

BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE

Theatre camp administration takes a backstage to director's family life.

London-based Theatre Tribe Academy is the United Kingdom's leading musical theatre holiday camp. The week-long programme, with sessions in London, Cambridge and Paris, serves students ages 8 to 18 from all over the world who want to experience the process of rehearsing and performing in a West End show.

A One-Woman Show

Director Emma Brooke caught the acting bug as a child. She trained as a musical theatre actress and pursued a career in the arts. Eventually, she founded her own business in order to have a creative outlet that allowed her to work from home and start a family. Her mission is to pass on the feeling of empowerment, responsibility, teamwork and confidence-building that performing instills.

Though she has creative staff to assist with programme sessions, Emma has been running the business side solo for six years.

100%

reduction in pre-session
registration and payment collection time

Administrative Overload

Even before son Harry (now 2) came along, Emma felt overwhelmed by the administrative processes revolving around registration and payment leading up to each of the 11 sessions she hosts. It was very time-consuming and tedious to constantly field calls about session availability, register participants, chase payments, and manage drop-outs.

Though she worked from home, she frequently had to keep a childminder in the wings for Harry during those times -- a practice at odds with the work-life balance she had planned.

Siloed Data, Mismatched Technology

Until she discovered ACTIVEWorks Camp & Class Manager®, Emma had no idea that such a product as programme management software existed. She had accepted an administrative reality consisting of:

- + **Google spreadsheets:** Manual input and computing required
- + **Multiple payment strings:** PayPal, cheques and cash
- + **A popular form-building solution:** Conditional formatting skills required
- + **WebMerge:** Document generation tool that imports data into PDFs
- + **MailChimp:** Email tool
- + **Frequent trips to the bank**

Manual processes and unintegrated solutions required lots of tweaking, organising for set up and then maintenance, taking time away from the creative process and Harry.

"I thought this was as good as it gets without having to pay someone to create something bespoke for me," Emma said.

"ACTIVE manages all the nitty-gritty details and I don't have to worry. It saves me so much time!"

Emma Brooke, Owner and Director

The ACTIVE Difference

Emma explored a few other solutions before selecting Camp & Class Manager in early 2017. "None of them offered everything I needed," she said.

Onboarding was “quite straightforward and speedy,” but almost immediately, before she had even fully explored all the software’s features, Emma saw a remarkable turnaround in what had become an unmanageable situation:

+ Programme registration and payment

“All the money being handled at the point of registration is an absolute gift! I don’t have to worry about it at all. Previously, if someone paid a deposit rather than the full amount, my heart would sink, because I knew I’d have to chase them for the balance. If they dropped out and hadn’t paid me, I knew I couldn’t recover the funds.

I no longer have to manually count spots, go to the bank, or respond to a million emails about availability – people just book their spots, at any time of day or night, with no help from me. It’s very user friendly, for myself and parents, who have had no complaints. There’s been no friction.”

+ Solution Integration

The time-savings and elimination of frustration Emma has experienced by using an all-in-one tool in just the first two months made her realize how administratively heavy her job had been. “I no longer have to link all the data manually!”

+ Cost Comparison

Before she did the math, Emma wondered if the cost of the software would be higher than the other solutions she was using. “It turned out that it wasn’t. On top of that, I got back massive amounts of time and my sanity! It’s been so worth it!”

Goals for the Future

Emma continues to prioritise her personal goals above the business. With plans to grow her family, it’s even more important to streamline management of Theatre Tribe. Although she has barely had time to scratch the surface of her new software, Emma’s early experience with the reporting tool enabled her to see her session rosters and available slots at a glance, rather than repeatedly having to manually count each one.

Over the next year, she expects to fill capacity of existing sessions and potentially increase revenue for even greater return on investment by utilising more of Camp & Class Manager’s features, including:

- + Communication Tools
- + Marketing and branding
- + Coupons and discount codes
- + Merchandising

As circumstances permit, she would like to eventually expand to hosting additional sessions in Prague, Spain and Italy, where no programmes like hers exist. Camp & Class Manager will support her on that journey.

“I’m so glad I made the decision to go with Camp & Class Manager. I got back massive amounts of time and my sanity. It’s been so worth it!”

Emma Brooke, Owner and Director

**Take back your life with Camp & Class Manager.
Contact us today.**

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