

Theater ticket app TodayTix makes West End debut

June 1 2015



The Garrick Theatre in London's West End is pictured on September 1, 2012

A last-minute theater ticket smartphone application that has been a hit on Broadway took its act to London's West End on Monday with the official opening there of TodayTix.

A TodayTix app that offers deals on theater tickets bought any time from seven days to an hour before performances came out of a test phase and went public in the iconic London theater district.

"We are expecting to be working with basically every single theater owner in London," TodayTix co-founder and chief executive Merritt Baer told AFP.

"Hopefully, by making it easier to see theater, and affordable, we are re-engaging an audience that hasn't been to the theater in a while and also bringing new people to the theater."

Since being launched in 2013 by childhood friends-turned-adult business partners Baer and Brian Fenty, TodayTix has met with rave reviews and now claims to sell about 3.5 percent of all Broadway theater tickets.

TodayTix boasts more than 425,000 users with a typical ticket buyer being about 32 years old, more than a decade younger than the average overall theater goer, according to Baer.

Baer, a theater producer who won a Tony Award in 2012 for a revival of Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" starring the late Philip Seymour Hoffman, said he was inspired by the way online services such as Uber and Airbnb have shaken up the taxi and hotel industries respectively.

"We thought why is something like this not happening in the theater world," Baer said.

Broadway theaters recorded ticket sales of \$1.365 billion in the year-long period that ended on May 24, according to a trade group called The Broadway League.

Figures available for the British market showed that theater ticket sales there in the 2013 to 2014 year tallied about \$8.4 billion.

TodayTix focuses on taking pain out of buying last-minute theater tickets, which can be purchased quickly using the smartphone

applications. Broadway show tickets can be picked up at will call, or be hand delivered by TodayTix uniformed 'concierges' outside theaters a short time before curtains are scheduled to rise.

Tickets at London theaters will be available at will call. TodayTix makes its money by charging flat fees per ticket and commissions paid by theaters. Versions of the TodayTix application are available for smartphones powered by Apple or Android software.

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