



Transforming Arts Organizations Worldwide

CRM & Ticketing Integration Best Practices

March 2023

Research Overview and Interviewees

The Questions

What are the best systems for integrating ticketing and CRM databases, particularly in continental Europe? What are common problems behind existing technology platforms, and how do arts organizations maintain the necessary expertise to adjust these systems in-house?

One-on-One Interviews



Bergen International Festival

Czech Philharmonic

Czech Philharmonic



Grand Theatre of Geneva



LAC Lugano



Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra



Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne

OPERNHAUS
ZÜRICH

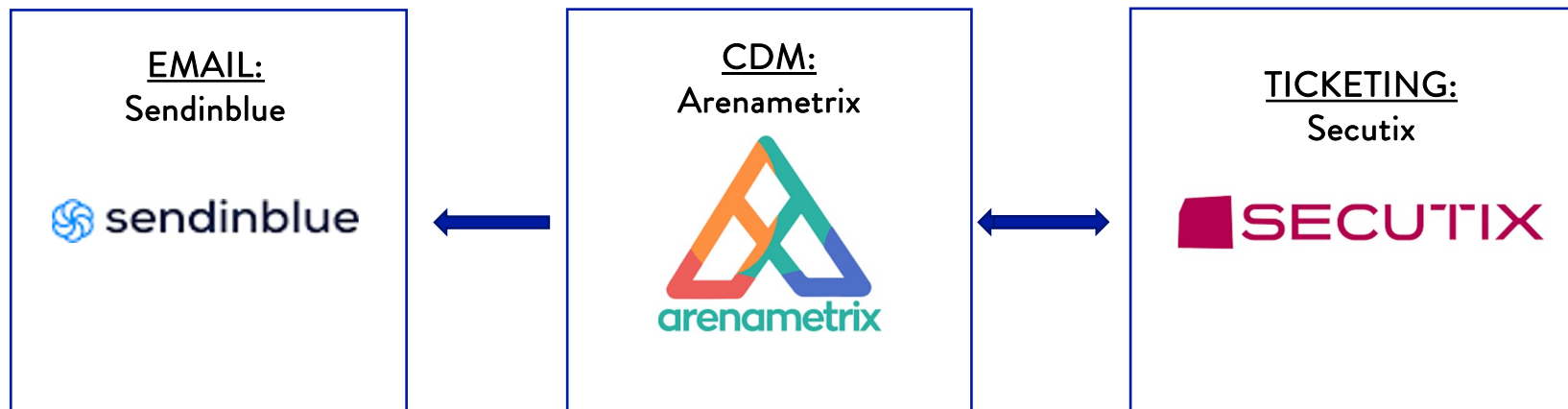
Zurich Opernhaus

Key Takeaways

- **The preferred CRM/ticketing systems for most organizations are not available in the home country of the requesting organization:** Tessitura, Spektrix and Tixly were all systems highly recommended by their users. Tessitura in particular is a single system that meets most of the customer data needs of arts organizations in one place. Should any of these systems become available in this country, it would make sense for the requesting member to switch to them.
- **Most of our interviewees don't require systems to manage fundraising and donor relations:** Most of our interviewees were not at a maturity level that required in-depth tracking, reporting or metrics on individual donors. From our interviews, the only CRM platform that also supported donors was Dynamics 365.
- **Interviewees expressed preference towards consolidating systems, “the fewer the better;” however requirements meant at least 3 systems were used by most:** when too many systems are in play, you not only run the risk of having to create more customizations to integrate different systems but also require training for staff on all systems. However, there's no single system for ticketing, CRM, fundraising and mailing available for performing arts in the home country of the requesting organization.
- **The choice for most continental European arts organizations is to stitch together several semi-customized solutions.** Ticketing systems like Secutix and customer marketing solutions like Arenametrix offer specialized capabilities tailored to performing arts; the full CRM systems available in the requesting organization's home country are typically across-industry like SuperOffice or Microsoft Dynamics and therefore require extensive setup in fields and reports and integrations that may need to be revisited with any software update of ticketing systems.
- **Therefore, ongoing customer service from vendors after set-up and integration should be a priority:** it is rare for arts organizations to have dedicated internal staff who work on maintaining CRM/donor and ticketing, and IT departments are not big enough to do this kind of work. Typically, interaction with these systems are a few peoples' responsibilities amongst other duties in marketing, development, and the box office. From our interviews, we learned that ticketing systems typically have poorer customer service benefits, but CRM systems have a wider range.

Case Study: Orchestra

Schematic of System Workflow

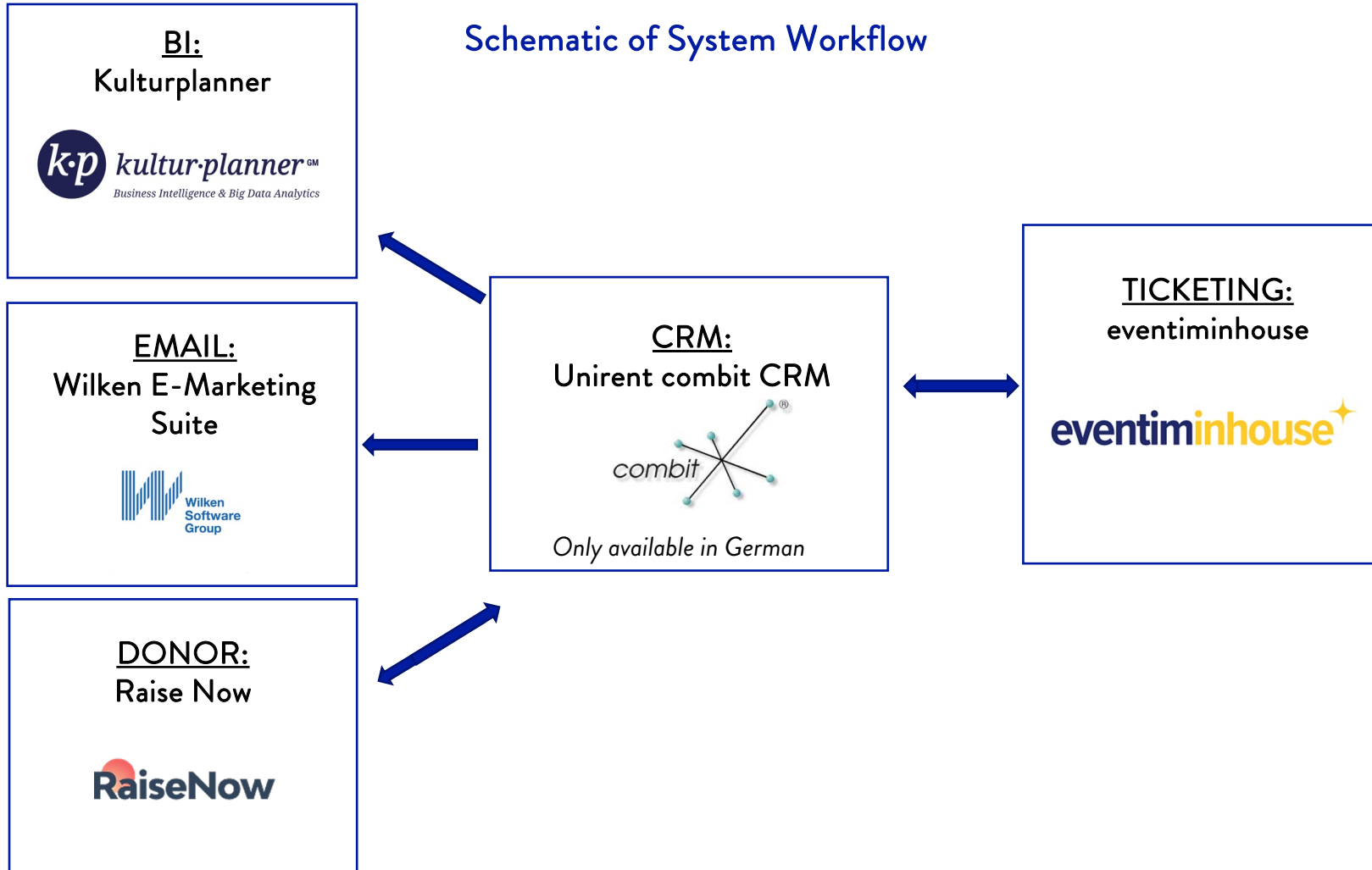


Background

- Years ago it was decided that this orchestra would use Secutix for ticketing. Secutix worked well for **managing their subscriptions and ticket sales.**
- Arenametrix is their CRM system. After conducting market research, this orchestra decided to use Arenametrix because of the **tool's integration with Secutix and the company's focus on cultural organizations.**
- It has taken almost one year to implement Arenametrix.
- They also considered using Eudonet for CRM, but it is not compatible with Secutix and costs more.
- This organization also uses Sendinblue for email marketing because it **integrates easily with Arenametrix.**
- There are two staff members in communication and marketing, and two staff for ticketing.

Case Study: Opera House

Schematic of System Workflow

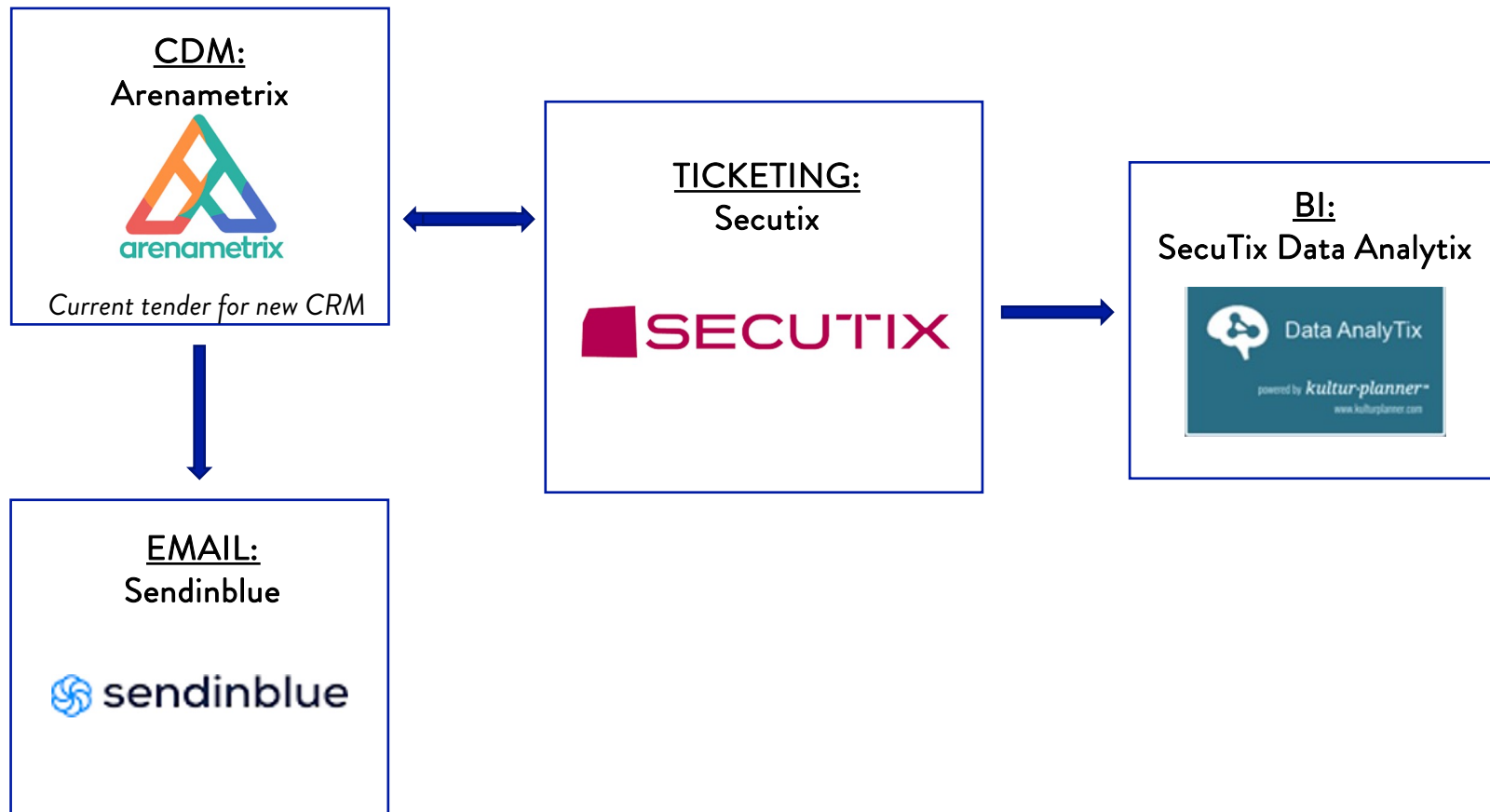


Background

- The ticketing and CRM systems were in place at this organization prior to COVID.
- Eventim.Inhouse is the ticketing service used by 16 opera houses in this country. In 2018, this org searched for a new ticketing tool, but decided to continue using Eventim.Inhouse based on the **unique specifications of the org's ticketing and marketing departments.**
- Unirent combit CRM has **bidirectional connectivity** with the Eventim.Inhouse ticketing system.
- This organization uses an external email marketing tool, Wilken E-Marketing Suite, which connects to combit CRM.
- For fundraising purposes, the team is currently using RaiseNow, which also connects to combit CRM. They are likely changing to Soul Click for fundraising in the near future.
- The IT team assists on issues **regarding updates, integration, and miscellaneous problems.**

Case Study: Theater

Schematic of System Workflow

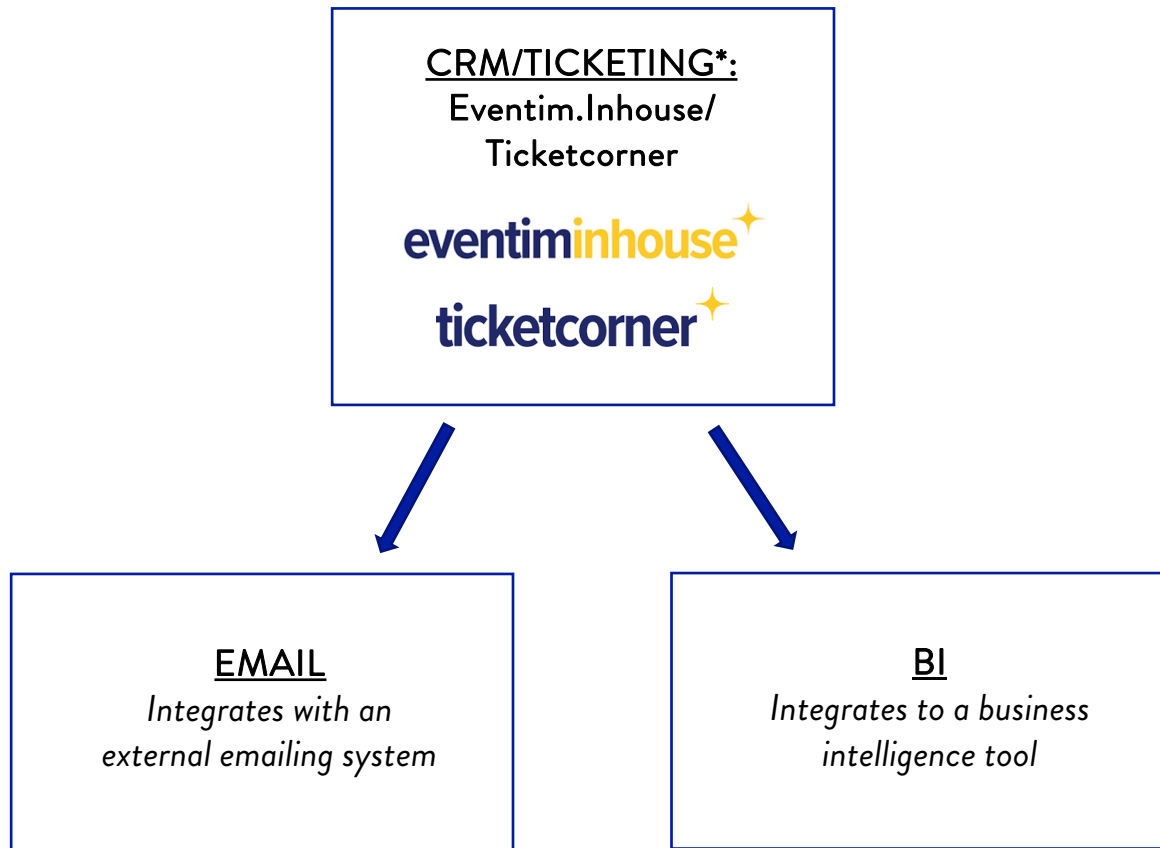


Background

- This theater has been using their ticketing system since 2016, and the CRM for three years.
- The theater is **currently changing their CRM system**. They are aiming to change from Arenametrix to a more powerful system. Internal audits revealed that other departments in the org have more needs that are currently unmet. They **are likely to change to Dynamics**.
- Arenametrix is a well-known partner of Secutix and is one of the only agencies in this country that has experience in implementing **dynamic/flex pricing** for opera houses and cultural organizations.
- Secutix is their ticketing system, which integrates well with their CRM and BI tools.
- Sendinblue is an external email marketing tool that also integrates easily with Arenametrix.
- This theater also uses **Microsoft tools** for a small volume of donor relations and administration but is interested in consolidating to MS Office in the future.

Case Study: Cultural Center

Schematic of System Workflow



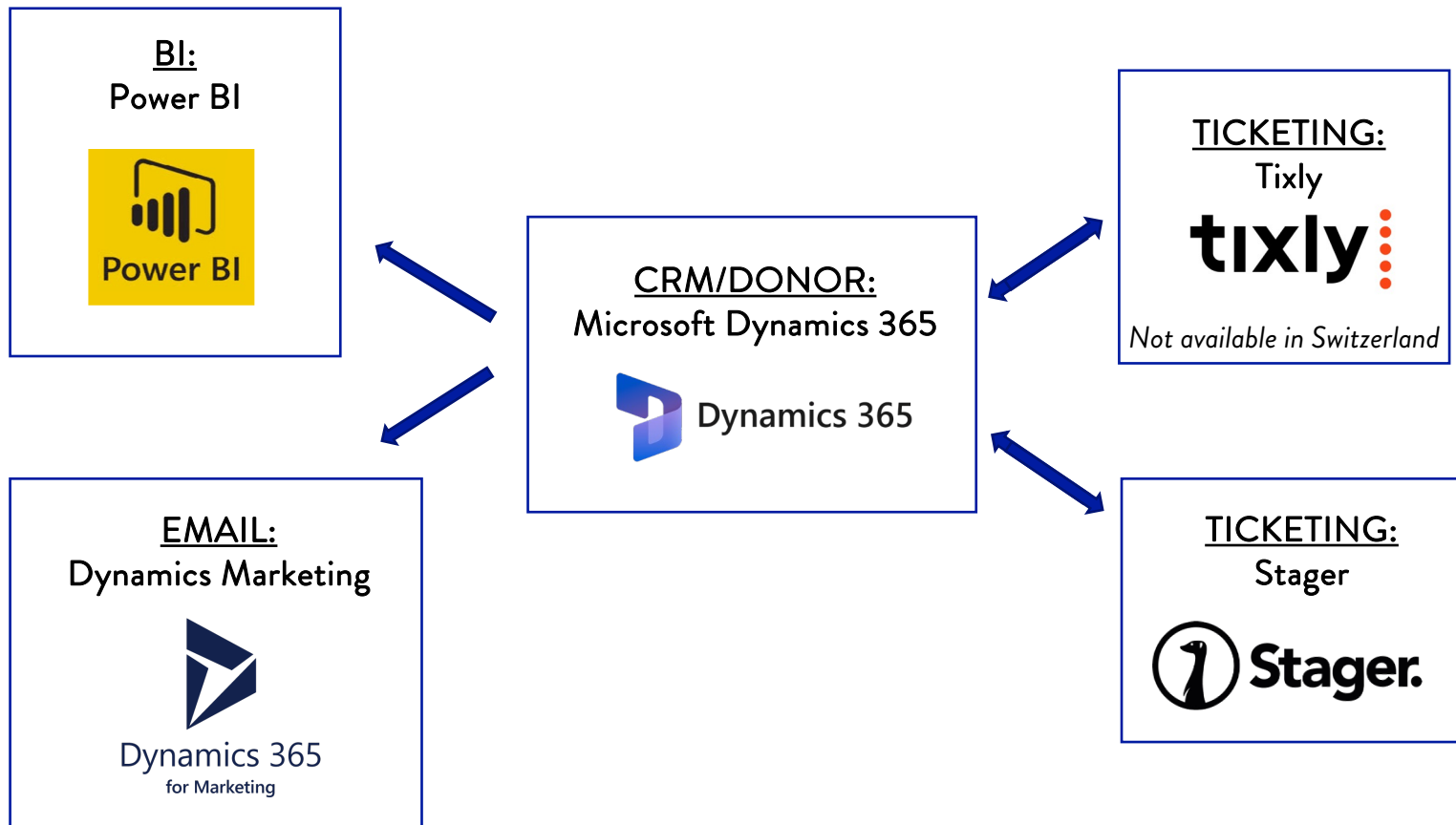
Background

* The cultural center works through Ticketcorner who is a reseller of Eventim.inhouse. This organization can manage a membership package and audience lists using Eventim.inhouse as their CRM but it took a while for these capabilities to work well as the platform was not originally built for a subscription model.

- Eventim.inhouse is a good technology for this organization but is not highly customizable for this org. It takes a lot of self-directed work to customize the system for specific needs and the customer service is very slow especially having to work through Ticketcorner, an intermediary. Their contract with Ticketcorner is quickly approaching its end, and they are looking to switch systems.
- Eventim.inhouse has direct integrations to emailing and business intelligence tools. It also handles online ticket sales well.
- Top criteria for future systems include customization and better cost and revenue structures from systems.
- There are not enough donors to warrant any marketing tools, so management of donors is done external to Eventim.inhouse.
- Primarily the marketing teams and an analytic personnel manager use the systems.

Case Study: Orchestra

Schematic of System Workflow

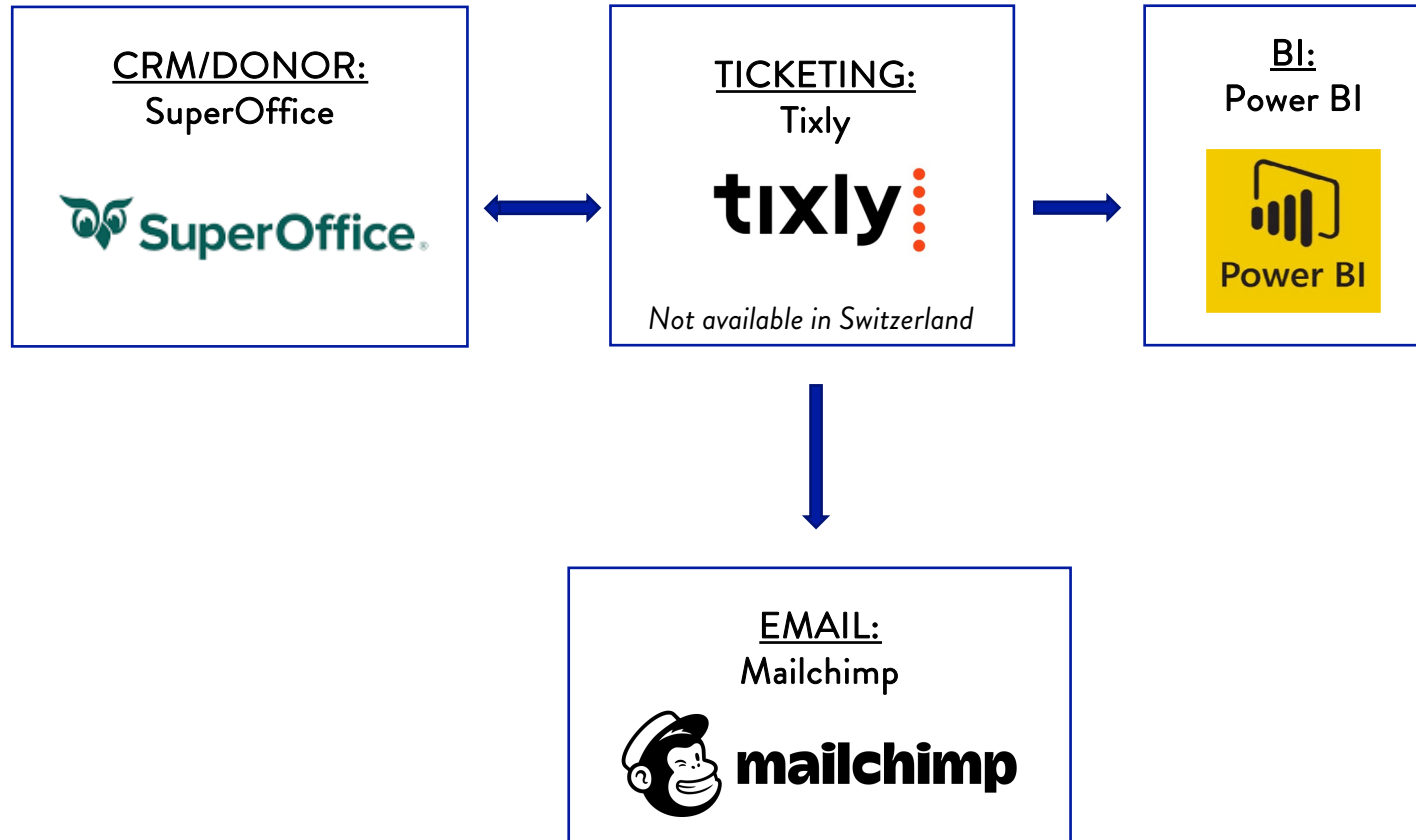


Background

- All of these systems have been in place at this orchestra for the last 5-6 years. Implementation of Microsoft Dynamics was performed by a previous staff member.
- The organization is currently undergoing a series of updates to their CRM system with an **external partner, PixelZebra**. These improvements primarily center around the customization of additional data categories, e.g., income level, purchase history, etc.
- The concert halls where the orchestra performs handle the Tixly ticketing system, although the orchestra gets a promoter dashboard view to Tixly as a concert organizer. The organization does manage a smaller ticketing system, Stager, that oversees concerts in smaller venues.
- Right now, the orchestra is using an external email marketing tool, but will **soon switch over to Dynamics Marketing to consolidate systems even more.**

Case Study: Festival

Schematic of System Workflow

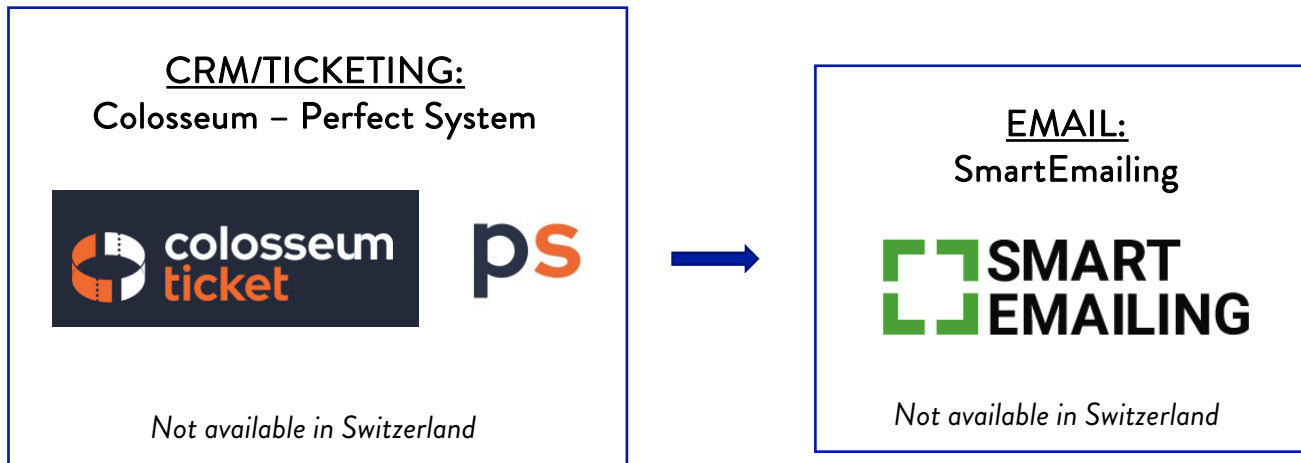


Background

- This is the festival's second year of using Tixly. Before Tixly, the festival used Ticketmaster (hard to create a loyal customer base), Eventim.Inhouse (lagged technologically and was clunky to use), and TicketCo (good for supporting digital products, not physical).
- In 2022, this festival worked with an external consultant to change ticketing systems and chose Tixly over other systems like Tessitura for its **ability to support online ticket purchasing**. Other systems had high integration fees and a long customization period. In addition, Tixly only charges **fees per ticket** rather than monthly fees which is **more economical for a festival schedule**.
- Setting up Tixly took only 6 weeks but primarily because this organization did not have to import past customer information — all customer data had to be freshly gathered.
- SuperOffice is particularly good at **sending out invitations to customers, logging conversations and supporting donor relations with VIPs, donors, and other special guests**.
- This festival has an internal IT staff member who has created a database that combines APIs from CRM and ticketing systems and feeds the data into the website for customers to engage with.

Case Study: Orchestra

Schematic of System Workflow



Background

- In this country, there is one big software player named Perfect System who essentially holds a monopoly. Thus, this organization has implemented and utilized the ticketing and CRM services of Perfect System for many years now.
- Upsides to this current technology include easy integration of systems (because they exist under the same umbrella company), ability of system to allow complex nuances (so it covers all the organization's needs), and that it allows arts and cultural institutions to share lists between one another.
- Downsides to these systems are that there is no dedicated donor module, no easy way to implement dynamic pricing, and the customer service is not as helpful as the orchestra would like.
- Currently, this organization is thinking about changing to Salesforce, primarily to give their fundraising team a more proper channel to store donor information and cultivation tactics. In addition, the orchestra would like all ticket history and CRM data to live in Salesforce so that everything is in one place.
- They have an IT department comprised of 3 FTE staff who work on managing the backend of the tool.

CRM and Donor Systems

**only highlights systems that exist in the requesting organization's home country*

CRM/Donor Tool: Dynamics 365

Benefits

- ✓ **High flexibility to customize the system to meet needs of your organization**
- ✓ **Dynamics 365 has NGO pricing that can be cheaper than their other products**
 - *Eligible nonprofits can get Dynamics 365 Sales Enterprise free for up to 5 seats and discounted pricing of 22.6 CHF per user/month for additional users, which is 75% off the commercial price. There are additional monthly fees for customer service, sales, etc.*
- ✓ **Easy integration with many other systems: ticketing, business intelligence, and email marketing tools.**
 - *Twice a week, one orchestra imports data from their ticketing systems Tixly and Stager into Dynamics*
 - *Dynamics 365's partnership with Power BI allows an automatic visualization of data in powerful ways – understanding trends in purchase history and predicting opportunities in future sales.*
- ✓ **Detailed database to store a high volume of audience AND donor lists**
 - *While most CRM systems in Europe only support audience lists, Dynamics 365 is also built with the intention to house donor data.*
- ✓ **Microsoft Dynamics is a vetted company and has a number of qualified external partners who can help support**

Downsides

- ✗ **Customization of Dynamics 365 most likely requires permanent external support, or at least the work of someone who has a strong tech background.**
 - *External help is almost necessary to set up complex backend security rules and a functioning backlog of data.*
 - *Overall, Dynamics 365 was not set up originally to service arts and culture organizations, so although there's the ability to integrate other systems, this integration takes a lot of customization.*
 - *One orchestra currently has employed two contractors from Pixel Zebra, an additional investment of 12K-13K Euros.*

CRM Tool: Arenametrix



Benefits

- ✓ **High flexibility to customize the system to meet needs of your organization.**
- ✓ **Price is more attractive than Salesforce or Eudonet.**
 - *About 30K CHF per year for one theater, whose pricing is also elevated because they added a lot of modules*
- ✓ **Easy integration with ticketing and email marketing tools.**
 - *Arenametrix has well-known partnerships with Secutix and Sendinblue.*
- ✓ **Useful for maintaining database and organizing data.**
- ✓ **Ability to support flexible and dynamic pricing**
- ✓ **Arenametrix can create a number of data visuals and reports.**
 - *Arenametrix creates reports and shares statistics that other BI tools cannot.*
 - *Allows for comparison of sales standings between events or seasons.*
 - *Helpful in understanding dynamic pricing and its efficacy.*
- ✓ **Arenametrix specializes in arts and cultural organizations, and so they update the tool according to the needs of the industry.**

Downsides

- ✗ **Arenametrix does not support donor management or fundraising.**
 - *Organizations using Arenametrix have to manage fundraising on external systems.*
- ✗ **Integrating Arenametrix with Secutix requires time and technical support.**
 - *Several months are required to integrate Secutix and Arenametrix.*
- ✗ **Arenametrix BI is not very robust.**
 - *Organizations using Arenametrix generally use separate systems for BI.*
- ✗ **Arenametrix has poor support.**
 - *Because Arenametrix is a newer CRM tool, technical issues do arise. They have originally operated as a customer data platform.*
 - *Interviewers have expressed that Arenametrix needs greater support staff to fulfill their needs.*

CRM Tool: Combit Unirent

Benefits

- ✓ **Unirent is a small company that offers high flexibility to customize the system to meet your needs.**
- ✓ **Pricing is lower because of the small nature of the company.**
 - *A price estimate for an opera house can be around 10-15K CHF per year*
- ✓ **Easy organization of customer database.**
 - *Can check customer's purchase and attendance history, subscription information, their inclusion in email campaigns, and conversion rate from newsletter.*
 - *Tool has a tag system that makes for easier organization and categorization of customer base.*

Downsides

- ✗ **Unirent combit may only be in German.**
 - *May only be functional in Germany and parts of Switzerland.*
- ✗ **Difficulty in set up and implementing updates.**
 - *Integration with other tools can take a long time, ranging from months to years.*
 - *After updates to combit, sometimes the CRM integration with other systems is disrupted.*
- ✗ **Lacks robust BI and newsletter capabilities.**
 - *The newsletter tool is not very powerful, requiring an external marketing automation tool.*
 - *BI must be managed separately as combit lacks this capability.*

Ticketing Systems

**only highlights systems that exist in the requesting organization's home country*

Benefits

- ✓ **Easy integration with CRM and BI tools.**
 - *Secutix has partnerships with Arenametrix and can integrate with BI tools such as SecuTix Data Analytix.*
- ✓ **Pricing is based on the number of tickets sold as a fee per ticket, which is helpful for a festival schedule. There are separate fees if you use SecuTix's online channel.**
 - *About 40-50K CHF per year for a theater, whose pricing is also elevated because they added a lot of modules*
- ✓ **Users enjoy the automatic functionality.**
 - *Secutix can create sales and revenue reports with a number of parameters.*
 - *Report exportable via PDF and Excel, and can be used as a template for email correspondence*
- ✓ **Secutix is robust and facilitates smooth running of daily tasks for ticketing departments.**
- ✓ **Easy use for understanding customer's purchase history, engagement with organization, subscriptions, and interactions with sales teams.**

Downsides

- ✗ **Secutix interface is outdated.**
 - *Users have reported that the tool's UX interface is difficult to use.*
 - *Some features, such as customized reports, can take a long time to load.*
- ✗ **Difficulty in tailoring Secutix to the organization's identity and website.**
 - *Outdated ticket purchase interface on the organization's website.*
 - *Limited scope of how Secutix can be used to change the website to distinguish the organization.*
- ✗ **Dynamic pricing must be done manually.**
 - *Ticketing teams must manually change the dynamic pricing rules.*
- ✗ **Poor support.**
 - *Secutix has a support team based in Spain, but they do not specialize in servicing cultural organizations.*
 - *Takes a long time for support staff to understand and fix the issues.*

Ticketing Tool: Eventim.Inhouse

Benefits

- ✓ **Good for organizations with large subscriptions client base.**
 - *Eventim.inhouse is a robust tool for managing season subscriptions.*
- ✓ **Pricing is based on the number of tickets sold as a fee per ticket which is helpful for a festival schedule.**
- ✓ **Good ticket office functionality.**
 - *Easy use for ticketing teams to fulfill their daily tasks.*
- ✓ **Easy organization of customers.**
 - *Allows for use of tags to mark customers and their interests.*
 - *Can see an individual's past purchases and subscriptions.*

Downsides

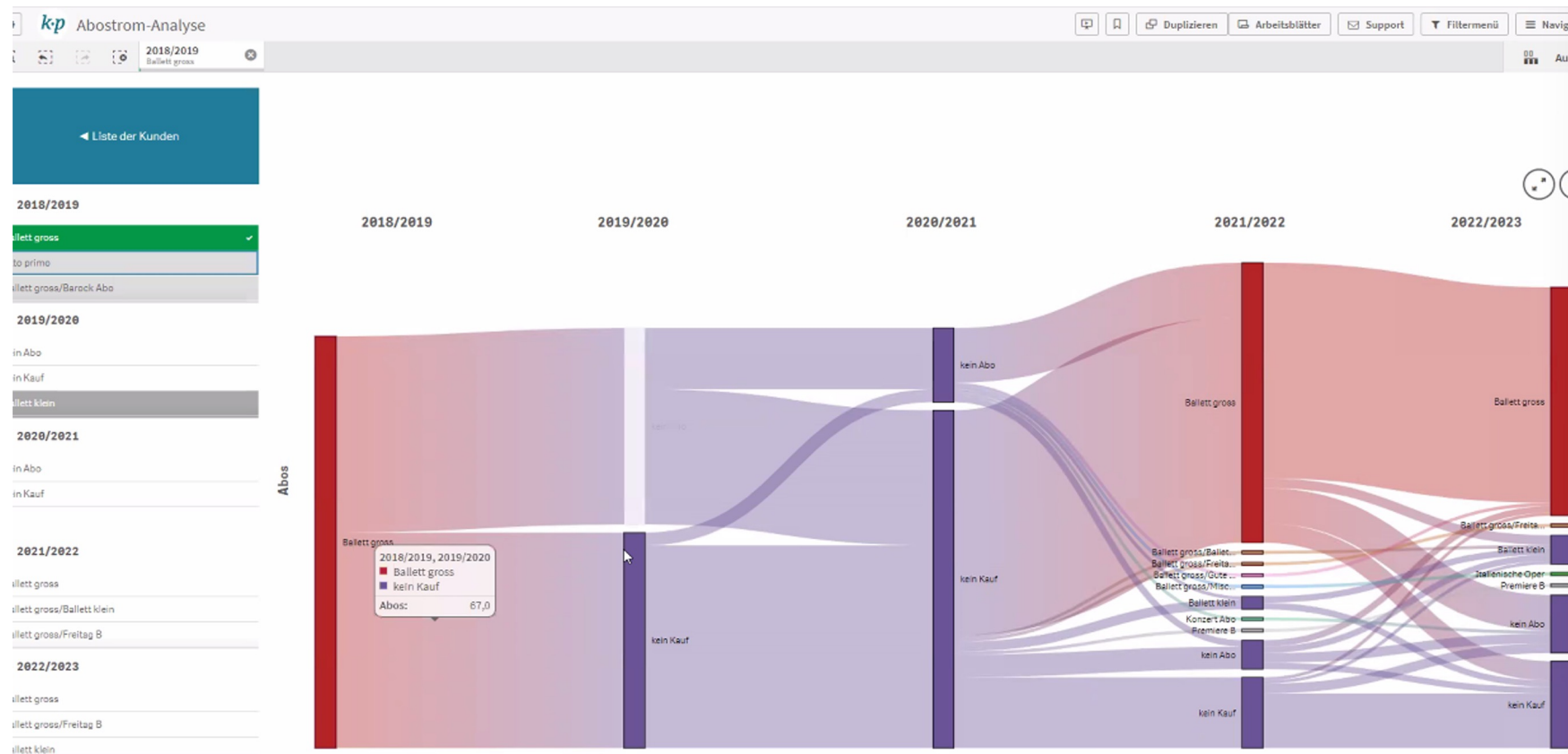
- ✗ **Interface can be difficult to use.**
 - *The UX interface is not always intuitive and can be difficult to use.*
- ✗ **Tool's updates causes issues for program connectivity and integration.**
 - *Sometimes, updates to eventim.inhouse affects the existing integrations between programs.*
 - *Setup for integrations can take a very long time.*
- ✗ **Minimal CRM and marketing capabilities.**
- ✗ **Very slow customer support, and not a lot of customization opportunity.**
- ✗ **Does not support dynamic pricing or flexible seat mapping.**

Business Intelligence Tools

**only highlights systems that exist in the requesting organization's home country*

Kulturplanner

Kulturplanner focuses exclusively on cultural organizations and creates updates that are specifically helpful for these institutions. The tool helps visualize customer journeys including changes in subscription and ticket sales. You can also create daily email reports that show live ticket sales in a PDF output (i.e., what was booked today, in the last seven days, etc.)



Power BI

Power BI is a tool managed by Microsoft and it makes automated reports and has a very easy to read marketing dashboard. Specifically, the data here is helpful for making strategic choices in email campaigns and knowing which customer groups to focus on. There seems to be less of a detailed view of specific customer journeys like Kulturplanner or SecuTix Analytix.

