

# Developing a Marketing and Communications Plan



*The defined audience segments and programming goals set the stage for effective outreach and communications plans, which are essential to successfully engaging new audiences. This building block involves reaching out proactively, encouraging the identified new audience members to participate in the organization's programming and reducing or eliminating challenges to their participation.*

Start small by focusing on what is organizationally feasible; experience some success; and then expand your efforts to achieve your goals. This effort, like all equity work, requires sustained relationships with the communities the organization strives to engage. These community connections will help organizations identify the best ways to communicate with the selected groups and to uncover and reduce barriers that have prevented prior engagement.

## Putting It Into Action

Once an organization has created the messages it wants to communicate and has determined the most effective methods for delivery, these plans can be put into place. Some ways to do so include:

- Advertising a program or event in the selected groups' preferred publications
- Placing posts on cultural groups' social media pages
- Sponsoring a culturally specific community event
- Displaying flyers in cultural groups' community gathering spaces
- Providing language translations for print and online media
- Broadcasting through media channels that a particular group prefers; e.g., social media instead of print media, radio broadcasting instead of online promotion.

For more information:



[racc.org/buildingblocks](http://racc.org/buildingblocks)

## Questions to Consider

- What community relationships are already established? What new connections need to be made?
- What are your resources in marketing and communications to successfully develop and implement a plan?
- Will you collaborate with other arts organizations or civic groups in your community outreach efforts?
- What types of media and other communication tools are feasible?
- Which communication channels does the specific community use most frequently?
- Are bilingual staff members or volunteers available to help translate, or will outside services be needed?



## Resources and Tools

- [Culturally specific media outlets \(RACC\)](#): RACC offers a list of media organizations that are culturally specific.
- [Su Público – Culturally Relevant Marketing](#): Su Público is a full-service ad agency specializing in grassroots marketing, culturally relevant consulting, public relations, and translations in 50 languages. Su Público is comprised of a team of people tapped into the multicultural communities of the Pacific Northwest.
- [Google Analytics](#) provides tools to measure how well marketing and communications plans are reaching audience segments using websites, newsletters, social media, and video channels.
- [Increasing Relevance, Relationships and Results: Principles & Practices for Effective Multicultural Communication](#) is a comprehensive guide to effective multicultural communication in order to build strong relationships and create meaningful dialogue among cultural communities by recognizing, respecting, and engaging the cultural backgrounds of all stakeholders.

## Example

### Metropolitan Youth Symphony

In 2012-2013, MYS staff members revisited the organization's communication and marketing strategies to see what new opportunities existed to engage in outreach to the broader community. Organizational flexibility has allowed them to identify and take advantage of creative opportunities as they arise. For example, in 2013 MYS approached KUNPTV Univision/MundoFox about a spring recruitment and concert advertising campaign. Thanks to in-kind contributions and other funds raised, the organization was able to execute a [set of ads in Spanish](#). There was an immediate uptick in interest from the Hispanic community with two families personally visiting the MYS office to sign up for programs. MYS has continued to use communication vehicles such as the Hispanic press, radio, and community organizations during the 2013-14 season, in addition to providing complimentary concert tickets to a range of multi-cultural organizations. For MYS, it is clear that experimenting with new avenues of communication is working as Univision recently ran a small feature pro-bono on MYS during the evening news.

“Probably the biggest change in my thinking is rethinking how to ‘market’ to diverse audiences. It really isn’t about marketing; it’s about learning and acknowledging the barriers to diverse audiences’ seeing themselves as theatre-goers. Then trying to reduce the roadblocks to their seeing theatre and learning about theatre.”

—Nicole Lane, Marketing and PR Director, Artists Repertory Theatre.  
From the [2013 Portland Equity in the Arts Consortium \(PEAC\) report](#),  
a program of the August Wilson Red Door Project