

# CONCERT PROMOTERS' COMMITTEE PROGRAMMING SURVEY

## Purpose

The programming survey in autumn 2008 was held to find out:

- about the diversity of members' programming
- members' comments on the Concert Promoters' Network brochure
- what category of artist they booked.

## Introduction

The survey was sent to promoters' Concert Organisers and to MM Reps for promoters without a Concert Organiser. Overall there were 186 responses which is 46% of the promoters circulated. The split in responses from the on-line and paper versions is interesting:

We sent out 320 email invitations – 25 'bounced' (ie 8% invalid email addresses) and 3 people opted out, but initially 117 responded (71 almost by return) and then after a reminder was sent to those not responding, a further 38 replied, giving an on-line total of 155 or a 48% response rate.

There were 82 paper copies posted, followed by a further 25 to the 'bounced' email addresses. These resulted in a total of 31 responses, giving a 29% response rate. The responses from the paper copies were input to the on-line survey monkey system.

## Respondents' background

**Q1:** 95% of respondents are happy for us to go back for further information if necessary.

**Q2:** 43% are Concert Organisers, 41% are both Concert Organiser and Rep and 16% are MM Reps

A wide spread of promoters replied; they were asked to categories themselves using the same 'kind' of category as used in the recent MM Census. Two were orchestras! The ranking of 'kind' of group was similar to that in the MM Census, although the percentage of festivals is different and the 17% 'other' is large in our survey (although perhaps a third could be put into the standard box categories):

<b>Q3 Kind of Group</b>	<b>Programming Survey</b>	<b>MM Census</b>
Chamber/instrumental	52%	50%
Mixed	15%	21%
Festival/community project	9%	20%
Vocal music	3%	2%
Friends organisation	2%	2%
Jazz	1%	2%
Other	17%	2%

Promoters in the 'other' kind included:

- Brass based
- Commissioning organisation

- African music
- Organiser of annual competitions
- Organ recitals

<b>Q4 Number of events promoted</b>			
< or equal to 6	7 – 8	9 - 11	> or equal 12
50%	27%	11%	12%

## Respondents' Diversity

These questions were aimed at finding out what other repertoires were presented in addition to their principal repertoire and what were promoters' experiences with them.

<b>Q5 Principal Repertoire</b> (these add up to 100%, with rounding)							
Western Classical	Mixed/wide ranging	Other	Light classical	World/ Ethnic/ Folk	Jazz	Music Theatre	Rock/ pop
83%	6%	5%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%

'Other' principal repertoires included:

- Brass
- Early music
- Organ music
- Contemporary

**Q6:** 69% respondents (128) input a web address, which is a healthy proportion but could be larger.

<b>Q7 Other Repertoires Presented</b>								
Western Classical	Jazz	Light Classica	Only our principle repertoire	World/ Ethnic/ Folk	Other	Music Theatre	Mixed/ Wide Ranging	Rock/ pop
84%	32%	32%	22%	20%	13%	12%	9%	4%

Although 22% only present their principle repertoire, 32% present some jazz or light classical music in their concerts. 20% present world, ethnic or folk music.

The 'other' category included early music, historical dance, contemporary, Scottish traditional, sacred and tango/gypsy

<b>Q8 Reasons for Infrequent Departure from Principle Repertoire</b>								
We think members prefer no change	Too few concerts to risk it	We know members prefer no change	Other	We never depart	We have tried and failed	No knowledge of alternatives	It needs a different venue etc	People expect food & drinks
56%	31%	28%	24%	10%	8%	7%	3%	1%

20% skipped this question (perhaps because they do depart frequently).

The 'other' category included:

- other groups in town cover the alternative repertoires (x5)
- we DO depart but not always financially successfully
- we do 14 events in one weekend so can experiment

- finance
- want to keep a winning formula
- our remit is to do what we do.

**Q9: 20 groups responded to the offer of support in expanding their repertoire.**

Their information has been passed on to their regional/national committee and Regional Development Officer.

**Q10: Experience of alternative repertoire**

Of those who had departed occasionally from their principle repertoire:

- 81% found it had attracted a new audience
- but 60% said the new audience did not come to their other events
- 75% found that their traditional members still came
- and 63% felt their traditional members enjoyed the alternative repertoire.
- 45% did not know whether their traditional audience would come if the show was at a different venue or time.

**Q11: 42% would not consider organising an event outside their normal season. 29% would do so, but another 29% made comments**

The comments include:

- no spare capacity to do this (x8)
- would need additional funding (x4)
- other groups in town operating (x3)
- nervous

**Comments on the Concert Promoters' Network brochure (CPN)**

**Q12:** 87% of respondents received a personal copy of the CPN brochure. There were 21 that did not. Hopefully they may book a copy via [www.makingmusic.org.uk/cpn](http://www.makingmusic.org.uk/cpn)

**Q13: How Often a Group Books Artists from the CPN brochure**

Every year	About every 2-3 yrs	About every 4-5 yrs	Never	Don't know
31%	30%	5%	24%	10%

An encouraging 30% of respondents use the brochure either every year or about every 2-3 years. But 24 % never use it and 20% skipped the question.

Many of the 55 helpful comments anticipated a later question. A surprisingly large number, 10, were new to MM and so not yet taking full advantage of schemes. Seven prefer a different type of artist, a further two use bigger names but only three blamed the price of artists and a further three prefer their own arrangements. Two use the Scottish Tours Book instead and two work on a different time scale.

**Q14:** 80% of respondents did not want **additional categories of artist** in the CPN brochure. But 20% did. The following suggestions received multiple requests:

- world (x9)
- jazz (x6)
- folk (x2)
- singer (x2)

<b>Q15: What would encourage more bookings</b>				
	Very Important	Important	Quite Important	Not important
Cheaper artists	36%	35%	14%	14%
Better artist	13%	28%	26%	33%
More diverse artists	7%	30%	19%	44%

On balance it would appear that cost is important; quality of artists is probably OK and some would like more diverse artists.

Among the additional comments, there were suggestions to:

- Allow the artists to be booked beyond the season covered
- Produce the brochure earlier (2)
- Include larger groups
- Have more programme choice

### **Q16: What category of artist is booked?**

The overall popularity of bookings is as follow, in descending order:

1 String quartet	12 Vocal group
2 Piano solo	13 Piano duo
3 Piano trio (eg piano, violin & cello)	14 Ensemble-brass
4 Ensemble-strings	15 Guitar
5 Duo-strings (eg piano & violin)	16 Unusual (eg piano accordion etc)
6 Ensemble-mixed	17 Duo-brass
7 Ensemble-woodwind	18 Jazz, traditional
8 String trio	19 World music (eg Indian music etc)
9 Vocal solo	20 Jazz, other
10 Early music	21 Jazz, modern
11 Duo-woodwind	

But in terms of very often booked, the categories split into groups as follows:

- string quartet and solo piano come way ahead of
- piano trio, ensemble-strings and duo-strings;
- the next group are ensemble-mixed, vocal solo, string trio and vocal group.
- followed by early music, ensemble-woodwind, duo-woodwind;
- then come guitar, unusual, jazz(traditional)
- and then ensemble-brass, world, other jazz and piano duo.

Also booked were: Brass band, Chamber choir, anything interesting that avoids hiring a piano (3), school groups, percussion group (2), harp (3), piano 4t, 5et,

### **Q17: Further comments on the brochure**

This was free text and 68 promoters (37% of respondents) took the time to make a comment. For example:

- 47 were complimentary - very good, excellent content, very useful, good reference, well presented, good editing, enjoy receiving it, useful adverts, appreciate the support etc.
- 3 would like it a whole season earlier and one just a bit earlier in Feb/March
- 4 still feel the artists are too expensive
- 1 offered us African artists; another found the Northern promoters meeting helpful
- 1 found the survey monkey frustrating

- 1 wanted more Scottish artists (but in Q12 two had said that they used the Scottish tours book in preference)
- 1 suggested a clearing house for bookings on the web (yes, we have eyes on that!)
- 6 said it was not applicable to them as they only joined for PRS and insurance – but they took the trouble to respond.

## **Final Comment**

Obviously the online survey has limitations as it requires a captive email audience (we had valid emails for 73% of promoters). The paper copy can be produced from the online pages. But the online system produces the analysis immediately in a very flexible format – and many responded by return. It also allows you to carry out extra enquiries from the data. So overall, it is very well worthwhile, but it takes a while to set up, unless you are very familiar with it. As with all surveys, it pays to try out the questions on a few friends who can be critical about their experience with it.

The Concert Promoters' Committee is very grateful to the large number of promoters that spent time filling in the survey in a very constructive way. We hope to be able to act on the responses and improve the service accordingly.

Berkeley Ranby  
Acting Chairman  
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