BUILDING BLOCK

A Pricing Model with Flexibility

THIS SECTION WILL COVER

- The benefits of a flexible pricing model
- Guiding principles for flexible pricing
- Steps for creating your first flexible pricing model and for monitoring sales
- Examples of flexible pricing in practice

BUILDING BLOCK:

A Pricing Model with Flexibility

WHAT IS FLEXIBLE PRICING AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Setting prices in response to demand can bring benefits to both organisations and audiences. It's a practice that's commonly used in other sectors, from booking train tickets early to enjoy the best prices, to paying extra for flexibility when confirming a hotel. Whilst it's not yet as widely adopted in the cultural sector, organisations who price flexibly have seen a positive impact on booking patterns, revenue and staff capacity.

When tickets go on sale at a fixed or highest price, it's impossible to increase overall income potential and easy to reduce it. Last minute offers, inflexible policy and lack of fees on the door all work to deter early bookers.

Choosing the right fixed pricing model for each event relies on accurate forecasting and assumptions about audience behaviours. With a flexible, popularity-based pricing model, it's possible to accelerate slow sales and maximise the potential of the most popular events.

HOW TO BUILD YOUR FLEXIBLE PRICING MODEL

There are three guiding principles for flexible pricing:

- **Be transparent.** Advertise maximum and minimum pricing, and make your policy explicit in your terms and conditions.
- **Involve everybody.** Make sure your whole sales and front of house team understand your model and can explain it to audiences if they're asked.
- **Never go lower.** Once a ticket is on sale, its price should only go up - that's key to driving early sales and maintaining trust with your ticket buyers.

The steps below are based on an auditorium with unallocated seating, ticketed in a single price band. Use this model as it stands or adapt it to your own organisation - we can help make sure it works for you.

1. Use the Popularity-based Pricing Calculator to help set a median ticket price for each event. This will be roughly equivalent to the single price you might have set if you weren't working flexibly.

2. For each event, set out your median, minimum and maximum ticket prices. Define the points at which you plan to increase prices, and use data from similar events to set targets for each month, week or day of the sales cycle.

   - If an event is unlikely to reach capacity and you anticipate running £10 offers at the end of the sales cycle, start with those £10 tickets now.
   - If you're targeting a sell out, start your price base higher or plan to raise prices sooner.
   - Aim high with your maximum prices. If prices never rise that high then every audience member will feel they've saved. If an event sells quickly, you'll benefit fully from its success.

3. Agree how to list flexible prices and ensure this is reflected in your policies. Give audiences a clear indication of the minimum and maximum they might pay. This shows your early bookers how much they're saving, and ensures late bookers aren't put off by higher price tiers.

4. Once you're on sale, run or schedule regular reports for each event - at least once a week for steady sellers, as much as once an hour for high- demand events. Add your sales figures to the worksheet and use the Traffic Light column to quickly flag slow and fast sellers, then gradually increase prices to reflect demand.

5. As well as overall capacity, compare tickets sold with your target sales at that date. If you've sold 60% three weeks from the event date, but you'd hoped to sell 80% by that point, you might keep prices lower; if you're ahead of target, increase them by a larger margin. By working dynamically, rather than advertising fixed dates for price increases, you give yourself the flexibility to assess each situation based on data, marketing activity and revised forecasting.

6. If you're working with multiple price tiers, you have still more flexibility. Adjust the overall pricing model, individual price tiers, or reallocate seats to higher-priced zones. Make sure you offer a range of prices until you're at 80-90% of capacity, then adjust so the last seat to sell is at your highest price point. Check that your full range of concessions and accessible tickets is available at every stage.

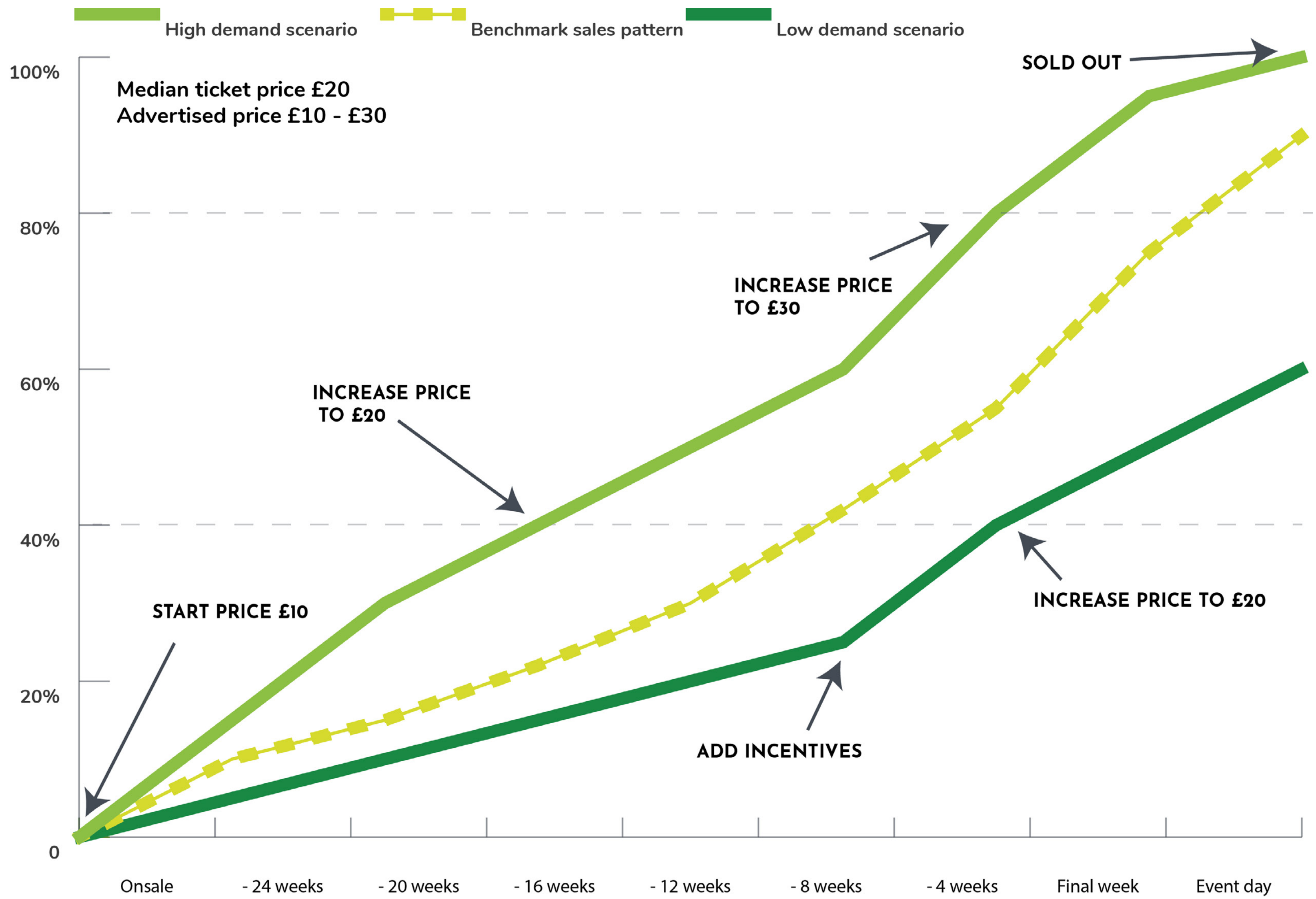
7. Create a Continual Improvement Plan to gradually improve the accuracy and detail of your forecasting and maximise ticket revenue. Consider the following KPIs:

- Average ticket price
- Timing of bookings: days before each event
- Booking patterns and ticket price over time
- Overall revenue and capacity sold

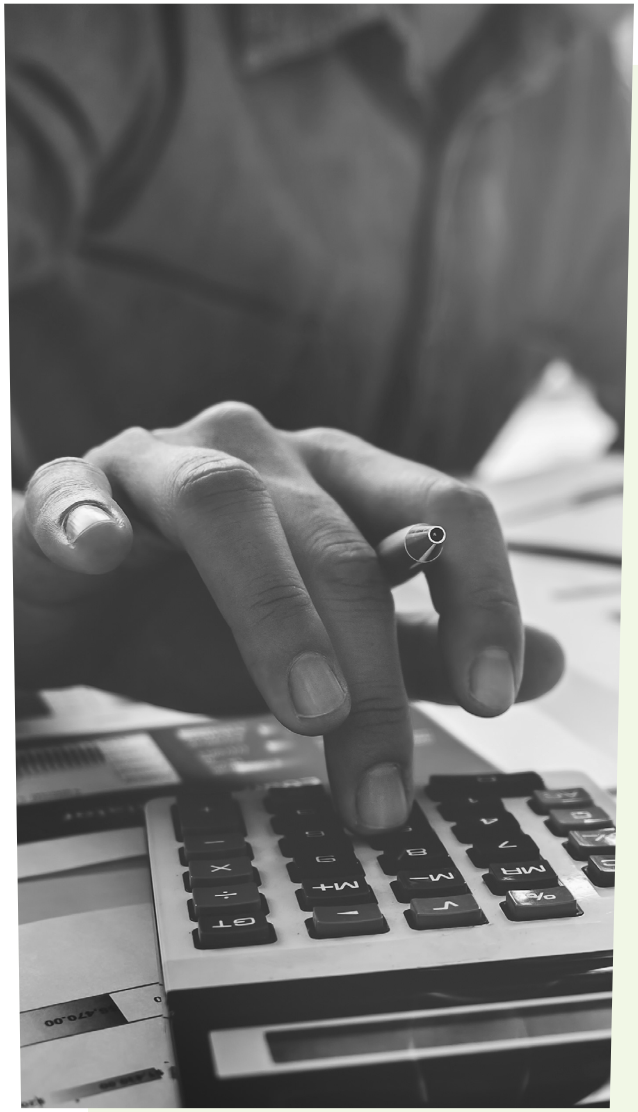
Flexible pricing: an example

This chart on the next page shows how, with flexible pricing, your team could:

- Increase overall ticket income
- Respond to below-target sales
- Reward early bookers
- Increase administration time to improve audience communications and upselling as the event approaches.



High demand scenario
Benchmark sales pattern
Low demand scenario
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0
Median ticket price £20
Advertised price £10 - £30
SOLD OUT
INCREASE PRICE TO £30
INCREASE PRICE TO £20
START PRICE £10
INCREASE PRICE TO £20
ADD INCENTIVES
Onsale
- 24 weeks
- 20 weeks
- 16 weeks
- 12 weeks
- 8 weeks
- 4 weeks
Final week
Event day



Flexible pricing models: additional resources

Use the Popularity-Based Pricing Calculator and Traffic Light Report to set and monitor pricing for your organisation's events.

To explore pricing in more detail, click this icon to view a pop-up list of industry experts who can help you develop your pricing strategies.

Spektrix Users: Click this icon to view a pop-up list of Support Centre articles to help you implement this advice in your system.