

SURVIVOR 101

FOR COMMUNITY ARTS ORGANIZATIONS



The Next Generation...

Produced by the Regional Cultural Development Advisory Committee
and
Metro Vancouver

Audience Development Workshop

Thursday November 21, 2013
Lynn Valley Library Community Room



ARTS | CULTURE | NORTH VANCOUVER

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When it comes to connecting to new audiences, the strategies of the most successful arts organizations involve a willingness to embrace transparency and risk.

Transparency has to do with the openness and candor of how arts groups speak to their audience. Innovative arts leaders have always known that risk-taking is an essential ingredient for audience building.

By changing old ways of doing business - with the help of imaginative marketing, research and new technologies - we can rethink where and how we provide meaning and value to current and potential audiences.

“Risk is not a negative. We’re more at risk if we don’t reach out to new audiences in new ways.”

Connie Wolf, Wallace Foundation Report on Audience Development

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Heather Redfern
Executive Director
Vancouver East Cultural Centre
‘The Cultch’

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Ruth Payne

Visual Arts Coordinator

Ferry Building Gallery

West Vancouver

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Joseph Bardsley
Development Manager
Vancouver Opera

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Colleen Maybin

**Community Engagement Manager
Vancouver Opera**

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AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

“Marketing has to be as important as curating a show or putting on a performance. It has to be thoughtful and compelling.”

Rich Silverstein, Wallace Foundation Report on Audience Development

1. Why is audience development so important?
2. What are effective examples of adapting to changes in audiences today?
3. How might arts organizations harness innovative marketing methodologies to build audiences?

Table Notes

- No audience no event/ program/ production/ performance
- Define your intended audience – youth, hipsters, patrons, etc
- Stay in your community, but try a new venue – i.e. seniors centres
- Try matinees and evenings to attract different/new audiences
- Attract new audiences through Volunteer opportunities

Table Notes

- Move beyond family and friends
- Branding can help boost audience – hire an expert to help you – grants are available
- Update your web pages – hire a co-op student - BCAC has 10K for 16 weeks - July deadline
- Open your rehearsals
- Do a free event – i.e. Culture Days
- Do some research as to where audiences are going

Table Notes

- Develop a social media strategy – Twitter, Facebook, Blogs
- Work at appreciating and keeping good existing audiences
- Changing styles of performances - shuffle” your music program
- Learn what your audience wants – 3 “popular” then do one “artistic”
- Children bring parents and relatives – promote season tickets at these events
- Ask people pre show to tweet or post that they are at your event
- Update and use existing data bases

Table notes

- Dynamic pricing
- Early bird rewards
- Contests
- Look at what other successful marketers are doing - how, who and when?
- Roadside signage
- Flash mobs - be seen
- Use other events – have a booth or table, perform for free to promote your classes or season
- Tie in with restaurant promotions

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AUDIENCE RESEARCH

“The key consideration in the ‘new math’ of audience research is that simply counting the overall number of attendees is not enough. Some of the most useful research for arts groups goes further. It can identify the specific characteristics of audience segments so that they can be targeted more precisely.”

Alan Brown, Wallace Foundation Report on Audience Development

1. How well do you know your audience; what methods do you use to learn who is and isn't there?
2. How can research make organizations smarter about designing their programming and outreach to encourage broader participation?

Table Notes

Use existing research resources

- “Raisers Edge Fundraising Software” - Blackbaud
- “Patron Edge Nonprofit Ticketing Management Software” – Blackbaud
- “Excel”
- Google Analytics
- Hootsuite
- Survey Monkey

Table Notes

- Sell tickets on line - data is collected and available later
- Use the data you have collected
- Use existing databases
- Use promo codes to find out who is coming in early – they are your early adopters and promoters
- Ask pre-show questions
- Have a draw box with survey out at all times for mailing list additions and programming ideas

Table Notes

- Invite feedback – on line discussion forum, comments box or email box
- Gather the data carefully – be strategic – hire an expert to help you with this
- Make thank you phone calls and collect immediate data
- Take photos during the event and ask the subjects for their name
- If you donate or subscribe get free tickets to giveaway
- Volunteer recruitment and appreciation
- Ask your existing patrons
- Ask your staff
- Ask your Board

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NEW TECHNOLOGIES

“New technologies are not only a tool for marketing to audiences but also a means to make cultural experiences more communal and participatory, and therefore more meaningful. Now digital technology allows people to take an active role in shaping the experience, rather than merely consuming the experience.”

Seth Schiesel, New York Times technology columnist,

1. How does digital technology contribute to information-sharing and cultural engagement ? E.g. social media, mobile apps, websites.
2. How can technology help to cultivating a younger audience?

Table Notes

- Be active users of Facebook and Twitter and Youtube
- Invite audience to a post on a web forum for reviews or comments after an event/performance
- Have dedicated social media staff
- Make sure you expectations are realistic – 3 - years for social media to build real momentum
- Time your messaging blasts – don't get lost in the noise
- Value of the information is key

Table notes

- Social media should be part of an over communication plan – review and evaluate ongoing
- Remember Followers generate interest and awareness
- Show works in progress on your web pages – increases access and interest
- You tube – sharing and connecting
- Hootsuite for scheduling and tracking tweets
- Curate your online information keep it fresh and valuable – content, content, content

Table Notes

- Use promotional videos on your website – directors talks, funders talks, audience responses
- Dropcards.com
- E-newsletters
- On Line contests
- Be consistent

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2014 WORKSHOPS

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING 101

Presenter: The Social Agency

Tuesday February 18, 2014, 1:00-4:00pm

Richmond Cultural Centre

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Presenter: Vantage Point

Tuesday, March 11, 2014, 9:00am-12noon

Vancouver Civic Theatres Salon, 630 Hamilton Street

Registration opens January 2014