

Attracting an Elusive Audience: How the San Francisco Girls Chorus is Breaking Down Stereotypes and Generating Interest Among Classical Music Patrons

Instructor Guide

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 & Subject Areas

1. **Strategic Planning:**Internal Research Planning, Program Development, Audience Surveying, Evaluation Building and Sustainability
2. **Field Research:**Listening to your community through intentional data driven focus groups that explore demographic and psychographic motivators of participation
3. **Marketing:**Visual Collateral Positioning and Communication
4. **Executive Nonprofit Management:**Thinking critically about what areas of growth a nonprofit is not meeting; Board of Directors politics; Allowing organizational change and 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.

a. 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 Further Use

1. **Grant Writing**: 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