

New York Theatre Workshop Casts OnTask in Health Tracking Role

CASE STUDY

Overview

As a not-for-profit theatre, NYTW relies on community support and special fundraising events to provide boundary-pushing artists with the resources they need to realize their creative vision. One of the most pivotal events of the year is the annual NYTW Gala that brings donors and artists together to celebrate important contributions and accomplishments in the theatre community. After a two-year hiatus of their annual in-person celebration due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team at NYTW was excited to bring the event back for 2022.

Challenges

Even from the early stages of planning this year’s gala, NYTW’s Director of Special Events, Matt Renskers, knew they would be taking on an unprecedented challenge. “It’s a big responsibility to bring over 400 people together for this singular event,” he says. “In the current landscape, that’s a scary risk. Especially if there’s another peak.”

The stakes were particularly high, not only because NYTW was concerned about the safety of donors and attendees, but also because many of the performers scheduled to appear at the gala were cast members of running Broadway shows. “We had to be sure that if performers were going to be in a room, that their safety was paramount and our event didn't impact their health or the Broadway community at large.”

NEW YORK THEATRE WORKSHOP

Since their founding in 1979, New York Theatre Workshop (NYTW) has fostered a community of adventurous audiences and visionary theatre makers, bringing them together to deepen our shared understanding of the world through productions, artist workshops, and education and community engagement programs. Their productions have reached hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, and the work they’ve nurtured has gone on to move millions more uptown and around the world. As the first home to some of the most celebrated Broadway shows, NYTW has staged over 150 productions and received a Pulitzer Prize, 25 Tony Awards, and two Grammy awards.

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The OnTask team were incredible listeners, which was very important to us. They never once tried to persuade us into fitting into the mold of the product, but rather molded OnTask around us to support what we needed.

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— Matt Renskers,
Director of Special Events,
New York Theatre Workshop

Challenges (Continued)

That commitment to safety convinced the team that it would be best to collect both vaccination status and Covid test results from all attendees. The idea of gathering that information manually quickly proved unworkable since it would be difficult to track and verify. It would also potentially put sensitive health information at risk, if the proper security precautions were not in place. Renskers realized that NYTW needed a solution that was both flexible and simple, which sent him looking for a partner capable of meeting them on their level.

“What we were asking for was actually a very simple thing,” he says, “but trying to find a partner to understand that we didn’t need a lot of bells and whistles was challenging. We wanted accessibility and to be able to streamline the user experience. A lot of different folks were going to be using this for the first time.”

Results

After researching a variety of health tracking solutions, Renskers and colleague Trevor Catalano, House Manager & COVID Compliance Officer for NYTW, came across OnTask and knew right away that they had discovered someone capable of working with NYTW’s unique requirements. “When we reached out, we were told about a client who had just used OnTask for a wedding,” Renskers recalls. “That was an indicator to us that OnTask works with a lot of different organizations and is open to thinking outside of the box.”

The NYTW team jumped into implementation quickly after making the decision to use OnTask’s HIPAA-compliant health tracking workflow capabilities. They started by customizing the existing form component to allow gala attendees to upload vaccination information and test results from their phones just as easily as they could from their desktops. The NYTW COVID Compliance Officer with administrator access to the platform’s backend could then verify the information to ensure that everyone had submitted the appropriate materials, making the large-scale event as safe as possible.

That process proved so successful for the 2022 NYTW Gala that the theatre decided to use it again for a subsequent event. “We needed the same user accessibility and it was a no-brainer coming back to OnTask again.”



Results (Continued)

The need to adapt to changing situations continues to shape both the theatre community and the tech industry. And as needs change, NYTW feels confident that OnTask is a well-cast partner when it comes to health tracking for their major events in the future.

About OnTask

OnTask by Accusoft is a web-based, no-code workflow automation platform that allows organizations to replace their tedious, error-prone manual processes with digital forms and documents. Originally created to help streamline Accusoft's internal sales process, OnTask has evolved into a feature-rich platform that creates smooth digital experiences. Choose from a library of pre-built templates or build a customized workflow to gather information from digital forms, create documents, route data to the appropriate destination, and verify with eSignature all within one automated, easy-to-use platform. Developers can also integrate workflow functionality into their applications with the OnTask API. For more information, visit ontask.io.

About New York Theatre Workshop

New York Theatre Workshop empowers visionary theatre-makers and brings their work to adventurous audiences through productions, artist workshops, and education and community engagement programs. We nurture pioneering new writers alongside powerhouse playwrights, engage inimitable genre-shaping directors, and support emerging artists in the earliest days of their careers. We've mounted over 150 productions from artists whose work has shaped our very idea of what theatre can be, including Jonathan Larson's *Rent*; Tony Kushner's *Slavs!* and *Homebody/Kabul*; Doug Wright's *Quills*; Claudia Shear's *Blown Sideways Through Life* and *Dirty Blonde*; Paul Rudnick's *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told* and *Valhalla*; Martha Clarke's *Vienna: Lusthaus*; Will Power's *The Seven* and *Fetch Clay, Make Man*; Caryl Churchill's *Mad Forest*, *Far Away*, *A Number* and *Love and Information*; Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen's *Aftermath*; Rick Elice's *Peter and the Starcatcher*; Glen Hansard, Markéta Irglová and Enda Walsh's *Once*; David Bowie and Enda Walsh's *Lazarus*; Dael Orlandersmith's *The Gimmick* and *Forever*; Heidi Schreck's *What the Constitution Means to Me*; Jeremy O. Harris's *Slave Play*; and eight acclaimed productions directed by Ivo van Hove. NYTW's productions have received a Pulitzer Prize, 25 Tony Awards, 2 Grammy Awards, an assorted Obie, Drama Desk, and Lucille Lortel Awards. NYTW is represented on Broadway with Anaïs Mitchell's *Hadestown* developed with and directed by Rachel Chavkin. To learn more, visit [NYTW.org](https://nytw.org).