



CASE STUDY

Unlocking the Past with the Yorkshire Film Archive

Key takeaways

- A streamlined content delivery system to help grow the client base
- Imagen has helped increase sales volume and lowered friction
- The archive has increased community engagement and raised the YFA profile

Introduction

A registered charity, the Yorkshire and North East Film Archives was set up in 1988. It works to collect and preserve the work of amateur and professional filmmakers and holds the most astonishing moving image record of life in Yorkshire and the North East of England over the past 130 years. The charity works hard to make the resulting film collections accessible to everyone.

At the annual FOCAL International Awards ceremony, the archive won two prestigious awards:

Best Use of Footage in a Short Film for its work on **Lost Connections**, and **Footage Company of the Year** which they credit partly to their Imagen-powered platform.

The problem

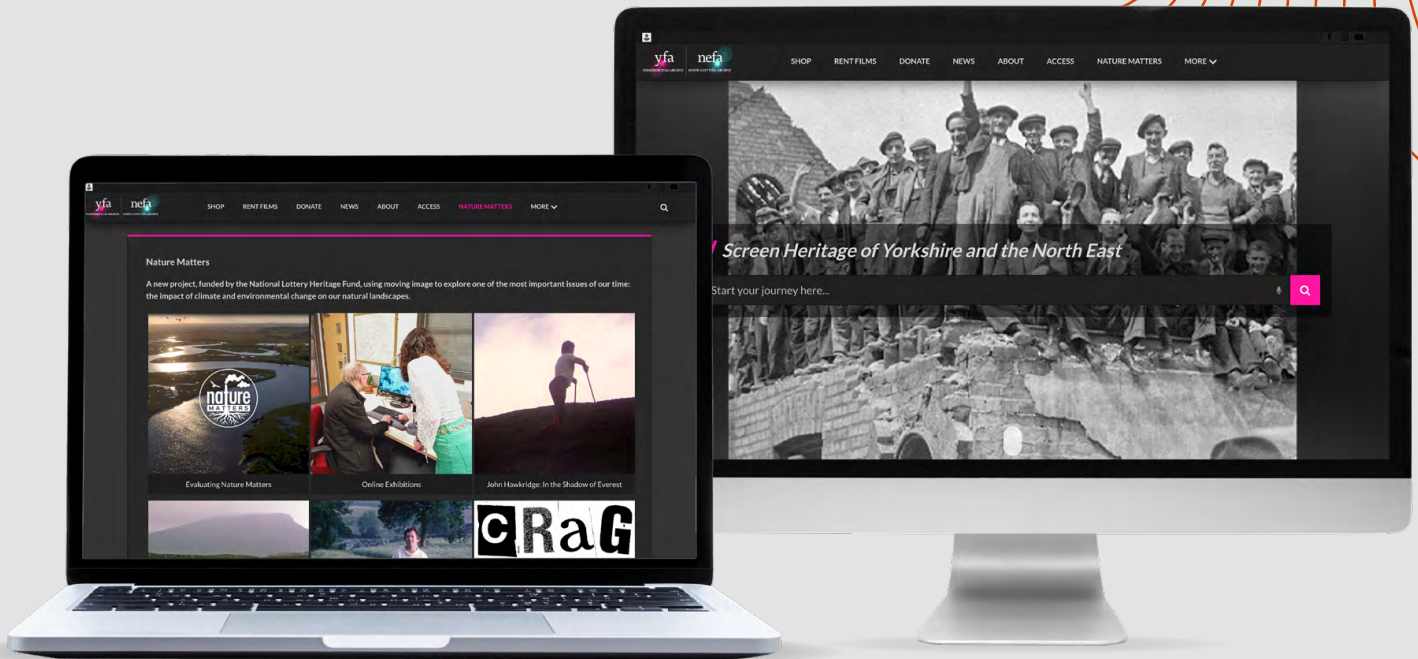
When the YFA first spoke to Imagen, it had a variety of reasons for needing a new content management solution, not least because the manual process it used to supply content to production companies and users was resource heavy, time consuming and the team were limited in how many requests they could service.

As Archive Manager Graham Relton explains: “What we were doing prior [to using Imagen] was what I would describe as ‘doing digital manually’. That process was really time consuming. I don’t think this was uncommon for archives similar to ourselves.”

The Yorkshire and North East Film Archives also needed a robust system to maintain the high standards of managing its collections, one that enabled workflows for easy access to digital assets, as well as having a user-friendly web offer to ensure the public could see and enjoy the collections, one of the key parts of their charitable aims.

• **70,000+**
of original film, video tape,
and born-digital material





The Solution

In October 2020, the YFA launched its new video management system – www.yfanefa.com. This was built and developed with Imagen, the experts in smart media asset management software solutions.

“We needed a day-to-day management system for our catalogue, but I also wanted to take the friction out of delivering content to archive producers, researchers and production companies. The quicker I can get content to an editor or filmmaker the more likely they are to use our footage in their production,” says Graham Relton.

The www.yfanefa.com site is open for anyone to enjoy the film heritage of Yorkshire and the North East of England but registration is designed for broadcasters, production companies, events managers and other media professionals. Registered users can create and share their own collections and request footage for download. The system is intentionally not fully self-service: due to rights and usage,

it never can be. The YFA has a whole range of content, ranging from TV collections to amateur home movies, and the relationship with the copyright owners is paramount.

As Relton points out: “A chat with one of our team can be the key to unlock more of our collections. That human connection is so important. We have an encyclopaedic knowledge of our own collections and can help find the right footage users are looking for.”

Results

The charity has been impressed by the speed with which it can find material. As Graham Relton explains: “I know that archive producers are under pressure to get content from suppliers. When we can do it in minutes, that’s huge. Combined with our knowledge of the collections, and our friendly and flexible approach, it means they come back to us for more.”

“ I know that archive producers are under pressure to get content from suppliers. When we can do it in minutes, that’s huge. ”

Graham Relton, Archive Manager, Yorkshire and NorthEast Film Archives

Results & Benefits



DOING MORE

"To me, [Imagen] feels like the equivalent of having another member of staff and it's helped us to increase the access to our collections. Thanks to Imagen, I can now service more requests in the same amount of time."



INCREASED SALES

"Imagen has contributed to an increase in sales," says Relton. "That [was] augmented by COVID, which saw more and more production companies using archive content. I've been able to service their requirements when in the past I couldn't accommodate them all."



REACHING MORE AUDIENCES

"We've been able to do more community engagement by working with different filmmakers, artists and musicians. This is vitally important for us as a charity and a key part of our remit."



FAST & FRICTIONLESS DISTRIBUTION

"[Our Imagen platform] makes me able to say 'yes' to more people and to take a few chances with content. In the past it wouldn't have been possible."



SPEEDING UP PROCESSES

Finding and sending content from the archive that would have taken five hours in the past, now takes around five minutes instead.

“ [Imagen] has contributed to an increase in sales... For example, today i sent off 15 screeners to someone and it took me five minutes. I know from experience how long that would have taken me in the past... that would have been five hours' worth of effort at least.

Graham Relton, Archive Manager, Yorkshire and NorthEast Film Archives