

# Mobile technology will not widen the audience for live classical music

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This research was conducted by **Gary Crawford and three others** at the **University of Salford, UK** and **Queensland University of Technology, Australia**

## Summary

This paper analysed the potential of a mobile app for selling tickets and expanding the audience amongst a student audience for classical music. The research specifically focused on a project led by the London Symphony Orchestra. They targeted students at elite universities in London with an app that allowed them to sell discounted tickets. Focus groups held with concert-goers who used the app suggested it wasn't an appropriate way to deepen the live experience or expand the audience, although it was an efficient way of selling tickets.

## The research was based on seven focus groups

All but one of the groups took place immediately after the concerts. In total 81 students took part in the research. Short questionnaires were also completed by 68 of the focus group participants. The profile of the students was generally more affluent and privileged than the national average. Many had developed a taste for classical music in their childhood.

## Mobile apps help reach an existing audience but do not expand it to newcomers

'A recurrent theme in many of the focus groups was the idea that classical music was not for everyone, and maybe should not necessarily be so.' The app was an improvement on a previous SMS system used to sell discounted tickets

to students, but it did not reach out to first-time attenders. Some of the students suggested there were various ways of behaving and listening that not all of their peers would be interested in (or capable of), and that a classical music concert was a very different experience to a pop concert or listening to music in a different setting. The researchers therefore interpreted attendance at this type of live classical music concert as an affirmation of middle-class taste and distinction.

## Keywords

**students** **focus group** **music** **app** **live** **UK** **Classical Music** **mobile**

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