



UNDERSTANDING AUDIENCES FOR JAZZ

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Briefing 7e: How do audiences attend Nottingham Jazzsteps?

How to use this briefing:

This is an analysis of data about ticket buyers held on box office computer systems and the responses to the questionnaire handed out at EMJAZZ members' jazz gigs in January and February 2009. It looks at how many potential attenders are actually coming to gigs and explores their frequency of attendance at jazz, where they see it, what else they buy tickets for and their preferences for venue, jazz style, day of week and start time. It also divides audiences into different attender types.

The results tell us that the core audience of jazz enthusiasts is much smaller than we thought. Use the information to work out what it means for your programming and marketing that the majority of audiences don't know much about jazz.

Key points

- There is plenty of potential to increase audiences for jazz. 0.7% of the potential jazz attenders within a 30 minute drivetime of Nottingham city centre actually bought tickets for gigs at Lakeside in 2008.
- Most attenders are just dipping into jazz. 84% of them bought tickets for just one jazz event at Lakeside in 2008. Just 12% have ever bought tickets more than once and only come to jazz. On average they buy for 1.2 jazz events per year at the venue. 15% of the tickets they bought were for jazz
- Data capture rates are too low at the Bonington Theatre to provide reliable information but analysis of available data gives an average frequency of 1.6 jazz gigs in 2008.
- They claim to be attending jazz more frequently but are more likely to go to a gig in London or Birmingham than at another East Midlands venue
- But they buy tickets at the venue much more frequently than ticket buyers for other artforms – on average 4.8 times a year. Ticket buyers for jazz also buy tickets at Lakeside for classical music (25% of their tickets), events for children and families and drama.

- No-one was attending their first ever jazz event
- Only one in ten of the current audience can be described as a jazz enthusiast with a relatively high level of knowledge about jazz
- Half the audience are music enthusiasts but jazz is just one of many music genres they are interested in
- The venue and the local public profile of the musicians are the only factors that have any relatively consistent effect on how well the gig sells
- The majority of attenders would prefer gigs to be on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and to start at 8pm.

Is there the potential to increase audiences?

What is the potential?

In the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's survey of arts attendance among 24,174 over 16s in England. 5.6% of respondents said they had attended a live jazz performance in the past 12 months.

This compares to 7.7% for classical music and 24.9% for all other live music performance excluding jazz and classical music. 10.6% of the population say they played a musical instrument for pleasure during the past 12 months.ⁱ

Target Group Index is the longitudinal research used by Arts Council England since 1994/5 each year interviewing around 25,000 British adults aged over 15. The latest data available is for 2005/6 in which 9.6% of respondents said they attended jazz at least once in the past year.ⁱⁱ

Of course, different types of people attend jazz, so to get an accurate assessment of the potential audience for jazz in the Nottingham area, that needs to be taken into account.

Area Profile Reports are published by the Arts Councils of England, Scotland and Wales and contain data that describes the population in a defined area, usually a drivetime from a town or city centre. They contain computed figures for the number of people attending particular artforms, including jazz. These use census data and Target Group Index. They are based on a detailed socio-demographic profile of attenders and an analysis of how many people that match the profile live in the defined area.

Briefing 4 shows that the catchment area for EMJAZZ member venues in Nottingham sits between a 15 and 30 minute drivetime (see map overleaf).

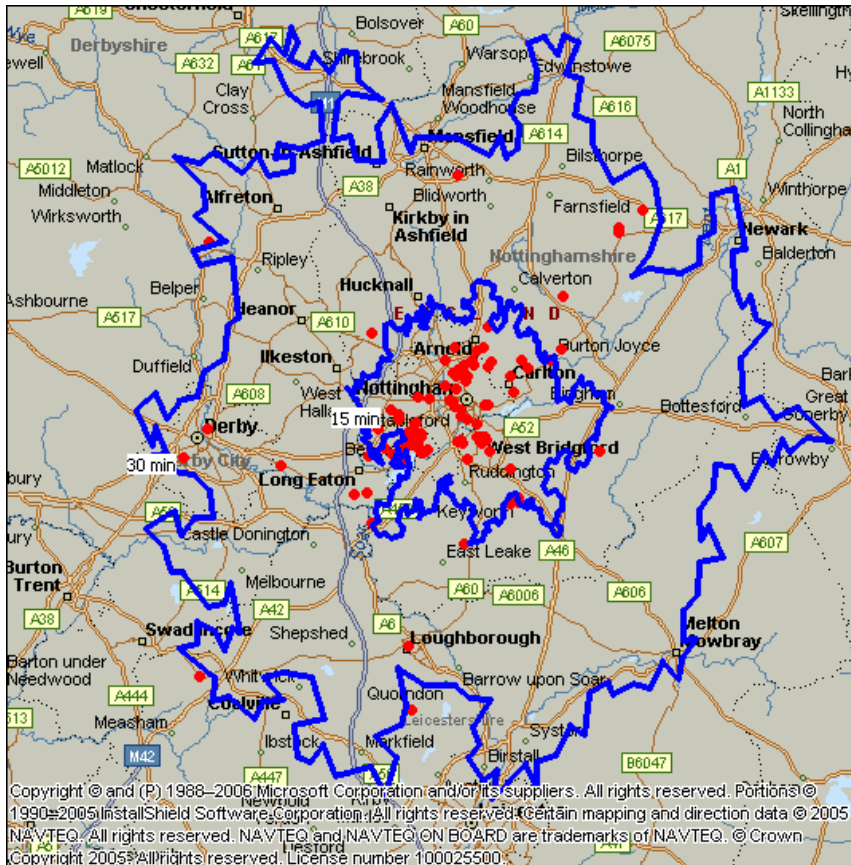
It is calculated that 24,717 jazz attenders live within a standard 15 minute drivetime of Nottingham city centre and 69,898 live within a standard 30 minute drivetime. This is respectively 9.2% and 8.8% of the population aged 15+, slightly under the percentage of the GB population saying they attend jazz 'these days'.

How many are actually attending?

To get a reasonably accurate picture of audience engagement, organisations must collect the names and addresses of at least 75% of their ticket buyers. Within the industry, a data capture rate of over 85% is considered acceptable and over 90% excellent. This customer data is linked to information about the tickets they bought. The

Lakeside collects audience data from over 85% of their ticket buyers. Data capture rates at the Bonington Theatre are too low to provide valid information.

272 unique individuals bought tickets for jazz at Lakeside in 2008, have a valid postcode and live within a 30 minute drivetime. On average they bought 1.9 other people with them giving an estimated 517 unique attenders. This is 0.7% of the potential audience within a 30 minute drivetime.



How often do people attend jazz?

Box office data analysis shows that 84% of ticket buyers only bought tickets for one jazz event at Lakeside in 2008. 10% bought for two jazz gigs at either venue. On average, ticket buyers each purchased for 1.2 jazz events out of three in 2008.

Data capture rates are too low at the Bonington Theatre to provide reliable information but analysis of available data gives an average frequency of 1.6 jazz gigs in 2008. 78% of the ticket buyers whose details have been recorded bought for one gig in 2008.

Audiences don't just attend jazz. 12% of ticket buyers who have bought tickets for jazz at Lakeside since the box office computer system was installed have bought tickets at the venue more than once and only bought for jazz.

How many ticket buyers for jazz are new to the venue?

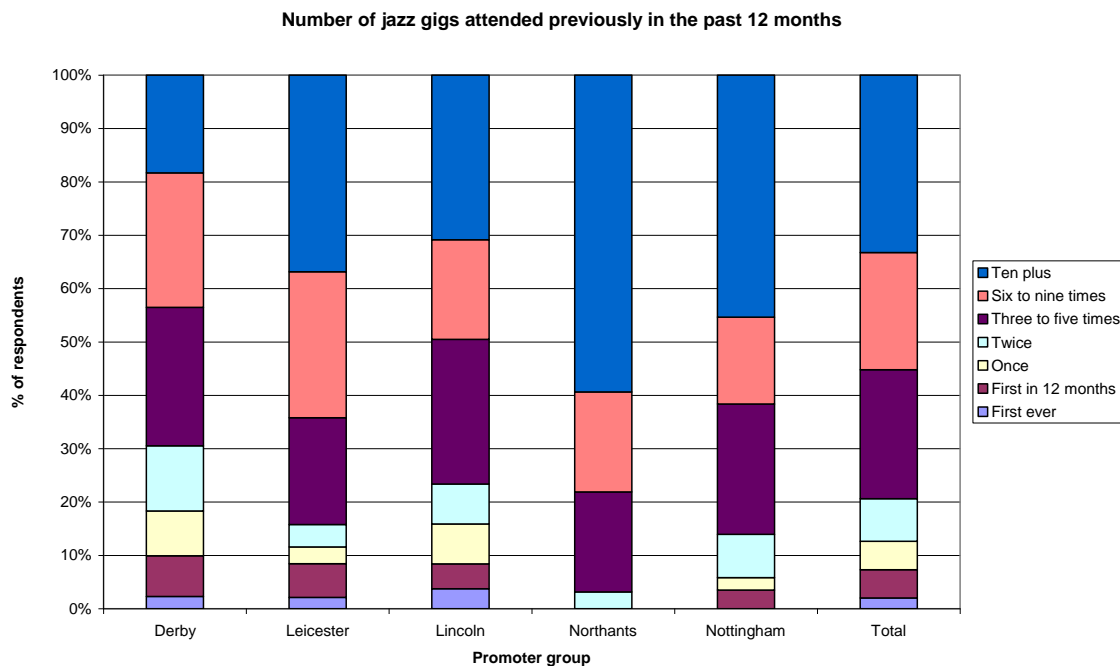
26% of ticket buyers for jazz at Lakeside had been buying tickets at the venue for less than 12 months compared to 37% of ticket buyers for all events.

None of the questionnaire respondents for Nottingham Jazzsteps gigs in January and February 2009 were attending their first ever jazz gig.

Attendance at jazz anywhere

Attendees at EMJAZZ members' gigs in January and February 2009 were asked to complete a questionnaire. This asked them how often they had previously attended jazz anywhere in the past 12 months.

3% of respondents attending Nottingham Jazzsteps gigs said they were attending their first jazz gig in the past 12 months. Another 2% said they had attended one previous jazz gig. 61% said they had attended six or more gigs.



Where else are they seeing jazz?

Focus group participants were more likely to travel to see jazz gigs in London and Birmingham than to go to gigs promoted by other EMJAZZ members. This is confirmed by tracing individual ticket buyers across members' venues and mailing lists.

Crossover is minimal, for example 12 people bought tickets at EMJAZZ gigs in both Derby and Nottingham. Crossover is between the venues in Nottingham also looks limited: out of 320 ticket buyers on the Bonington Theatre mailing list, just 38 (12%) have the same postcode as ticket buyers at Lakeside.

This lack of crossover can also be seen among ticket buyers for dance in the region with 8% of ticket buyers for dance at Deda, 10% of those at Nottingham Playhouse, 1% of those at the Theatre Royal and 2% of those at Lincoln Drill Hall also purchasing at another East Midlands venue. The exception is Lakeside where 19% of ticket buyers for dance also purchased at another venue.

	Bought tickets at Derby Live/Deda	Bought tickets at Lakeside	Bought ticket at LDH	Bought ticket at Castle	Bought tickets at Y in 2008	On New Jazz 5 mailing list	Same postcode as Bonington ticket buyers ever	Total ticket buyers
Bought tickets at Derby Live/Deda 2008		12 3%	3 1%	0 0%	2 1%	3 1%	18 5%	352
Bought tickets at Lakeside 2008	12 5%		0 0%	0 0%	1 0%	1 0%	38 17%	225
Bought ticket at LDH 2008	3 1%	0 0%		0 0%	0 0%	61 20%	4 1%	310
Bought ticket at Castle 2008	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%		3 1%	0 0%	1 0%	227
Bought tickets at Y in 2008	2 2%	1 1%	0 0%	3 3%		0 0%	2 2%	105
New Jazz 5 mailing list	3 1%	1 0%	61 15%	0 0%	0 0%		3 1%	417
Bonington ticket buyers for jazz ever	18 6%	38 12%	4 1%	1 0%	2 1%	3 1%		320

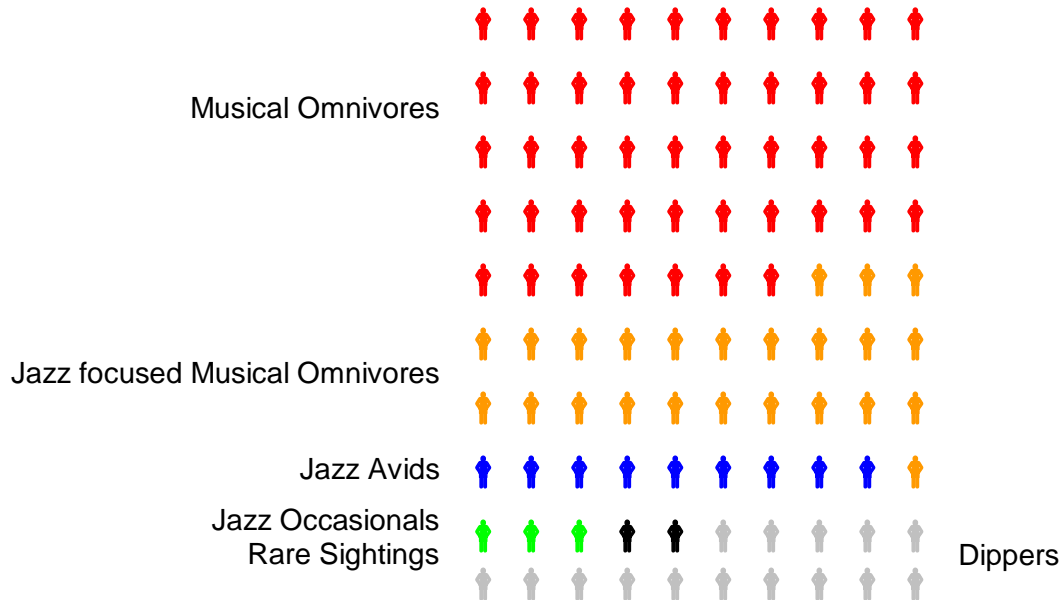
Types of attender

The questionnaire responses give us information about the frequency they say they attend jazz gigs anywhere and their frequency of attendance at any music event. This means we have been able to divide jazz attenders into target groups.

Just over a third of respondents at Nottingham Jazzsteps gigs are mainly interested in jazz. Half the audience are music enthusiasts with jazz just one of the many music genres they are interested in.

Target group	% of respondents at Nottingham Jazzsteps gigs	Description
👉 Musical Omnivore:	47%	Attends live music frequently but jazz is not their main interest
👉 Jazz Focused Musical Omnivore	24%	Attends live music frequently with jazz as their main interest
👉 Dipper:	15%	Occasionally attends live music but jazz is not their main interest
👉 Jazz Avid:	9%	Attends live music frequently, mainly jazz gigs
👉 Jazz Occasional:	3%	Occasionally attends live music with jazz more frequent than other styles
👉 Rare sighting:	2%	Rarely attends live music

This means that only a third of the current audience can be described as a jazz enthusiast with a relatively high level of knowledge about jazz. If one of the Nottingham Jazzsteps venues sold 100 tickets for a gig, this is what the audience would look like:



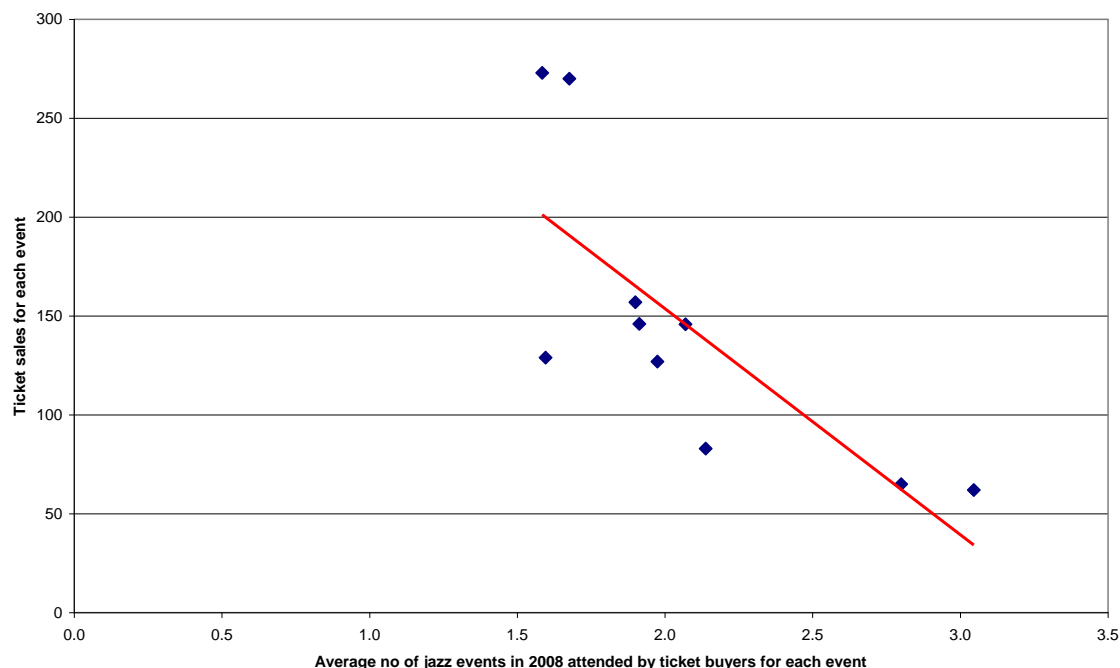
What are the most effective ways of growing audiences?

As frequency of attendance at Nottingham Jazzsteps venues appears to be relatively low but attenders say their overall attendance at jazz events is much higher, the most effective ways of selling more tickets is to get and keep new attenders and persuade existing ticket buyers to choose Jazzsteps gigs more often.

How is the audience different at a well-attended gig?

There is an unquestioned assumption among the participating promoters that the audience for poorly-attended gigs consists only of jazz enthusiasts and that it has failed to attract a more general audience.

Box office data indicates that the more tickets are sold for an event, the greater the proportion of infrequent attenders. The chart shows figures for 2008 at Lincoln Drill Hall.



A detailed analysis of the purchasing patterns of each ticket buyer for a well-attended gig and a poorly-attended gig at Lincoln Drill Hall supports this.

The analysis focused on ticket buyers for the Dave Stapleton Quintet (audience of 61) and the Darius Brubeck Quartet (audience of 201).

The ticket buyers for the Dave Stapleton Quintet on average had bought tickets for jazz more frequently in the previous 12 months than ticket buyers for the Darius Brubeck Quartet (5.4 gigs compared to 3.3 gigs). They were less interested in other artforms (13% of their tickets were for other artforms compared to 24%).

Fewer ticket buyers for the Dave Stapleton Quintet were interested in artforms other than music (see below). Just over a half of ticket buyers for the Dave Stapleton Quintet were Jazz Avids or Jazz Occasionals compared to just under a third for Dave Brubeck Quartet. The gig attracted fewer new ticket buyers.

We need to be careful how we define 'jazz enthusiast', though. The Dave Stapleton Quintet gig attracted more Jazz Occasionals than Jazz Avids with almost a third of the audience specifically interested in jazz buying tickets for fewer than six gigs in the previous 12 months.

Do ticket buyers have preferences for particular types of jazz?

Ticket buyers are attending so infrequently that it's not possible to see a pattern in their attendance from box office data.

Analysis of attendance figures for 247 gigs promoted by EMJAZZ members between 2006 and 2008 shows what factors influenced the popularity of events.

Each gig was given three scores out of ten:

- **Accessibility of the music** where 1 is 'hard work' and 10 is easy listening

- **Local public profile** (as opposed to the profile with jazz enthusiasts in London) where 1 is unknown and 10 is well-know
- **Jazz pedigree or credibility** where 1 is pure jazz and 10 is heavily influenced by pop or other mainstream music.

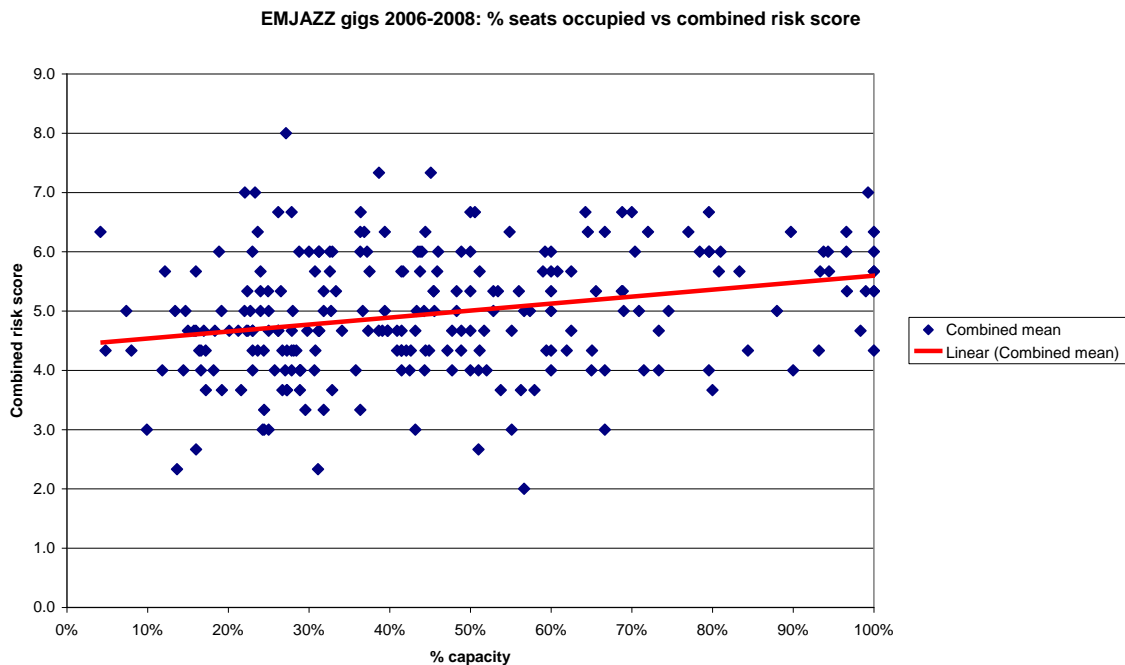
The three scores were then averaged to give a combined mean score to indicate the level of challenge or risk that might be perceived by the average attender.

Either the number of attenders or the percentage of the available seats occupied could be used as an indicator of the popularity of a gig. Both have disadvantages. The percentage capacity is skewed by the larger capacity venues in which promoters do not expect to sell all the available seats. The attendance figures do not take into account small venues which sell out and are skewed by a small number of large capacity gigs which did well.

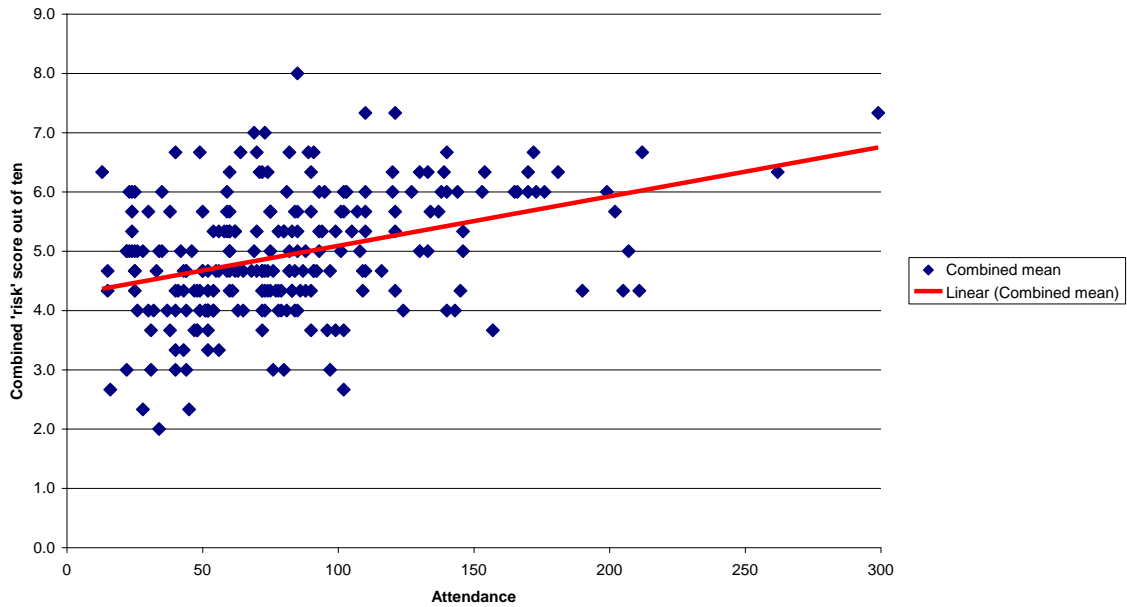
Both these measures of popularity were used to create a series of charts with trendlines.

Where a factor has a strong influence on the popularity of a gig, the trendline will be at a steep angle and the data points will be clustered close to it. Where there is no relationship, the trendline will be near horizontal and the data points scattered all over the chart.

There is no relationship between the combined mean score and the attendance or percentage capacity of a gig.



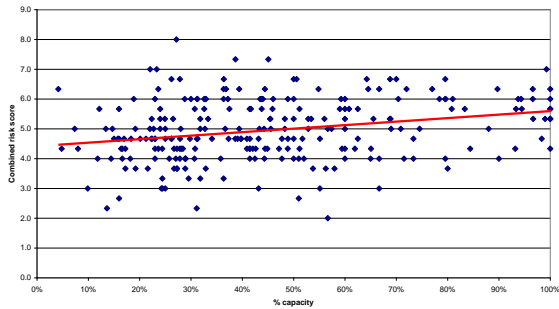
EMJAZZ gigs 2006 - 2008: attendance vs combined 'risk' score



There is no relationship between the musical accessibility score and the attendance or percentage capacity at a gig.

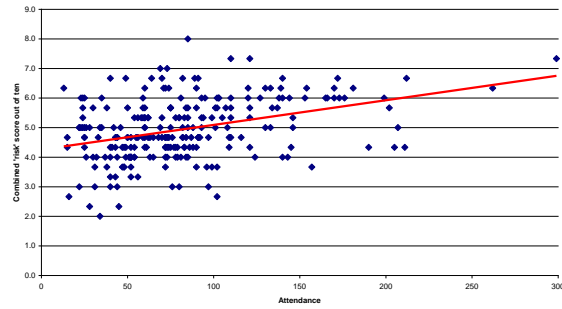
Comparison with % seats occupied

EMJAZZ gigs 2006-2008: % seats occupied vs combined risk score



Comparison with attendance

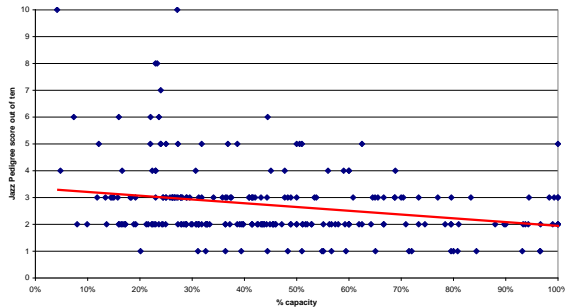
EMJAZZ gigs 2006 - 2008: attendance vs combined 'risk' score



Neither is there a relationship between the jazz pedigree score and the attendance or percentage capacity at a gig.

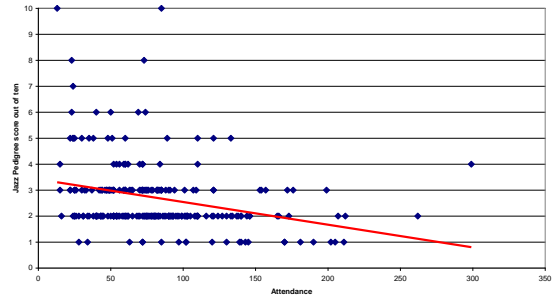
Comparison with % seats occupied

EMJAZZ gigs 2006 - 2008: % capacity vs Jazz Pedigree score



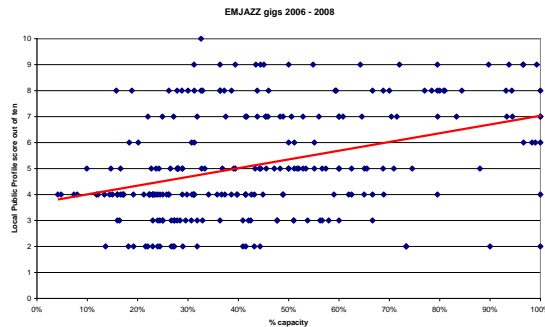
Comparison with attendance

EMJAZZ gigs 2006 - 2008 Attendance vs Jazz Pedigree score

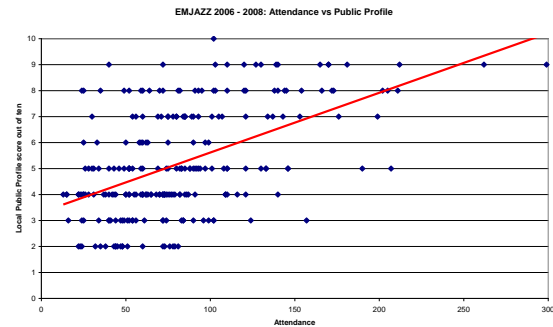


There is some relationship between attendance and the score for local public profile but not with percentage capacity.

Comparison with % seats occupied



Comparison with attendance



What else do they attend?

Research in the US shows that the cultural tastes of people with relatively high educational attainment can be characterised by the wide range of events they attend rather than an in-depth interest in a particular artform.ⁱⁱⁱ In particular, high educational attainment, along with geographic mobility and complex social networks, is strongly linked with diverse musical tastes.^{iv}

Ticket buyers for jazz at Lakeside are much more frequent attenders than ticket buyers as a whole. On average they buy tickets for 4.8 events per year compared to the 2.2 events bought by ticket buyers for other artforms.

Just 15% of the tickets bought by jazz attenders at Lakeside are for jazz.

Ticket buyers for jazz at Lakeside also buy tickets for classical music (25% of their tickets), events for children and families and drama.

Programming days, times and venues

What nights of the week attract the biggest audiences?

An analysis of gigs programmed by EMJAZZ members between 2006 and 2008 shows that fewer than five gigs took place on Sundays, on Mondays and on Tuesdays. These have therefore been excluded from the analysis. Four unusual figures for Thursdays were removed as outliers.¹

The percentage of seats occupied (% capacity) at gigs on each of the remaining days of the week shows considerable variation – there are both poorly performing gigs and well-performing gigs on each of these days of the week. The median would indicate that programming on a Wednesday is marginally more risky than Thursday to Friday but there were still six gigs that achieved 90% capacity or higher.

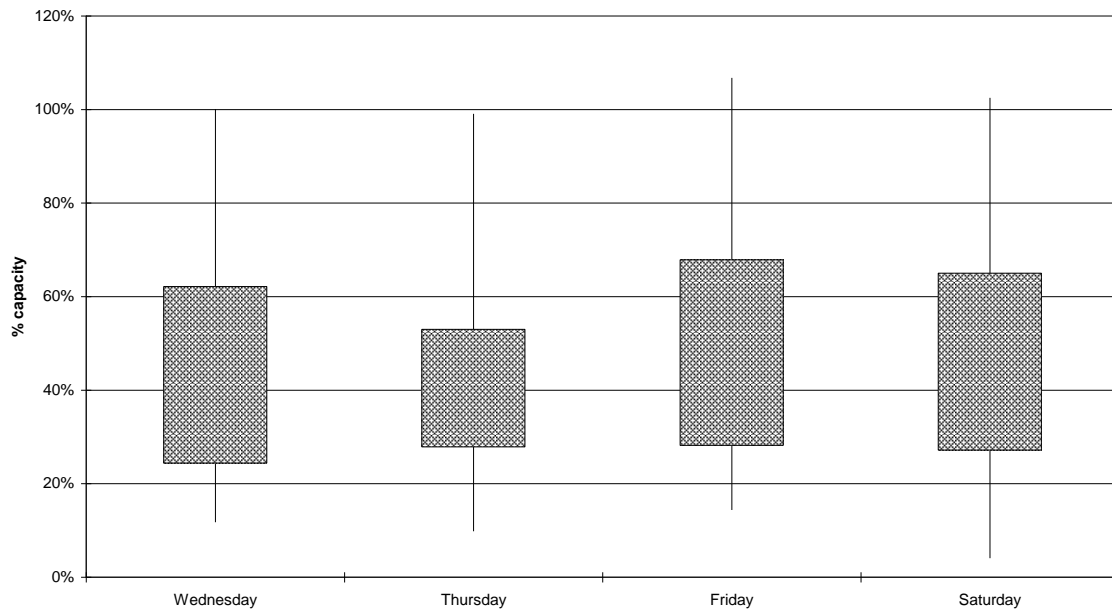
¹ Outliers defined as more than 1.5 x IQR (interquartile range)

	No of gigs	Median % capacity
Sunday	2	Small sample
Monday	4	Small sample
Tuesday	4	Small sample
Wednesday	59	33%
Thursday	100	41%
Friday	43	43%
Saturday	37	43%

In the following charts, the shaded blocks on the chart show the percentage capacity achieved by the middle 50% of the gigs on each day of the week. The top of each vertical line shows the highest capacity achieved on that day and the bottom shows the lowest capacity.²

The relatively long length of the boxes as well as the long lines top and bottom show the lack of relationship between day of week and percentage capacity.

% capacity achieved by EMJAZZ gigs 2006-2008 by day of week



Preferred day of week

A quarter of the attenders who filled in questionnaires at the EMJAZZ members' gigs in January and February 2009 said they did not have a preferred day of the week for going to jazz gigs. Of those who expressed a preference, over 59% preferred Fridays, 49% preferred Saturdays and 37% preferred Thursdays.

² Some capacities are over 100% because the promoter put extra seats on sale once the gig sold out.

	% of respondents
Mondays	7%
Tuesdays	10%
Wednesdays	23%
Thursdays	37%
Fridays	59%
Saturdays	49%
Sundays	19%
Total respondents	335
No preference	117
No response	12

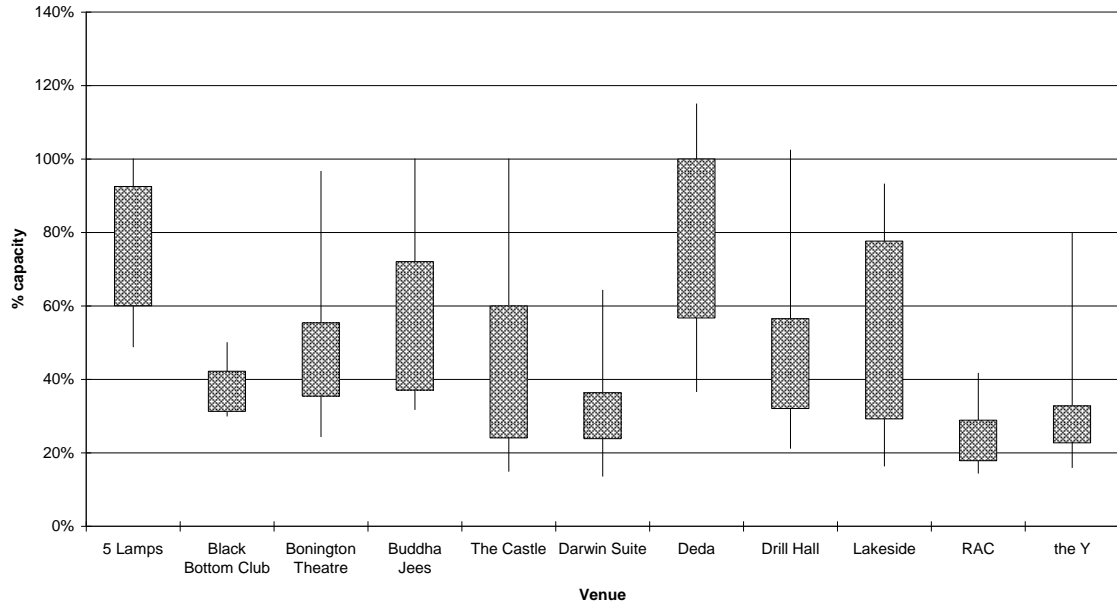
Influence of the venue

Analysis of venues presenting more than five EMJAZZ gigs 2006 to 2008 shows that the venue is a more important influence on the size of audience than day of week. The median percentage capacity suggests that Derby Jazz's programme at its small scale informal venues offers least risk. In terms of number of attenders, however, Lincoln Drill Hall and Derby's Darwin Suite achieve bigger audiences, although the cost of promoting in these larger venues is likely to be higher so that does not necessarily mean the promoter would regard these gigs as more successful. The box plot charts show that there are still highs and lows in attendance and percentage capacity but the boxes indicating the middle 50% are much shorter, showing a greater consistency around the median.

Venue	No of gigs	Median % capacity	Median attendance
Deda	17	73%	44
5 Lamps	10	67%	61
Buddha Jees	6	52%	57
The Castle	23	50%	51
Bonington Theatre	64	45%	80
Drill Hall	23	42%	124
Black Bottom Club	6	34%	28
Darwin Suite	22	30%	99

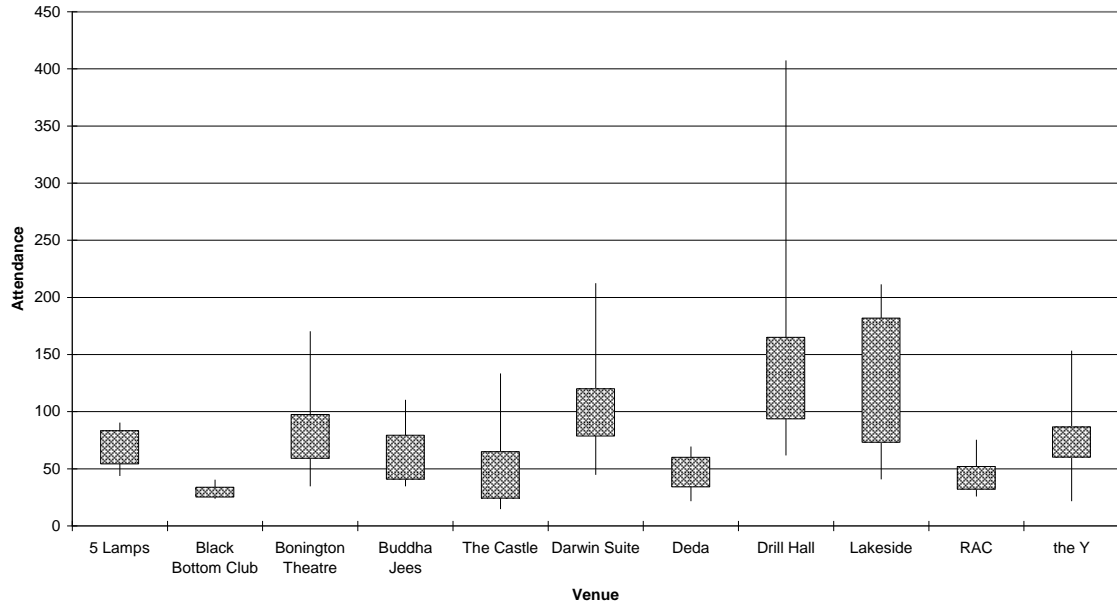
The variation in percentage capacity at each venue is still considerable with the middle 50% of values still stretched out at several venues, particularly the small ones as small differences in the number of attenders have a big impact on the percentage capacity simply because the overall capacity is low.

% capacity achieved by EMJAZZ gigs 2006-2008 by venue



The relationship between the venue and the number of attenders is stronger, however, with the middle 50% of values being more concentrated around the median in all venues except Lakeside.

Attendance at EMJAZZ gigs 2006-2008 by venue



What start times would attenders prefer?

Two thirds of respondents preferred an 8pm start time. 23% preferred 7.30pm and 17% 7.45pm. Just 7% said they had no preference and a further 4% had preferred start times covering a window of at least an hour.

References

ⁱ *Taking Part, the National Survey of Culture, Leisure and Sport: arts opportunities workbook*, DCMS, consulted at <http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/research/TP-artsOpp0607.xls#AO14!A2>

ⁱⁱ Sharrock, P. and Sharrock, L. (2008), *Target Group Index 2005/6*, Arts Council England, p27

ⁱⁱⁱ Peterson, R.A. and Kern, R.M. (1996). 'Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore', *American Sociological Review* 61:900–907

^{iv} Relish, M., (1997), 'It's Not All Education: Network Measures As Sources of Cultural Competency' *Poetics* 25: 121-139



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