

Written evidence submitted by Jo Hutchison of JHI Marketing

1. About Jo Hutchison of Jo Hutchison International (also known as JHI Marketing)

- 1.1. JHI provides marketing services to theatre producers and venues for theatrical shows and events in the West End, across the UK regions and internationally.
- 1.2. Comprising 16 full time employees within the following departments: campaign management, digital and social media and content creation, inventory management and analysis, and business management.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Our work is to promote the sale of tickets for events. While the government is recommending social distancing restrictions on people's movement, they will not be able to go to the theatre so our work in marketing shows has had to cease with immediate effect.
- 2.2. With no income we cannot meet our running costs of staff salaries and office costs.
- 2.3. The government furlough scheme has enabled us to keep our business open, and keep our staff employed but we need that to continue as we bring back the workforce in staggered re-start dates until our industry is back up and running and audiences are returning to the theatres. Without it, we will still need to make staff redundancies as we begin the slow process of rebuilding our business.
- 2.4. Our audiences are made up of members of the UK general public of all ages and socio-demographics who are interested in arts and events and UK in-bound tourists.
- 2.5. I believe that there will be a huge thirst for live arts and culture at the end of this period of confinement and as world leaders in creating that culture, the UK's theatre industry needs to be ready to offer it to the Nation.

3. What has been the immediate impact of Covid-19 on you/your organisation?

- 3.1. The theatres have closed and our clients are not putting on events, so no need to employ our marketing services.
- 3.2. All staff are on furlough with some key workers working from home to service a few remaining clients working on events due to take place in 2021.
- 3.3. Even with the support schemes provided by the government, our business will operate at a loss until theatres re-open and performances and productions resume.

4. How effectively has the support provided by DCMS, other Government departments and arms-length bodies addressed the sector's needs?

- 4.1. The furlough scheme has meant we have not had to make staff redundant yet.
- 4.2. We are not able to take advantage of any other government support.

5. What will the likely long-term impacts of Covid-19 be on the sector, and what support is needed to deal with those?

- 5.1. There will be a slow return to social engagement from our theatregoers so we need to rebuild customer relationship and instil confidence in the safety of attending events.
- 5.2. It is unlikely that audiences 65+ will return to the theatres, so this area of the market will be lost for the immediate future.
- 5.3. It is unlikely that tourists will be traveling to the UK for cultural trip, so this market will be lost for the immediate future.
- 5.4. We hope that young professionals who will be the first to return to work and who will be travelling will also be inclined to attend cultural events. But we need government support for advertising campaigns to encourage them to book.
- 5.5. We would like to offer full refunds for these bookers should they be unable to attend events in the future and need help financing the communication of this message.
- 5.6. We need government support to encourage our audiences back to our theatres, thus reigniting a very profitable and key industry across the UK and maintaining our position as cultural world leaders.

28 April 2020