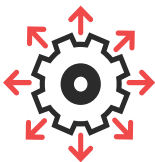


# Attracting an Elusive Audience

## How the San Francisco Girls Chorus is Breaking Down Stereotypes and Generating Interest Among Classical Music Patrons

The San Francisco Girls Chorus undergoes extensive audience research to uncover key assumptions that hold them back from reaching certain audiences. Learn how they maneuver branding, messaging and presentation of concerts to attract new key audience demographics with the data gathered from surveys and focus groups made possible by a grant from the Wallace Foundation.

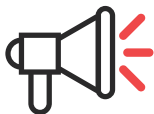
### Key Themes and Subject Areas



**Strategic Planning** - Five areas of expansion were identified by SFGC leaders to amplify with funding from the Wallace Excellence Award to achieve success attracting a wider audience base: organizational branding, program development, audience surveying, and evaluation building and sustainability dedication



**Field Research** - Internal and external research was conducted to explore the perceptions of girls choruses in general and SFGC in particular. Research focus groups were assembled, comprised of San Francisco classical music patrons, and used to learn about awareness issues and perceptions of SFGC



**Marketing** - The role of visual collateral branding and positioning was examined and reinvented for SFGC to establish and reinforce a strong and consistent brand voice for the organization that communicated the idea of the Chorus as a serious professional performing group



**Executive Nonprofit Management** - Critical thinking structures are incorporated to promote internal reflection into growth areas that SFGC was not initially meeting. Board of directors politics is examined, and leadership begins to allow organizational change, encouraging positive growth through rough waters

# Teaching Concepts

1. Discuss the complexities of multifaceted nonprofit organization strategic planning with **Advanced Arts Management Students**. Use this guide to demonstrate the role of Board of Directors leadership and Board Health

2. With **Arts Marketing or Advanced Arts Management Students**, explore Internal Reflection lead by External Data that helps avoid internal “Group Think” mentalities, and how visual messaging and organizational representation can play a vital role in which audiences you are attracting to your organization.

**Class Discussion Lead** - Page ‘ix’ in the preface: “For some professionals, especially artistic and programming staff, soliciting audience opinion runs the risk of overtly pandering to public taste, thereby sacrificing artistic integrity. But listening to participants can provide observations needed to create innovative, creative, and deeply engaging programs – insights that, for these organizations, sometimes revealed an unexpected level of sophistication among audience members as well.” **How has the SFGC used audience observations to engage on a deeper level and what creative solutions did they generate to capture the audience demographic they were targeting and change perceptions of their performances?**

3. With **Arts Marketing Students**, discuss **Organizational Balance**: The marketing audience for the Chorus School is different from the classical music patrons the SFGC is trying to attract to the Choir’s performances. Learn how focus groups with parents of students informed messaging for the School and how that differs from the visual messaging created for the Choir’s performances.

4. For **Grant Writing Students**, investigate how connecting with the right funder allowed SFGC to build a case for support that funded organizational reflection and repositioning to build a more sustainable audience

**Read the full case study from The Wallace Foundation [here](#).**

This Instructor Guide was written by Jessie Bower on behalf of the Association of Arts Administration Educators.

