



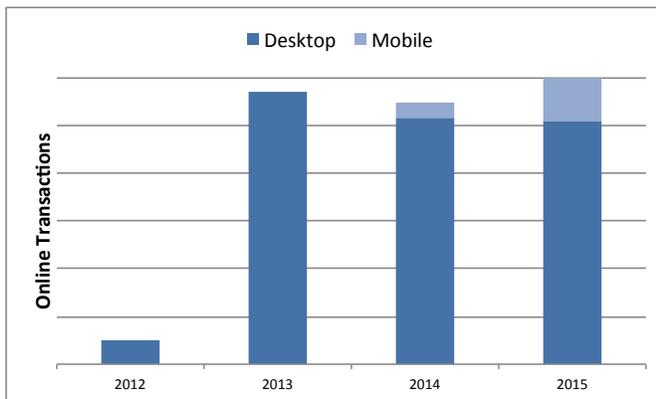
RTO4.ca tourism case study series

Drayton Entertainment

The Arts and Culture sector is often financially fraught and fragile – especially in smaller cities and towns. Meanwhile the Entertainment industry floods cable networks and Internet channels with high quality content. Can digital marketing analytics help cultural attractions in smaller centres compete?

Topics: [Digital Analytics](#) | [Online Ticket Sales](#)

IMPACT



TRIPLED projected mobile sales transactions from 2014 to 2015

700% increase in Facebook fan following in 12 months

50% faster sales and promotion lead time (from 8- to 4-weeks)



500% ↑ FACEBOOK SALES

Year-over-year increase in tracked Facebook online sales from 2014 to 2015

ABOUT

Since 1991, Drayton Entertainment has thrived by building critical mass among seven mid-size small-town theatres in Drayton, Cambridge, Grand Bend, St. Jacobs and Penetanguishene Ontario. In 2016 they will circulate 19 different productions among those stages, all under founding and current Artistic Director Alex Mustakas. Drayton Entertainment's website integrates a 3rd party real-time e-ticketing service. They employ 40 full-time staff, plus hundreds of actors, musicians, stage technicians and house administration at any given time. They are active on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.



THE HIGH LEVEL

RTO4 created a digital operations dashboard for Drayton Entertainment to track, measure and report the online traffic patterns between their email blasts, social media channels, tourism referral websites, their own website, and online ticket sales. Shining a spotlight on digital analytics revealed various user experience (UX) and website hygiene issues, along with highlighting the growing trend of mobile visitors. Here are key management takeaways:

- 1 *"We had only hunches about how people got to their online purchases. Now we know precisely and focus our efforts and spending."*
- 2 *"Web traffic analytics showed us how important our four main referral websites actually are – we give them more emphasis now."*
- 3 *"Ticket sales are already going to mobile. A mobile-friendly website is definitely our next big task."*

Danielle Wade and Company in Anne of Green Gables, 2015 Season. Photographer: Hilary Gauld Camilleri.



“It was a revelation to see how our online sales flowed. Measurement helps us make better decisions.”

Steven Karcher, Executive Director, Drayton Entertainment

MINE THE GAP

Online ticket ordering used to be a fulfillment process that spanned days. By introducing real-time ticketing in 2013, Drayton shifted nearly 40% of their sales online practically overnight, with an eventual goal of 50%. *"We reduced our overhead in 2014 with online sales,"* says Executive Director, Steven Karcher, *"but we need marketing information and ideas for the incremental gains to reach that 50%. A large part of our demographic will research online, but balk at buying."*

Meanwhile, younger patrons expect it. *"Personally, I'm so busy that if I can't pick specific seats at 2AM on my iPad, I just won't buy"* says Amanda Kind, Marketing Manager. *"That's my generation."*

Which highlights the next large hurdle at Drayton: Mobile. *"RTO4 encouraged us to make our website more mobile-responsive and a lot of sales now come that way,"* says Kind. *"So we know that a fully mobile-friendly site is ahead of us. You can't ignore the data."*

SOCIAL DATA

Amanda also calls social media and web analytics revelatory. *"We dabbled in Google Analytics and the back ends of Facebook and Twitter, but not much more than 'How many Likes this month?' Now, we see last Thursday's Facebook post was shared 20 times and our sales in Grand Bend jumped that afternoon. That's both helpful and encouraging."*

Email marketing can be refined too. *"With an email blast for a musical in St. Jacobs, we can see the click-throughs from Waterloo addresses, their website views, ticket selection and purchase,"* she says. *"Instead of hunches and rough correlations, we see impacts and benefits right away."*

RTO4 made other suggestions. *"Some were surprisingly simple,"* Amanda says. *"Like putting the 'buy' button near the bottom of the page after the show description, instead of making people scroll back to the top – you lose people that way."*

"We have an organization-wide push to find creative ideas for better efficiencies," says Steven. *"Web analytics help us see which ones work."*

DRAMATIC CHANGES

It's well known that digital marketing offers various advantages: creative flexibility, immediacy, rich media (photography, video, links, etc.), personalization, targeting, low-cost delivery, and more. What's becoming more apparent is the usefulness that digital analytics provides. Measuring website and social media traffic reveals specific impacts, hidden patterns and new opportunities.

"With our theatres spread across the province, we had to buy a lot of traditional media. We just threw it out there to see what came back in final sales," says Karcher. *"Now, online measurement helps us see specific results so we can be more savvy with our spending and timing. And I can do better cost analysis, including the use of staff time and effort."*

Drayton Entertainment Artistic Director Alex Mustakas as The Pirate King in The Pirates of Penzance, 1991 Season and 2015 Season.

1991

Season



2015

Season



Photos supplied by Drayton Entertainment.

"Data is knowledge and knowledge is power. Drayton Entertainment used web analytics to have a transparent, honest lens into current digital operations, and evaluate their performance. They then strategically leveraged this intelligence to make informed marketing decisions in real-time."

Zac Gribble, Director of Media Technology, RTO4

WHAT NOW?



Get to understand Google Analytics with the Analytics Help Centre: <http://bit.ly/GAHelpMe>



Watch the free Digital Analytics Fundamentals video series: <http://bit.ly/GAVids>



Use analytics to find your best referral sources and optimize those channels (e.g. search, email, social media ...).



Make your social media posts authentic, engaging and share-worthy.



Optimize the length and purpose of your social media posts – and link back to a relevant landing page on your website!



Benchmark, track and measure the social traffic to your website.



Test your website using different devices. Current web traffic trends show roughly half of website visits are mobile/tablet.



Simplify the online path-to-purchase – reduce the number of clicks or taps customers have to make to buy.