"Easy announce and book" was specified as part of the UbiCompForAll project in order to identify potential users of the technology that will be developed in the project and to generate design ideas for the services these users might compose.

Summary

Kari, booking manager at the ticket office for the concert hall in Trondheim has composed "No Easy announce and book", a ticket advertisement service, in order to find new auditors to the next programmed events.

Problem description

Service providers wish their services to be fully booked, mainly for the sake of a good economy, but also for other reasons such as reputation or good atmosphere in the case of a concert. The ticket advertisement service addresses the problem of "last minute" advertisement. The service might both be used to announce vacant seats and also to sell reserved tickets that have not been picked up.

Main actor (s)

Kari (23) works at Olavshallen ticket office. She is friendly and gladly provides information or makes arrangements for customers.

Activity scenario

Early morning, Kari arrives at work at the ticket office at Olavshallen and switches her computer. Upon start-up she gets information about the next programmed events and a sale status for each event. There is only short time left before the visit of highly respected pianist Andràs Schiff, and still only 200 tickets are sold. Kari knows that the public in Trondheim needs to be reminded and has therefore sets up the "Easy announce and book" service that provides support for advertising vacant concert seats and booking. After looking closer at the sale trend during the last days, she contacts the sale manager and they agree to start the advertisement of discounted tickets.

Kari activates the "Easy announce and book" and provides some information about the event and the discount. Kari is eager about attracting new customers to the concert hall and has therefore specified the service so it is possible to send advertisements to newcomers and visitors in the city, not just to the ordinary concert attendees.

Already a few minutes after publishing the advertisement, new ticket bookings are already received. For each new order, the "Easy announce and book" selects seats and initiates a credit card transaction. Upon successful transaction, it provides an e-ticket and a ticket reference.

Alternative stories

Kari may compose different variants of the service:

- Advertisements might be sent at different times: one week before the concert, one day before or some hours before.

- Advertisements might be started manually as illustrated in the scenario, or automatically at certain points of time.

- The mechanisms for the identification of new customers may depend on the time left before a concert. For example, city visitors are invited only when short time before the concert is left.

- Discount might be set manually as illustrated in the scenario, or automatically depending on the time left before a concert.

- Different policies for ticket payment may be applied. Customers might pay on ticket pick-up time. In the case of discount, they should pay while booking tickets.

- In the case of a popular event, a waiting list may be created and the release of tickets (e.g. booked tickets not picked up on time) may trigger an advertisement. The advertisement of free seats should then be sent to a single customer, the first in the list.

Properties

Several alternative behaviours are possible that makes the service of interest from a composition viewpoint. Also the same kind of service might be applied for the advertisement of different kinds of products and services allowing us to create building blocks that can be reused for various advertisement purposes.

The service "Easy announce and book" might be built incrementally. For example, Kari might first compose a simple service for sending advertisements. Then when he gets more experience in using the composition tools, she might add support for reservation and payment. In that way, she might gradually learn new features of the composition tools.

External evaluation

The responsible for marketing and communication of Trondheim Symphony Orchestra has evaluated the advertisement scenario. She has earlier worked for Trondheim Kino (movies) and the film festival Kosmora. As part of her work at Trondheim Kino, she has participated in the development of the web-based ticket system. She is also interested in IT-based media solutions. She has therefore a broad marketing experience related to our scenario. Her comments are summarized below.

Reaching visitors in the city, i.e. newcomers with little knowledge of what is happening in the city, is the main potential benefit of the scenario. However an issue even more critical than selling tickets is that of marketing an event. Trondheim Symphony Orchestra is investigating new marketing approaches for attracting a wider public. Marketing live events is especially challenging since no easy-to-publish materials are available for concerts, unlike what is the case for movies.

Ideally all actors in the entertainment domain should use the same reservation system. This is not the case today. There exist several web-based reservation systems (e.g. Filmweb, Billet service, Dokkhuset, etc.). This is confusing for the users to find events, and reservation systems are not being extended at the pace of new technologies or communication forms. For example, the reservation system at Trondheim Kino that was launched for many years ago is still the same. A system today should support more advanced ways to provide information and involve the users. This diversity of systems is also challenging for UbiCompForAll because diversity makes

difficult the development of new solutions upon reservation systems, e.g. advertisement and sale through Wireless Trondheim.

The scenario focuses on advertising free tickets and selling tickets. Another issue is about finding new ways to attract new listeners, e.g. young people, persons who dare not go to the concerts, etc. The problem for an orchestra is not really that of selling, but of spreading knowledge about the concerts and packaging the product. It is necessary to investigate new approaches, for example:

- using new media to spread information about concerts: instead of paper, send videos;

- creating games in relation to concerts;

- explaining people how the orchestra functions, what are the challenges of playing together; for example, through musicians blogs (the more people understand, the more they get interested);

- letting listeners follow in direct a concert they cannot attend;

- letting children play music at home together with the of the concert on TV.

Marketing movies is completely different form marketing an orchestra. Newpapers, TV tell about movies everyday. Producers provide marketing materials. Video materials, such as trailers, exist that can easily be spread. It is much more complex to provide the public with information about a live event such as a concert of an exhibition because it is not so easy to create a taste sample.

Related scenarios

The advertisement scenario might be applied for advertising different kinds of products and services. We have described two other scenarios:

- "No caries – No pain", the advertisement of dental care services

- "Tickets for sale!", the advertisement of unused tickets by a private person.