

## CASE STUDY

# AUDIENCE PROFILING

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## MY AUDIENCE: WHO ARE THEY AND WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW?

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Most arts organisations collect a huge amount of information about their customers but a common problem is accessing this data and turning it into meaningful or actionable information to inform marketing. Profiling helps answer the questions such as 'who is our audience?', 'where is our audience?' and 'what are they like?' Profiling is defined in Chapter 10 of *FULL HOUSE: Turning Data into Audiences* ([Australia](#) and [New Zealand](#)) as "analysing the catchment area and the customers - actual and potential - and generating reports, tables maps and so on to illustrate these".

**Profiling your audience does not need to be that difficult. The main challenge is gaining access to your customer data.**

## BEHAVIOURAL ANALYSIS: SPARE PARTS PUPPET THEATRE

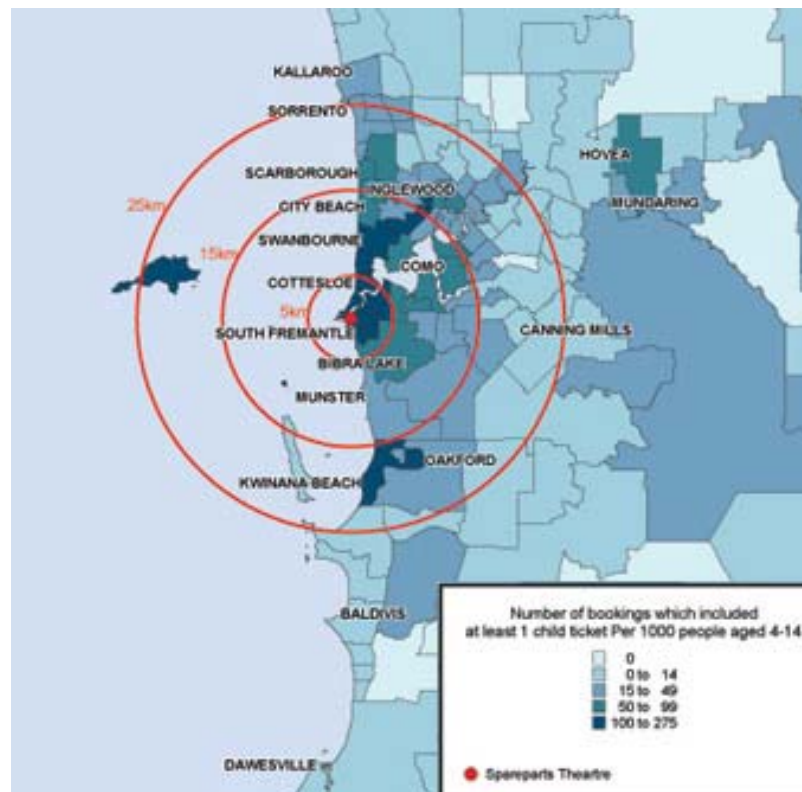
[Spare Parts Puppet Theatre](#) is a small theatre company based in Fremantle, 12 km south of the City of Perth. Spare Parts is in the enviable position of having its own 185-seat venue and its own ticketing system. The company was using a customised Filemaker Pro database that contained over eight years' customer history consisting of 20,000 transactions. In January 2007, before they changed to a new ticketing system, Spare Parts conducted a snapshot analysis of this valuable marketing asset.

An eight year sample of transactions comprised 16,300 transactions from March 1999 to June 2006. A total of 12,163 or 74.6% had an address. Of these 10,768 had personal addresses and 1,395 had company or school addresses. This analysis provided a great deal of detail regarding the audience and its purchase behaviour. By way of example, Spare Parts mainly serves a family and schools audience. Hence, the average booking size is relatively large at 4.7. When they considered the composition of the audience, more accurate and meaningful indicators were developed from the data. Schools and groups account for 8% of transactions with an average of 41 tickets each booking and General Public tickets account for 92% with an average transaction of 3.5 tickets.

Spare Parts does some metropolitan and regional touring which they plan to increase over the next couple of years. The mapping of purchasers by postcode indicates some of the potential for 'touring' productions within the Perth metropolitan area. Three areas of potential were

identified, namely: Northern suburbs, The Hills to the East of Perth and Central Perth. An indication of potential was provided by mapping the percentage of tickets sold in each postcode compared to population four to 14 years of age. The age range was deemed to provide a good key indicator of the potential audience for children's theatre.

For other artforms, it is not necessarily as easy to identify an indication of catchment potential as the presence of children of a specified age range. This is where the addition of geodemographic data is useful to identify areas of potential and augment the detail contained in a customer database.



### GEODEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: NBR NEW ZEALAND OPERA

Geodemography is the study of population characteristics (such as age, gender or income) set within a spatial context. There is a fundamental assumption at the heart of geodemographics, that people who share the same characteristics as your current customers are most likely to become customers too. This is often expressed as birds of a feather flocking together. Geodemographic Analysis, or Profiling, is a technique widely used to determine the demographic composition of a local area. Profiles measure the size of the population, its age, gender, ethnicity, patterns of housing tenure, car ownership, credit-rating and so on.

A well known geodemographic classification is MOSAIC which, in New Zealand, comprises 38 segments and describes neighbourhoods at the mesh block level. Mesh blocks average around 100 people and are the smallest geographic unit for which population data is collected by Statistics New Zealand. More information regarding MOSAIC is provided in Chapter 7 of *FULL HOUSE: Turning Data into Audiences* ([Australia](#) and [New Zealand](#)).

In 2006 Vicki Allpress-Hill, Marketing Manager of The [NBR New Zealand Opera](#) partnered with [PMP Micromarketing](#) to conduct geodemographic profiling of its database. The research looked at five years of current and past attenders for the Opera's Wellington and Auckland seasons and applied a variety of geodemographic techniques using the MOSAIC classification. Starting

with the name and address data in the Opera’s ticketing database, PMP Micromarketing identified locations and applied the MOSAIC group that best described residents of this geographic area. Vicki reinforced the importance of comprehensive and accurate name and address data being collected at the point of sale to facilitate such analysis.

As part of the project, PMP Micromarketing produced Customer Location Maps, Market Penetration Maps, Market Potential Maps and profiles of Opera customers using the MOSAIC classification. Below is an example of the profile of the NBR New Zealand Opera audience at the MOSAIC Group level.

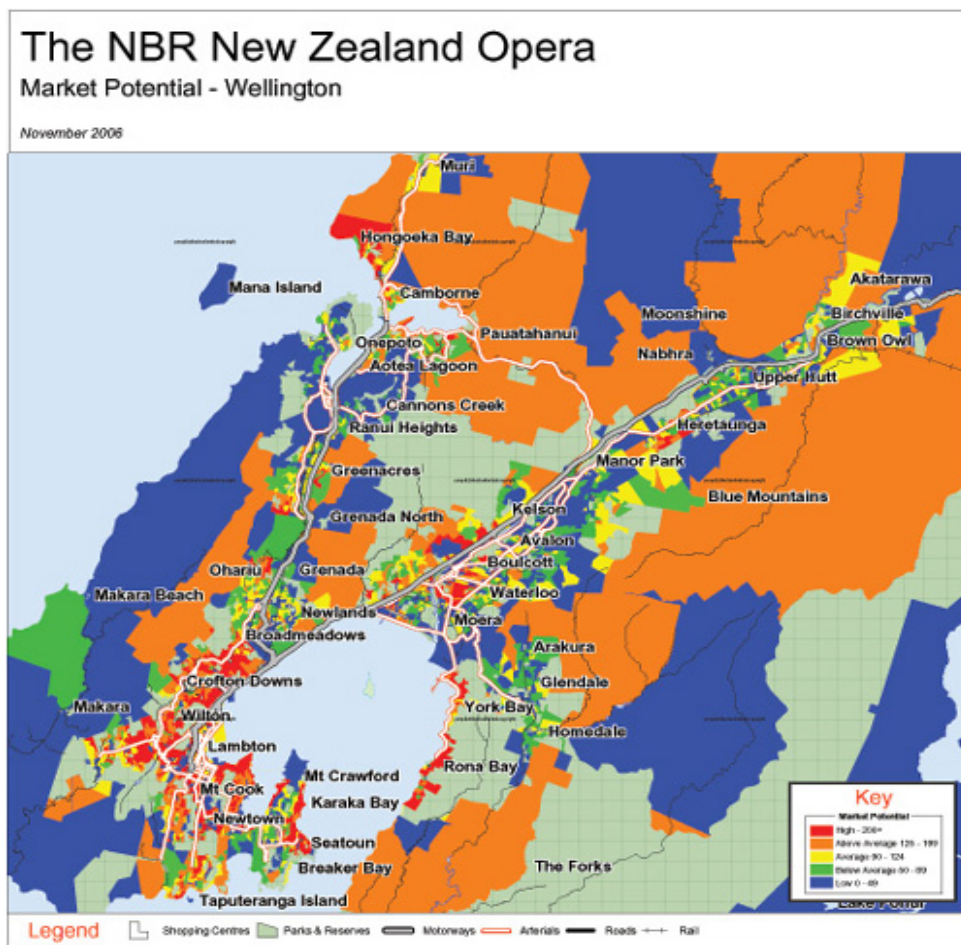


The results helped reinforce what Vicki already believed about her audience. Not surprisingly, the customers were centred in the most affluent and central suburbs, with pockets in specific suburban and rural areas. Having the maps really helped with their Auckland Regional Funding initiative bid. It helped to demonstrate that their audiences were situated in all four cities within the Auckland region, namely: North Shore, Auckland, Waitakere and Manukau.

In fact, Vicki and her team were surprised how many of their customers were attracted from the North Shore. As Auckland is spreading and is in fact, a series of 'villages', Vicki expected most of her audience to be sourced from the central area.

As would be expected, the audience profiling showed that a high proportion conformed to the "Elite Professionals" and "Comfortable and Secure" groups. However, Vicki said that "what was pleasantly surprising was how well our marketing focus over recent years to young, urban professionals has worked. We had a significant showing in the "Stylish Singles" MOSAIC Group." A more detailed understanding of the MOSAIC types comprising your current and potential audience assists in the geographic targeting and the positioning of messages.

PMP Micromarketing also generated Market Potential maps for the Opera that demonstrated the potential demand exhibited by an area. The likely composition of MOSAIC types has been identified at the neighbourhood level across New Zealand by PMP Micromarketing using population data. A profile can be built using the MOSAIC types that describe current attendees from the address data contained in the ticketing transaction database. It is then possible to compare the potential of a neighbourhood from population data for providing customers matching this profile, with the current customer penetration in an area as detailed in the ticketing database.



Profiling and similar analysis enables identification of areas of under representation to identify and monitor audience development activity. A geodemographic profile also provides detailed information to give a picture of who your audience is, as well as their attitudes and behaviours to help position your messages and offerings.

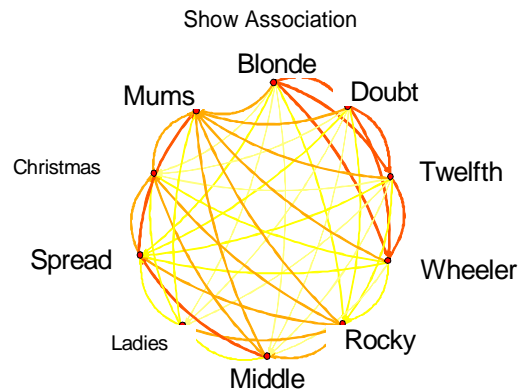
### GEOGRAPHIC AND ATTENDANCE ANALYSIS: AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY

During 2006, the [Auckland Theatre Company](#) (ATC) undertook some geographic analysis with [Twenty Limited](#). In excess of 33,500 patron records were collected from transactions conducted for shows at the Maidment Theatre, using PatronBase, as well as SKYCITY Theatre and The Concert Chamber that use the Ticketek service. The data was de-duped at a household level to merge more than one customer in a property and provide an indication of consumption at the household level. Approximately one in ten Auckland households had a relationship with ATC. In some areas this penetration doubled, but in some other areas the performance was below expectations.

Of interest was the different attendance behaviour; 61% of tickets are purchased in groups of two or less which translates to the industry norm for such events of 2.2 tickets per transaction. As would be expected, there was a very loyal segment that, although comprising only 3% of patrons, purchased 23% of tickets. Additionally, 21% of patrons purchased 74% of tickets which aligns quite well with the [Pareto Principle](#) or the 80:20 rule. Conducting this frequency analysis provides one of the dimensions for the [Audience Builder](#) analysis as developed by Andrew McIntyre.

Some very interesting analysis provided a visual indication of the degree of association between different events presented by ATC. There was a strong association for the 'Gilt Edged-Quality Theatre' types of shows presented at the Maidment Theatre (*The Blonde*, *The Brunette*

and the Vengeful Redhead; Doubt; Twelfth Night and Wheeler's Luck) and a lesser association between the three 'Entertainment-Commercial' type of shows (*Spreading Out*, *Mum's Choir* and *Middle Age Spread*). *Ladies Night* had little association to any other shows and only 4,500 of 14,000 *Rocky Horror* patrons attended any other ATC events. This kind of analysis is valuable to assess the positioning of events and the responsiveness of patrons to individual shows and specific styles of production. It also helps quantify and demonstrate the effectiveness of programming with respect to outreach and audience development.



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Geographic analysis was also undertaken which provided an indication of penetration at the level of Area Unit (like suburb in Australia). This also provided an idea of areas of over and under representation. The data was then profiled at the Meshblock level which provided an indication of a variety of demographic variables. Under performing areas were identified and looked at in more detail to attempt to isolate variable of value to develop audiences in these areas. In addition, the profile of patrons demonstrating different levels of attendance were compared to also identify any indicative variables.

The findings from this research suggested five strategies and the approach to this: Leveraging Patron Data, Differentiated Marketing, Re-engaging Non-attendees, Email Marketing Program and a systematic mail-drop test for under-performing areas.

## CONCLUSION

Yes, such commercial research services can be expensive, but the resulting knowledge can well justify the expense. There are other options for organisations to gain access to this kind of market intelligence, such as partnerships or cooperative marketing initiatives. As a starting point, here are three steps your organisation must take to gain the full advantage of such analysis;

1. Negotiate full access to your customer data as a priority.
2. Pay attention to your point of sale to ensure the collection of complete and accurate customer name and address data.
3. Work with your box office or service provider to gain access to comprehensive transaction data. This will facilitate behavioural segmentation that can then be described with geodemographic analysis.

**About the author**

As Principal Consultant of [ARTS Australia](#), Tim Roberts has over twenty years experience in ticketing and arts marketing throughout Australasia and internationally. He specialises in CRM and audience development and analysis for the arts. Tim is co-author of [FULL HOUSE: Turning Data into Audiences](#) with editions published in 2006 by the Australia Council and Creative New Zealand.