BLACKPOOL GRAND THEATRE
AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2006 – 2008

Prepared for Blackpool Grand Theatre by Richard Gerald Associates Ltd (RGA)

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Grand Theatre, Blackpool (the Grand) was built to a Matcham design in 1894 and is a Grade II* listed building. Designated the National Theatre of Variety through a joint venture with Equity in 2006, its vision is of "a society where everyone enjoys and values the performing arts." This vision is underpinned by the following strategic mission and goals:

"The mission is to continue our historic success in conserving the integrity of the irreplaceable Grade II* Listed Victorian theatre, welcoming theatregoers by presenting a discerning programme of popular, thought-provoking and progressive theatre for Blackpool and the North West."

As part of the organisation's business planning process 15 goals have been identified and the following have particular relevance to audience development. These are:

- To promote the art of the theatre through programming innovating and rousing popular entertainment, drama, opera, ballet, dance, pantomime and music.
- To promote the Grand Theatre as the National Theatre of Variety.
- To find and develop theatre goers for different artforms from all sectors of our population.
- Through an education programme including theatrical activities in the Lawrence House Studio at the Grand Theatre, to involve members of our communities of all ages as audiences and participants.
- To foster the great affection held for the Grand Theatre by the people of Blackpool and our communities.
- To promote tourism and economic regeneration, in association with Blackpool agencies.

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to review existing approaches to marketing and audience development, evaluate existing management information and then develop an effective strategy for developing new and existing audiences at the theatre. The Plan covers a two-year period from October 2006 – September 2008.

1.3 DEFINITION

Part of the process of achieving success with this plan is fully understanding the definitions of audience development. For clarity we have used those provided by the Arts Council of England and illustrated how that could be interpreted. Audience development can be achieved by:

- developing an existing audience's relationship with an arts organisation and its existing activities – encouraging existing audiences to try new shows, join the Friends or stay longer in the bar to discuss the production.
- developing new activities and work for existing audiences – developing participatory activities resulting from a show. This might be a masterclass, pre-show talk or post-show discussion.
- developing new audiences for existing activities and work – targeting one particular group of people who have not experienced the theatre and encouraging them through a range of tactical activity to attend.

- developing new audiences for new activities and work – targeting one particular group and developing a particular type of activity. This might be a pre and post show discussion group for young deaf people wanting to experience theatre.

1.4 APPROACH

In preparing this report RGA has undertaken the following tasks:

- Interviewed key staff members regarding existing approaches to marketing and audience development.
- Reviewed all existing management information and audience research.
- Reviewed all relevant strategic documents relating to audience development so that the Grand's policy can respond to stakeholder priorities.
- Facilitated discussions with key staff members on the strategic approach to audience development.

RGA has collaborated closely with Blackpool Grand Theatre on the production of this Audience Development Plan. In particular we have worked with Stephen Mercer, Marketing Manager, Paul Iles, Manager and Robbie Pendlebury, Access Officer

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Our Audience Development plan covers a two-year period from October 2006 – September 2008 and includes a review of the Grand's current approach to audience development, our strategic response for the future and key projects that will drive growth.

The process has been a collaborative one, in particular we have worked with Stephen Mercer, Marketing Manager, Paul Iles, Manager and Robbie Pendlebury, Access Officer.

2.2 REVIEW AND KEY FINDINGS

The following emerged as key themes from analysis of management information and primary and secondary research. These have been used to shape our future direction in relation to audience development.

Encouraging more frequent visits to the Grand and cross-fertilisation of audiences – in particular the Grand is looking to increase the frequency of attendance from the local population to reduce dependency on summer season.

Building on the foundations - our stakeholders continue to encourage engagement with several key target markets that the Grand has historically targeted and is committed to developing further – disabled and economically disadvantaged communities, young people and young people at risk. Our approach will build on engagement with these groups to sustain our relationship.

Tackle the barriers – there are physical, intellectual and knowledge barriers facing potential audiences for the Grand, including issues relating to travel, childcare and information.

Collaboration – collaborative audience development has already delivered results and the Grand should continue to support such initiatives in order to promote our offer as a whole and the heritage aspects of the building. In turn the Grand can act as a gateway to drive visitors to explore other cultural and heritage assets in the town.

New technology plus social networks– already a growing part of the Grand's tactical activity, these two strands of will play a stronger part in driving new audiences.

Communicate the benefits – the Grand has strong support and tangible benefits to articulate to people and this must be a central part of our communication strategy.

2.3 AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Based on the review of current activity and an understanding of the current barriers to audience development, RGA and the Grand Theatre have developed a series of audience development objectives to cover the period October 2006 – October 2008.

The Grand will continue its proactive work in marketing over the next two years. As a result it would like to:

- Increase achieved occupancy from 41% to 45% by 2008 – an additional 25 tickets per show and 21,360 additional ticket sales.
- From the additional 21,360 ticket sales a total of 3,000 people will be new to the Grand.
- The frequency of visits from Lancashire residents will increase from 2.85 times per year to 4 times a year by 2008.
- Increase the volume and value of media coverage each year by £25,000 and generate at least 2 national articles in a broader spread of national media including Daily Mail/Daily Express/Radio 2.
- Increase the number of website hits from 30,000 per month to 37,500 by 2008.
- Increase the percentage of on-line sales from 3% per annum to 8% by 2008.
- Increase the number of people with a disability visiting the theatre from 484 in 2005 to 600 by 2008.

2.4 OUR STRATEGY

The Grand Theatre brochure will remain a central part of tactical activity but the Grand will strive over the next two years to maximise the use of new technology, social network marketing and special promotional activity aimed at new audiences. Specifically, it will:

- Maximise opportunities to raise awareness of the Grand's activities via cultural industry and public sector networks to articulate the importance of the theatre in the life of the town and the social/cultural benefits that it generates.
- Maximise marketing opportunities to current core visitors to encourage repeat visitation and crossover between artforms.
- Maximise marketing opportunities for core loyal visitors to become ambassadors for the theatre and generate new visitors.
- Using price promotional activity to encourage trials of new artforms and to introduce new users to the theatre. (e.g. Student Stampede)
- Continue to develop programming strands and product to that attracts new audiences, in particular family friendly activities, those unfamiliar with the theatre experience and people with disabilities.
- Maximise marketing activity to businesses associated with the visitor market including accommodation providers, tour operators, taxi drivers and guides.
- Developing collaborative marketing activity with other key attractions in the town to drive new users to the theatre and encourage access to other cultural assets in the town.

2.5 TACTICAL ACTIVITY AND INITIATIVES

The Grand will continue with a wide range of tactical activity but key initiatives, already proven elsewhere in the UK and Europe, will be developed in order to drive new audiences.

The three key initiatives are:

Ambassadors Scheme –A total of 10 Ambassadors will be recruited from areas that have a high proportion of people from the C2DE grouping. Ambassadors will be provided with an introduction to the work of Grand and its people, activities and organisation. The recruited Ambassadors will already have a degree of authority in the community and will belong to some social networks. They will then be encouraged to build relationships with key groups and networks within their own local community. Each Ambassador will organise pre-arranged group visits to the theatre and a package of support will be provided to encourage engagement, including contributions to transport, a simple photo-story book detailing a tour of the theatre in pictures so that people can understand what to expect, free guides and discounts in bar. Ambassadors would be encouraged to initiate between 2 – 4 visits in a 12 month period. A remuneration package will be offered to each Ambassador including discounts, travel and refreshments.

Group Hug – 25 key group organisers have been identified that already co-ordinate 3 trips to the Grand each year with on average at least 250 ticket sales. The theatre will co-ordinate a thank you “Group Hug” for each individual and bring together the top 25 people. The “Group Hug” will consist of special goody bag gifts, including signed programmes/posters for the last season, a sneak preview of new season, refreshments and an opportunity to see extracts from forthcoming productions. Moreover each group organiser will be encouraged to be part of the drive to increase numbers and develop new audiences. A target will be to attract at least 5 new people to each group who have not been to the Grand before with a prize for delivering new attenders.

Test Drive- this is another successful campaign model that can be developed with key stakeholders. Blackpool Council is keen to encourage more people on low incomes to visit the theatre and this programme can be used to nurture such an audience. The model is simple and based on the idea that people are often more willing to try a product/service if they are given a risk-free trial. Extensive research and evaluation of such schemes in the arts indicates that an initial screening phase is essential to ensure that willing participants are recruited. If possible data should be supplied from the Council and initial telephone contact made to discuss the production and dates. A small group of new attenders are then personally assisted during their visit, provided with support material for the production and greeted on arrival and during the interval. The visitors are then nurtured with a follow-up offer and discount. However progress with this initiative is driven by developing good relationships with producers willing to participate in Test Drive and offer free/discounted seats.

2.6 RESOURCES

We have allocated a total of £153,577 based on the tactical activity described in this plan. As noted it does not include human resource costs (marketing salaries, benefits, recruitment and training) or office/administration costs relating to the marketing staff. At this stage a considerable amount of the existing activity will be undertaken by existing staff who have already begun the process of engaging with new audiences.

2.7 MONITORING AND EVALAUTION

The results of the audience development activity must be monitored to evaluate the plan's effectiveness and a review procedure implemented so that the plan is regularly updated. The following information will be used in that process:

- Ticket sales, numbers of bookers and repeat purchases.
- The number of customers added to the database and the quality of information (e.g. all records to be completed).
- Response to individual campaigns – ticket sales.
- Discounts/promotions – number of discount codes allocated including disabled people.
- Media coverage generated.
- Revenue generation.
- Annual audience survey to establish user profile and response to various aspects of the venue and marketing This could be completed on-line and managed in-house.
- An on-going review of competitors in the market (including new entrants), in addition to a parallel review of their pricing policy.
- Point of sale data collection.
- When possible all marketing tools to carry a response mechanism or means to calculate effectiveness.
- Acorn profiling of the database to monitor changes in penetration (2008)

3. MARKETING REVIEW: KEY FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In 2006 the Grand commissioned RGA to complete a Social and Economic Impact Study for the theatre and a considerable amount of the primary and secondary research focused on a review of marketing activity. Furthermore to better understand the characteristics of Grand Theatre attendees, the database was profiled using Acorn, a geodemographic classification system that analyses database entries by the characteristics of the postcode area. We have produced the detailed analysis in Appendix 1 and summarised the findings so that the reader can fully understand how the target segments have been selected. Further analysis and discussion has then taken place in order to enhance the data produced for this study.

3.2 VOLUME OF ATTENDANCE

The number of performances and achieved occupancy for the Grand Theatre over the past three calendar years is:

Table 1: Blackpool Grand Programme, Admissions and Occupancy, 2003-2005

	2003	2004	2005	% change 2003-2005
Performances: Main Theatre	389	424	426	9.5%
Performances: Studio	32	20	28	-12.5%
Total Performances	421	444	454	7.8%
Total Admissions	213,668	223,470	205,965	-3.6%
Achieved Occupancy*	47%	45%	41%	-11.9%

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

* Based on a capacity in the Main Theatre of 1,163 and in the Lawrence House Studio Theatre of 80, and includes special promotional tickets

The number of performances at the Grand has increased by 10%, over the period, to 454 in 2005, a very high rate of utilisation. However, whilst the overall product offering has grown the audience has shrunk by 4%, resulting in a decline in achieved occupancy from 47% in 2003 to 41% in 2005. There is clearly spare capacity at the Theatre and maintaining or growing seat occupancy is a primary focus. This is particularly important for the summer season, where one main production represents over a third of all ticket income (see Section 2.3.2), but has shown a serious decline in sales, from a high of 67% occupancy in 1999 to 31% in 2005. The performance in the summer season is inextricably linked to the overall performance of Blackpool as a tourism destination, which has declined significantly in recent years.

3.3 VALUE OF ATTENDANCE

3.3.1 Annual Performance

Whilst the Grand's achieved occupancy has fallen over the past three years, achieved income has increased at a faster rate than the overall growth in performances. This has resulted in substantial increases in the average achieved net ticket price.

Table 2: Blackpool Grand Theatre Ticket Sales and Revenue, 2003-2005

	2003	2004	2005	% change 2003-2005
Admissions	213,668	223,470	205,965	-3.6%
Net Income	£2,099,668	£2,536,094	£2,314,202	10.2%
Average Achieved Net Ticket Price	£9.83	£11.35	£11.24	14.3%

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

This is indicative of sound financial management in response to declining ticket sales and an effective pricing policy. Ticket prices are set in negotiation with the visiting company. Most of these come from the south of England, where the usual ticket price is up to 50% higher than that at Blackpool. The ability of the Grand Theatre to influence pricing is therefore limited. However, the decline in average achieved net ticket price between 2004 and 2005 suggests that audiences will not tolerate a policy of increasing prices indefinitely and therefore it is still vital to increase the volume of tickets sold. It is questionable whether a policy of further price increases is sustainable in the long term. This is recognised by the Manager of the Grand, who has adapted his negotiation strategy to maximise the bargaining power of the venue.

3.3.2 Ticket Sales by Artform

The annual figures presented above have been analysed in more detail by breaking down the programme into separate artforms. It should be noted that there is some discrepancy between some of the figures; monitoring and reporting systems should be implemented to ensure that the systems reconcile.

The contribution of each artform to ticket sales over three years (2003-2005) is presented in Table 3 (Main Theatre) and Table 4 (Lawrence House Studio).

Table 3: Performance by Artform, Main Theatre 2003-2005

Artform	% of total ticket sales	% of total ticket income	Average achieved net ticket price
Summer Variety Season	33.3%	36.2%	£12.62
Musicals	14.0%	16.2%	£13.51
Pantomime	11.8%	10.6%	£10.40
Comedy Drama	5.8%	4.9%	£9.95
Drama	5.1%	4.7%	£10.78
Children's	7.4%	4.4%	£6.87
Ballet	2.5%	4.1%	£18.77
Opera	1.6%	2.9%	£20.66
Concert	1.8%	2.3%	£14.64
Pop Music	2.1%	2.3%	£13.13
Other	4.6%	2.2%	£5.52
Contemporary Dance	1.9%	2.1%	£12.77
Cult/occult	1.8%	1.9%	£11.84
Tribute Bands	1.7%	1.7%	£11.69
Circus	1.2%	1.4%	£12.84
Stand up comedy	0.8%	0.9%	£12.39
Variety	0.6%	0.5%	£10.75
Comedy	0.6%	0.5%	£8.38
Workshops	0.7%	0.3%	£3.94
Puppetry	0.4%	0.1%	£3.02
Tours	0.1%	0.0%	£1.34

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

The Main Theatre programme is dominated by the summer season show, one main production, which accounts for one-third of all tickets sold. This underlines the dependence on the Blackpool tourism market and the Grand’s positioning as part of the town’s entertainment and leisure product. Musicals and pantomime together account for a quarter of tickets, with nearly all of the other artforms accounting for less than 5% of tickets sold. The contribution of each artform to ticket sales by value shows a very similar pattern

There are several artforms that achieve above average net ticket prices and therefore make a comparatively higher contribution to income than their share of the programme; these are:

- Opera (average achieved net ticket price of £20.66)
- Ballet (£18.77)
- Concert (£14.64)
- Musicals (£13.51)
- Pop Music (£13.13)
- Circus (£12.84)
- Contemporary Dance (£12.77)
- Summer Season (£12.62)
- Stand up comedy (£12.39)
- Cult/occult (£11.84)
- Tribute bands (£11.69)

There is clearly potential to attain significant ticket prices at the Grand for certain artforms. However careful monitoring of the price points is required to ensure that the Theatre's pricing strategy does not exclude audiences. Our conversations with the Grand's public sector stakeholders suggests that the development of new audiences is an important target for them; this seems justified given the current achieved occupancy levels. A thorough review of pricing policy is required, taking into account both the characteristics of the local market and the Grand's ability to control pricing.

Given the recent designation of the Grand as the National Theatre of Variety we would anticipate activity, outside the summer season, to increase and the percentage of total ticket sold to rise from 0.6%.

Table 4: Performance by Artform, Lawrence House Studio 2003-2005

Artform	% of total ticket sales	% of total ticket income	Average achieved net ticket price
Children's	32%	20%	£3.28
Ballet	1%	2%	£6.81
Drama	17%	21%	£6.69
Musicals	1%	1%	£5.96
Jazz/Blues	24%	29%	£6.29
Other	24%	26%	£5.69

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

The programme in the Lawrence House Studio is dominated by children's theatre, jazz/blues and drama. It should be noted that average net ticket price is significantly lower than all other performances in the Main Theatre. Approximately a quarter of tickets and income are classed as "other" and there is probably a requirement to review the coding and classifications used for this space.

3.3.3 Retained Profit

Based on the annual accounts, the “gross profit” from productions (that is, the income retained from ticket sales after payment to the producer/promoter) has declined from 29% in 2002 to 22% in 2005.

Fluctuations in the gross profit will be due to changes in the contractual terms between the producer/promoter and the Theatre, which in term will vary by artform. Paul Iles, Manager of the Grand Theatre, has reviewed historic and current contractual terms and has prepared the following analysis of gross profit margin by artform. It should be noted that these are indicative figures only, based on the Manager’s experience in preparing and negotiating contacts.

Table 5: Indicative Gross Profit by Artform, Blackpool Grand Theatre

Artform	Retained Profit (%)
Children’s	28.0%
Tribute Bands	27.5%
Pantomime	25.0%
Comedy	25.0%
Cult/occult	25.0%
Pop Music	25.0%
Variety	25.0%
Summer Season	25.0%
Circus	22.5%
Classical Music	22.5%
Ballet	20.0%
Musicals	11.0%
All Studio Theatre Productions	5.0%
Drama	0%
Workshops	0%

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

The level of retained profit varies considerably by artform. A key task for the management at the Grand Theatre is to ensure that the programme is sufficiently balanced to meet the artistic and cultural aims of the Theatre whilst making a financial contribution. The children’s shows, pantomime and summer seasons, therefore, as well as being important components in their own right, contribute to the successful running of the Theatre by generating profit that can be used to support the inclusion of drama and workshops in the programme. This is particularly important given the comparatively low levels of revenue support received by the Theatre for such work.

3.4 PURCHASING PATTERNS

3.4.1 Booking Method

The majority of attendees at the Grand book their tickets over the telephone; this proportion has increased since 2003. There is a corresponding decline in the proportion of tickets booked in person, from nearly a third in 2003 to a quarter in 2005. Internet sales have grown substantially but from a very low base and still comprise less than 3% of all bookings. The introduction of a new website with enhanced ticket reservation facilities may address this. Agency sales are almost immaterial, representing less than 1% of all tickets booked.

Table 6: Booking Method, Grand Theatre, 2003-2005

	2003	2004	2005	% change, 2003-2005*
Phone	67%	72%	72%	8%
In Person	33%	26%	25%	-24%
Online	1%	2%	3%	389%
Agency	0%	0%	0%	

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

* Rounded figures

Whilst the growth of online booking can relieve pressure on box office staff and associated administration it can reduce the opportunity to up- or cross-sell; the technology should be capable of providing a similar service ("if you are booking that, you'll like this") or providing sustained customer contact via email.

3.4.2 Method of Payment

Most attendees pay for their tickets using credit or debit cards. The proportion using this method of payment has increased over the past three years, with a corresponding decline in the volume of cash and cheque payments. The trend is experienced throughout the year, although the summer season shows a higher volume of cash sales, perhaps reflecting a greater tendency for tourists to purchase walk-up tickets rather than making an advanced booking. Even within this period, however, the volume of cash sales is declining.

Table 7: Method of payment, Grand Theatre, Autumn to Spring Seasons 2003-2005

	2003	2004	2005	% change, 2003-2005
Card	62.3%	64.4%	65.5%	5.3%
Cash	28.9%	28.1%	26.5%	-8.4%
Cheque	7.2%	6.4%	6.7%	-6.7%
Agent/invoice	0.9%	0.4%	0.6%	-36.3%
Tokens	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	-9.5%
Gift Voucher	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	3.0%

Table 8: Method of payment, Grand Theatre, Summer Season 2003-2005

	2003	2004	2005	% change, 2003-2005
Cash	44.8%	37.3%	38.9%	-13.1%
Cheque	5.0%	5.1%	4.8%	-3.8%
Card	49.0%	56.1%	54.8%	12.0%
Gift Voucher	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	15.4%
Tokens	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	-10.7%
Agents/invoice	0.8%	1.0%	1.0%	23.5%

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

3.5 GRAND THEATRE CUSTOMERS

3.5.1 Marketing Strategy and Activity

The Grand Theatre's marketing strategy has, until the adoption of a new business plan in 2005, focussed on tactical activity, promoting on a show-by-show and seasonal basis. Whilst this maintains expectations from promoters it means that the profile of the Grand is dependent on the quality of available product. The Manager believes that a greater focus on the Grand itself – the building, the experience, the atmosphere and the staff – in marketing activity, would reduce this dependency and help to increase loyalty to the venue as well as to the promoter or artform. Since his appointment as Manager, Mr Iles has brought into better balance the marketing of the heritage aspects of the theatre and production marketing; one only has to look at the newly designed content on the theatre's website blackpoolgrand.co.uk. to understand this. With this in mind the annual generic marketing budget has been used to bring equilibrium between marketing of the heritage theatre, productions and attracting new audiences.

Marketing activity has also focused heavily on printed material and press advertising, but through analysis of sales information there is a commitment to expanding the range of tactical activity used and, in particular increasing the use of new technology to generate sales. Collaborative activity is also being developed with Blackpool Council, Blackpool Tourism, visitor attractions and other leisure related activity in the area. Join The Party, a collaborative marketing initiative, has brought together a range of leisure providers and created three packages (24hr Blackpool, Excitement Blackpool and Golden Blackpool) and bundle activities together for the consumer. What then follows is a range of offers and deals that allows the individual to self-select activities. The benefits to the Grand are already proving worth while and this is clearly a step in the right direction to encourage cross-over between visitors and cost effective marketing activity.

The adoption of this plan will progress some of the initiatives already being developed and introduce new activity to generate new audiences.

3.5.2 Audience Development – Existing Activity

The Grand currently undertakes a range of activities targeted at segments identified within the Business Plan and it is intended that the plans outlined in Section 4 will build on and enhance these activities. Existing activity is summarised below.

New audience segment	Partners	Why they are a target	Current Offer	Outcomes
Disabled people (physical and learning disability)	Fylde Deaf Children's Society (National network) SPIT – Sign Performances in Theatre Organisation Blackpool Council – Access Officer and First Centre (Area Network Centre for people with disabilities) West Lancashire Deaf Association Dramability – arts access group for people with disabilities Blackpool and Fylde Blind Society Talking Books Networks – local co-ordinator	Currently under-represented Stakeholder target Strategically important - enhance social impacts	BSL performances Excellent access for physically disabled Infra-red induction hearing loop Price promotions and discounts Deafpool – large scale event focusing on raising awareness of deaf issues/social networking (Sept) Children's Deaf Awareness Weekend (Nov) Marketing material large print/audio/BSL DVD and website access friendly Community Newspaper – regular information/offers	- Ongoing liaison and links with community contacts - Consultation on improvements to services - 127 users for pantomime signed performance (2005) - 50 – 100 attenders per signed performances - 484 registered disabled discounts (2005) - Encourage access to other cultural assets - Enhanced staff/volunteer skills with BSL (2 qualified in-house audio describers and 3 volunteers)and improve quality of service - Enhanced staff skills with disability awareness training - Deaf awareness, communication tactics and basic sign language - Nominated for Positive Action Award (2006)

New audience segment	Partners	Why they are a target	Current Offer	Outcomes
Socially excluded/low incomes	Blackpool Council	Currently under-represented. Strategically important market to achieve targets and enhance social impacts. Moral obligation to justify public funding and broaden range and type of visitor. Stakeholder target	Discounted/free tours and talks Networking via Council departments and projects Free pantomime performance preview for socially excluded groups Sponsorship programme and performances Community Newspaper – regular information/offers	Ongoing liaison Free pantomime performance preview for socially excluded groups
Young people aged 5 - 6yrs	Blackpool Council Senior/Primary Schools network Blackpool and Fylde College	Currently under-represented Stakeholder target Strategically important – build audience of the future and revenue implications Enhance curriculum Build confidence	Special events – schools Alive programme Children's/Schools programme Youth drama academy Price promotions and discounts (Student Stampede) Volunteering opportunities	8,615 under 18 ticket sales (2005) and expanding in 2006 959 student discounts already in 2006, growth from 563 in 2005.

3.5.3 Postcode Analysis

The Grand holds a database of 73,909 ticket bookers. 73,502 (99%) records have valid postcodes. A summary analysis of this data underlines the Grand's positioning within a tourism destination – the database contains entries for every postcode area in the UK!

30% of all records are Blackpool postcodes, with a further 9% from Preston, no other postcode area accounts for more than 5%. This is indicative of a very tight core catchment, supplemented substantially by people resident in the rest of the UK, presumably many of them visiting Blackpool as a leisure day trip or holiday. The top postcode areas are shown in the Table below.

Table 9: Top postcode areas, all bookers, Blackpool Grand Theatre (N=139,550)

Postcode Area	% of all bookers
Blackpool (FY)	30
Preston (PR)	9
Blackburn (BB)	5
Lancaster (LA)	4
Sheffield (S)	2
Manchester (M)	2

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

3.5.4 Database Analysis

The detailed analysis of the Grand database using ACORN has been presented in appendix 1. Here we have summarised the findings.

Of the five most prominent Types on the Grand Theatre's database, only one has an above average propensity to take an interest in Theatre. Where approximately 8% of Low Income Singles, Small Rented Flats would be expected to visit any theatre, the Grand is achieving a penetration of 13.2%. This is a positive finding – it suggests that the Grand is overcoming traditional social, cultural and economic barriers to arts attendance and that it has had to develop its audiences beyond the traditional profile. Future marketing and audience development strategies should clearly acknowledge this and the profile of the Grand's current and potential audience, particularly in relation to pricing. The Grand should take care of this audience and aim to attract more of a similar type, rather than penetrate those ACORN groups that have a higher propensity to attend. It is likely that more typical attenders will already be travelling to other arts venues and persuading them to shift, at a time when Blackpool may not have as much to offer as say Liverpool or Manchester, will be a significantly hard sell.

The top five categories within the Lancashire database are broadly the same as those in the full database (Home Owning Families, Terraces, 4th on the main database, is 6th at the local level). There is one addition to the list: Low Income Singles, Small Rented Flats. This accounts for 5.6% of all records at the Lancashire level, with an index of 208, suggesting high penetration of this group. However there will still be opportunities to penetrate this group further.

3.6 NON-ATTENDERS

In order to understand some of the barriers facing non-attenders to the Grand we have reviewed and summarised some of the most relevant national research produced over the last five years. "New Audiences" has been a valuable resource during this process; the site was set up to encourage as many people as possible, from all backgrounds and every walk of life, to participate in and benefit from the arts. Arts Council England invested £20 million in the programme, over five years, from 1998 to 2003.

- Barriers to attendance differ for those already engaged in the arts and those who have not engaged in arts activity. The former are more likely to mention practical difficulties and the latter are generally just not very interested. Arts In Wales commissioned a large scale study in 2005 to explore such themes with the following findings emerging.

- 'The main barriers to attendance were a lack of interest, a lack of time, nothing available close by to go to, cost and family commitments/childcare. It should be noted that the study covered a wide range of artforms, not just theatre.

- 34% of respondents were "not really interested" in the arts. It is inevitable that a proportion of the Grand's market catchment will not attend due to a lack of interest or commitment to other activities.

- 28% found it difficult to find the time, possibly because of work, children or other caring roles. Here there is a role to play in considering the timing of performances to attract new audiences, including early morning shows for older consumers who maybe don't won't to be out in the evening, or shorter "bite-size" performances that allow people to fit activity around other activities such as going out for a meal or shopping. A highly successful strategy adopted by the Royal Scottish National Orchestra was a "Bite-Size" classical concert series presented early on a Saturday Evening.

- 15% of respondents said arts attendance costs too much. In response to this many organisations have reduced this barrier simply by offering potential new audiences free tickets and allowing them to "Test Drive" the arts. Through regular contact with potential new audiences who have been part of "Test Drive" campaign, organisations encourage repeat visits to the arts and slowly increase ticket prices to reduce the dependency on free tickets. This scheme has been highly successful.

- 13% reported that "Nothing s available close by, too far to travel". Ensuring that public transport easily and cheaply fits with the start and end times of performances can be particularly difficult, but it is important for the Grand as many existing attenders rely heavily on public transport. Various transport schemes have been used to subsidise travel and there have even been schemes where a taxi company has supported afternoon pick-up and drop-offs for older people wanting to visits the theatre and gallery. Once new audiences have been introduced, with the added assistance, they are more likely to understand the benefits and feel compelled to overcome some of the barriers that they perceived previously.

- 10% of respondents have family commitments and childcare issues. Other organisations have successfully introduced shows where young-mothers are encouraged to attend with young children (Scream Screens in cinema) or crèche facilities are provided during matinee performances in order to provide short-term child care. In the sports sector it is deemed essential to offer crèche facilities in order to maintain the traditionally younger market – consideration might be given to providing a similar service to carers (parents and grandparents) who would like to visit the Grand.

- Only 1% of people were deterred because they might feel uncomfortable or out of place.

The New Audiences programme ran over 5 years with a total of 14 funding strands, 1,157 different audience development projects and a total of 4 million attendances. We have reviewed the final summary document to extract key information that will be relevant to The Grand. In general the project identified a requirement to develop a wide-ranging audience profile, to include current attenders, young people, older people, people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, people from socially disadvantaged areas, rural communities and family groups. Some of these targets are particularly relevant to the Grand as work has begun in this area and they are priority groups for other stakeholders.

- For young people although the physical barriers to attendance of cost, travel and lack of time are significant, psychological barriers are paramount and are best summarised as a general feeling amongst some young people that the arts are irrelevant to them and culturally exclusive.

- Barriers for ethnic minorities include lack of relevant product, price, timing, access to promotional material, and lack of peer group representation across staff, artists and audiences.

- Current barriers for families include lack of understanding of family needs, limited resources and inadequate facilities, a lack of arts 'product' for the whole family, and inappropriate communication and marketing.

- Barriers for low income families also include cost, transport, lack of childcare, lack of time and the perception that the arts are exclusive and elitist.

- Barriers to audience development in rural areas include lack of information or data on audiences, lack of marketing skills within arts organisations or appropriate venues, and poor access to networks.

- For older people barriers to participation include geographic location, lack or cost of transport, safety, price, access to information, and having no one to go with. For older people still in full-time work, time pressures were more likely to be a barrier

- A number of initiatives addressed transport as a barrier to attendance. The Arts Express Networking Project aimed to attract new rural audiences to arts events by providing free transport and using an animateur to undertake outreach work with rural community groups. Some organisations targeted older people from Black and minority ethnic groups. Leicester Haymarket's project, New Audiences Development, targeted first generation Asian communities and attempted to overcome barriers of language or unfamiliarity with the venue. Outreach activity in religious and community settings provided taster events for groups not ready to come into the theatre. Again the latter initiative is an example of a project that allows audiences to "Test Drive" the arts.

3.7 STRATEGIC CONTEXT – AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

It is important to consider the key priorities identified by the Grand's stakeholders and where possible ensure that existing policy supports such strategies.

3.7.1 Arts Council England

The overarching vision of Arts Council England 2006-2008 is "To put the arts at the heart of national life and people at the heart of the arts."

The 2006-8 agenda for Arts Council England, North West has six priorities, each with its own action points:

Taking part in the arts
Agree and deliver a regional action plan to increase attendance and participation across the North West population, including delivery for our specific target groups of adults from Black and minority ethnic, disabled and economically disadvantaged communities.

Children and young people
Deliver the "Children, young people and the arts: North West regional strategy"

Increase young people's voice and participation in the arts, with an emphasis on young people at risk.

Deliver four Creative Partnerships in Merseyside, Manchester Salford, Cumbria and East Lancashire and establish a legacy building on their work.

The creative economy
Deliver our creative industries strategy with key targets around skills and professional development, enterprise and innovation and access to finance.

Deliver initiatives to increase access to markets in the visual arts, music and dance sectors.

Vibrant communities
Encourage more arts approaches to delivering local priorities through Local Strategic Partnerships and in Local Area Agreements and work with local authorities to drive up their arts performance in the region.

Establish partnerships and investment programmes in our priority areas of Liverpool, West Cumbria and East Lancashire and in the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Areas in the North West (East Lancashire, Manchester and Salford, Merseyside and Oldham and Rochdale).

Build on our partnership with the public health team at Government Office North West and develop arts activity in health providers' strategies, plans and programmes.

Internationalism
Produce and deliver a regional international action plan which will support and encourage increased international opportunities for the arts in the North West.

Support Liverpool European Capital of Culture to deliver an internationally acclaimed festival in 2008; to ensure a legacy of long-term growth and sustainability of the arts in the city; and to encourage the connectivity between Liverpool 2008 and the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012.

Celebrating diversity
Agree and implement our regional disability action plan.
Implement our regional cultural diversity action plan.

3.7.2 Blackpool Council

The most relevant policy document is Blackpool: Innovative, Confident and Inspiring, A Strategy for Blackpool's Visitor Economy, 2006-2010. This has been reviewed in detail for the Social and Economic impact study so for brevity we have not reproduced it here but have highlighted key themes that can be considered when developing new audiences.

The vision for Blackpool is that it will be famous for:

Innovative Ideas – creativity and innovation in our attractions will drive visitation.
Confident People – people skilled in delivering quality service will inspire visitor loyalty.
Delightful experiences – delighting visitors with convenience, beauty and respect will inspire our visitors to promote us to their families, friends and colleagues.
"Innovative ideas, confident people and delightful experiences will make Blackpool a great place to visit time after time."

3.7.3 Key Themes and Target Markets.

Clearly Arts Council England has several key target markets that the Grand has targeted historically and is committed to developing further – disabled and economically disadvantaged communities, young people and young people at risk. It should be noted that Arts Council England have prioritised the following geographic areas - Merseyside, Manchester Salford, Cumbria and East Lancashire. Blackpool is not within this grouping.

The Blackpool Council strategy is slightly harder to interpret in relation to audience development and the Grand must discuss the document further with the Council in order to ensure that this major stakeholder is supportive of the theatre's approach.

3.8 KEY FINDINGS - ANALYSIS

Analysis of the management information and research has been ordered into areas of strength and weakness for the Grand Theatre. The purpose of this is to prepare detailed recommendations for developing the audience development strategy and ensuring that any new activity responds to existing and potential audience characteristics.

STRENGTHS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATION
Social Impacts	
Audiences are generally very positive about the Grand Theatre and regard it as a fundamental element of the Blackpool experience.	Marketing, communications and programming – create further social benefits by encouraging audiences to use the venue as a more of public space. Develop product that can assist the process. Encourage users to access other cultural/heritage assets in the town
Volunteering skills are transferable and many volunteers work within other volunteer organisations	Marketing – utilise the wide networks that the volunteers have to build audiences and encourage new volunteers.
Designation as the National Theatre of Variety has raised awareness of the continued support of this genre and also other cultural issues.	Communications – further work is to be done on raising awareness and developing new product associated with the variety genre, particularly to encourage crossover to over artforms.
The local arts market is challenging but the Grand has succeeded in attracting people who are not (typical) arts attenders.	Marketing Plan – communicate this to Stakeholders, continue to develop similar audiences and use as a lever to develop partnerships with producers, supporters and new sponsors.
Over 80% of respondents believe a visit to the Grand will stimulate their engagement with the arts in the future.	Collaboration – move forward with collaborative activity that encourages participation in the arts across the town (e.g. Puppet Festival AND Join The Party) Encourage users to access other cultural/heritage assets in town

STRENGTHS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATION
Current Operations	
Increased average net ticket revenues in the face of declining audience trends	Monitor – possibly unsustainable in the long term.
New sales channels developing	Marketing Plan; Utilise new technology to build customer loyalty and relations and to attract new audiences. Continue to develop web-based marketing.
Attracting people from across the UK: the Grand is delivering an important contribution in regards to cultural tourism.	Communications ensure Grand maintains position in the tourism offer and work with other partners to develop attractive cultural packages. New partners can deliver new audiences.
Nearly £250,000 of positive media coverage generated per year.	Marketing Plan – develop communications regarding National Theatre of Variety, heritage and generic communications. Tailor press activity to the media preferences of the local market as shown in the Acorn profile.
Strategic Context	
The majority of local stakeholders are positive and aware of the theatre's contribution to the town in relation to heritage, cultural vibrancy and economic activity. The Grand is currently targeting a number of Arts Council England priority groups.	Communicate the tangible benefits in relation to social and economic impacts. Build on this to lever further support.
Arts and cultural activity are central to long term regeneration with new product development and innovation ideas essential.	Communicate role in existing infrastructure and willingness to develop new product, ideas and innovate.
Audience development priorities include disabled and economically disadvantaged communities, young people and young people at risk.	Marketing Plan – build on programme of activity, marketing and development for disabled people. Build on Acorn groups and those in economically disadvantaged groups. Continue to target young people and enhance the offer and marketing approach.

STRENGTHS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATION
Audiences consist of two distinct catchments; a strong local market and the tourism market	Marketing Plan – understand the different characteristics and how to respond to these segments. Develop relationships with the appropriate stakeholders for each.
Audiences rate the Theatre highly and can see clear differences in the offer compared with other facilities.	Marketing – capitalise on the value placed on the experience, the people, the unique auditorium and the "buzz" of the place.
The theatre is a direct motivator for people to visit Blackpool and for some to extend their stay in the town.	Marketing and Communications – work to communicate this and also build on relationships with partners to develop packages (retail and hospitality sector) to open up new users to the venue.
Community groups visit the Grand regularly and regard the venue as professional and fun.	Marketing – continue to target groups in the local community and develop new products to stimulate interest (e.g. Open Doors Day, Behind the scenes tours)
Friends of the Grand have had a long association with the theatre and they find the venue a stimulating and very friendly place to be involved in.	Marketing and Communications – continue to use support and recruit. Develop the relationship to nurture this group as ambassadors for the theatre, in particular with new audiences.
Many Grand volunteers have enjoyed a long relationship with the theatre and there are very positive social, health and cultural benefits of such an association.	Marketing and Communications – communicate the benefits with a view to expanding programme and mix of volunteers. Consider extending the training programme to encourage socially disadvantaged.
Opportunities to increase the penetration of Lancashire audiences.	Marketing Plan – consider developing families market.
Positive perceptions of the theatre – Lancashire residents value the Grand as an important cultural asset and find it stimulating. Visitors to Blackpool from outside Lancashire view it as fun.	Marketing and Communications – develop and communicate the friendly feeling in the theatre and build generic campaign around this. Incorporate into refresher training for volunteers.

STRENGTHS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATION
Educational visitors regard their experience as positive and that the Grand provides opportunities that wouldn't be available without the theatre, in particular exposing young children to the arts	Marketing and Communications – build on this to encourage cross-fertilisation of family market and adult market. Consider crèche/childcare facilities to remove barriers to attendance for certain segments.

WEAKNESSES

Social Impacts

Volunteers predominately female and from older age groups	Marketing – consider developing younger age groups with links to training programme, work experience and national volunteering programme. Consider re-branding as an "intern" to attract younger age group with modification of package of benefits. Also aim to attract more men.

Current Operations

Occupancy levels are in decline, in particular in the Summer Season. The Grand is highly vulnerable to the overall decline of Blackpool as a seaside destination.	Develop Strategic Marketing Plan and review Summer Season and opportunities for new product development. Look to increase the frequency of attendance from the local population to reduce dependency on summer season.
Higher ticket prices may be a barrier to new audiences and those from socially deprived areas. This issue was also expressed (unprompted) during the social and economic impact research.	Marketing Plan – devise pricing strategy and promotions that add value to the experience and attract new audiences and key new markets. (Families)
Marketing activity generated show-by-show. Generic marketing would build on the USP of the venue, its people and the experience – all recognised as core strengths of the Grand.	Develop within strategic Marketing Plan
Audience development required to penetrate Lancashire market, encourage repeat attendance and new users.	Marketing Plan: develop clear approach to new audiences including repeat attendance and further penetration of Lancashire market.

3.8.1 Current Barriers to Visiting

The Grand has made some changes to programme, pricing and promotional activity in order to attract new audiences, however management recognise that there is still high potential to respond to new research from non-attenders and other tools and techniques that have been used to attract new audiences. The following is a summary of the key potential barriers to attending the theatre (based on secondary research sources) and an overview of how the Grand plans to address them.

	Response
Physical barriers:	
Transport/access – some segments heavily reliant on public transport. Personal safety/security an issue with car parking	Clear communication regarding public transport available. Continue with joint ticket and car-parking offer Ticket and coach transport offer and discount for groups and school Communicate multi-layers of access on offer for people with disabilities
Opening Hours and programming	Continue with programme of matinees and where possible explore alternative day-time shows for older consumer (as with the proposed Morning Melody Concerts)
Childcare and other issued related to caring for family (including older members)	Family programming continues and open-days access Investigate development of trial crèche facility Variable start time (8/9pm starts)
Knowledge barriers:	
Access to relevant information	Develop use of new technology and web-based marketing Develop social network marketing and partners (such as the Join The Party collaboration with other leisure providers)

No one to go with (older people)	Develop buddy system for older people or encourage singles-nights with social activity before and after performances. Use Friends schemes and volunteers to provide buddy. Communicate the Potential to develop romantic liaison!
Intellectual barriers:	
16-24 year olds perceived theatre as culturally irrelevant	Develop programme aimed at young people Marketing utilising existing social networks – clubs/bars Communicate exclusivity of the Grand Theatre Academy
Language, tone and style require a certain level of education and can lead to a perception that arts exclusive and elitist	Marketing material aware of different levels of educational standards, clarity, simplicity and understanding

4. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Based on the review of current activity and an understanding of the current barriers to audience development, RGA and the Grand Theatre have developed a series of audience development objectives to cover the period October 2006 – October 2008.

The Grand will continue its proactive work in marketing over the next two years. As a result it would like to:

- Increase achieved occupancy from 41% to 45% by 2008 – an additional 25 tickets per show and 21,360 additional ticket sales.
- From the additional 21,360 ticket sales a total of 3,000 people will be new to the Grand.
- The frequency of visits from Lancashire residents will increase from 2.85 times per year to 4 times a year by 2008.
- Increase the volume and value of media coverage each year by £25,000 and generate at least 2 national articles in a broader spread of national media including Daily Mail/Daily Express/Radio 2.
- Increase the number of website hits from 30,000 per month to 37,500 by 2008.
- Increase the percentage of on-line sales from 3% per annum to 8% by 2008.
- Increase the number of people with a disability visiting the theatre from 484 in 2005 to 600 by 2008.

5. MARKET POSITIONING

We have developed a suggested positioning statement that responds to the findings of the audit and market research and discussions with staff about the existing approach. This will form the basis of all marketing activity at the Grand, including specific audience development initiatives.

Existing users, who are not necessarily traditional arts attenders, are positive about their experience. They find the theatre friendly, fun and a positive experience. This needs to be communicated to off-set any unfavourable views regarding arts participation or the perceived audience "type" at the Grand or at theatres in general. Furthermore, existing audiences and local partners should regard the Grand as a gateway for people to access other cultural assets in the town or further afield.

The following key words will inform this approach and be central to any future tactical activity. In practice the Grand must test any future tactical activity against the positioning statement to ensure that it is consistent.

Friendly and sociable – a warm and welcoming theatre that tries hard to help everyone enjoy their visits to theatre. A place where people can socialise or get more involved in the workings of theatre in order to meet new people and contribute to the local community.

Unpretentious – we provide a real "man/women in the street" explanation about why we decided to put on shows, what it's about and why you would like it.

Encouraging – we want you to enjoy arts and culture. To try new things, get involved and experience the positive benefits of engaging with the arts.

6. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

6.1 NEW AUDIENCES – THE RATIONALE

Following on from analysis of the Acorn data we have articulated why we have selected each new audience segment, what we will offer them that will be compelling enough for them to consider a visit and finally how their involvement with the Grand will be sustained. Detailed tactical plans follow for each segment, including Acorn groups who currently attend.

Market Segment	ACORN Types	Why they are a target	What we will offer them	How their involvement will be sustained
Disabled people (physical and learning disability)	All classifications	Currently under-represented Stakeholder target Strategically important - enhance social impacts. Legislation – DDA compliance	BSL Signed and audio performances expanded Stage Text (to be introduced in 2007) Programme synopsis Ability to explore independently and via tours Participation via youth academy and integrated workshops Community newspaper links	Partnerships with disability networking groups Personal contacts Quality of service Regular contact Social interaction

Market Segment	**ACORN Groups and Types**	**Why they are a target**	**What we will offer them**	**How their involvement will be sustained**
Socially excluded/low income	Low income singles (older segment)	Currently under-represented Strategically important market – enhance social impacts Moral obligation to justify public funding and broaden range and type of visitor Stakeholder target	Informal, reassuring and welcoming environment that orientates people Straightforward tone and style plus audio tours A programme of activities that are relevant to their everyday life Support during visit to aid enjoyment and learning Test drive scheme Buddy programme Community newspaper links	Personal involvement and interaction Celebration of activity and involvement Tangible social and personal development Skills transfers and benefits for staff engaging with new groups (renewed meaning to their work) and variety Partnerships with community groups that have authority and are trusted in the community

Market Segment	**ACORN Types**	**Why they are a target**	**What we will offer them**	**How their involvement will be sustained**
Young people aged 16 – 24	Low income singles	Currently under-represented Stakeholder target Strategically important – build audience of the future and revenue implications	Warm welcome Programme that draws from popular youth culture – music, fashion, cabaret and comedy. Price promotions Association with credible partners and links Community newspaper links	Social and personal development - placements and work-experience Skills development Growing programme of activity Skills transfers and benefits for staff engaging with new groups (new ideas and perspectives)

Market Segment	ACORN Types	Why they are a target	What we will offer them	How their involvement will be sustained
Families with children 5 – 14 yrs with high/ medium incomes	Comfortably Off Category Moderate Means Category Well-off families with mortgages Young working families Working families with mortgages	Building on existing audiences but extending catchment area Strategically important – revenue implications Strategically important for marketing to build word of mouth, social networks and profile	Guidance for parents to help with interpretation and understanding Family friendly audit and action points Programme relevant Community Access day and information Added value activity Linked offers to other attractions and information on family friendly activity (web-site)	Continue with excellent customer care Opportunity for further engagement – theatre academy, open days and workshops Co-ordinated offers and relevant marketing (Join the Party)

The strategy will focus on further developing the following areas of differentiation.

Product differentiation – a truly eclectic mix of music, drama, variety, circus, dance and opera that offers everyone with an opportunity to try something that they will enjoy.

Place differentiation – A venue that adds sparkle and glamour to an evening out. Friendly, intimate, glamorous and magical. A place that is safe, welcoming and somewhere where you know that you can feel confident about enjoying your visits to the theatre.

Personnel differentiation – our staff are well informed, they enjoy working in the theatre and they are knowledgeable about the productions and the companies that perform at the Grand. They also understand that some people may need more help with their visit to feel comfortable or special. They are trained to respond to the customers' needs and feel positive about wanting give a warm welcome.

Promotion differentiation – we use a language that is clear and free from jargon, yet it excites and stimulates people to visit. Our tactical activity is imaginative and varied and new technology is a central part of our development, combined with effective use of social networks and word of mouth.

6.2 STRATEGIES

The Grand Theatre brochure will remain a central part of tactical activity but the Grand will strive over the next two years to maximise the use of new technology, social network marketing and special promotional activity aimed at new audiences. Specifically, it will:

- Maximise opportunities to raise awareness of the Grand's activities via cultural industry and public sector networks to articulate the importance of the theatre in the life of the town and the social/cultural benefits that it generates.
- Maximise marketing opportunities to current core visitors to encourage repeat visitation and crossover between artforms.
- Maximise marketing opportunities for core loyal visitors to become ambassadors for the theatre and generate new visitors.
- Using price promotional activity to encourage trials of new artforms and to introduce new users to the theatre. (e.g. Student Stampede)
- Continue to develop programming strands and product to that attracts new audiences, in particular family friendly activities, those unfamiliar with the theatre experience and people with disabilities.
- Maximise marketing activity to businesses associated with the visitor market including accommodation providers, tour operators, taxi drivers and guides.
- Developing collaborative marketing activity with other key attractions in the town to drive new users to the theatre and encourage access to other cultural assets in the town.

6.3 TARGET MARKET SEGMENTS

The choice of target markets is based on the needs of the Grand to fulfil both corporate and marketing objectives. We have based our analysis of the market size on the Acorn profiling recently commissioned for the Grand and our findings from the Market Review.

Existing Attenders will form a significant part of the audience strategy. At present the Acorn profile indicates that there are 81,939 arts attenders within the 60-minute market area. Based on the current database, The Grand has captured over half (54%) of this market – 4% of the total market area. However we cannot simply deal with existing attenders as a homogenous group. The Acorn profiles act as a clear way to segment the market both for existing customers within the 60-minute drive time and those who are visiting Blackpool from elsewhere.

For the purpose of defining the target markets we are dealing with the existing database of 73,909 records and a market catchment of 60 minutes drive.

TARGET MARKET

Comfortably Off - Settled Suburbia – Middle Income Older Couples

Market Size and Current Penetration:

82,698 individuals within a sixty minute drive time.
3,928 records on the Grand Theatre database.
Penetration rate of 5.5%
Database index 266 (over two and a half times the national average)

Characteristics: Middle of the road Britain". People are not considered wealthy but have relatively few financial worries. Most own their own home and are employed in a range of professional and managerial, clerical and skilled occupations.
Established communities of empty nesters (couples whose children have left home) and retired older couples.
Relatively high levels of disposable income as still in employment
Enjoy UK and European holidays throughout the year.
Not high newspaper readership– mainly Daily Express and Mail.
Gardening is their most important leisure activity and enjoy eating out.

Product Offers:

Musicals, variety, dance, comedy, bar/social experience, Friends of the Grand and volunteering

Marketing Tactics:

Season brochure
On-line e newsletter
E-marketing via major employees – Tesco, BAE, Axa, Asda etc.
Strategic partners providing special offers – restaurants etc.

TARGET MARKET

Moderate Means – Blue Collar Roots – skilled workers, semis and terraces

Market Size and Current Penetration:

61,104 in 60-minute drivetime
3,216 records on the database.
Penetration rate of 5.3%
Database index 174 (nearly two times the national average)

Characteristics: These people are shop workers and skilled blue collar workers employed in manufacturing and other manual occupations.
The age profile is similar to that of the UK as a whole, with a mixture of singles, couples, families and retired people.
Most people are buying their property although some are renting privately.
Car ownership is in line with the national average.
Incomes are modest rather than low.
Interests include camping and caravanning, angling, bingo and the pub.
High level of cable TV subscription and is likely to read the Daily Mirror and The Sun, with the Sunday Mirror, News of the World and The People at weekends.

Product Offers:

Musicals, comedy, variety, music, bar and social activity

Marketing Tactics:

Season brochures
On-line e newsletter
Direct mail
Ambassadors and social networks- taxi drivers, hairdressers, health club, retail.
Media advertising
Special promotions and competitions with reciprocal seaside locations (Blackpool/Brighton swap)

TARGET MARKET

Moderate Means - Home Owning Families, Terraces

Market Size and Current Penetration:

101,529 in 60-minute drivetime.
2,308 records on the database.
Penetration rate of 2.3%
Database index of 201 (twice the national average)

Characteristics:

This is a younger Acorn Type, comprising young families with two children under ten, typically living in small terraced housing.
Employment is in blue-collar jobs in manufacturing, mining and other manual occupations, with shop work also common.
Some unemployment and long term illness is above the national average.
Educational qualification levels are generally low.
Car ownership is below the national average and many people travel to work on foot or cycle.
Incomes are generally low, resulting in low levels of saving and investment and below-average usage of credit cards.
Leisure interests include camping, angling, bingo, horseracing and rugby, as well as watching cable TV and gong to the pub. Popular newspapers include the Daily Mirror, Daily Sport and their Sunday equivalents, as well as the Daily Star.

Product Offers:

Pantomime, variety, musicals and children’s shows
Youth academy and workshops

Marketing Tactics:

Season brochure
e-mail marketing
Price promotions and cross-over offer for returning patrons
Media advertising
Social networks
Test Drive scheme
Ambassadors

TARGET MARKET

Urban Prosperity – Aspiring Singles – Low income singles, small rented flats

Market Size and Current Penetration:

16,929 in 60-minute drivetime
2,230 records on database
Penetration rate of 13.2%
Database Index of 208 (twice the national average)
8,615 under 18 (2005) 959 student discounts (2005)

Characteristics:

Young and old single people – around 20% are aged under 20 and 10% are over the age of 75.
Incomes are quite low and residents have average qualifications. They have relatively routine jobs in shops and offices and there is some unemployment.
The younger people have high material aspirations but in reality have low limits on their credit cards, plan to pay off debts and require a loan.
Spending on food is low and they use catalogue shopping to help economise.
Few people own a car and public transport dependency is high. There is some level of eating out, primarily in the pub.
Leisure interests focus on football and betting on horses. At home, residents relax by reading a novel or listening to music. There is a keen interest in self-improvement and education.

Product Offers:

Variety, musicals, comedy bar and social activity
Lecture programme, tours and talks

Marketing Tactics:

Transport advertising or contra deals- bus tickets?
Links and co-promotions with tertiary education – Blackpool College, University of Third Age
Singles-buddy nights
Price promotion – student stampede
College, education networks and links to part-time evening courses/community education

TARGET MARKET

Adults and Children with disabilities

Market Size and Current Penetration:

Registered disabled users 446 (2004) 484 (2005) 727 est. (2006)

Characteristics:

Depending on disability varying degrees of assistance prior to and during visits.
Good information sources and excellent info-pre-visit
Children influenced by parents/carers and social networks.
Support and information networks important.

Product Offers:

Signed performances
Audio-description performances
Disabled access to auditorium
Community access open day
Play/performance synopsis
Stage Text (2007)

Marketing Tactics:

Utilise established networks and associations for email/newsletter marketing
Continue with personal visits to groups (30/annum- Access Officer)
E-mail and mobile communications

TARGET MARKET

Education Sector

Market Size and Current Penetration:

Primary school teachers
Secondary school teachers

Characteristics:

Expressive arts teachers
Curriculum focused
Limited amounts of time and many other pressures and targets
Limited resources, particularly travel

Product Offers:

Schools Alive programme, schools performances, technical workshops and tours

Marketing Tactics:

Direct Mail
Personal meetings/presentations to LEA
Partnership delivery
Distribution via school network
Price promotions and travel deals

TARGET MARKET

Media – local, regional and national plus travel and tourism trade press.

Market Size and Current Penetration:

500 approx

Characteristics:

Limited amount of time
Regular turn-over of staff
Different needs for each publication– topical/fun for tabloids and more heavyweight for broadsheets.

Product Offers:

Press Releases
Press packs
Digital images
Press Launch for season

Marketing Tactics:

Personal contact – telephone and face-to-face
Continue to nurture relationship
Feed story ideas, themes and angles
Entertainment – lunch/brunch
Gifts and gimmicks linked to shows (e.g. Rose/Beauty and Beast)
Generic campaigns – access and disability activity, youth theatre, social and economic impacts etc.

TARGET MARKET

Stakeholders

Market Size and Current Penetration:

Arts Council England, Blackpool Council, Visit Blackpool, Blackpool and Fylde College and RE:Blackpool

Characteristics:

Strategic objectives
National priorities

Product Offers:

2-3 personal invites/annum
Annual Review documents and good news headlines
Applications and Presentations

Marketing Tactics:

Face to face meetings
Funding applications
Annual report – robust measurements and professional presentations
Media coverage – industry related
Monitoring and Evaluation reports
Conferences and training networking

7. TACTICAL PLAN

7.1 PRICING

Pricing is an important marketing tactic and the Grand will continue to use price as a means to encourage purchases. However pricing is not a decision made solely by the Grand and producers can influence such decisions, even decide not to participate in such schemes that can deliver new audiences (Student £5 or Student Stampede) It is acknowledged that price is a considerable factor in some groups being persuaded to take a risk and trial a visit to the theatre. As a consequence the Grand has developed the following price promotion tools that can be suggested to producers and they continue to build up evidence that can be presented to justify the success of such schemes.

Student Stampede – 60 tickets discounted to £6 a ticket on the night of the performance

Continuation of discounts for registered disabled, unemployed, students and children.

"Test Drive"–a highly targeted programme of free tickets to encourage trial of the venue, followed by regular contact with the individual to encourage repeat visitation, but at a slightly increased price until fully integrated into the core pricing.

7.2 THE MARKETING MIX

Key actions within the "marketing mix" are indicated below, with an indication of budget although these are indicative and will be determined by the make up of programming for 2007/08. On the whole the Grand Theatre operates on split deals with promoters and there is always a certain amount of uncertainly about what a producer is prepared to commit to marketing.

A generic marketing budget will support this activity, to ensure that the strategies of promoting the venue and its staff rather than the product are achieved. It is anticipated that further financial support may well be needed to progress some of the new initiatives.

The Audience Development budget is shown in this document at 2006 prices; obviously an inflationary factor will need to be applied for 2007 and subsequent years.

Advertising: £50,000

Regular monthly advertising in the Blackpool Gazette, a composite advert dealing with show by show. Blackpool Gazette is a media partner and an additional proportion of the spend is sponsored. Regional advertising to include Lytham St Annes Express (especially opera, ballet, musicals and drama), local papers Lancashire Evening Post and Lancashire Evening Telegraph, Westmorland Gazette for Cumbrian audiences. Additional national advertising focusing on Daily Mail and Daily Express as and when funds are available from producers.

Annual contract for town poster sites theatre changed on a weekly/monthly basis.

Customer Care: £1,000

- Communicate top-line audience development strategy to front-line staff to place emphasis on the new audiences we are hoping to attract, including a briefing on some of the barriers to attendance and how the Grand intends to respond.
- Family friendly audit completed to ensure that there are no gaps in service provision.

- Continue and enhance disability awareness training and BSL with volunteers and frontline staff training.
- Continue to undertake formal feedback from customers via comments form in Box Office and through the disabled groups post-show meetings.
- Maintain on all printed material and web-site accurate information detailing location, access times, facilities offered, travel arrangements and family friendly information.

Direct Mail: Budget £6,500

- Continue to capture data for all visitors to the theatre and web-site.
- Continue with programme of show-by-show direct mail.
- Continue to expand the e-mail direct mail list on the web-site and via ticket sales. Develop e-flyer concept with e-mail contacts with special offers and links to other leisure providers (Join The Party)
- Develop stakeholders list – Board, ACE, Blackpool Council, Arts Officers, MPs, MEPs, Councillors etc.
- Develop educator list (formal and informal) to include – community education, Parents Associations, after-school activity groups (Guides/Brownies/Boys Brigade) Toddlers Groups, Tumble Tots, nursery schools (private/public), Youth Groups and child care workers.
- Develop group lists – social groups (WI's, Rotary, Masonic), Special interest groups (writers, drama, music, walking and horticulture) and Senior Citizens groups including the University of Third Age.

Generic Marketing: £20,000

Allocated to generic marketing activity that promotes the theatre and its activity as a whole.

Press Relations: Budget £250

- Maintain all existing media mailing lists.
- Concentrate efforts on individual press briefings and personal relationships.
- Develop media information available on web-site (News Section)
- Continue to target 6-10 key media for personal meeting (lunch etc.)
- Target access-related website and media (You and Yours, Radio 4 etc.)
- Continue to follow-up all press mailings with telephone calls.

Print: £52,000

- Review existing brochure to take account of increased postal costs and reduce size as required.
- Continue with programme synopsis for disabled patrons and also consider for new audiences visiting the theatre for the first time.
- Additional material as and when possible to support campaigns to students (other than direct mail) but NOT usual "arts" print – beer/coffee mats and postcards for Stampede

Public Relations: Budget £400

- Front Line Staff - an initiative that builds on the work the Grand has already done with Blackpool Landladies. Extending the idea of introducing a season, encouraging questions and providing opportunities to see performances. Further work to be done with "front-line" staff, including tourist information officers, concierges, taxi drivers, leisure sector, hairdressers, health and fitness workers and restaurant and retail staff.

During the year a total of between 2-4 familiarisation visits are to be co-ordinated to communicate the work of the Grand and the programme. Refreshments to be included at a total cost of £100 per event.

- Develop relationships with social networks and groups to promote talks, tours and lecture series. Consider the development of standardised short presentations.

New Media/Technology: Budget £6,500

- Continue with e-mail newsletter
- Continue to develop links with relevant web-site, in particular disability, access and family friendly.
- Develop web-flyer for e-mail network

This service is undertaken in-house and there are no additional costs associated with this.

Special Initiatives : Budget £2,465

- Develop cross-promotional activity with compatible retailers and restaurants to distribute print and offer special incentives and deals for customers.
- Develop relationship with the student market via national student discount card.(Young People Now Network)
- Grow the idea of Community Access Day (November 2006) and consider the outcome from November 2006 to modify the programme or develop the offer.
- Continue to develop the links with community newspapers to move into developing the Grand Ambassadors scheme (below)

<u>Ambassadors Scheme</u> – adoption of an initiative that has proved successful across the UK when attracting new audiences to cultural activities. A total of 10 Ambassadors will be recruited from areas that have a high proportion of people from the C2DE grouping. Ambassadors will be provided with an introduction to the work of Grand and its people, activities and organisation. The recruited Ambassadors will already have a degree of authority in the community and will belong to some social networks. They will then be encouraged to build relationships with key groups and networks within their own local community. Each Ambassador will organise pre-arranged group visits to the theatre and a package of support will be provided to encourage engagement, including contributions to transport, a simple photo-story book detailing a tour of the theatre in pictures so that people can understand what to expect, free guides and discounts in bar. Ambassadors would be encouraged to initiate between 2 – 4 visits in a 12 month period. A remuneration package will be offered to each Ambassador including discounts, travel and refreshments. A total of £1,200 has been allocated to cover recruitment costs and expenses.

<u>Group Hug</u> – 25 key group organisers have been identified that already co-ordinate 3 trips to the Grand each year with on average at least 250 ticket sales. The theatre will co-ordinate a thank you "Group Hug" for each individual and bring together the top 25 people. The "Group Hug" will consist of special goody bag gifts, including signed programmes/posters for the last season, a sneak preview of new season, refreshments and an opportunity to see extracts from forthcoming productions. Moreover each group organiser will be encouraged to be part of the drive to increase numbers and develop new audiences. A target will be to attract at least 5 new people to each group who have not been to the Grand before with a prize for delivering new attenders. A total of £175 has been allocated to cover marketing material, entertainment costs and small goody bags for each group organiser.

<u>Test Drive</u>- this is another successful campaign model that can be developed with key stakeholders. Blackpool Council is keen to encourage more people on low incomes to

visit the theatre and this programme can be used to nurture such an audience. The model is simple and based on the idea that people are often more willing to try a product/service if they are given a risk-free trial. Extensive research and evaluation of such schemes in the arts indicates that an initial screening phase is essential to ensure that willing participants are recruited. If possible data should be supplied from the Council and initial telephone contact made to discuss the production and dates. A small group of new attenders are then personally assisted during their visit, provided with support material for the production and greeted on arrival and during the interval. The visitors are then nurtured with a follow-up offer and discount. A review of previous initiatives suggests that on average there is a cost of £2.18 to contact and recruit someone onto “Test Drive” campaign, excluding the cost of the free ticket. We have allocated a total of £1,090 to recruit a total of 500 people onto “Test Drive” each year. However progress with this initiative is driven by developing good relationships with producers willing to participate in Test Drive and offer free/discounted seats.

8. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

8.1 IMPLEMENTATION

At present there is very little opportunity for additional resources to be allocated to marketing so the options for undertaking additional activity are limited:

Any additional activity will need to be undertaken by the existing staff on top of any existing duties

Voluntary support may be possible for discreet tactical activity e.g. Ambassadors and Test Drive

Marketing support in-kind from stakeholders. The “Test Drive” scheme is the most appropriate initiative that could be developed in partnership with the Council and marketing staff resources allocated so that some of the workload shared. Further discussions should take place to establish if this is a practical way forward and an opportunity for joint working that might deliver benefits for both organisations. We would anticipate a short secondment of maybe four weeks to support the initiative.

A considerable amount of the work with disabled people is undertaken by the Access Officer and other volunteer support. We have anticipated that the majority of this work will be handled by this officer.

It is also important that on-going training requirements are identified and resources allocated accordingly, particular short-courses and networking opportunities presented by the Arts Marketing Association. A full training audit and plan is beyond the scope of this study; provision for audience development related training is not made in the budget presented below.

8.2 INDICATIVE BUDGET

The following is an indicative annual budget, based on the actions indicated in Section 6. As noted it does not include human resource costs (marketing salaries, benefits, recruitment and training) or office/administration costs relating to the marketing staff.

It covers the two years of this Audience Development Plan and is adjusted in the second year for inflation at a rate of 2.5%.

Table 10: Indicative Audience Development Budget, October 2006-September 2008 Future Values

Item	2006-7	2007-8
Advertising	£50,000	£51,250
Customer Care	£1,000	£1,025
Direct Mail	£6,500	£6,663
Generic Marketing	£20,000	£20,500
Press Relations	£250	£256
Print	£52,000	£53,300
Public Relations	£400	£410
New Media	£6,500	£6,663
Special Promotions	£2,465	£2,527
Monitoring and Evaluation	£500	£513
Sub-total	£139,615	£143,105
Contingency (10%)	£13,962	£14,311
Total	**£153,577**	**£157,416**

Source: Blackpool Grand Theatre/RGA

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The results of the audience development activity must be monitored to evaluate the plan's effectiveness and a review procedure implemented so that the plan is regularly updated.

9.2 MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (MIS)

Management information is reviewed regularly and this must continue on a weekly basis. Performance against key marketing/audience development targets should be reported at management and Board meetings. Supplementary measurements are likely to be required for each new initiative. Useful management information includes:

- Ticket sales, numbers of bookers and repeat purchases.
- The number of customers added to the database and the quality of information (e.g. all records to be completed).
- Response to individual campaigns – ticket sales.
- Discounts/promotions – number of discount codes allocated including disabled people.
- Media coverage generated.
- Revenue generation.

The product must also be monitored to ensure that it is satisfying customer requirements and continuing to reinforce the position of the Grand. This might include:

- Annual audience survey to establish user profile and response to various aspects of the venue. This could be completed on-line and managed in-house.
- An on-going review of competitors in the market (including new entrants), in addition to a parallel review of their pricing policy.

The promotional mix must be monitored to enable management to evaluate how effective each promotional tool has been. Appropriate action must be taken if certain tools are not delivering marketing objectives – this may include revising the content or type of promotional activity undertaken.

- Point of sale data collection.
- Annual attendance survey to include information about marketing tools, data to be profiled to gather more information about existing and new attendees.
- When possible all marketing tools to carry a response mechanism or means to calculate effectiveness.
- Acorn profiling of the database to monitor changes in penetration

APPENDIX 1: ACORN DATABASE PROFILING

In order to better understand the characteristics of Grand Theatre attendees, the database was profiled using Acorn, a geodemographic classification system that analyses database entries by the characteristics of the postcode area. It is intended that this research can be used to inform the Grand's audience development and marketing campaigns and to better target tactical activity. The full area profile has been provided to the Grand Theatre as a separate document, with core findings summarised below; at overall, Lancashire and beyond Lancashire levels.

Acorn categorises the UK population into 5 categories, 17 groups and 56 types. The largest five types in the database overall are:

Table 1: Most significant types in the Grand Theatre Database (n=73,502)

Category	**Group**	**Type**	**% of records**	**Index***
Comfortably Off	Settled Suburbia	Middle Income, Older Couples	8.1%	266
Moderate Means	Blue-Collar Roots	Skilled workers, semis and terraces	6.8%	174
Comfortably Off	Secure Families	Established Home Owning Workers	5.8%	148
Moderate Means	Blue-Collar Roots	Home Owning Families, Terraces	5.6%	208
Comfortably Off	Secure Families	Mature Families in Suburban Semis	5.1%	148

Source: CACI/RGA

* The index figure shows how representative the sample is of the UK population as a whole. An index of 100 means that the proportion of households belonging to this Acorn Type on the Blackpool database is the same as the proportion of households in this type in the UK as a whole. An index of more than 100 means that the database has more households within this category than average and an index of less than 100 means that the database has less households within this category than average.

Together these Acorn Types represent 31% of the total database. It is therefore worth examining the characteristics of these groups in more detail.

The *Comfortably Off* Category is described as "middle of the road Britain". People are not considered wealthy but have relatively few financial worries. Most own their own home and are employed in a range of professional and managerial, clerical and skilled occupations.

An Acorn Group contained within the Comfortably-Off Category, *Settled Suburbia* consists of established communities of empty nesters (couples whose children have left home) and retired older couples. Given that children have left home and mortgage levels are low, these households have relatively high levels of disposable income. They like to go on holiday and will typically enjoy UK and European holidays throughout the year. Gardening is their most important leisure activity. These people have managed their income well and have adequate resources to feel secure about their future.

Middle Income, Older Couples is one Type within the Settled Suburbia Group and accounts for the largest proportion (approximately one in every twelve) of database entries. Four in five households in this category are still in employment, which gives them high levels of disposable income now that their children have left home. As well as gardening and holidays this group enjoys eating out on a regular basis. They enjoy watching television and may subscribe to satellite channels. They also enjoy listening to light classical music. They are not particularly keen readers of newspapers but will tend to choose the Daily Express and Daily Mail. Clusters of these types of households are found in towns such as Southend-on-Sea, Gloucester, Congleton and Wyre.

Secure Families is also a Group within the Comfortably-Off Category. This group contains home-owning families living in stable areas in suburban and semi-rural locations. Families may include young children, teenagers and young adults who have not yet left home, with a smaller proportion of empty nesters. Incomes are at least of average levels. Most people in this group have some savings and consider themselves to be financially prudent.

Within Secure Families there are two Acorn Types featured in Table 1. The first, *Established Home Owning Workers*, are traditional blue-collar neighbourhoods containing married couples, families with older children and some empty nesters. Formal educational qualification levels are below average. People tend to work in routine occupations in manual and retail sectors. Family income levels are average and the main income is often supported by female part-time working. Half of homeowners are purchasing their property on a mortgage with another third owning outright. Most households have access to a car. They are likely to take one main holiday per year, probably a packaged holiday to the Mediterranean or a camping or caravanning holiday in the UK. Popular leisure activities are watching TV, going to the cinema and bingo. Doing football pools, visiting the pub and gardening are also common. Established Home Owning Workers read tabloid newspapers and listen to Radio 2. They are commonly found in Wolverhampton, Dudley, Darlington, Stoke, Rotherham and Mansfield.

The second Secure Family Type featured in the Table is *Mature Families in Suburban Semis***.** Again this Type comprises empty nesters and couples with older children. Employment is likely to be in office or clerical jobs and earnings are above average. Families have built up investments and are likely to have paid off their mortgage, thereby having equity in their house. This group is more comfortable with face to face contact for financial transactions rather than other methods such as the internet. Residents watch a lot of TV but also eat out occasionally. They have the money to take regular holidays. Car ownership is above average. The Daily Express and the Daily Mail are the most popular newspapers.

Concentrations of this neighbourhood type are found in Outer London (Bexley, Havering and Sutton) as well as in Dartford, Watford, Stockport, Solihull and the Wirral.

The remaining Types in Table 1 belong to the *Moderate Means* Category. This contains much of what used to be the country's industrial heartland. Many people are still employed in traditional, blue-collar occupations. Others have become involved in service and retail jobs as the employment landscape has changed. Overall, people in this Acorn Category have modest lifestyles but are generally able to get by.

Blue Collar Roots is a Group within the Moderate Means Category. These are communities where employment is in traditional occupations. Families and retired people predominate but there are some young singles and single parents. Many houses are being bought on a mortgage although renting from a private landlord, local authority or housing association is common in some areas. Levels of educational qualifications tend to be low. Most employment is in factory or other manual occupations. Incomes range from moderate to low; unemployment is higher than the national average, as is long term illness. There are pockets of deprivation within this group. Car ownership is below the national average and many households find it difficult to save regularly. There are pockets of high debt levels. Interests include camping, angling, bingo, the pub and horseracing. This Group shows high levels of tabloid press readership and will watch cable TV.

Nearly 7% of database entries belong to the *Skilled Workers, Semis and Terraces* Acorn Type, located within the Blue Collar Roots Group. These people are shop workers and skilled blue collar workers employed in manufacturing and other manual occupations. The age profile is similar to that of the UK as a whole, with a mixture of singles, couples, families and retired people. Most people are buying their property although some are renting privately. Car ownership is in line with the national average. Incomes are modest rather than low and as with the Mature Families in Suburban Semis there is a preference for face to face financial transactions. Interests include camping and caravanning, angling, bingo and the pub. This group has a high level of cable TV subscription and is likely to read the Daily Mirror and The Sun, with the Sunday Mirror, News of the World and The People at weekends. This Type is found throughout the UK including Blackpool, Stevenage, Crawley, Neath-Port Talbot, Harlow and the Wear Valley.

A further 6% belong to *Home Owning Families, Terraces***.** This is a younger Acorn Type, comprising young families with two children under ten, typically living in small terraced housing. Generally employment is in blue-collar jobs in manufacturing, mining and other manual occupations, with shop work also common. There is some unemployment and long term illness is above the national average. Educational qualification levels are generally low. Car ownership is below the national average and many people travel to work on foot or cycle. Incomes are generally low, resulting in low levels of saving and investment and below-average usage of credit cards. Leisure interests include camping, angling, bingo, horseracing and rugby, as well as watching cable TV and gong to the pub. Popular newspapers include the Daily Mirror, Daily Sport and their Sunday equivalents, as well as the Daily Star. This Type is generally found in former mining, industrial and manufacturing areas of Wales and northern England – Merthyr Tydfil, Rhonda, Burnley, Barrow in Furness and Halifax.

Lancashire Profile

As well as catering to a local market the Grand is also a significant contributor to the tourism sector. It is therefore appropriate – and interesting – to split the database records into those which lie within a sixty-minute drivetime of Blackpool (an area that roughly covers the County of Lancashire) and those from outside this area. It should be remembered that Blackpool, being a coastal town, has a resident catchment area that is half that of a town in a central UK location.

The top five Acorn Types on the database in the Lancashire area are:

Table 2: Most Significant Types within the Grand Theatre Database, Local Market (N=44,528)

Category	Group	Type	% of records	Index*	Ranking in Full Database
Comfortably Off	Settled Suburbia	Middle Income, Older Couples	10.2%	137	1
Moderate Means	Blue-Collar Roots	Skilled workers, semis and terraces	7.8%	142	2
Comfortably Off	Secure Families	Established Home Owning Workers	6.1%	119	3
Urban Prosperity	Aspiring Singles	Low Income Singles, Small Rented Flats	5.6%	208	6
Comfortably Off	Secure Families	Mature Families in Suburban Semis	5.1%	148	5

Source: CACI/RGA

* The index figure shows how representative the sample is of the 60-minute drivetime as a whole. An index of 100 means that the proportion of households belonging to this Acorn Type on the Grand's database is the same as the proportion of households in this type in the whole of the 60-minute drivetime catchment. An index of more than 100 means that the database has more households within this category than average and an index of less than 100 means that the database has less households within this category than average.

The Table shows that the top five categories within the Lancashire database are broadly the same as those in the full database (Home Owning Families, Terraces, 4th on the main database, is 6th at the local level). There is one addition to the list: Low Income Singles, Small Rented Flats. This accounts for 5.6% of all records at the Lancashire level, with an index of 208, suggesting high penetration of this group.

Low Income Singles, Small Rented Flats comprises neighbourhoods of young and old single people – around 20% are aged under 20 and 10% are over the age of 75. The proportions of both age ranges are well above the national average. Incomes are quite low and residents have average qualifications. They have relatively routine jobs in shops and offices and there is some unemployment. The younger people have high material aspirations but in reality have low limits on their credit cards, plan to pay off debts and require a loan. Spending on food is low and they use catalogue shopping to help economise. Few people own a car and public transport dependency is high. There is some level of eating out, primarily in the pub. Leisure interests focus on football and betting on horses. At home, residents relax by reading a novel or listening to music. There is a keen interest in self-improvement and education. Geographically this type occurs in various locations including Canterbury, seaside locations such as Blackpool and Torquay and Scottish towns such as Dundee, Galashiels and Paisley.

Non-Lancashire Profile

The top five Acorn Types on the database for audiences from outside the 60-minute drivetime area are:

Table 3: Most Significant Types within the Grand Theatre Database, Non-Lancashire (N=34,781)

Category	Group	Type	% of records	Index*	Ranking in Full Database
Moderate Means	Blue-Collar Roots	Home Owning Families, Terraces	5.6%	208	4
Comfortably Off	Secure Families	Established Home Owning Workers	5.4%	139	3
Moderate Means	Blue-Collar Roots	Skilled workers, semis and terraces	5.3%	136	2
Comfortably Off	Settled Suburbia	Middle Income, Older Couples	4.9%	160	1
Comfortably Off	Secure Families	Middle Income, Home Owning Areas	4.3%	122	10

Source: CACI/RGA

* The index figure shows how representative the sample is of the UK population as a whole. An index of 100 means that the proportion of households belonging to this Acorn Type, on the Grand's database, is the same as the proportion of households in this type in the whole of UK. An index of more than 100 means that the database has more households within this category than average and an index of less than 100 means that the database has less households within this category than average.

The profile of bookers from outside the 60-minute drivetime is very similar to that inside, with one exception: Middle Income, Home Owning Areas. These are comfortably off middle aged people living outside major towns. The children are likely to have left home, allowing the parents a comfortable lifestyle. Family incomes are good and residents are free from major financial worries, actively preparing for retirement. These people enjoy being outside – they play golf, go walking and go fishing and bird watching. They are likely to be members of the National Trust. They read the Daily Telegraph and Daily

Express and often listen to Radio 2. Pockets of this Type are found in Halifax, Huddersfield, Stevenage, Guildford, Dorchester and Cambridge.

Arts Attenders

From the data provided in the Acorn profile it is possible to assess the overall propensity of Lancashire residents to visit the Theatre. Acorn data indicates that across the UK population as a whole, 8% have an interest in theatre and the arts. This propensity varies by Acorn type; those most likely to attend the Theatre are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Acorn Types with the highest propensity to have an interest in theatre and the arts

Type	Propensity	Index
Affluent Urban Professionals, Flats	22%	269
Prosperous Young Professionals, Flats	21%	267
Multi-ethnic Young, Converted Flats	16%	195
Well-off Professionals, Larger Houses and Converted Flats	15%	188
Suburban Privately Renting Professionals	15%	184

Source: CACI/RGA

Applying the Acorn propensities for Theatre/Arts to the entire 60-minute catchment area (i.e. all people in the area, not just those on the Grand Theatre database) suggests that the local market is relatively challenging. It has a below-average propensity for interest in the arts of 7.39%, an index of 82. There are just 1,835 people falling within the top five Types presented in Table 4; there are no “Prosperous Young Professionals, Flats” or “Multi-ethnic Young, Converted Flats” at all. According to the Acorn profile, the 60-minute market area contains a total of 81,939 potential arts attenders. With 44,528 records on its database, the Grand appears to have captured over half (54%) of this market – 4% of the total market area. This is a tremendous achievement – particularly given competition from other theatres – and suggests that in operating in this area the Grand has to attract groups who would not typically display much interest in theatre or the arts. This is illustrated in Table 5, which shows the average propensity to display an interest in theatre or the arts for the top five booking Types in the 60-minute area (Table 2).

Table 5: Most Significant Types within the Grand Theatre Database, Local Market (N=44,528)

Type	Propensity to display an interest in the arts	Index	Ranking in Arts Attendance Database (of all Acorn Types)	Penetration by Blackpool Grand Theatre
Middle Income, Older Couples	7.76%	97	30	5.5%
Skilled workers, semis and terraces	6.40%	80	38	5.3%
Established Home Owning Workers	6.40%	80	39	4.5%
Low Income Singles, Small Rented Flats	7.92%	99	29	13.2%
Mature Families in Suburban Semis	9.68%	121	21	4.8%

Source: CACI/RGA

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RGA Ltd
7 Dean Bank Lane
Edinburgh
EH3 5BS

T: 0131 343 1115
F: 0131 343 2273
E: info@rgaconsulting.co.uk
W: www.rgaconsulting.co.uk