

# 5 ways to market your digital theatre production

By Simon Baker, Digital theatre expert



# Think global

**The advantage of live streaming theatre is that your audience capacity is limitless.**

Traditional marketing tools including on-location posters and local newspaper adverts are redundant to the global viewer. For digital theatre, think digital.

Simon said: “Before the rise of digital theatre, a show operating in York – for example – would be pitched to the people of York and surrounding areas. By hosting a hybrid event, it means you can market your digital strand to a worldwide audience made up of all kinds of communities. That is very powerful. Social media is a huge crossing road for marketing physical and digital theatre. It remains important to clearly distinguish your physical tickets to live stream, though.”



# The golden hour

## A different sales curve

People attending theatres to watch live performances will be required to plan their evening in advance. That means purchasing a ticket in the days leading up to a performance.

Digital theatre does not have this barrier. Tickets can be purchased seconds before a performance is due to go live.

Staying visible online in the days, hours and minutes before a show is therefore crucial with some organisers reporting 75% of digital tickets are sold on the day of the event.

“Purchasing tickets online is very different,” said Simon. “It’s very last-minute, so you’ve got to be publishing content on your social media channels regularly ahead of a performance. A lot of theatres can be taken aback by this as the sales curve is completely different. You’ll see exponential growth in your digital sales on the day of the show, so don’t be alarmed if ticket sales are weak the day before.”



# ‘Pay it forward’

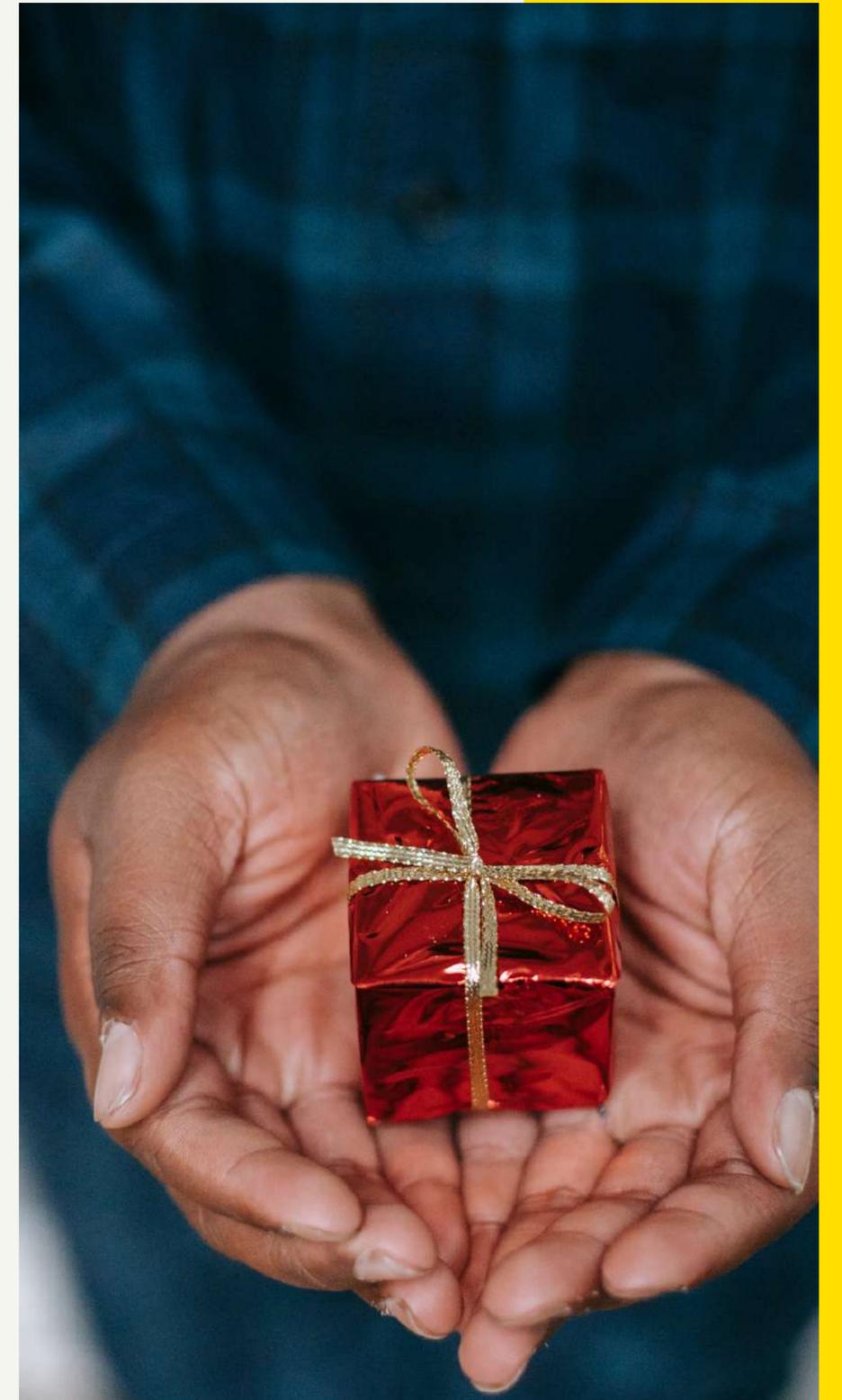
## Support of the industry will remain

The financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating. With time, the economy will recover.

But theatregoers’ support of the industry will remain a constant. In many examples, people are willing to pay over the odds as a way of supporting actors in their return to work. This feature is particularly relevant now amid an easing of lockdown restrictions where theatres can open again.

“Through Wise Children’s’ partnership with TicketCo, we were able to assign multiple price tags to the same performance,” said Simon. “It’s not too dissimilar to physical theatre’s pricing structure with child, concession and adult tickets available.

“With digital theatre, you might advertise concession and standard tickets but list gold, silver and bronze ‘pay it forward’ packages too. Of course, it is totally up to the customer if they want to voluntarily pay more but you would be surprised by viewers’ generosity.”



# Power of video

## A marketing tool

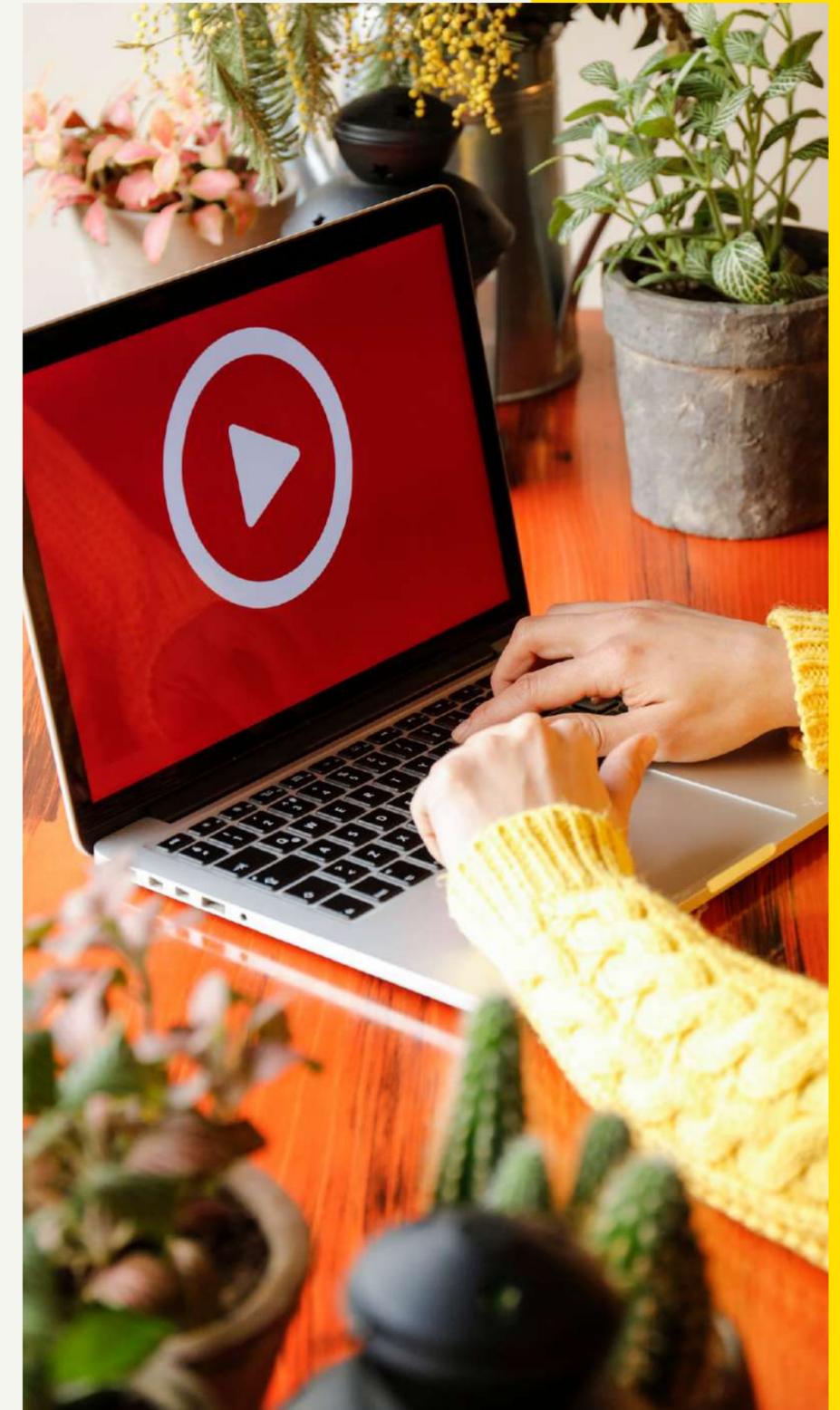
Videos on YouTube are reportedly consumed by one billion people globally each day.

We are not suggesting publishing a trailer for your digital performance will guarantee viral engagement. But it is important to understand how video has transformed the way we engage target audiences.

Video can be published on all social media platforms and be visible on the ticketing page too.

“Done correctly, video can provide you with a quality and simplistic marketing tool,” said Simon. “Of course, it comes at a cost, but for touring theatre companies there is great value in commissioning a high-quality video with longevity in mind.

“A trailer for a show or a short video of the cast and crew encouraging viewers to tune into the performance’s live stream are examples of how video can grow your audience.”



# Add value

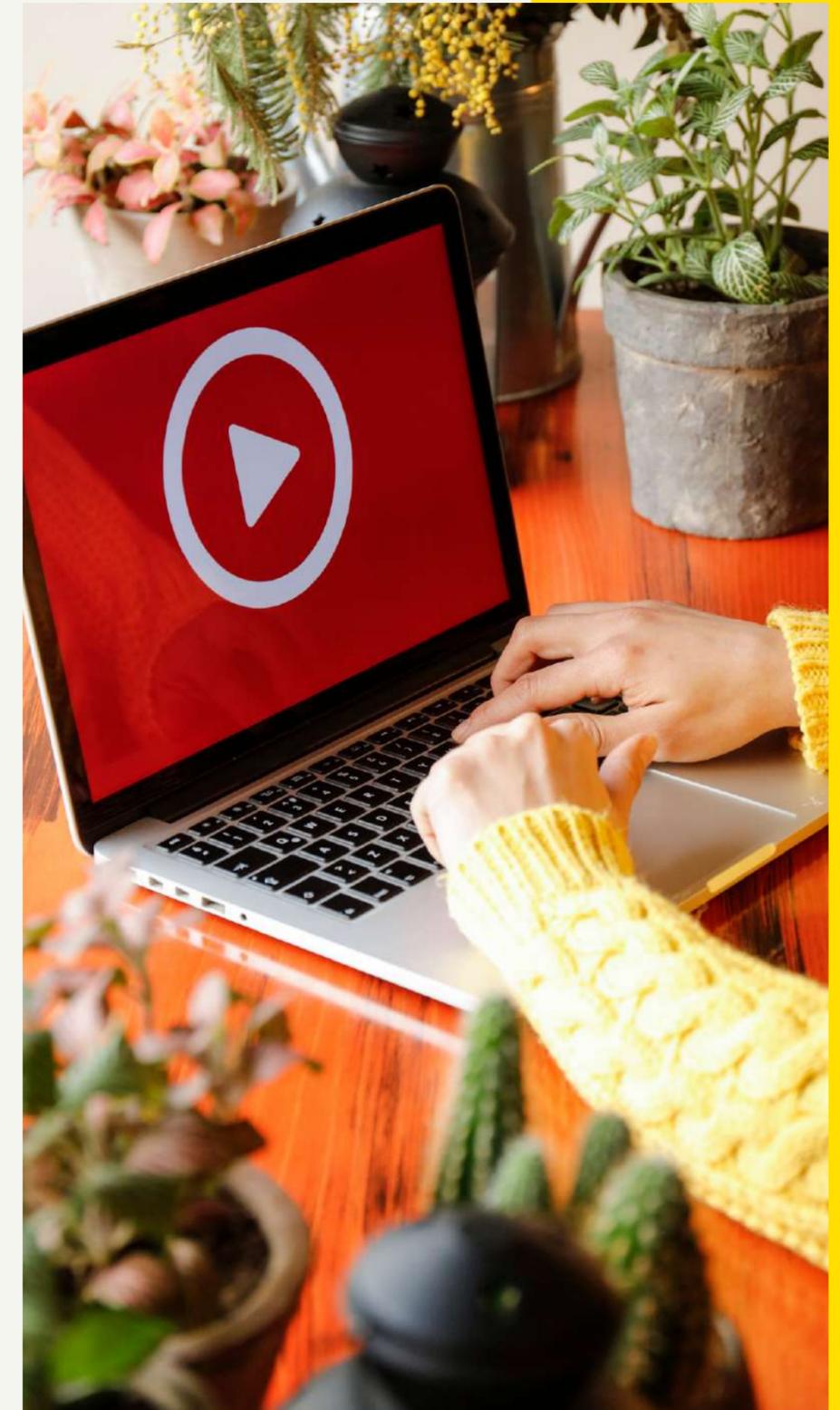
## Should always be considered

Touching the Void is a sensational true story of how climber Joe Simpson cheated death after becoming the first person to successfully ascend the West Face of Siula Grande with Simon Yates.

Mr Simpson's story has since been turned into a play. It was recently performed at Bristol Old Vic and delivered as a hybrid event via TicketCo Media Services integrated live stream and ticketing platform.

To add additional value possible to viewers' live stream experience, Bristol Old Vic arranged for Mr Simpson to appear live on YouTube before a performance for a special Q&A to set the scene.

Simon added: "Touching the Void were very clever in getting Mr Simpson to appear on YouTube at no additional cost to the viewer before one of the shows. Adding value to a performance is something that should always be considered. Sometimes it can be ingenious, other times more simplistic. But viewers love getting value for money, it makes them feel appreciated."



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