Modernising the customer experience for De La Warr Pavilion

'Est. 1935. Modern ever since' is the tagline of this cultural centre, but much work was needed to ensure that promise is upheld in our hyperconnected age. Beaming's help upgrading the Pavilion's connectivity allowed CEO Stewart Drew and his team to vastly improve the services they offer customers.

Challenges

The Pavilion is a consumer-focused business, but, until recently, it wasn't up to speed with the technological revolution that's transforming customer experiences globally. Stewart elaborates on their predicament. "Our box office services were stuck in the 1970s. It's the most important part of the business – we currently sell over 50,000 tickets a year – and many of these transactions were done face-to-face or by post. We were also still counting ticket stubs at the end of the night to find out how many people had come to a gig." The building itself – although a stunning example of modernist architecture – posed another set of issues. Its metal framework acts as a Faraday cage, blocking phone signals and inhibiting Wi-Fi. Firstly, this problem affected audiences who wanted to share their experience on social media. Secondly, the Pavilion is keen to become a business hub for Bexhill, a position they couldn't hope to achieve while unable to support people working on their laptops in the café. TV companies who often needed to live stream data from the building also suffered. On top of all this, much of the team's servers and hardwarewas unsupported or on its last legs.

Company Background

De La Warr Pavilion is a pioneering centre for arts and culture in an iconic modernist building in Bexhill on Sea.

Challenges

- Inefficient, manually managed box office and other services
- Out-of-date equipment
- Poor phone signals and Wi-Fi within the building

Solution

- A 100mb fibre-optic internet connection installed
- Many services moved to the cloud
- Help setting up the online box office and other web-based services
- Replacement servers
- Tightening up of data security
- Improved building Wi-Fi

Results

- A transformed experience throughout the customer journey
- Improved capacity for fund-raising
- Staff released from manual tasks and able to dedicate time to other functions
- Improved Wi-Fi is helping this cultural centre to become a business hub

Solutions

Beaming's technical abilities were just part of the reason Stewart chose us as his connectivity partner, as he explains: "What also attracted me was their wider presence as a company. Many telecoms providers are one-dimensional, but Beaming's ethos in both service and social responsibility align with ours; they're involved in community projects, run university internships and are big into research." Once onboard, our number-one task was to upgrade the Pavilion's connectivity, installing a 100mb broadband fibre-optic line along with the necessary infrastructure. It's given them one of the fastest connections in the area and allows them to move many of their services into the cloud. The box office now has mobile compatibility, and ticket scanners do away with those tedious stubs. In the office, the replacement of infrastructure happened without the loss of a single file. To ensure everything came together, we worked closely with other suppliers, including the web developers and the company that runs the box office. It's an aspect of our role that Stewart wasn't expecting: "Beaming demonstrate joined-up thinking; some of the stuff they do isn't really their problem at all." And our involvement continues; we're currently working to ramp up the public Wi-Fi, creating multiple zones to overcome the building's inherent incompatibility.

> " Many providers over-promise. Beaming also 'over-promise', but then they deliver it. I'd say Beaming has made about 1,000% improvement on what we had before."
>
> **Stewart Drew,**
> Director and CEO,
> De La Warr Pavilion

Results

In Stewart's words, the improvements have been 'transformative'. Today, ticket customers are virtually self-servicing, allowing staff to focus on enhancing the experience in other areas. And having instant access to information about how many people are in the building at any given time is invaluable for the purposes of marketing and Health & Safety. We've also tightened up data storage processes, which are now more secure and intuitive to manage. The upgrades have even facilitated the De La Warr Pavilion's fundraising efforts, making it much easier for people to become a member or donate online. With all the changes happening so quickly, Stewart admits he was nervous. But, looking back, he recalls nothing but seamlessness and reliability. "In the four or so years we've been working with Beaming, we haven't had any outages, and I can't remember a single major problem. We pride ourselves on our customer service, and Beaming give us the same; in three words, they're professional, intelligent and collaborative."

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Beaming specialises in designing and implementing reliable voice and data products to a range of businesses and provides ongoing support for long-term success.

T: 0800 082 2868 | E: hello@beaming.biz | www.beaming.biz | @BeamingNews