



**Press Embargo:**

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## **Theatre Tokens defy economic climate, enjoying record-breaking sales in 2011**

Theatre Tokens, the unique theatre gift voucher scheme run by The Society of London Theatre (SOLT), saw sales of almost £10million in 2011, in spite of pressure on the high street and the continuing economic downturn. This record breaking performance can be celebrated as further demonstration of the resilience of the theatre industry and the popularity of theatre amongst UK consumers in the face of squeezed incomes, high inflation and economic gloom.

More people than ever before chose to give Theatre Tokens, which are valid at theatres across the country with no expiry date, as the gift of theatre for Christmas 2011. Online sales channels saw the biggest increase in 2011, with online sales up over 25%. Phone sales via the Tokenline hotline were also up 10% on 2010.

SOLT President Mark Rubinstein commented:

"We are delighted that Theatre Tokens sales have gone from strength to strength in 2011, with consumers recognising just how much the magical gift of theatre is appreciated by friends and family. With so many highly-anticipated shows opening across the UK this year, adding to an abundance of critically acclaimed and much-loved long-running shows, theatre-goers will certainly be spoilt for choice in 2012."

Sales of Theatre Tokens are dependent on strong pre-Christmas trading, with over 50% of total sales taking place in the fourth quarter. This year saw a trend of late purchasing on the part of the consumer with sales steady in October but up significantly in November and December.

The Theatre Tokens Christmas campaign helped to generate these strong November and December sales with promotions and advertising on London Underground and commuter routes into London, in the national press, on Classic FM radio, and online.

Theatre Tokens plans to continue to grow its business by exploring and exploiting new methods of selling to consumers. With 2012 come plans to work with key suppliers to utilise mobile platforms and Facebook channels, as well as exploring options for the distribution of e-vouchers.

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**Editor's Notes:**

- Theatre Tokens is run on behalf of the theatre industry in the UK by the Society of London Theatre, a trade association that represents the producers, theatre owners and managers of the major commercial and grant-aided theatres in central London. It is responsible for industrial relations, legal advice, campaigning for the theatre industry together with a wide range of audience development programmes to promote theatre going including Theatre Tokens.
- Theatre Tokens were launched in 1984 as a means of encouraging theatre-going
- Any revenues or profits generated from Theatre Tokens are re-invested in supporting theatre or theatre marketing campaigns
- Theatre Tokens are available in £5, £10 and £20 denominations and can be bought online - [www.theatretokens.com](http://www.theatretokens.com), by telephone - Tokenline on 0844 887 7878, or in person at participating theatres and a range of retail outlets including selected branches of WHSmith, Waterstone's. A full list of participating theatres can be found at [www.theatretokens.com](http://www.theatretokens.com).