



Cuban Dance Company

'El Iyawo Cuban Dance'



'El Iyawo Cuban Dance' was formed by Guillermo Davis, Master Dancer, Choreographer and Teacher from Guantanamo, Eastern Cuba

We promote classes and events in the Group Event Diary. This makes the events visible on our website, to ALL visitors and to Google searches. We want to be easy to find and our events show up very well"

"The Group Leaders can send emails to the whole of their group about planned events and rehearsals, changes in plans etc. It removes an administrative load from them and from us"

The Challenge

'El Iyawo Cuban Dance' is a popular London-based dance company managed by a small team under the inspiring leadership of Guillermo Davis. The team organise weekly events at local venues in East London.

The Challenge was to grow the business without creating an administrative overhead. Cuban Dance set out to find a system which would give them the tools to:-

- Grow the business
- Maintain a membership list
- Promote and advertise their events
- Personalise their different dance groups in one location

At the same time costs had to match our budget; we do not want to have a solution where upfront costs would damage the sustainability of the group.

Project Details

Performance groups *CuDance 10*

We needed a facility of Sub-groups within Groups to enable us to handle performing groups and other special dance groups easily. Clearly our performing groups need to receive information specific to them and separate from main publicity mailing. For example, rehearsals for the dance group arranged with the choreographer need to be recorded in the performing group diary. Also CuDance 10 is self-organising and the group may need to record their own performing events as well as those they are doing with 'el Iyawo'.

Subscription collection – the Carnival Comparsa

"The Cuban Comparsa called "SIÁA-KARÁAAA!" is a related but separate community group associated with our main group. They plan to charge for membership of the Comparsa from next year; members will pay one fee for membership that will cover class/rehearsals attendance for carnival sessions and use of costume/props for procession. A single charge (in place of weekly rehearsal charge) will encourage members to attend rehearsals regularly and membership will encourage commitment. We found the system has excellent support for membership subscriptions. These include reminder letters as well as payment records.

"Having the membership list available online also helps us see how many costumes we will need to make. We can also easily see who has a subscription outstanding. As with the main group and the performing group, emails/ mailing labels can be sent to the Carnival group membership with dates of costume/prop making sessions, requests for skills, then details of procession meeting times, location of dressing rooms and procession start times etc plus Comparsa-specific news, post-procession congratulations, party etc."



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Guillermo observed that

"Many of our students have access to email and the Internet, others don't. We have found the system's group-mailing facility extremely useful because we can easily do regular mails of class and event information and send it by email to those who can receive it; for those without email we get an address label and phone list and can choose which to use depending on the urgency of the message. We no longer have to remember to contact those who don't get email"

Admin and Publicity - Saving time, saving costs!

Time for vital Administration and Publicity is always tight and it's important to keep costs down. The system has enabled us to be very much more focussed and effective.

For example, providing sub-group specific mailings.

A member of that group maintains their own contact details so we don't have to, then the sub-group can do its own local information mailings as well as receiving the mainly monthly mailing that goes to all.

We used to tell students we didn't do postal mailings for those that don't get email (it was too costly in admin time) However using the system makes it easy and cheap to include a post list too; it just costs a few 2nd class stamps and takes no time at all. It really helps with subscriptions for performing groups since the admin time in dealing with reminders is minimal and it keeps the payment records for the accounts. We can also ask our regulars to maintain their own contact details, relieving us of more work."

Conclusion

To visit El Iyawo web pages go to.

www.eliyawo.co.uk

For more information on this project contact
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We required an out-of-the-box professional website for our Dance venture, where the costs would match our income.

El Iyawo Cuban Dance has made good use of ActivityForum; the new group has established itself and is now deploying tools that enable it to maintain close contact with its dancers and classes. There is more to running dance groups than dancing and reducing the administration burden has given Guillermo and Linda the chance to do more with the same effort.

To see the public aspects of how 'el Iyawo Cuban Dance' is using ActivityForum to promote its work see www.eliyawo.co.uk and look for the yellow button 'Class and Event Info' to get the Event Diary page for our public events. To go to their group in www.ActivityForum.co.uk click on the "search" for **dance**

