

The Belgrade Theatre **ccl**

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The Belgrade Theatre is an 858 seated theatre situated in Coventry city centre. It was originally built in 1958 and in late 2004 a major refurbishment plan commenced, which will be completed in early 2007. As the theatre is a limited company with charitable status it was able to access funds for this project from four main public bodies: The Arts Council Lottery fund, Coventry City Council, Advantage West Midlands and ERDF (European Regional Development Fund). The Theatre itself also organised a public fund raising campaign to accumulate the full funds necessary for the planned £12 million project.

As part of the major upgrading of the theatre, the management team decided that the theatre's existing IT infrastructure would not support the required functionality and growth of the new Belgrade. This issue was discussed during meetings with Coventry and Warwickshire Business Link and it was agreed that a formal review of the Belgrade's IT strategy was required. CCL were selected to assist with this process and Business Link were able to provide a percentage of CCL's consultancy costs.

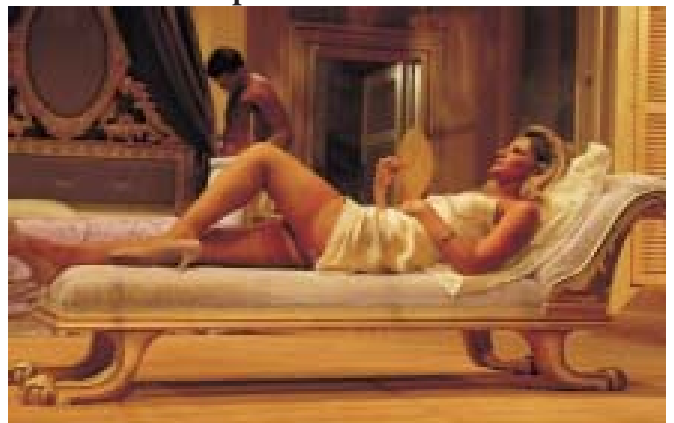


Mita Mistry, Senior Consultant and Ian Ainsworth, Project Controller, were the CCL Consultants assigned to this project. Mita's first task was to conduct a detailed IT Options and Strategy Review. The review considered various options, such as "do nothing", continue with a "best of breed" approach but with improved components or adopt a single integrated system that would cover Ticketing, CRM, Event Management and HR/Payroll and finance. Change management was high on the agenda for the project as Belgrade Theatre has an artistic culture, therefore is not naturally process orientated and several members of staff have little need to use the computer system on a

regular basis. As a result, working as a team and involving as many key staff as possible was extremely important to gain support and buy-in for the project. "The whole process of review enabled Belgrade staff to analyse our working practices and procedures which has already resulted in changes to practice, improved communication and a better understanding of the systems required to improve efficiency" Joanna Reid, Executive Director, remarked.

The next stage was to issue an ITT, analyse responses and facilitate demonstrations from short-listed suppliers. The preferred supplier was selected for a Conference Room Pilot, which is currently ongoing. Once this is finalised successfully CCL will be closely involved in the negotiation of contracts and Service Level agreements to ensure the best possible outcome for The Belgrade.

"CCL's involvement has been fantastically helpful" said Joanna. "Mita and Ian have provided us not only expert advice and support in this unfamiliar and complex IT world, but their flexible and pragmatic attitudes have made them a pleasure to work with. It's very reassuring to have CCL as a partner."



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