

Website Design Brief for St George's Bristol

Business and Website Overview

St George's Bristol (SGB) is looking to:

- Create a dynamic, engaging and well-optimised new website. It needs to deliver an intuitive, accessible and outstanding audience/customer experience.
- It will be SGB's primary channel for online engagement, driving up commercial income: ticket sales, car/bar sales and pre-orders, donations, commercial hire offer and additional purchase opportunities.
- It will be the primary digital platform to convey SGB's values and purpose externally: we're looking for better brand integration, and clear embodiment of the organisation's USP and ambitions. It needs to facilitate high-quality creative content such as live streamed events, and guest content.
- It will be an important tool to transform internal operations: much improved integration of (Spektrix) CRM, payment and box office software is required.

What is St George's Bristol?

St George's Bristol is a cultural destination for music and ideas. We operate a unique event space for Bristol's communities and local and inter/national musicians. SGB is widely regarded as one of the UK's finest and most vibrant concert halls. We have a warm and loyal audience following and are held in particularly high esteem among musicians, many of whom consider St George's to be the best hall for chamber music in the UK.

Our mission is to be a 'creative and imaginative space for music and ideas at the heart of our community' and, in pursuit of this, we aim to curate a rich and diverse programme of the world's finest musicians and thinkers that our community can enjoy. We present 300 performances annually including classical, world, contemporary, jazz, and spoken word events to over 100,000 people. The artistic programme is subsidised by contributions from café-bar sales, hires (weddings, conferences etc.), recordings, and an ambitious annual charitable giving target.

Our market is established for classical performance - over 55, white, familiar with the arts, loyal, longstanding consumers of culture who regularly attend events across the city (likely to prioritise music and theatre). SGB **must** diversify its audiences whilst maintaining good quality relationships with existing patrons. There is a strong need to focus on reaching a broader, younger, more diverse demographic. We see the website as a key tool to holding these two requirements in tandem.

- What we do and how we make money

SGB is a 580-seat concert hall in the heart of Bristol. Alongside the main hall, box office and office spaces (housed in a Grade II* deconsecrated church), we have flexible performances and events spaces, and a cafe bar within a new contemporary building completed in 2018 (also shortlisted for RIBA south west awards 20/21). The venue sits within grounds that provide opportunities for outdoor events.

SGB is a charity. It has a core team of 24 staff (16 FTE) and operates at £1.83 million in annual turnover (pre-Covid). It receives statutory funding from Arts Council England and Bristol City Council that represents 11% of income. We generate income which contributes to the costs of delivering the artistic and education programmes, and operational overheads. The income mix consists roughly: 69% earned income (ticket sales, commercial hire and bar), and 20% fundraised through individual giving and Trusts / Foundations.

- How customers currently buy from our business

Since March 2020 (during the pandemic), all purchases are made via the website. When the Box Office is physically open, customers can make purchases and donations / set up subscriptions in-person and over the phone. All transactions are processed via Spektrix CRM.

- What makes our business unique within the marketplace?

SGB's main auditorium houses a world-class acoustic loved by audiences and inter/national artists alike. Performances are intimate and their unmatched quality of sound creates an immersive, powerful concert experience - as expressed in the 'organising thought' of the SGB brand, 'Feel Moved'. SGB is recognised for its high quality programming, long standing and strong relationships with artists, and its diverse education offer for families and young people.

What's wrong with our current website?

- It's difficult to navigate / find key information
- All primary functions take too many steps to achieve
- It is not effectively optimised for mobile / tablet devices
- The site is too text heavy, feels dated rather than fresh and contemporary
- The hard-coded template and themes are severely limiting our flexibility in terms of page, event design and functionality
- Very challenging to integrate rich content, video, or enable guest content.
- Poor integration with Spektrix CRM, which is currently reliant on iframes.

Structure has developed ad-hoc with multiple voices across many years, leading to large volumes of poorly organised information. This includes a complicated, inefficient hierarchy of content on the back end which is leading to poor practice in populating the site.

Project Objectives

- Create a dynamic, engaging and well-optimised new website to deliver an intuitive, accessible and outstanding audience/customer experience.

- The website needs to address two primary organisational objectives:
 - Driving earned income
ticket sales, commercial enquiries and opportunities, and fundraising
 - Driving audience development
convey SGB's values and purpose externally through better brand integration, facilitate high-quality creative content such as live streamed events, guest content.

- Measuring our success

We will monitor our success against our existing position and delivery against business targets. We will look at the uptake of our digital-only products along with % of online sales achieved, and users vs sales/bookings conversion rate.

We will also be tracking our users' visit times, bounce rate, and acquisition.

We can provide further detail of targets and KPIs on request.

Audience Development - digital channels

In addition to driving ticket sales, donations and enquiries, the website must function well as a key tool for audience development, as we seek to attract and retain new online users and new in-person audiences.

Over the next 12 months and beyond, we plan to increase the number of online only events, **recordings and hybrid / streamed performance which means that the website's functionality needs to grow and change as these programmes develop.** We are seeking to deliver a blend of live and digital events, whether cultural or commercial and a stronger connection and flow with social media work. As much as we would like to see our audiences back in the hall – we recognise in the short-medium term this may be limited. Older customers may not choose to come, so we need to support them outside of the hall digitally, through live streaming, paid and free content, whilst also continuing to bring newer, younger audiences and users in.

The website needs to support SGB's core marketing efforts and aid in widening access and engagement, which will focus more on creative campaign content: storytelling, image making, in collaboration through, preferably organic, blogger outreach, influencer outreach for more dynamic content pitching.

The site also needs to be compatible and integrated (as is feasible) with our financial systems, our digital marketing software platforms and applications, and ticketing and events systems that offer improved functionality, efficiencies and deliver more dynamic creative content and engagement. Mobile optimisation is key, as is accessibility, and intuitive thematic design.

Our digital audience: the current picture

Across the last reporting year (pre-Covid), we averaged

- Between 30k & 40k sessions per month
- Between 10k & 20k unique users per month
- 92% of users visited with the purpose of purchasing tickets (the remaining 8% split between venue information - especially access requirements - and our other core landing pages).

Design & Functionality Requirements

Sections we need

Events listings and bookings

- Includes booking journey with interactive seating plan (for live in-venue events)
- Merchandise/additional purchases e.g. interval drinks, upsells
- Events listings must be calendar based, with filtering capabilities based on genre and theme/programme series
- Includes booking and hosting of digital/online events: video and live streaming, and exclusive access

Venue and visitor information

- Including Box Office, Cafe Bar, Accessibility
- Members/account login
- Enquiry forms
- T&Cs

Fundraising / philanthropy

- Including donations and membership sign-ups
- Case studies, thank yous
- Regular well-integrated site-wide opportunities for giving
- Logo acknowledgements and links

Blog section / news

- Will include some articles from existing site's blog
- Must include capability to support third party content and collaborations

Hiring St George's

- Including tech spec, venue plan
- Galleries
- Enquiry forms
- Cultural hires (concerts, recordings) & Commercial hires (functions, conferences, weddings)

Learning & Participation

- Educational and family events
- Learning resources
- Information
- Case studies / examples of impact
- Enquiry form

About

- SGB's history, purpose, values, goals, and wider programme
- Meet the team
- Recruitment
- Charitable / compliance info



Copy and Content

Design integration of our brand

Across all the above sections is the overarching need for design integration of our brand. We want to see dynamism, flexibility and a strong sense of identity site-wide. We want to lead with key information, strong images, and calls to action.

Copy

We will write all copy in-house but would like the site to contain the flexibility to host external content, e.g. guest blogs, artist takeovers, PR collaborations. We would like to carry across some blog content from the current website.

Calls to Action

All calls-to-action across the website need to be fully customisable. Currently, e.g., our homepage carousel CTAs are hard-coded to read 'Read More'. We need to be able to alter these e.g. to 'Book Now', 'Book tickets', 'Donate', 'Enquire' etc.

Images

Currently all images have to be manually re-sized prior to upload, in order to comply with our site layout. We want the new site's design to be able to handle image integration and sizing instead.

Flexibility

Our new site design must be flexible, including page layouts and navigation. We need a user-friendly, design-conscious back end to the website (for instance, page builder style capabilities as opposed to our existing basic Wordpress composer). All templates must work with mobile/tablet optimisation in mind. We also need a streamlined and structured site navigation which we can easily edit (our menus are currently hard-coded). This needs to be elegant, user-friendly and again, well-optimised for mobile view.

Social media integration

We would like to discuss how our existing social media channels (@stgeorgesbris – Twitter, Facebook and Instagram) could or should integrate within the site's design.

A note on our brand guidelines

Our brand vision is to be *'a magical place for music lovers and makers'*, with the organising thought of *'Feel Moved'*.

Home to outstanding acoustics as well as a carefully curated programme of diverse world-class music and art, we delight in bringing the audience closer to the performance.

Our brand values are: *Stay Curious; Experience Matters; Nurture is good; Intimacy is precious.*

We can supply more detail on brand guidelines on request.

We would also like to discuss the possibility a future 're-skin' of the website, in the event that our visual branding may be refreshed within the website's lifetime.



Operations & Integration

Wordpress

We currently have a Wordpress website and would like to keep using Wordpress.

Spektrix

We need seamless integration of our powerful CRM site-wide. We want to move away from iframes and the protracted customer journey they entail. We also want to decrease the volume of manual input of information to the website: much of this information is currently duplicated on Spektrix but **doesn't pull through**. We need a robust site design which can accommodate additional Spektrix tools such as widgets (e.g. donations).

As mentioned above, we need flexibility and customisation to be able to house 3rd party content within our pages. We also want to be able to host video content seamlessly including on-demand, streaming, and limited access/password protect; whereas currently, we are limited to basic YouTube embeds into a static page or event.

Video integration

We now host both on-demand, streamed, and live-streamed, video content. We need the design flexibility to house this 3rd party content within our site in a secure and design-conscious way. We need to be able to limit access and password-protect these pages, and link access to member purchases. Currently we are limited to basic YouTube embeds. We are open to the idea of an integrated video player within our site, or designing with a view to integrating a hosting package such as Vimeo.

Mobile optimisation

All aspects of our site need to format beautifully for both mobile and tablet view.

Traffic Generation & Search Engine Optimisation

We will be sharing website content extensively across social media and with other arts, culture and tourism platforms.

Designing our website to allow for both strategic and responsive SEO is key. An SEO and share preview plugin such as Yoast, or equivalent, is essential. We would like to discuss and develop SEO best-practice guidance for our staff **populating the website, in terms of the site's structure and the SEO factored into the site's design/any hard-coded elements**.

We aim to develop pay per click advertising across the coming seasons for both our cultural and commercial sides of the business.

Google Analytics

We currently use Google Analytics for our existing site and would like to continue to use it for our new site.

Accessibility

Our site needs to be WCAG compliant. Wherever possible we need to offer accessible viewer options and ensure legible colour schemes. All text needs to be compatible with text-to-voice software.

Project Delivery Information

Timescale

Deadline for brief submissions	Midday 22 December 2020
Selection process	w/c 11 January 2021
Agency appointed	w/c 11 January
Project ready	w/c 15 March 2021
Go live (if different than above)	End of March 2021

Project Budget

SGB has a confirmed budget of £40,000 to complete the project to Go Live stage.

Contact Information

Esme Jones, Marketing Manager

Contact esme.jones@stgeorgesbristol.co.uk

Working pattern Tuesday - Friday

Required Response

A written and visual response to the brief including indicative stages based on the timescales set out above, including any questions or challenges. Examples of relevant work (including testimonials).

Thank you for reading! Please let us know if you have further questions on any aspect of the information provided in this brief.