Dance

Fifty-four Dance organisations participated in the 2019 Digital Culture survey which evaluates how arts and cultural organisations in England use digital technology. They include organisations of different sizes from across England, giving us a picture that reasonably reflects how the Dance sector is using technology to support its work.[1]

Importance of digital technology

Most important for →	Marketing
Least important for →	Creation

Dance organisations are more likely than the sector overall to consider digital technology to be essential/important for all areas of their work, apart from creation. As in previous years, and in line with the sector overall, the area in which the most organisations perceive digital to be essential/important is marketing: 93 per cent of Dance organisations recognise digital as essential/important for marketing activities, compared to 88 per cent among the sector overall (see Figure 1). Since 2013, the top three areas in which digital technology is considered essential/important for Dance organisations have remained marketing, preserving and archiving and operations.[2] The importance of digital has remained stable for creation and operations and has increased only slightly for marketing and for distribution and exhibition since 2013. The area in which the importance of digital has increased most across Dance organisations is business models, which has risen by 36 percentage points since 2013 (19 per cent considered digital to be essential/important in 2013 vs 55 per cent in 2019).[3]

Since 2013, the gap in the perceived importance of digital has widened between Dance organisations and the sector overall. For example, in 2013, 61 per cent of Dance organisations perceived digital to be essential/important for distribution and exhibition, compared to 62 per cent of the sector, whereas in 2019, 65 per cent of Dance organisations perceive digital to be essential/important for distribution and exhibition compared to 50 per cent of the sector. The gap has also increased in the areas of marketing, preserving and archiving and operations.

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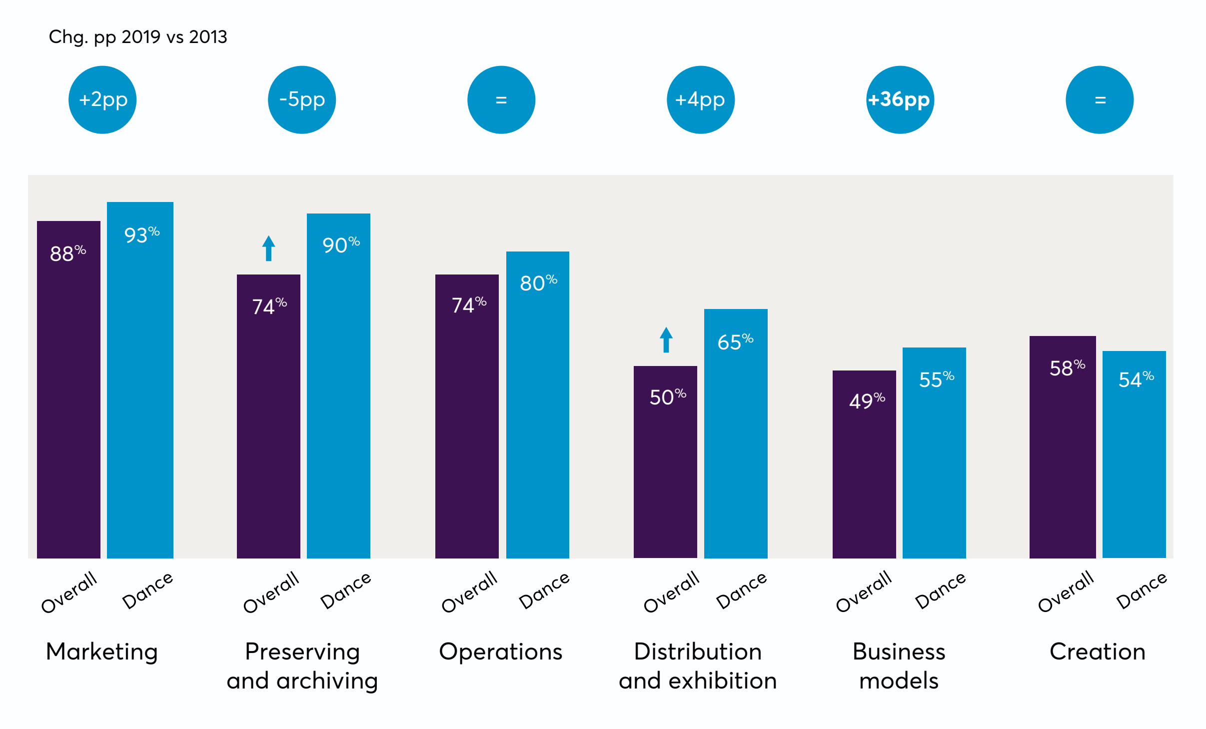
Figure 1: Importance of digital (essential/important) in different activity areas – whole sector vs Dance, 2019



How important is digital technology to your organisation overall, at the present time, in each of the following areas? 'Chg. pp' = Change in percentage points. Statistically significant changes 2013–2019 (at a 95 per cent confidence level) highlighted in bold. Arrows show statistically significant differences vs whole sector.

Base: 2013 – Dance organisations (n = 53); 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 54), 2019 – all organisations (n = 1,113).

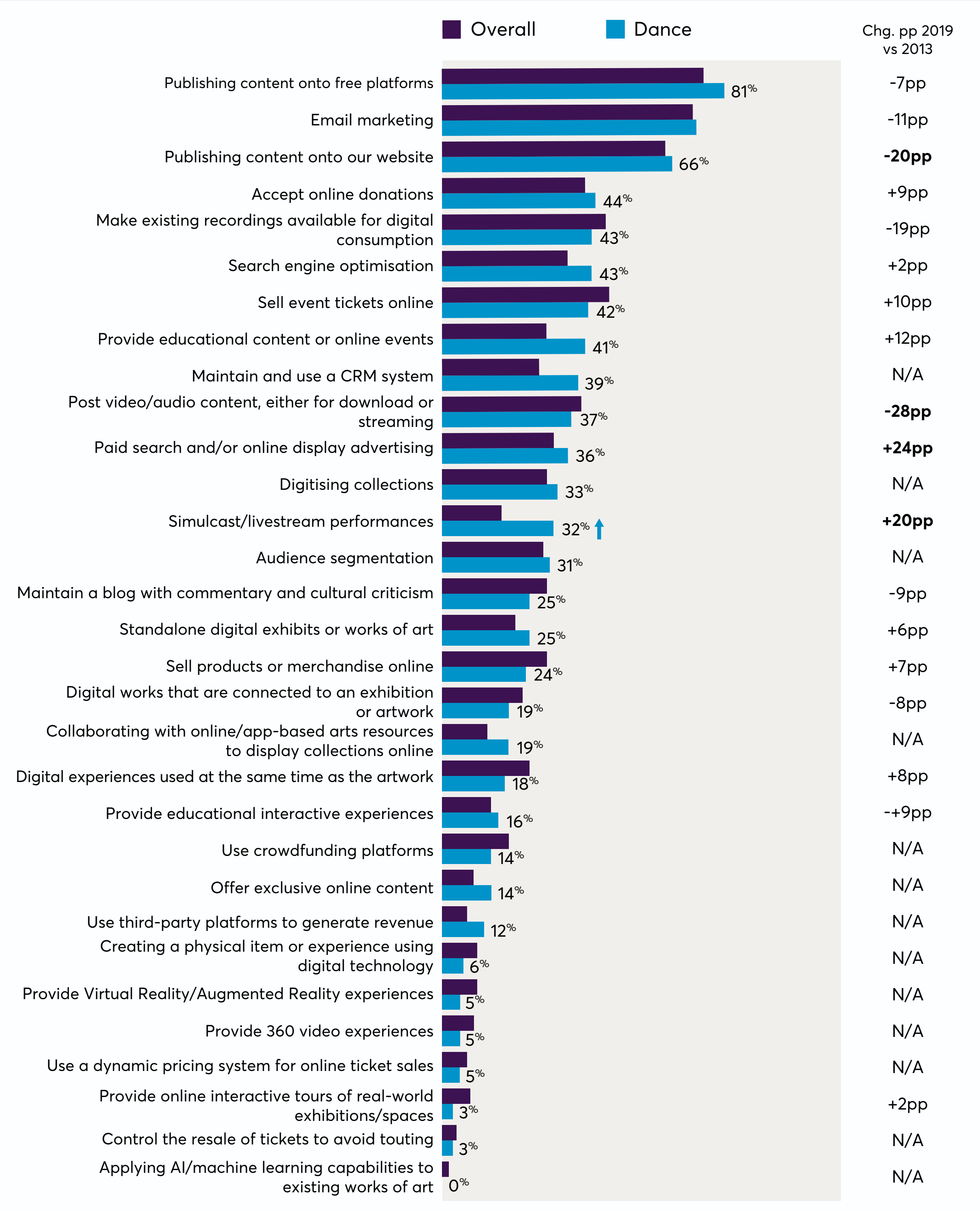
Digital activities

Top digital activities →	Publishing content on free platforms, email marketing, publishing content on own branded website
More likely than other other artforms to do… →	Paid search/display advertising, simulcast/livestream

In 2013, across the sector overall the average number of digital activity types done per organisation was nine, while Dance organisations averaged eight. Now, both dance organisations and the sector overall on average do eight of the thirty-one types of digital activities shown in Figure 2.[4]

Dance organisations are more likely than the sector to carry out twelve out of thirty-one activity types, the largest difference being simulcasting/livestreaming performances (32 per cent amongst Dance organisations vs 17 per cent amongst the sector overall).

Figure 2: Digital activity types for Dance organisations (2019 and change from 2013)



Now thinking about your organisation's digital activities, please indicate which of the following your organisation currently does. 'Chg. pp' = Change in percentage points. Statistically significant changes 2013–2019 (at a 95 per cent confidence level) highlighted in bold. Arrows show statistically significant differences vs whole sector. N/A is stated where question was not asked in 2013.

Base: 2013 – Dance organisations (n = 53); 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 54), 2019 – all organisations (n = 1,134).

In comparison to 2013, a far greater proportion of Dance organisations engage now in simulcasting/livestreaming (32 per cent in 2019 vs 12 per cent in 2013), while a much smaller percentage now post audio/video content for download or streaming (37 per cent now, compared with 65 per cent in 2013).[5]

Dance organisations are ahead of the sector as a whole when it comes to mobile and social media: 83 per cent of Dance organisations have a mobile-optimised web presence, compared to the sector average of 73 per cent. The proportion of Dance organisations with a mobile presence has increased markedly over time (83 per cent in 2019 vs 28 per cent in 2013).[6]

In comparison to the wider sector, Dance organisations are using more social media platforms (5.3 vs 4.2 sector average) and they are notably more likely to use Instagram (86 per cent vs 65 per cent sector average). Instagram is the social media platform which, since 2013, has seen the most significant growth, amongst both Dance organisations and sector organisations as a whole (86 per cent of Dance organisations use Instagram now vs 9 per cent in 2013).[7]

Looking at the fifteen social media platforms listed in the survey, Facebook remains the most popular and is used almost ubiquitously by Dance organisations (96 per cent of Dance organisations vs 92 per cent of the sector). Dance organisations are more likely than the sector overall to use video platforms, such as YouTube (68 per cent vs 47 per cent sector average) and Vimeo (50 per cent vs 22 per cent sector average). Part of the reason could be that Dance organisations use these platforms for simulcasting/livestreaming, an activity which they are more likely to be doing than the sector overall (32 per cent vs 17 per cent).

Dance organisations engage in slightly more data-driven activities on average than the sector overall (they do an average of 4.9 activities vs 4.3 amongst the sector overall). Compared to the sector overall, Dance organisations are much more likely to use data to develop their online strategy (69 per cent amongst Dance organisations vs 41 per cent amongst the sector overall) and to use analytics and insight from audience/visitor data to improve their website (50 per cent vs 39 per cent).[8]

Since 2013, there have been notable increases in the proportion of Dance organisations undertaking some data-led activities, including: using data to develop our online strategy (69 per cent in 2019 vs 39 per cent in 2013), using analytics and insight from audience/visitor data to improve our website (50 per cent in 2019 vs 30 per cent in 2013) and using data to administer/improve membership schemes (21 per cent in 2019 vs 6 per cent in 2013).[9]

The positive impact of digital

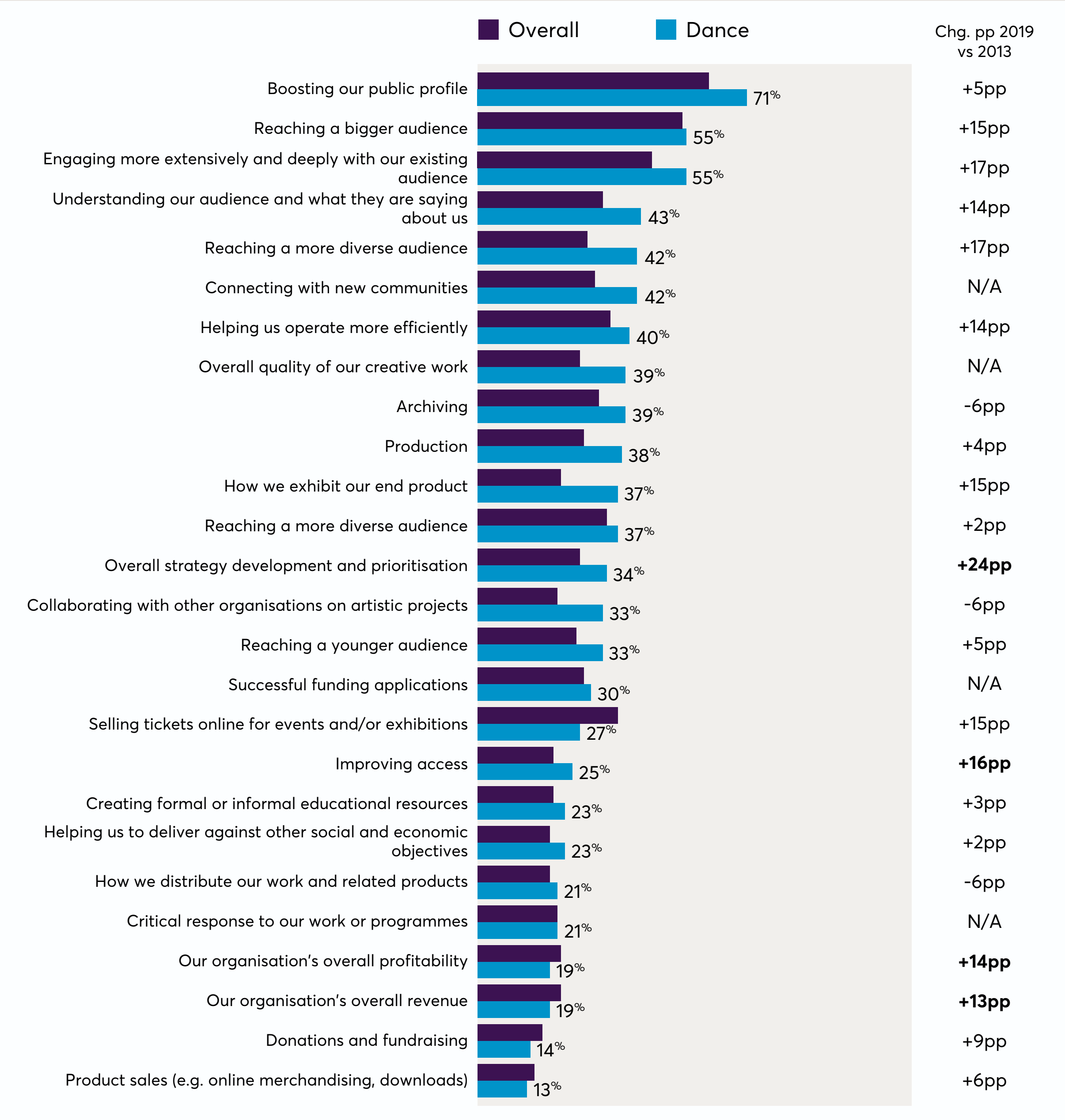
Proportion seeing major/fairly major positive impacts overall →	70 per cent (vs 67 per cent for the whole sector)
Main area of positive impact →	Boosting public profile

In the Digital Culture survey, organisations were asked how great an impact digital technology had had on their organisation's ability to fulfil its mission successfully. Overall, 70 per cent of Dance organisations reported a major or fairly major positive impact (scoring four or five on a five-point scale) on their ability to carry out their mission, similar to the sector average of 67 per cent.[10]

In sixteen out of the twenty-six categories of activity listed, more Dance organisations report a major positive impact of digital technology now compared to in 2013 (see Figure 3). The areas seeing the most change tend to relate to business models and to audiences. The specific categories where reporting of major positive impact has increased by the biggest margin are overall strategy development and prioritisation (34 per cent in 2019 vs 10 per cent in 2013), engaging more extensively with our existing audience (55 per cent in 2019 vs 38 per cent in 2013) and reaching an international audience (42 per cent in 2019 vs 25 per cent in 2013).[11]

Positive impact levels across different activity areas tend to mirror the sector overall, but there are some areas where more Dance organisations report major positive impact. The largest differences are for how we exhibit our end product (37 per cent of dance organisations vs 22 per cent of the sector overall) and reaching an international audience (42 per cent vs 29 per cent).[12]

Figure 3: Proportion of Dance organisations reporting a major positive impact of digital technology on activity areas (Dance vs whole sector, 2019)



Thinking back over the past twelve months, would you say your organisation's use of the internet and digital technology has had a major positive impact, a minor positive impact, or no positive impact at all on each of the following? 'Chg. pp' = Change in percentage points. Statistically significant changes 2013–2019 (at a 95 per cent confidence level) highlighted in bold. N/A is stated where question was not asked in 2013.

Base: 2013 – Dance organisations (n = 53); 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 48), 2019 – all organisations (n = 997).

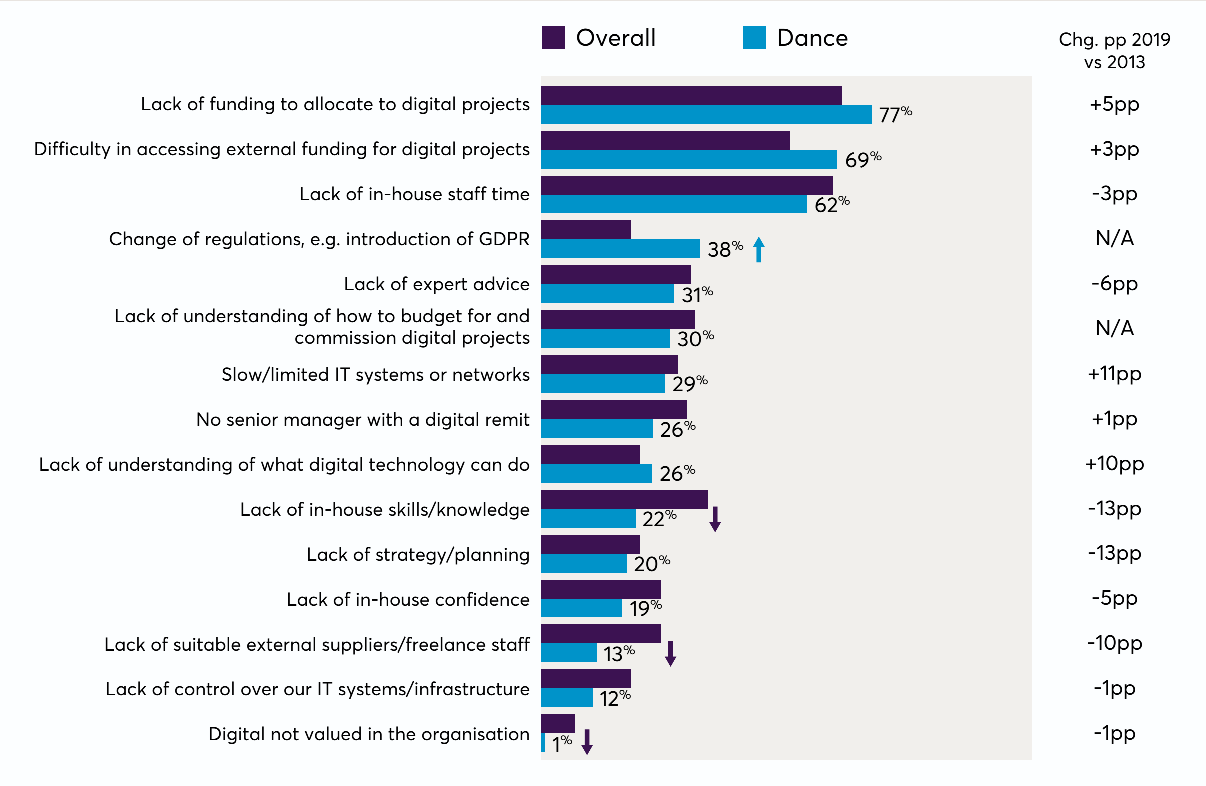
Management factors

Biggest barrier →	Lack of funding to allocate to digital projects

In line with the sector overall, Dance organisations report that lack of funding to allocate to digital is the most common barrier to achieving their digital aspirations (77 per cent in 2019), followed by difficulty accessing external funding (69 per cent) and lack of in-house staff time (62 per cent). Whilst these have remained persistent barriers since 2013, the proportion that report lack of funding as a barrier has increased over time (from 72 per cent in 2013 to 77 per cent in 2019), whilst lack of staff time has decreased (from 65 per cent in 2013 to 62 per cent in 2019).

There are only three out of fifteen barriers that Dance organisations are more likely than the sector overall to report. These include difficulty in accessing external funding (69 per cent amongst Dance organisations vs 58 per cent for the sector overall) and lack of funding to allocate to digital projects (77 per cent vs 70 per cent).[13] The barriers that Dance organisations are notably less likely to report are lack of in-house skills (22 per cent vs 35 per cent for the sector overall) and a lack of suitable external suppliers (13 per cent vs 28 per cent overall).

Figure 4: Perceived barriers to achieving digital aspirations, felt by Dance organisations (Dance organisations vs whole sector, 2019)



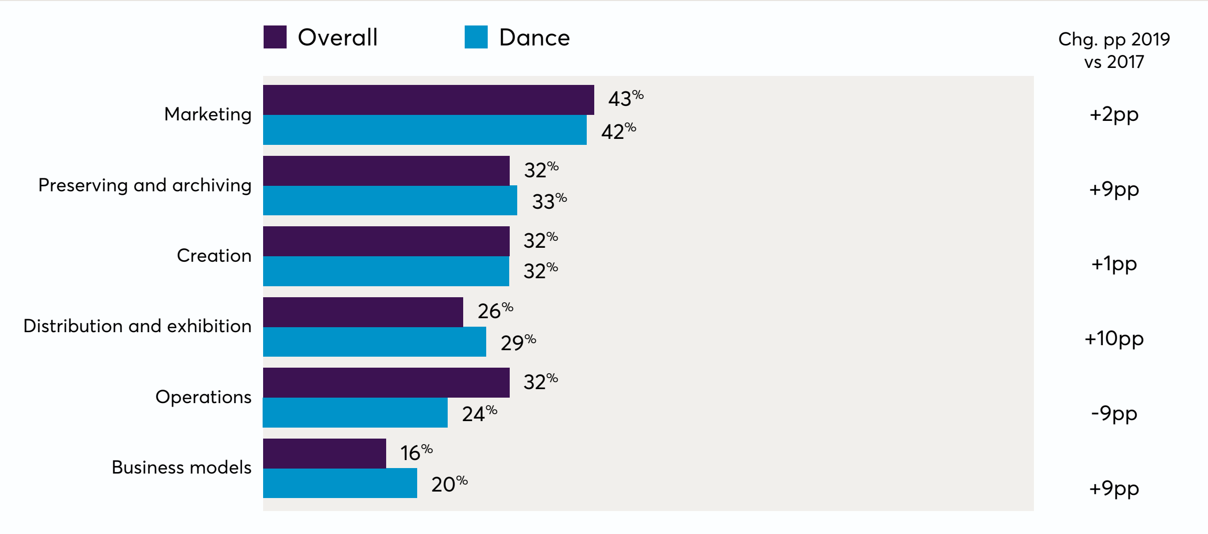
To what extent do you see each of the following as barriers to achieving your organisation's aspirations for digital technology? 'Chg. pp' = Change in percentage points. Arrows show statistically significant differences vs whole sector. N/A is stated where question was not asked in 2013.

Base: 2013 – Dance organisations (n = 53); 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 47), 2019 – all organisations (n = 976).

Dance organisations tend to report similar levels of advanced skills as the sector overall (see Figure 5). The only area in which Dance organisations differ significantly is that a lower proportion report having advanced skills in operations (24 per cent of Dance organisations report having advanced skills in this area vs 32 per cent amongst the sector overall). The area in which the greatest proportion of Dance organisations (43 per cent) report advanced skills is marketing, which is the same area as the sector overall.[14]

Across all areas tested in the survey, lower proportions of Dance organisations than the sector overall report having basic skills compared to their peers. For example, just 27 per cent of Dance organisations report having basic skills in distribution and exhibition compared to 50 per cent of the sector overall.

Figure 5: Proportion of Dance organisations that report their organisation to have advanced digital skills (six–ten out of ten) compared to their peers (Dance vs whole sector, 2019)



For each of the following areas, how advanced do you feel your organisation's digital skill levels are compared to your peers? 'Chg pp' = Change in percentage points.

Base: 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 47), 2019 – all organisations (n = 965).

Since 2013, the Digital Culture survey has also asked organisations to look at a list of skills and capabilities in eleven key digital technology areas, rating each one according to whether they feel well-served or under-served for their needs. This takes account of external options as well as internal resources; feeling 'well-served' may involve having sufficient in-house skills or could be achieved through accessing skills and expertise externally.

The average number of areas in which Dance organisations feel well-served for their needs has increased over time, from 3.3 in 2013 to 5.6 in 2019. The areas where Dance organisations are most likely to report being under-served for their needs compared to the sector overall relate to data and to software: database management (46 per cent vs 37 per cent of the sector); data analysis (45 per cent vs 39 per cent of the sector) and software development (45 per cent vs 37 per cent of the sector).[15] However, since 2013, the proportion of Dance organisations who say they are under-served across these three areas has fallen: from 53 per cent in 2013 to 46 per cent in 2019 for database management, from 58 per cent to 45 per cent in data analysis and from 54 per cent to 45 per cent in software management.[16]

The areas where Dance organisations are notably more likely to feel well-served for their needs compared to the sector overall are multimedia/website design (67 per cent vs 51 per cent of the sector overall) and digital strategy and planning (51 per cent vs 33 per cent).[17]

Endnotes

1. Please note, our sample size of Dance organisations (n = 54), allows for a margin of error of +/- 13 per cent at a 95 per cent confidence level. Please see the main report for details of our calculations of statistical significance.
2. Q10. How important is digital technology to your organisation overall, at the present time, in each of the following areas? Base: 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 54).
3. Q10. Base: Dance organisations in the following years: 2013 (n = 53), 2019 (n = 54).
4. Q12. Now thinking about your organisation's digital activities, please indicate which of the following your organisation currently does. Base: 2013 – Dance organisations (n = 53); 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 54), 2019 – all respondents (n = 1,134).
5. Q12. Base: Dance organisations in the following years: 2013 (n = 53), 2019 (n = 54).
6. Q23. Does your organisation currently have a web presence that is optimised for mobile devices? Base: 2013 – Dance organisations (n = 53); 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 49), 2019 – all organisations (n = 1,134).
7. Q18. On which, if any, of the following social networks/websites does your organisation currently have a regularly active profile? Base: 2013 – Dance organisations (n = 53); 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 51), 2019 – all organisations (n = 1,029).
8. Q16. Thinking about how you use audience or visitor data (generated either via your own website, social media, offline engagement or a third-party platform such as Audience Finder), which of the following activities are you doing? Base: 2019 – all respondents (n = 1,036), 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 51).
9. Q16. Base: Dance organisations in the following years: 2013 (n = 52), 2019 (n = 51).
10. Q35. Overall, how great an impact do you feel digital technology has had on your organisation's ability to fulfil its mission effectively? Answer scale: five-point scale from no impact at all (1) to major impact (5). Base: 2019 – all respondents (n = 994), 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 48).
11. Q28. Thinking back over the past twelve months, would you say your organisation's use of the internet and digital technology has had a major positive impact, a minor positive impact, or no positive impact at all on each of the following? Answer scale: three-point scale from no positive impact at all (1) to major positive impact (3). Base: Dance organisations in the following years: 2013 (n = 53), 2019 (n = 48).
12. Q28. Base: 2019 – all organisations (n = 997), 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 48).
13. Q37. To what extent do you see each of the following as barriers to achieving your organisation's aspirations for digital technology? Base: 2019 – all respondents (n = 976), 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 47).
14. Q67. For each of the following areas, how advanced do you feel your organisation's digital skill levels are compared to your peers? Base: 2019 -– all respondents (n = 930), 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 38).
15. Q45. Here is a list of skills and capabilities in key areas relating to digital technology and digital R&D. Please rate each one according to the extent to which your organisation is well-served or under-served for its needs in these areas. Base: 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 47), 2019 – all respondents (n = 970).
16. Q45. Base: Dance organisations in the following years: 2013 (n = 53), 2019 (n = 47).
17. Q45. Base: 2019 – all respondents (n = 970), 2019 – Dance organisations (n = 47).

Learn more about the Digital Culture 2019 survey findings

The Digital Culture 2019 report and factsheets are brought to you by Arts Council England and Nesta. Click here to read the Digital Culture 2019 report.

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