programme to take into consideration walking time but also for audiences to know much time they have between shows, ease their mind and make them feel comfortable.
- Add other useful tips to journey times: show people where toilets etc are. And allow for a flow of events
- Make programmes easier to read with itineraries or suggestions
- Do itineraries for specific preferences / needs (i.e. BSL, dance highlights etc)
- Consult with specific groups about their needs before and after the event, observe what they do during the event. However, be realistic about what you can and cannot achieve.
- Be aware of size of font and colours etc in your print
- Attitude is Everything have useful toolkits and offer levels of accessibility assessments

Data Collection

- Paper vs tablet surveys: both have pros and cons: might be harder for audiences to type long responses but on paper surveys, festival staff need to type responses up
- Allow companies to have conversations after shows with audiences and ask them to feedback to the festival team, however you need time to do so and consider this in the festival schedule.
- Opportunities for people to hang out, talk amongst each other / with artists etc. Appetite offer free coffee for a quick feedback session (putting sugar cubes in teapots with their answers)

Digital Tools

Growth of **smartphones**: in any group there will be at least one person with a smart phone. This could potentially be used to understand their flow and engage with them.

Only works if you put all the resource behind it to show people how it works, what they get out of it etc., so they sign up for it

Importance to brand your evaluation, make it recognisable, consistent and interesting.

Location based marketing, give offers / information and gather some data in return. Some data you can get without asking, other data you can ask for when they sign up to wifi for example.

- **GPS, WIFI, Beacons (for events)** can be used as entry points to contact and track people
- Send **competitions** to phones: you can gather information from that, but need to make sure you follow new GDPR regulations
- **WIFI**: require information before free access, but make sure you don't scare people off with too many questions. Requires a lot of testing.
- **Wifi Beacon:** mobility box, festivals can use information on where people are going. Picks up wifi usage on phones between the beacons.
- **IBeacons:** allows organisers to push out info to audiences' phones, but they need to be close to beacon and involves downloading an app.
- **Geo Fencing**: work alongside an app that audiences need to download (as IBeacons) and agree for festival to use location services and to get push notifications. Considerations around the benefits of this as you need to develop app and people are more reluctant to download apps for one off events. However, festivals can get flow and traffic information from audiences as well as sending information out to people.
- **Geo Fencing** didn't work for retail as people didn't want information pushed at them. Needs to be an exchange, show audiences benefits of the app.
- **When using web-data:** Need to check what the demographics of people using webdata are compared to people in the field and if they are compatible in the analysis.

DOINK presentation

DOINK are a 'Do and think tank', aim is to use data to change things afterwards. Make data collection worthwhile and fun.

Example: Paint images, facilitators ask questions and capture answers on iPads, as well as adding different colours to an image. Capture data online and can read image according to colours used.

Tangibility of data by humanising data. Give people their data back (use colours for answers for example) so they can look at items and share info with their friends.

Facilitated conversation at heart of data collection: the connections that you make with audiences as part of your evaluation.

Sentiment: why are people here and how do they feel about the event. Very hard to measure.

Example: MOOD STRINGS

- Live string sculpture that engages with children and their parents (talk to parents whilst children are doing it)
- People come back to show friends afterwards and compare, which is ideal to start conversations.
- Benefits: Can start analysing results during the event, not as usually where data only gets analysed afterwards

- Very simple questions as markers, which can then be used as springboard for next conversations, which are captured on ipads during or after the conversation
- Make sure you also hear from people who have negative response: find out why in follow up conversation (in paper survey this is not always possible)
- Allows to make evaluation into something in itself, a sculpture not just a tag on to the festival. This allows people to engage with the actual data in a playful way.
- Engage audiences' hearts before their minds, start with something interesting they want to engage with then they will stay for follow up questions.
- Use Google forms on tablets, fieldworkers put in answers.
- No need to count strings, as long as answers get recorded on ipads – makes it more visual and engaging. Questions don't have to be asked in same order.
- Examples for opening questions: What has inspired you? What exciting conversations have you had today? (not leading or clichés i.e. do you come here often)
- Have script for questions, how to lead from one answer to the next etc, that can be adapted
- After conversation ask audiences if they would be happy to write down a comment. Most likely to do so as they are now invested. Make sure you explain what it is for, highlight the direct benefits for them. Comments can go on a big comment wall, a board with hooks for bits of paper etc
- Facilitators: talk amongst each other during event to report back and have a laptop open to type up comments.
- Debrief during the day amongst facilitators to have a general idea of what is happening.
- For the final report summarise in categories for partners.
- Be aware what partners need to know (feelings and age or just feelings for example), audiences will be more likely to give data as well once they are invested.
- Make sure you have wifi available (if needed) and enough battery life

In one day DOINK spoke to 350 people (total of 20,000 audiences) with 3 facilitators, but numbers depend on what you want to know, how much detail. DOINK can provide and train facilitators.

If you are working with **volunteers**, involve them from the beginning, in the design of the evaluation, not just collecting it. Make it their project and allow them to help with questions, the script etc and work with engaging people.

DOINK use science, journalism or social science **students**, they can help plan questions and use data for their thesis.

Capture people emotionally first, let them talk about themselves NOT your data capture.

Be aware of **wording of questions and language you use** to talk to people. Don't use ACE terms, and if you do make sure you could explain it / talk to audiences about what for example 'culture and arts' means to them vs what ACE think.

You can use a mix of closed and open questions, follow up closed questions with an open one to get more detail and qualitative data. Closed: hard data, quantitative & Open: soft data, qualitative.

Use **different tools** to get evaluation data, it doesn't need to require a lot of people

Be aware of what you want to get out of the evaluation and what you need to know. Think of this from the start.