

Exploiting the value of our empty seats



Andrew McIntyre

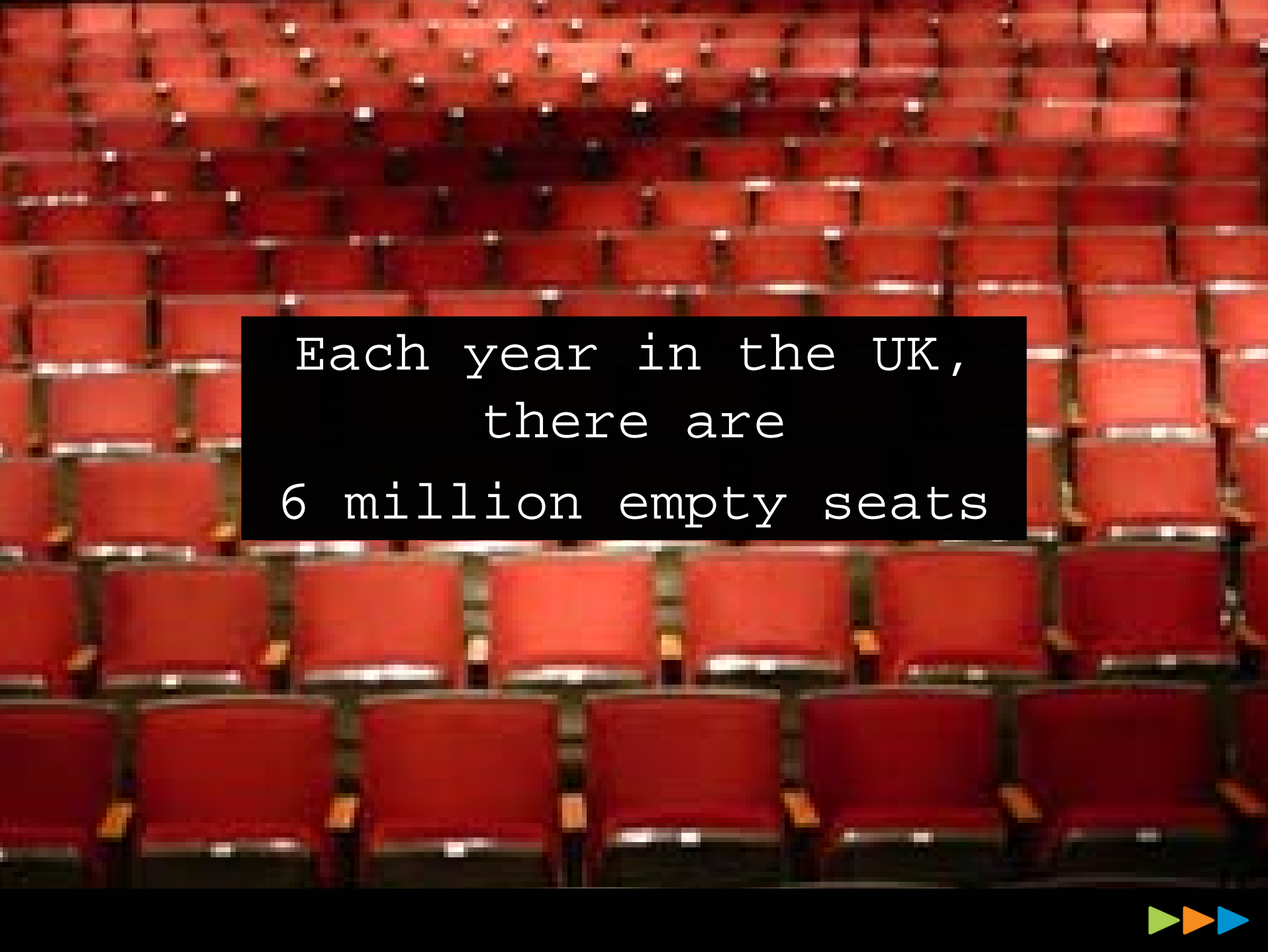
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Exploiting the value of our empty seats




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A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is dim, highlighting the texture of the red fabric.


Each year in the UK,
there are
6 million empty seats



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That's £80m of unsold tickets



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At this workshop in
Sydney today..



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..we have thousands of
empty seats between us



Worth \$millions




...but currently earning
\$0




Have we fully
penetrated the market?






Research always says
not



A large, diverse crowd of people is gathered for an outdoor event. The crowd is dense and filled with people of various ages and ethnicities. Many individuals are wearing colorful hats, including wide-brimmed straw hats and colorful umbrellas. The scene is vibrant and festive. In the center of the image, there is a black rectangular box containing white text.


Australia is full of
potential attendees



A large, empty auditorium with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the perspective is from the back of the hall, looking towards the front. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the seats.

But our theatres and
concert halls aren't



A photograph of a large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the red fabric.

Take a good look at
the
rows of empty seats



Our subscription
schemes
aren't filling them




Our sponsorship contra
deals aren't filling
them



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is dim, highlighting the texture of the red seats.

Our advertising
isn't filling them



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is dim, highlighting the texture of the seats.

Our season brochures
aren't filling them




Why not?




Because these are
sales-focused
techniques



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They are all aimed
at the core audience



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is dim, creating a somber atmosphere.

They are not aimed
at non-attenders



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Not surprisingly, they
remain non-attenders



We need a new approach



We need a stronger
marketing focus



We need new thinking..




...and new techniques




We need to reach out..



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is dim, creating a sense of solitude and anticipation.


...beyond the current
audience



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We need to understand
why people attend



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And why they don't
attend



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Some people do
experience real
barriers



But for most, it's
just
lack of persuasion



They're not sure that
what we're offering is
what they want




They're not going to
risk
time and money finding
out




(it's not easy getting
your
money back afterwards)



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Not attending is
habit-forming



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We need to break
through their inertia



Would you buy a car
without driving it
first?

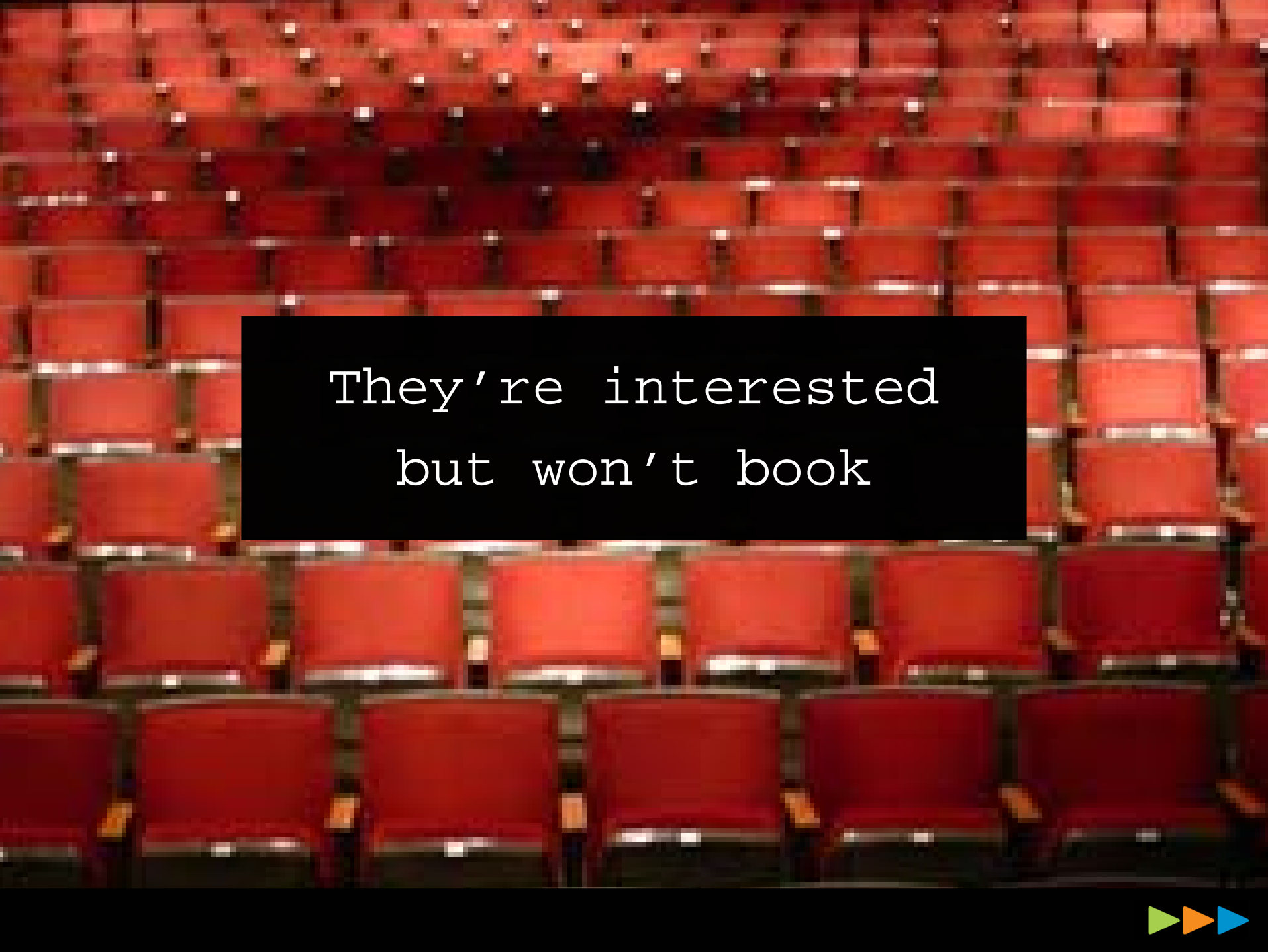


Do you try on shoes
before you buy them?




So why not let people
try
the arts before they
buy?



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They're interested
but won't book



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We've got the seats
but can't sell them



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the red fabric.

A match made in heaven



A `low-cost` match
made in heaven



Actually, a profitable
match
made in heaven




It's easy and cheap to
find potential
attenders



Test Drive speaks
to them directly



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the red fabric.

It takes the work
out of booking




It takes the **risk**
out of booking



It explains and
enthuses



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It creates excitement
and anticipation



It makes you
an offer you can't
refuse



It's not just win-win..



It's win-win-win-win



Happy new attenders
impressed with full
house



(they talk about you
to everyone they know)



Paying attenders
impressed with full
house



(book earlier next
time?)



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is dim, creating a sense of quiet and anticipation.

Performers love a full
house



You get new audiences
and a new income
stream



What's the catch?



It has to be done
properly




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It's not papering
or discounting



It mustn't alienate
existing paying
audiences



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It shouldn't
devalue the tickets



You must follow-up
and nurture new
audience



Up to 35% come back
and pay



Another 35% are more
likely
to return in the
future



They'll pay back your
modest investment **this**
year



But think how much
they'll
spend in the next ten
years



It makes a short-term
profit



But it's not a short-term tactic



It's a sustainable
strategy
for audience
development



Because it makes a
profit...



..it doesn't need
ongoing subsidy




So it should be built-
in not
bolted-on to your
marketing



Only stop when you've
no empty seats left




A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the red fabric.

How big would you
like your audience?




How big would you
like your ticket
income?



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is dimly lit, with the focus on the text in the center.


I can see the dollar
signs in your eyes



A large, empty theater with rows of red seats. The seats are arranged in a grid pattern, and the theater is completely devoid of people. The lighting is dim, creating a sense of quiet and solitude.

But fuller houses also
unleash creativity..



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They underwrite
artistic freedom




We could take bigger
risks



And plan longer runs



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Every night more
seats go to waste



While marketing
budgets are stretched



All the more reason to
convert empty seats
into cash

