

The Strategic Content Alliance

Audience research – why you should be doing it



Audience research – why you should be doing it

Presenter

Organisation, position

Overview of the presentation

- The digital revolution
- Why researching audiences is important
- A successful use of audience research - BBC iPlayer
- How audience research can be useful for you
- What you can be doing

The digital revolution

- Over the last decade digital technologies have fundamentally changed the delivery of public services
 - Digital services are now used widely within public services
 - Rapid growth and development of electronic content
 - Significant body of expertise with digital technologies
- This has been a period of experimentation
 - Often technology-driven
 - Fragmented content and service delivery
 - Lack of real understanding about the way audiences interact with digital services
- Programmes such as Digital Britain and the Strategic Content Alliance now seek to focus, stimulate and coordinate the delivery of digital services



Why might you want to research your audiences?

- Audience research is the process of planning and conducting a programme of work to better understand audiences and audience behaviour
- Advances in technology are matched by rising expectations of the public
- Knowledge about your audiences can help you understand (and meet) public expectations

Knowledge about your audience can help you to...

- Deliver high quality programmes and services
- Demonstrate impact and value for money to funders
- Achieve more value from your budget
- Manage your portfolios more effectively
 - Eg make balance of investment decisions easier
- Monitor and evaluate services/programmes more easily
 - KPIs should require services/programmes to demonstrate a rich understanding of their audience
- Undertake collaborative activities
 - Market intelligence can inform and support joint procurement activities

Do you know enough?

- If you cannot answer the following questions you need to know more about your audiences...

WHAT are the target audiences of your organisation/service/content?

HOW do your audiences use your digital content?

ARE you meeting your audiences' needs?

WHO is not using your service that you would like to be?

WHAT is the relationship between your digital and non-digital services?

ARE you effectively anticipating the needs of your audiences?

Successful use of audience research ***Case study: redesign of the BBC iPlayer (2008)***



- BBC iPlayer
 - originally launched in 2007
 - a service that lets you watch BBC television programmes from the last week over the internet
- Redesign aim
 - to launch a version of iPlayer that integrated the delivery of on-demand TV and radio
- The redesign relied on extensive user engagement
 - to test the design and usability of the new design of iPlayer
 - to check that existing users would not react negatively to the new design
 - to find out how perceptions of the design might affect audiences' attitudes towards the BBC as an organisation and content provider in the 21st century digital world

Successful use of audience research Case study: redesign of the BBC iPlayer (2008)

- Conclusions of the research
 - response to the design generally positive
 - modifications were made to address concerns expressed and further enhance the benefits
- Relaunch of iPlayer was successful
- BBC continues to research its audiences
 - to monitor the success of the new iPlayer
 - to inform further service development

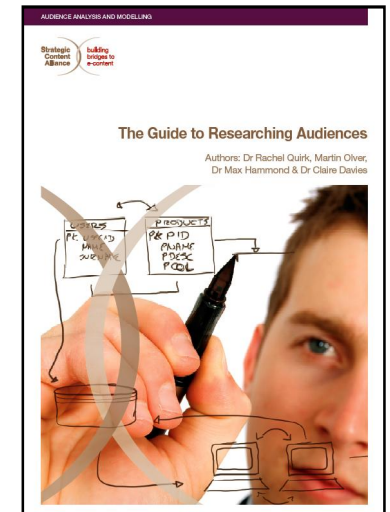
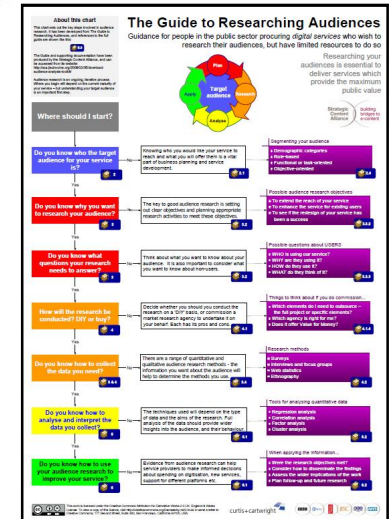


What can you be doing?

- Embrace and utilise audience research
 - Promote a more coherent joined up approach across your services
 - Readdress performance monitoring indicators - demonstrating a number of website hits is not enough
 - Empower your staff to find out if they are meeting their audiences' needs
 - Provide adequate resources and support

- Promote the use of SCA methodology: The Guide to Researching Audiences
 - practical guidance to help non-experts
 - sector-specific briefings

- Promote other resources for audience research in the sector



Thank you for listening and any questions?

For further information please contact the SCA at.....

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