

## Customer relationships key for Pavilion Dance



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**Deryck Newland,**  
Artistic Director, Pavilion  
Dance South West.

### Pavilion Dance: A Creative Collective

Pavilion Dance South West (PDSW), a thriving performing arts organisation with a venue in Bournemouth, England, started out as a bright idea from a collective of passionate dance initiatives across the South West of England, and was initially known as Dance South West. From a loosely constituted network to today’s national dance development organisation with a state of the art venue that hosts performances, classes, live screenings, art house films and exhibitions and includes a state-of-the-art 200-seat studio theatre and two dance studios, PDSW has come a long way.

Just six weeks before the venue’s formal opening in late 2010, the team still needed a CRM and venue management software up and running in that time, all within a strict budget. “As a small organisation, it couldn’t afford to buy full systems for each separate function at the venue, so the system had to service the box office, venue management and marketing”, says Deryck Newland, Artistic Director at Pavilion Dance South West.

### Stage One: Searching for a Solution

“I first came across PatronBase in 2008 when I was working at Salisbury Arts Centre, which was one of the first venues in the UK to use this software”, says Deryck.

“We looked at multiple options and did a big comparison and a competitive tender process before narrowing our options down to PatronBase. In the end we realised, that though there are a number of different tools that do similar things, it is important to choose one that suits your scale and ethos.”

“The biggest reassurance for me was realising that PatronBase were able to work even with clients of relatively small turnover. And they identify with the not for profit ethos of our organisation. That for me carries more weight than the features and modules in a particular system.”

Deryck says they also appreciated the flexible payment options offered by the PatronBase team, “As opposed to the other options, I didn’t have to tie in a percentage of our ticket sales revenue.”





## Structure and best practice

Deryck asserts the importance of a system for any performing arts organisation which has customers or supporters, "For any venue, the system and software behind the ticketing and marketing is an essential tool, and without it, it is really tough going. While we are all creative professionals in the organisation, nobody is an IT specialist, so a system like PatronBase brings structure and industry standard best practices into our day-to-day functioning as a venue."

"We picked PatronBase because of (i) the people behind it and (ii) the flexibility in the organisation and the software they deliver. They listen carefully to customers and respond actively to concerns and issues. The other big thing is that they develop the software with you. They listen to new ideas, for example, venue manager, was developed and refined very much through conversations that we had with them about what was required at Salisbury Arts Centre", says Deryck.

18 staff members at PDSW now use the PatronBase system, including six at the box office for ticket sales. "The software itself is pretty straightforward, and easy to learn for new team members. Everybody can check in first thing in the morning to see, through venue manager what is going on in the building. I also use it to maintain an overview of the figures and check for underperforming ticket sales. The system is easy to maintain, we don't have a lot of IT staff and I don't think we need it either", says Deryck.

Having a system that provides a collaborative and collective view for all team members involved in running the venue has helped in the smooth management of everyday tasks at PDSW. "We can even pull the data we need straight into our website, so that really helps in raising our patrons' experience on the website".

## Customer relationships are key

Deryck has been in the industry for many years and has been the Director at PDSW for nearly two years, and is happy to share some honest advice for other venues. "Data is king. You absolutely have to use the software and systems that are available now to develop customer relationships. Unless you build relationships with your audience, you will never be able to develop a sustainable model for your venue or arts organization."

"Think about how you capture and use your data to record and develop relationships. Think about a system that can work across the organization so the entire team at the venue works together to build your audience."

## About PatronBase

*PatronBase provides arts management software to organisations across the world.*

*It is used by performing arts organisations to build their audience. These organisations are inherently creative in the way they do business, reflecting their specific talents, facilities and the community they serve.*

*Our software offers a broad range of functionality, from event marketing and ticketing through to membership and venue management. This range of features is available with a flexible pricing model that is highly competitive.*

*PatronBase is mainly about working with you, fitting our software to meet your needs, to reflect your unique situation and creative vision. The ultimate measure of success for us is that you are able to build an audience your way.*



**For more information and resources, visit:**

**[www.PatronBase.com](http://www.PatronBase.com)**

