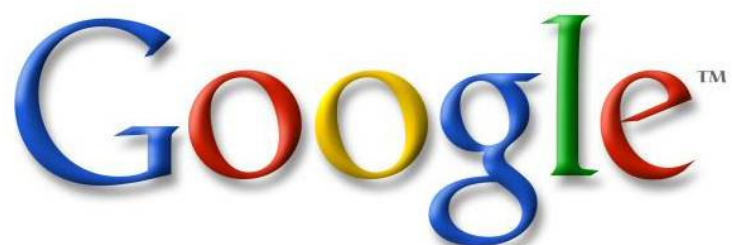

Arts Audiences

A partnership initiative of the Arts Council and Temple Bar Cultural Trust



Mentoring Scheme Report May 2013

Background:

glór is a multidisciplinary arts venue based in Ennis, Co. Clare. Opened in November 2001, we have evolved from what was originally envisaged as a cultural tourism venue to a vibrant community arts centre boasting a 485 seater theatre, a studio space that can hold up to 60 people, a gallery and a café.

glór has had a website since 2001, www.glor.ie, and this was redeveloped as recently as December 2011. We integrated Google Analytics into this new site and were eager to move our use of this information to the next level and maximise the benefit and opportunities that can be gained from this.

Our website has, in recent years, moved from being just an advertising and listing facility, to also being considered an active sales portal.

Prior to our involvement in the Google Mentoring Scheme, we relied on a heady mixture of gut, instinct, observation and pure luck, and we sorely needed something more tangible and measureable than this.

Goals:

- Increase online ticket sales by 10%.
- Harness the knowledge from Google Analytics to improve customer experiences and business outcomes.
- Familiarise ourselves with Google AdWords so as to become confident users of same so as to incorporate it into our wider marketing plan.
- Actively develop a new online audience and engage more effectively with our current online audience.

Challenges:

glór faced a number of challenges in terms of reaching customers:

1. According to the 2011 census Clare has a population of approximately 115,000 people, but only 25% have access to broadband. When taken in light of the ComReg Report that 67% of Irish households have internet access, how does glór strategise for online activity?
2. glór is the only venue in the County of Clare. Whilst a marvellous starting point there is an underlying challenge, that being how do you connect with 115,000 people of all ages, widely spread geographically?
3. How to appropriately & effectively balance online & offline marketing methods, and how to source the information that will generate these decisions initially and inform any subsequent changes/tweaks to same down the line?

Key Measurements:

In order to gauge the impact and success of our efforts, the following key measurements were used:

1. Online ticket sales
2. Bounce rate
3. Visits to site
4. Referrals from Google/Google AdWords
5. Ezine sign ups
6. % progressing to purchasing/conversion

The measurements were recorded for the period of the Mentoring Scheme, thus from October 2012 to April 2013 (Year 2), and recorded with the same period in the previous year (Year 1).

These are expanded on individually on the following pages.

1 - Online ticket sales

THE TARGET

The original target was to effect a 10% increase in our online sales, from an average of 11%, with an aspiration of ultimately reaching an average of 30%.

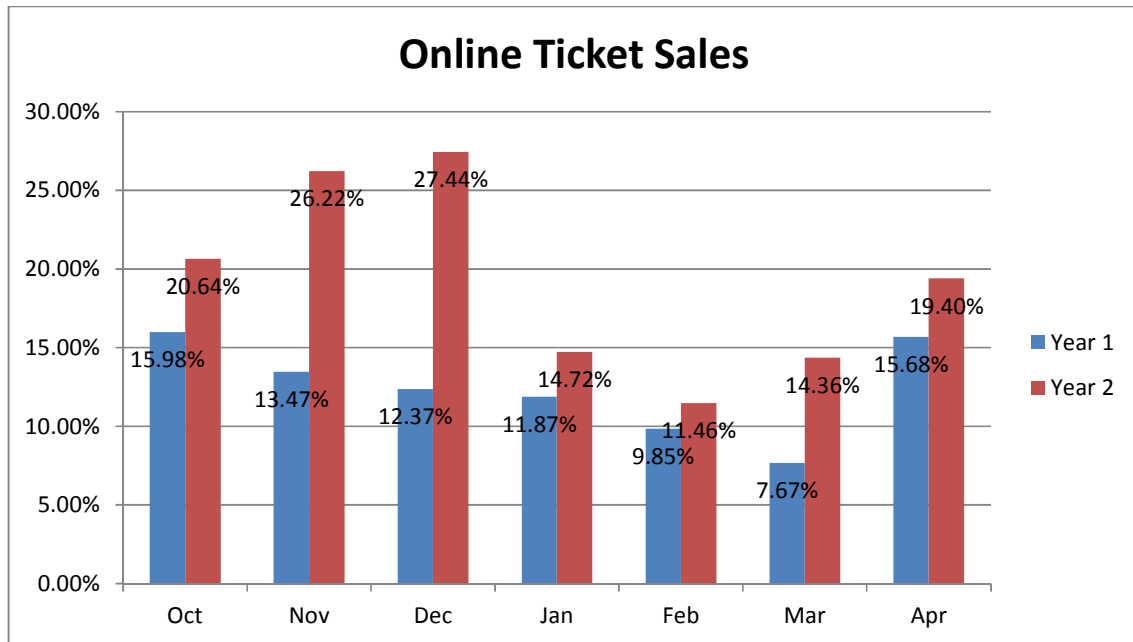
WHAT WE DID

Through a combination of Google AdWords, which drove increased traffic to our site, and Google Analytics, which showed us how people interacted with our site, we took on board this information and reacted to it, thus continually tailoring our online offering to the experiences and needs of our customers.

THE RESULT

Our average sales have increased beyond our expectations. In monetary terms, online sales are up 112%.

This decreases the volume of phone calls and counter bookings, allowing us tangible savings on wages in the box office department. Another knock on effect has been the increase in customer opting online to have their tickets posted out to them. This allows us to include marketing material tailored to their previous booking preferences, at no cost to us.



Our expected annual fluctuations (quiet in January & February as most tickets presold before Christmas and new season not yet kicked in fully) are represented above.

2 - Bounce Rate:

THE TARGET

Bring overall bounce rate to within a range of 25-30%.

WHAT WE DID

The decision to include bounce rate as a measurement came about on foot of the Google Analytics session we received as we had not previously looked at or understood this information.

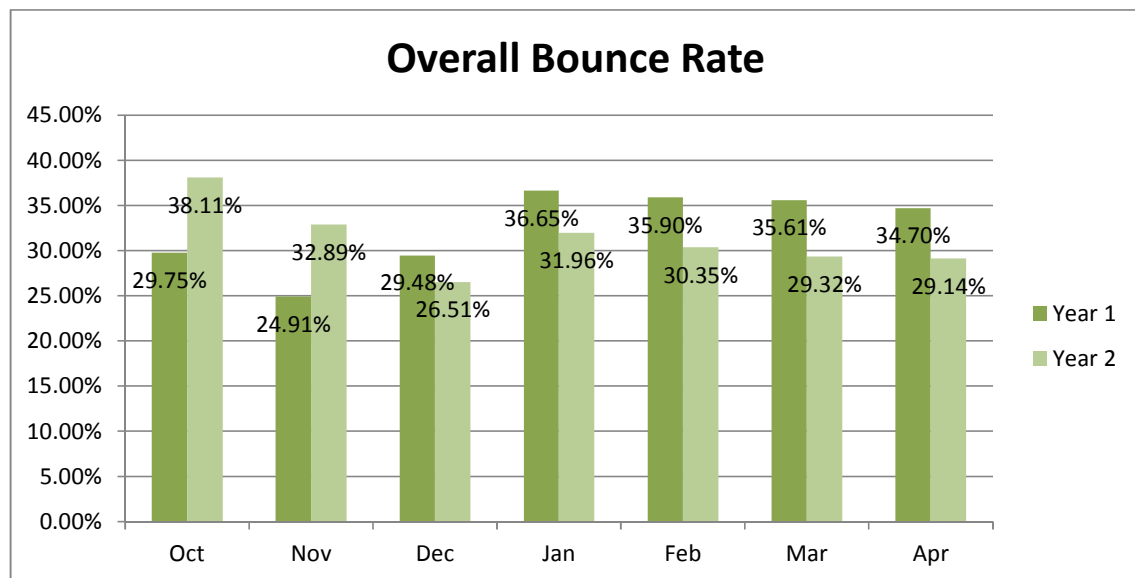
Armed with an understanding of it, we looked back at our bounce rate and could see that it had crept up steadily and found a correlation with the increasing use of mobile devices to access glór.ie, which had been at 10% in January 2012 and increased month on month to 26% by October 2012.

Further study of Analytics showed that it was the indeed the mobile users who were having the least satisfying experience of our site, reflected in their bounce rate.

glór had not previously had a mobile site, and this information allowed us to promptly address this.

THE RESULT

Our mobile site went live in January 2013 and the bounce rate is decreasing, a trend we hope to see continue.



3 - Visits to site

THE TARGET

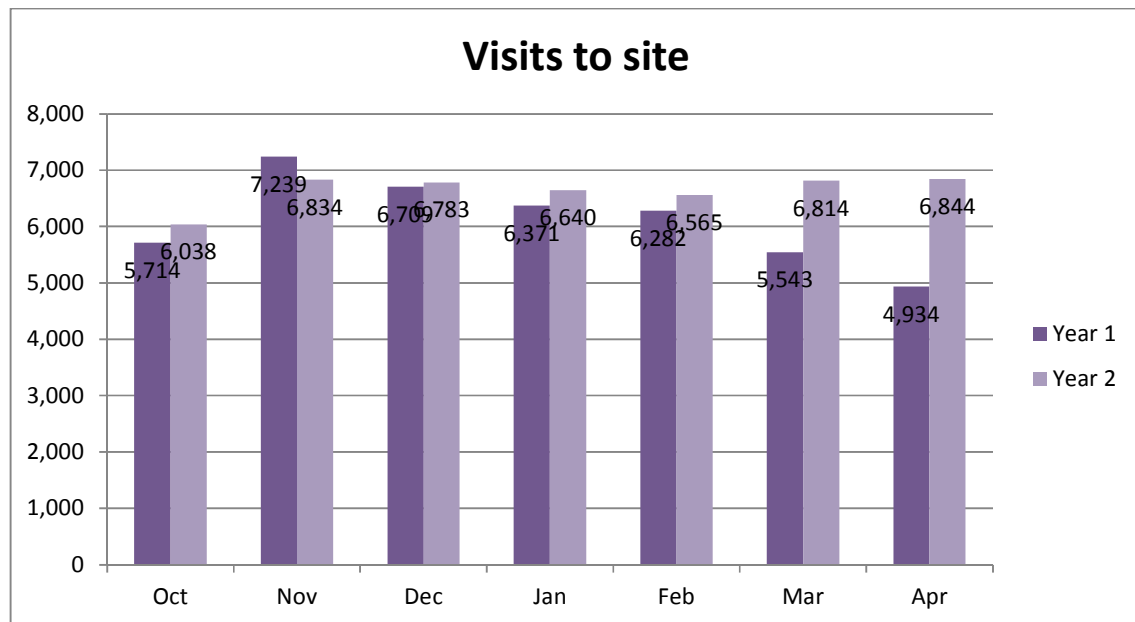
Each visit to the site is a sales and income opportunity. An increase in visits to the site is ultimately likely to contribute to an increase in our bottom line. We set ourselves a target of increasing our site visits by 10%.

WHAT WE DID

An active engagement with Google AdWords led directly to an increase in numbers visiting our website. The breakdown of this is outlined on the next page.

THE RESULT

Visits to glor.ie have increased by 8.7% over the period of the mentoring scheme and we expect to see this trend continue.



It is worth noting the peak of traffic to our site in November 2011 (Year 1) which is as a result of our 10 year anniversary and considerable regional promotion around same.

4 - Referrals from Google/Google AdWords:

THE TARGET

In tandem with our aim to increase visits to our website and so drive online sales, we aimed to maximise the potential benefits to be gained from Google AdWords. To this end we aimed to increase our referrals from Google.

WHAT WE DID

Despite being daunted initially, we embraced AdWords, and have 6 campaigns to date, each with varying though promising results.

CAMPAIGN	CTR
glór - Brand	10.17%
glór family audiences	2.87%
Ennis Book Club Festival	1.51%
What's On at glór	1.13%
DruidMurphy Campaign	0.53%
Conferencing	0.27%

The 'glór brand' campaign has had most attention in terms of the keywords and the match types. This tweaking has made significant impact on the CTR.

The 'Ennis Book Club Festival 2013' campaign is split into 2 distinct Ad Groups,

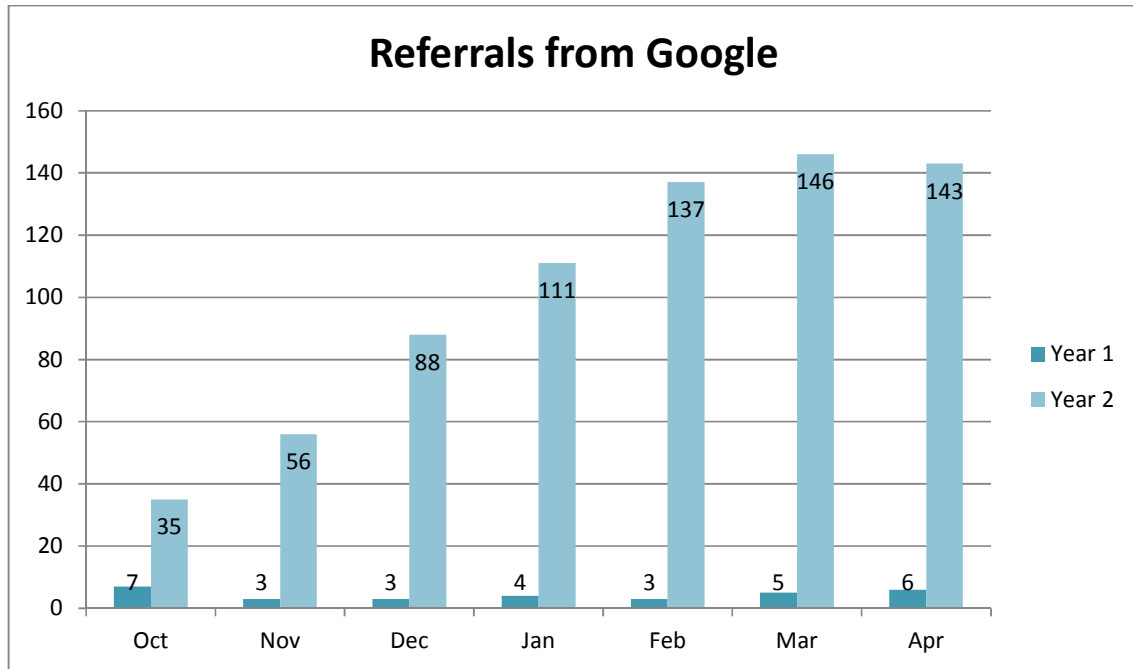
- One to reflect the 2013 Festival and the authors/events specific to this.
- One 'evergreen' group to capture year round interest in literary events and festivals.

thus maximising the impact of the campaign.

The 'DruidMurphy' campaign was used as an AdWords project by glór in terms of testing the waters as to the impact such a tool can have on an event specific level. Over the course of the campaign, there were 25,796 impressions on this campaign. We plan to use Google AdWords on an event specific level again as a result.

THE RESULT

In January 2013, Google was the top referring site for glór.ie. Over the course of the 7 months recorded, the increase in referrals to Google was a staggering 2,210%.



For all those booking tickets with glór in person or over the phone, we capture the publicity method which led to the customer finding out about the event(s) in question. Due to the effectiveness of Google AdWords, we are planning to introduce Google as an option of its own to the list currently used as it has become a key source of its own.

5 - Ezine Signups:

THE TARGET

Increase engagement with our online audience.

WHAT WE DID

Signing up to the glór ezine can be done in 3 ways:

- Enter your email address in the dedicated box visible in top right hand corner of each page of our site.
- Give your email at time of booking.
- Sign up via ezine referral from a friend (Constant Contact)

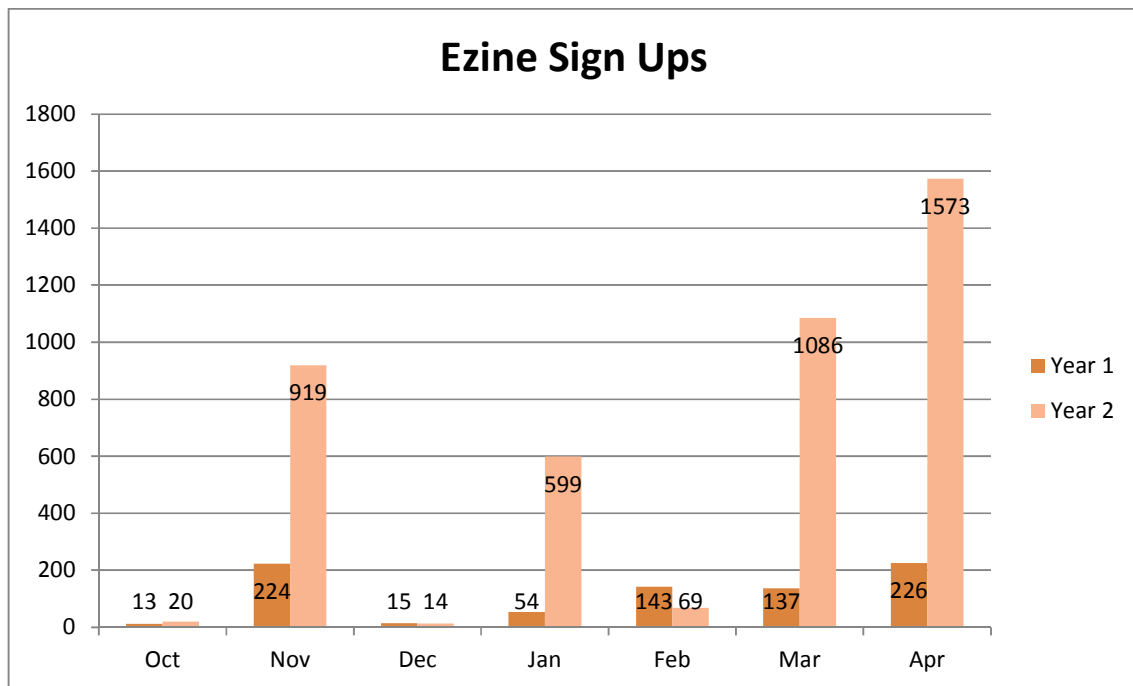
Email addresses gathered via the first 2 options are manually added to Constant Contact every few weeks as time allows. Thus, it naturally follows that after an extremely busy booking period we will have gathered a slew of new email addresses which are then added in bulk as the calm redescends. This is very visible from the graph below.

It is fair to assume that the impact of increased traffic to our site from Google referrals/ AdWords has played a significant part in the below surge in ezine sign ups.

We are also now automating our ezine sign up such that a sign up on the site will link straight to the ezine system, thus removing any bulk additions to the list and allowing customers who have recently given us their email address to be interacted with in a much more timely fashion.

THE RESULT

There was a 427% increase in sign ups to our ezine in Year 2 compared with Year 1.



6 - % progressing to purchasing/conversion:

THE TARGET

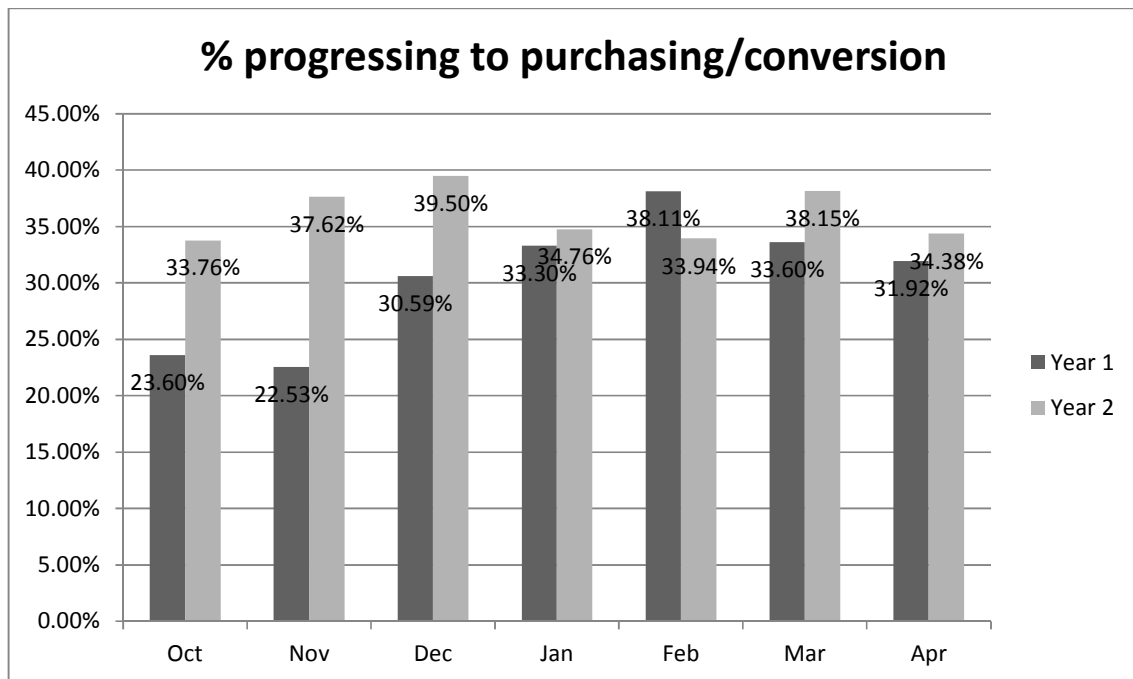
This measurement shows us how many customers are hitting the option on our website to buy their ticket online. We aimed to increase this % by 10%.

WHAT WE DID

It is fair to assume that the impact of increased traffic to our site from Google referrals/ AdWords has played a significant part in the increase in those visiting our site and thus progressing to booking an event.

THE RESULT

Over the period of the Mentoring Scheme we have seen an 18.02% increase in those leaving our site to progress to online booking.



We have also recently liaised with our online ticketing provider, tickets.com who have agreed to work to integrate Google Analytics into the booking pages for our events. This will allow us track the progress of customers through to booking and see what the actual conversion rate is in terms of tangible sales.

What Now?

We are very pleased with the results to date and look forward to building on these. There is always room to improve, and we are setting ourselves internal targets within which we can improve further.

We now have the tools to harness the information available to us and breathe life into the aspiration of www.glor.ie being a viable sales portal.

Lean on our fellow mentees as a network of those continuing to learn using a similar tool set in a similar broad environment.

Thanks.....

Many thanks to Una Carmody & Arts Audiences for such a fabulous and worthwhile opportunity.

To my mentor, Karl Ryan, he of endless patience, thank you, Danke and Tack så mycket!