Increasing Cultural Participation:

An Audience Development Planning Handbook for Presenters, Producers, and Their Collaborators

By Paul Connolly and Marcelle Hinand Cady

About the Authors

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Acknowledgments

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This handbook grew out of the experience of the Audiences for Literature Network (ALN), an audience development initiative supported by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund (now named the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds and referred to here as the Funds or the Wallace Funds). This program began in 1997 when eight community-based literary centers were chosen for one-year planning grants to develop projects through which they would form partnerships with other community organizations to build audiences for literature and literature programming.[1]

The three-year implementation grants that resulted from the Funds' ALN planning grants will culminate in 2001. Over the years, the eight organizations participating in the program have learned a great deal about audience building. In particular, they realized that they have much in common with colleagues across arts disciplines who are striving to increase cultural participation.

According to Michael Warr, ALN national coordinator:

> These are extraordinary times in the literary arts. Audiences are flocking to readings, writing workshops, and poetry slams. Writers are performing with musicians, multimedia artists, dancers, and visual artists. The organizations in the ALN consortium have enhanced the strength and impact of their programs and have amassed a body of knowledge about audience building that they have shared with each other through conferences and electronic networking. This handbook is an opportunity to share that knowledge and experience with a broader range of groups working in diverse arts fields. The ALN groups and I are particularly excited about the expanded interactions taking place with performing arts presenters, many of whose experiences are also reflected in this publication.

The ALN was modeled after the Wallace Funds' Audiences for the Performing Arts Network (APAN) and informed by the program design of other funds-supported initiatives such as the Arts Partners Program, administered by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP).

Kenneth C. Fischer is president of the University Musical Society, the multidisciplinary arts presenter at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor that was a participant in the APAN program. An enthusiastic supporter of partnerships among literary and performing arts groups, Ken writes:

> When the ALN grantees joined me and nearly one hundred other Wallace Funds grant recipients in the performing arts fields at a gathering in Seattle in June of 1999, it became apparent to me that all of our organizations shared similar challenges and opportunities in audience building. I promoted the idea of ALN having a presence at the annual APAP members conference and have chaired two such meetings to date. These meetings, and the growing number of collaborations among local arts organizations, are expanding possibilities for partnerships among literary groups and performing arts groups to share knowledge and to embark on joint programs.

This handbook was supported by the Wallace Funds to share some of the discourse and process of the ALN groups with the broader field of arts organizations. It is the belief of the Funds that people-centered strategies for building public participation in high-quality arts programs can help institutions of varied disciplines and sizes to diversify, broaden, and deepen relationships with their communities. For that reason, this handbook addresses not only literary presenters, but also performing arts organizations.

chapter 1

Understanding Cultural Participation

Who Is the Audience for Performing Arts and Literary Programming?

The audience for performing arts and literature is broad and diverse. A recent National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) survey found that half of the U.S. population, or 97 million Americans, attend at least one of seven arts activities each year (including jazz, classical music, opera, musicals, plays, ballet, or art museums). The study discovered that 35 percent of the American population attends arts events an average of 3.3 times per year. Furthermore, the survey found that people participate personally in creating, making, or performing art at even higher rates than attendance at arts events: 66 percent of the survey respondents said they participate personally in one (or more) art form.[2]

The audience for literature includes all people who read literature and those who actively participate by attending readings and performances and taking writing workshops. The NEA's survey of arts participation found that in 1997, 123.2 million adult Americans (almost half of the entire population) read plays, poetry, novels, or short stories, indicating that reading or participating in literature remains a popular cultural activity in the country. The survey determined that 63 percent of adults read literature at least once in the last year, a participation rate that is higher than any other cultural activity, including museum or performing arts attendance. Some experts in the field note that literacy and library circulation rates have risen and a "reading renaissance" is taking place, as shown in the prevalence of poetry readings and book groups nationwide. On the other hand, it has been observed that the audience for literature is growing at a slower rate than the overall population, due to increased competition from other leisure-time activities.

When you think about who the potential audience is for performing arts and literary

> "Cultural participation" acknowledges that the arts are an interactive, rather than passive, act.

presenters, consider the NEA survey's findings about barriers to participation in the arts and cultural activities. People stated that the reasons they didn't participate were: It is too difficult to find time; there are not enough performances or exhibitions in their area; tickets are too expensive; and the location of arts events is inconvenient.

What Is Audience Development?

Audience development is reaching and engaging people in local communities by increasing the number or types of people who participate in arts activities, or deepening an existing audience's level of participation. It includes serving both new audiences and the present audience more deeply. Through the audience-building process, arts organizations

forge bonds between individuals and institutions to help create communities that are engaged with the arts. To ensure that these communities grow and remain dynamic, the organizations in these communities must deliberately seek to address the needs, issues, and concerns relevant to the people of the community.

Audience building is a complex endeavor. Thorough planning and comprehensive implementation (including not only programmatic but also marketing, organizational development, and institutional strategies) are necessary to ensure that audience development initiatives are effective.

Changes in Terminology and Knowledge

Terminology regarding attracting and building the frequency and loyalty of audiences has changed during the course of the ALN project. At the outset, the term "audience development" was commonly used. Then some in the field began using the term "audience building" to avoid the implication that the endeavor was only concerned with increasing the *size* of the audience. Lately, "cultural participation," which acknowledges that the arts are an interactive rather than passive act, has been used more frequently. This handbook uses all of these terms.

Knowledge about people's behavior in terms of arts participation has also evolved over the past several years. At the start of the project, it was clear that people participate in the arts at different points along a spectrum, from avoidance to awareness, participation, and active support. In 1999, the Wallace Funds commissioned RAND, a research organization, to examine a wide range of ways arts and cultural institutions could attract new audiences, reach a larger share of existing audiences, and deepen the involvement of current participants in their programs. RAND's study analyzes why people participate in arts and cultural activities and what institutions can do to encourage participation. In the first phase of its work, RAND developed a theoretical model to examine the factors most likely to influence an individual's decision to participate in the arts. The model

is based on the experiences of a number of arts organizations that have received grants from the Funds, as well as current literature in the field. During the second phase of its work, RAND is surveying arts administrators who are currently involved in cultural participation efforts. The survey results will help the RAND team refine the participation model and draw conclusions about the most effective ways to increase arts participation.[3]

The Wallace Funds and RAND will produce a range of documents based on the research they have been undertaking, including: a bibliography of studies related to arts participation; a final report on participation-building strategies with a revised participation model, findings from the national survey of arts organizations, and an assessment of the most effective engagement strategies; a toolkit with participation-building strategies for arts organizations that links institutional missions and objectives with the most effective strategies; and a white paper for arts funders on strategic ways to support efforts to increase cultural participation. The Funds plan to release these reports by 2001. Some of RAND's early findings, particularly information about the participation model, have been incorporated into this handbook.

Why Increase Cultural Participation?

Most nonprofit organizations are, by their very nature, mission driven, not market driven. They do not strive to make a profit, but to improve the quality of life, discourse, or art or to support artists and creativity in communities. Many performing arts and literary organizations struggle financially and face the seeming indifference of society at large to the importance of their work.

Therefore, it is not surprising that, faced with such a set of challenges, the leaders of organizations may hesitate to embark upon the complex process of audience building. Yet the solutions to many of these problems lie within successful audience development work. By serving larger audiences with more engaging programs, arts organizations become more vital, visible, and financially viable institutions. The former executive

director of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra explained how audience development activities have helped his organization stabilize and thrive:

> Changing a few concert formats wouldn't solve the problem; changing the fundamental nature, but not the content, of the symphony's interaction with the community might. We decided that we had no choice but to plunge into the community with a completely unapologetic attitude toward our art, as self-effacing missionaries for that art, seeking to build as many points of connection as we could find. By engaging in comprehensive, ambitious audience development, we're inculcating [audiences] with the innately infectious nature of our art. We are actively involved in building our own infrastructure for broad-based support down the line while providing service to the community in the near term. If we do our job in the trenches now, the question of our relevance will be moot in twenty-five years.[4]

For most organizations, audience development is not achieved by going about business as usual. Many start their program planning by thinking about content first, based upon current enthusiasms about a certain artist, author, or format. Underlying this process are such assumptions as: Audiences are interested in what the organization is interested in, and people who share the organization's enthusiasms know about its programs.

Thorough audience development planning calls these and many other assumptions into question. Clearly, an organization's current audience shares its interests, but an organization's potential audience may not share its current interests or know that it has interests in common with the organization.

When planning your organization's programs, you should first ask: Is our current audience the same as our potential audience? If the answer is no, and in almost every case it will be, then you need to ask more questions, such as: What potential audiences are we not reaching? Why aren't we reaching them? Do they know about our programs? Are they interested in our programs and, if not, do we have interests in common that can bring us together? To properly address these questions, thorough research, creative marketing, innovative program design, and thoughtful evaluation are required.

Is our current audience
the same as our potential audience?

Objectives of This Handbook

This guide is for performing arts and literary presenters, producing organizations, collaborating organizations, and others involved in the audience-building process. It suggests ways to improve organizations' abilities to increase cultural participation in their communities and describes a process that can guide organizations through the planning, implementation, and evaluation of such work. The handbook also strives to:

- share strategies that have helped ALN groups and other performing arts organizations analyze current audiences and programs and implement strategies to deepen, broaden, and expand participation in arts programs;
- inform arts groups of the wide-ranging implications of launching an audience-building initiative;
- enable organizations to assess whether they are ready for audience building;
- disseminate the latest thinking and theories related to cultural participation;
- articulate some of the major issues that staff and boards must confront when they begin the audience-building process;
- promote the concept that administrative, programmatic, and marketing strategies must be integrated to effectively build participation in the arts;
- link audience building, documentation, and evaluation;
- provide organizations with self-help tools that they can use to evaluate and build their audience development initiatives.

How to Use This Handbook

This handbook contains step-by-step guidelines to help the board and staff members of arts organizations engage more deeply and effectively in the process of audience development. It begins with an assessment of readiness, because successful audience development relies upon a basic infrastructure and organizational self-understanding. The next chapters cover how to assess your organization and audience, set goals, design audience development strategies, integrate audience development with marketing, anticipate organizational implications and build capacity, develop schedules and budgets, and produce documentation and evaluation. The last chapter describes how to make an ongoing commitment to audience development.

Throughout the handbook are recommended approaches to research and creative planning, examples of successful strategies in case studies, models for evaluating the effectiveness of programs and activities, and other tools. This guide should serve both as a catalyst to encourage you to embark upon the journey of audience development and a compass to help you guide your organization to its desired destination.

The handbook ends with two appendices. Appendix A contains a series of worksheets and sample forms related to various chapters, which can be reproduced. Resources for obtaining more information on cultural participation, evaluation, and documentation are described in appendix B.

chapter 2

Getting Ready

Is your organization ready to begin planning for audience development activities? There are neither absolute "right" nor "wrong" ways to engage or expand audiences. Yet there are proven effective processes and identifiable ingredients present in organizations that succeed in audience development. Prerequisites for success and preliminary planning steps are delineated in this chapter.

Step 1 — Form a Planning Committee

Before formally taking the steps described in this and the following chapters, identify the individuals you believe are best suited to participate in planning for audience development. This may include a core group of individuals who are deeply committed to and engaged with the organization, such as the executive director, president of the board, and other key staff or board members.

Certain stages of the process will require the input of specific individuals, who may or may not be appropriate for inclusion in the core planning committee, such as specialized staff members; board committee members; and "outsiders," including representatives from the wider fields of performing arts or literature, other organizations serving similar constituencies, or funders. Periodically during the planning process, the full board and staff should be engaged to share their experiences and to help shape a vision for the organiza-

tion. Broad participation will help to ensure that the final plan is fully adopted and implemented at all levels of the organization, from clerical support to board leadership.

At an early point in planning, the core committee should determine what outside expertise might be needed to assist with the project. For instance, a strategic planning consultant could help guide the entire process or facilitate a key meeting, or market research professionals and equipment and systems analysts may help with other aspects of the project. Although some of these may be available *pro bono* through board connections, others may need to be hired for a fee. Local funding agencies and peer organizations can usually provide reliable recommendations, and technical assistance grants may be available to help cover consulting fees and related expenditures.

Forming a Planning Committee:

The Writer's Voice

The Writer's Voice in Billings, Montana, a regional affiliate of the national YMCA Writer's Voice, launched a planning process to analyze the needs of area audiences and develop more appropriate programs to serve them. The process began with the formation of a planning committee that included staff and board members from the Writer's Voice as well as representatives of other organizations. This six-month-long process involved meetings that brought together representatives of the full range of institutions providing literary services to the area's population, including libraries, schools, an arts center, and a museum. Through these meetings, the planning committee identified school children in outlying rural areas as an audience that was underserved by literary programs.

Through subsequent meetings with school system representatives and teachers, the planning committee was able to design a program entitled "Poets on the Prairie" that pairs local poets and writers with schools to provide access to creative writing activities for rural school children. Following the six-month planning period, the program was launched in a year-long implementation process targeting just two or three counties and schools so that the strategies could be tested and refined. Following this pilot period, the program was fully implemented in twenty-one counties, resulting in ninety visits by writers and artists from other disciplines during the year.

Planning to Reach a New Audience:

Arizona State University

Arizona State University (ASU) Public Events' "Drawing the Lines" project aimed to develop new Native-American audiences and educate existing audiences about Native American culture and art forms. ASU placed five Native-American artists in different communities for three-week periods to teach performance skills and create new works. The works were then presented in their tribal communities and on stage at ASU Public Events' auditorium at a Native-American Arts Festival.

ASU began the project with a two-year planning period. Representatives from ASU Public Events, ASU academic departments, a national service organization for Native-American arts, and the tribal communities all participated on the planning committee. During this period, ASU developed relationships with the tribal communities and selected residency sites. ASU arranged a series of meetings with the artists and community members, during which community needs were discussed. The planning process culminated in a three-day convergence meeting of everyone involved in the project.

The extensive and inclusive planning paid off. ASU Public Events was able to recruit new audiences to the workshops and festival. In particular, Native-Americans totaled approximately 99 percent of the workshop participants and about 70 percent of the audiences at the festival.

A commitment to audience development often *begins* with the recognition that funders are encouraging arts organizations to commit not only to serving the art form's existing audience, but also to engaging new audiences with that art. A dedication to audience building is crucial to successful fund-raising. Also, increasing cultural participation can help to increase earned revenues for organizations in other ways, through membership income, entrance costs, and fees for services. Yet an interest that is based purely on the bottom line is not sufficient to support a lasting and effective audience-building process. The commitment must be based on an understanding that sustained audience development is critical to the overall vitality and relevance of the specific organization to its community, and to the vibrancy and relevance of cultural endeavors to society at large.

Therefore, assessment of your organization's readiness for beginning an audience development process might begin by posing the following questions for serious reflection and response by key board and staff members. (These questions are included on Worksheet 2.1 in appendix A. See Exhibit 2.1 for a sample filled-in version of this form.)

- Why is increased audience development important for your organization?
- How will it benefit your organization?
- How will it benefit the community your organization serves?
- How might it benefit the field and society at large?

These questions might be posed most effectively at an appropriate point in regular board and staff meetings, or at a special meeting of board and staff convened to begin this process of planning for audience development. Or they could be circulated individually once the topic has been broached at an appropriate meeting.

If the board and staff do not demonstrate a clear understanding of the value of audience development, it may be necessary to introduce the subject by inviting leaders of organizations that have successfully launched such programs to speak or build advocates for the process by bringing board and staff members to meet with funders, colleagues, and consultants who are familiar with the full benefits of audience development.

Increasing cultural participation can help to increase earned revenues for organizations.

Exhibit 2.1
Establishing a Commitment to Audience Development

(This is a filled-in sample of Worksheet 2.1 in appendix A.)

1. **Why is increased audience development important for your organization?**

-   We have a number of different audiences for different programs, but they don't even know each other. It would be great to get the jazz festival audience coming to our Mainstage events year-round.
-   There are all sorts of families in the community and their kids know about us and participate in the education program, but the parents have never even stepped in the door.
-   The people coming to the Mainstage plays are getting older; the whole audience for theater might just disappear over time.

2. **How will it benefit your organization?**

-   If we could get families coming to the Mainstage and music programs, they might become members. At least it would increase subscriptions.
-   If jazz festival audiences came to our other programs, our audience would look less old and homogeneous.
-   More families would mean more young lovers of music and dance and arts, which we want.

3. **How will it benefit the community your organization serves?**

-   Giving more people alternatives to TV and sporting events is our role in the community.
-   Making the newcomers to our area, the families that relocate here, feel more a part of the community of our organization.

4. **How might it benefit the field at large?**

-   Getting kids interested in all the fields we present—music, theater, and dance—will build audiences for the future for those art forms.
-   Figuring out ways to get people to "crossover," such as jazz lovers coming to theater, or theatergoers attending dance performances. These are lessons that other rural presenters can use across the country.

5. **How might it benefit society at large?**

-   More art, less TV!
-   Getting kids involved with us may begin to replace the arts education that has been cut in the schools.
-   Our programs address issues important in our world. Maybe through art people can learn about other cultures or spend time with people of other races.

Certain basic resources are required for audience development, including sufficient personnel; professional ability in areas such as programming, public relations, marketing, and fund-raising; the clerical support, paid and/or volunteer, to handle increased information management and correspondence; and access to sufficient equipment and facilities. It will be difficult for an organization to successfully launch audience-building initiatives if it is suffering from significant weaknesses in its infrastructure, such as inadequate staffing, equipment shortages, or poor information management systems. By inviting a few key board and staff members to frankly respond to the *Organizational Infrastructure Assessment Survey* (Worksheet 2.2 in appendix A), a better understanding of current organizational strengths and weaknesses can be gained.

Once weak points have been identified and addressed, your organization will be better prepared to conduct successful audience development work. At the onset of this process, key board and staff members must understand the resources needed and be willing to improve. Once audience development goals and strategies have been articulated, this will be reviewed to identify new areas that may require bolstering to support implementation.

Successful audience development is best based upon a foundation of experience. Most likely, your organization has been presenting programs and services over a period of time that has allowed board and staff to formulate hypotheses about the relationship between the organization and the audiences it serves. Experience gleaned through trial and error regarding planning, presenting, and promoting programs is essential to developing suc-

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cessful audience development projects. If your organization is new, you will need to solicit the guidance of others who have appropriate experience with similar programs and target audiences. If some of the leadership of your organization is unfamiliar with the institution's past, it will be essential to build a familiarity with the organization's history before envisioning an appropriate future. (Worksheet 2.3 in appendix A includes questions you can answer about evaluating your record of programs and services.)

A prerequisite for an organization beginning audience development work is a solid understanding of its audiences. You will need to answer the following questions:

• Are your board and staff familiar with the organization's current audience?
• Do you know how many people actually attend your events and participate in your services?
• Are you knowledgeable about their characteristics, habits, and interests?
• Is your understanding of current audiences based purely on observation and anecdotal evidence, or is it supported with data gleaned through audience surveys and other tools?

(Additional questions to help in understanding your audience are articulated in Worksheet 2.4, appendix A.)

Most successful audience development projects begin with a solid baseline profile of current audiences. Many organizations have the necessary information at hand as a result of consistent use of audience surveys and other evaluative tools. If, however, organizations preparing to embark upon audience development projects lack such data, they can begin an intensive process of audience identification early on in their planning phase. This might include developing and using audience surveys; convening meetings with people who have the most direct contact with current audiences, including program participants such as workshop leaders, readers, and others directly in touch with your constituency; and even directly engaging sample groups of audiences through roundtable discussions, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews.

Ideally, baseline data reflect an entire season or year of operations. Data can be intensively collected at the beginning of a planning process, then updated throughout the year to round out the picture. If staff and board lack knowledge of the tools and techniques of market research, you can consult those who are more expert, such as staff of other organizations that might be willing to share their experience, a consultant, or some other knowledgeable individual. Additional market research may be required to learn more about potential audiences.

Once baseline information has been collected and analyzed, it will help inform decisions by your organization's planning committee regarding target audiences for future

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projects, whether filling an unmet need among existing audiences or reaching out to an underserved or completely unengaged new audience group. The data should also provide information that will help reveal the current relationship of programs and services to audiences and make clear what underlying strategies are at work. This information is essential to successful planning for audience development.

Since audience development is about deepening and broadening bonds with the community in which an organization operates, it is important to have some basic connections established before embarking upon new projects. For instance:

• The awareness and respect of peer organizations, including educational institutions,

community nonprofits, government agencies, libraries, and others, will help to open doors for sharing information and developing partnerships.

- The support or, at least, recognition of your institution by local and national funding sources, public and private, will be instrumental to gaining the funding needed for expanded audience development.
- An understanding of your organization's level of visibility and reputation among peer organizations, the arts community, and general public will provide valuable information, which will influence future public relations and marketing efforts.
- Relationships with key media contacts will prove invaluable to getting the word out about your project.

If these community relationships are not in place, the early planning stages of an audience development project can serve as the ideal time for forging them, whether through surveys, town meetings, or one-on-one conversations. (Worksheet 2.5 in appendix A poses questions that will help you assess the breadth and depth of your organization's community relationships.)

The following case study highlights an organization that successfully engaged the community during the planning process.

Involving Community Partners in the Planning Process:

Dancing in the Streets

Dancing in the Streets, a New York City-based group that commissions, produces, and presents site-specific dance and interdisciplinary performances, considers planning to be the key to the success of their audience development efforts. "By having the whole staff and community partners participate in planning," notes Executive Director Aviva Davidson, "we avoid crisis management and engage effectively with the community."

For the past six years, Dancing in the Streets has sustained a long-term initiative in Red Hook, Brooklyn, a community that is struggling to become more vital and attractive. The work integrates community activities, arts education, a performance festival, and professional site work. Dancing in the Streets has developed partnerships with local schools, social service agencies, and arts organizations. Most of the planning happens during the organization's monthly meetings with these community partners, during which the participants check in, ask questions, and revise plans.

Prerequisites for Success

The Wallace Funds have found that organizations that succeed in audience development initiatives typically possess the following characteristics: a clear and shared vision; openness to change; a connection with community; commitment to relevance; organizational capacity and resources; and an ability to tell the story about audience building. These factors, which encompass both philosophical and pragmatic concerns, are explained in detail below. (Worksheet 2.6 in appendix A poses some critical questions to help you assess your organization's capacity to plan and manage a successful audience development initiative.)

- *Clear and shared vision.* The most effective audience-building efforts usually involve presenters whose leaders have a clear, common vision of the need for and goals of audience development. The leadership champions and communicates the vision for audience development to staff, the board, and other constituents so that all stakeholders feel a sense of ownership.

- *Openness to change.* An audience development initiative usually requires many changes in an organization, with programs being just the beginning. Audience development also requires organizations to change the way they do business and manage resources. Increasing numbers of audience members, diversifying the audience's composition, or deepening the participation of the current audience typically necessitates a commitment to bringing new people into the organization and involving previous constituents in different ways. Effective cultural participation projects usually involve presenters who embrace change in the audience, the organization, and the community.

- *Organizational capacity and resources.* The potential of even the clearest visions and the strongest community connections will remain untapped without sufficient human and financial resources and institutional capacity (explained in step 3 of this chapter). The following are some fundamental characteristics that indicate organizational health: a vital mission and clear sense of why the organization exists; well-regarded programs of high artistic quality; capable and motivated leadership, management, and staff; a well-organized board with able and involved members; clear communications and accountability; efficient operations and strong management support systems; and solid finances, with reliable and diverse revenue streams. Although few groups exhibit all of these qualities, if several of them are missing,

Leadership champions and communicates the vision for audience development to staff, the board, and other constituents so that all stakeholders feel a sense of ownership.

the best intentioned audience development effort can fail.

Organizations that have attained a certain level of institutionalization, marked by sustainability of programs and services and the full development of the organizational systems to support those programs and services, are most likely to be effective at launching and maintaining new audience engagement strategies. Successful organizations usually have a strong record of programs and services from which to draw and build upon, as well as an understanding of audiences gained through observation and research.

• *Connection to the community and commitment to relevance.* Arts organizations that are closely connected to their communities and deeply committed to presenting relevant programs are more likely to succeed in their efforts to build and sustain their audience (described in step 4 of this chapter). These organizations forge and maintain ties with their communities by: viewing themselves as a part of a whole community; continuously gaining knowledge about the interests, concerns, and motivations of their current and potential audiences; and engaging in ongoing dialogues with different parts of their communities to guide organizational decisions. They develop and offer programs that are relevant to the wants and needs of the communities they serve and build partnerships with artists who share their commitment to audience development.

• *Ability to tell the story about audience building.* An organization's effort to increase cultural participation is most successful when a system is established to enable ongoing communication between project participants and the organization's

constituents. Telling the story of how the artistic work is being developed, the audience's experience and reactions to the work, and the issues that the organization is facing during the project is an integral part of an audience development project. An organization's ability to establish a feedback loop with audiences, funders, community members, media, board members, and staff and to use various documentation methods to address all these constituents is a key success factor.

Warning Signs for Lack of Readiness

Below are some warning signs that your organization is not ready to initiate an audience development project. Organizations that identify weaknesses in some of these areas

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can gain a better understanding of their immediate needs and make plans to overcome them during the early stages of their audience-building initiatives. Those organizations that identify multiple weaknesses may choose to engage in a preparation period before proceeding with planning and implementing audience development projects.

• *Absence of buy-in from stakeholders.* The most crucial warning sign that an organization is not ready to initiate an audience development project is the lack of widespread buy-in among all stakeholders involved with the project. An absence of understanding and agreement among the executive director, board, and staff can be an enormous liability.

- *Inadequate communication with the community.* Lack of communication with community members is another indication that an organization may not be ready to take on an audience-building initiative. The feedback loop between an arts organization and its current and potential audiences in the community is an essential element of effective audience development. An arts organization needs to offer programs and to express issues that are relevant to the life of the community and have a relationship on which to build an ongoing conversation.

- *Failure to integrate audience development into the entire organization.* If audience development is narrowly pigeonholed into one department, such as marketing or education, then it will probably become an isolated activity that will not reach its full potential. Audience-building initiatives that concentrate only on selling tickets and increasing box office sales ultimately have trouble sustaining themselves.

Addressing Organizational Weaknesses

Once appropriate board and staff members have considered the questions posed in this chapter, they will be better able to determine their readiness to embark upon cultural participation initiatives. If the responses reveal that your organization has in place the basic elements of readiness, then an audience development planning process can begin. If you perceive an organizational shortcoming, here are some possible strategies to address problems:

- *Determine the cause of the problem.* Avoid the tendency to quickly label the source of an organizational weakness that is hampering an audience development project. Since most organizations operate as complex systems, it is usually hard to pinpoint one element as being the sole root of a problem. Devising a solution without a thorough diagnosis can sometimes lead to additional problems.

- *Spend more time planning and educating.* If it becomes apparent that some of your key stakeholders have a different vision

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for audience development, have not bought into the concept, or are resistant to change, it is usually worthwhile to take the extra time to hear them out and try to get them onboard. Sometimes people need to read materials, attend training sessions, or visit other organizations to gain a better understanding of audience development.

- *Start small or scale back the effort.* It may be best to rethink your project and scale it back if some key participants are not committed to it or if you lack adequate resources. If the initiative is in the planning stage, you can begin with a smaller pilot project, learn from the experience, and apply the lessons to an expanded subsequent effort. If the project is already underway, you can scale it back until there is the level of support necessary for it to succeed.

Step 6   Determine the Scope of Your Planning Project

The scope of planning projects can vary widely. Step-by-step guidelines are provided in the following chapters that can provide a planning template for your organization, or you may choose to incorporate a selection of these exercises. However you choose to utilize this handbook, the observations, exercises, and case studies that are provided should offer valuable insights into the planning, implementation, documentation, and evaluation of audience development initiatives.

After completing the exercises in this chapter, your organization's planning committee should be able to determine roughly what scope your planning process should require. It may be helpful to discuss this with board and staff from other organizations who have participated in planning processes, funders who are well versed in this area, or consultants. There are also books available on the subject, several of which are listed in appendix B.

The case below describes an especially lengthy and extensive planning process.

Conducting an Extensive Planning Process:

The Poetry Society of America

The Poetry Society of America in New York City launched a year-long strategic planning process with multiple goals, including the improvement and expansion of its infrastructure and the reconfiguration of its programs. This process, which was facilitated by an experienced planning consultant, included monthly meetings by a strategic planning committee comprised of key board and staff; meetings of board/staff committees assigned with assessing human resources, equipment and facilities, finance and development, public relations and marketing, and programs and services; and a day-long board retreat. A telephone survey was conducted to analyze the organization's reputation and perception within its local community and the national field of literature. Information regarding audiences and programmatic initiatives was gathered and analyzed, and detailed recommendations were made regarding organizational infrastructure.

The final plan called for a three-year implementation that would not only improve the infrastructure of the organization, but also radically expand the audience it served. A complex array of unrelated programs was pruned and reconfigured to include three focused program initiatives that could be implemented in five cities across the nation. These included Poetry in Motion, a program that placed poetry posters in city subways and buses; Tributes in Libraries honoring renowned poets; and Poetry in Public Places readings featuring thematic poetry. These programs were designed to appeal to audiences ranging from those with little prior exposure to literature to those that are deeply engaged. Marketing mechanisms that encouraged audiences to seek higher levels of engagement were designed, and programs that further enhanced and rewarded the deepest level of engagement, such as seminars and competitions, were reconfigured.

chapter 3

Assessing Your Organization and Audience

All good planning for the future begins with a clear understanding of the past and present. In the previous chapter, you were asked to assess your organization's readiness by answering some basic questions. This chapter delves more deeply into that process of building a comprehensive profile of your organization and audience.

The best place to start assessment is by examining your organization's history. Dynamic arts organizations are typically *responsive* entities. Their leaders *respond* to needs they perceive within the community, interests of new board members, exciting events in their fields, and challenges and initiatives expressed by funders, government agencies, or other institutions. This kind of responsiveness connects organizations to their communities and keeps them vital.

Without an attitude of responsiveness, organizations face stagnation, loss of relevance, and ultimately extinction. However, unexamined and undirected responsiveness can lead to organizational instability, inconsistency, and ineffectiveness. Planning provides the middle road, allowing organizations to strategically chart a new direction that responds to a carefully selected set of challenges and goals. Operating with a strategic plan can help your organization avoid costly tangents and dead-end projects, establish momentum,

and arrive at its desired destination.

Thorough organizational assessment requires analysis of all aspects of your organization: its mission, programs, services, and infrastructure; its relationship to similar institutions in the area; its relationship with audiences; and its role and image within the community it serves. It is also important to create a snapshot of the community within which your organization is located. For instance, area demographics may have shifted signifi-

> All good planning for the future begins with a clear understanding of the past and present.

cantly, affecting the habits and patterns of various constituencies.

Your organization might begin the assessment process by inviting appropriate staff and board members to fill out the worksheets associated with this chapter (see appendix A), adapting them as needed to measure and chart the organization's recent path. Once these forms have been completed, the data can be shared with key board and staff members, who may then consider the analysis questions provided and engage in a conversation about the issues raised. These discussions will help you set appropriate audience development goals and develop the strategies to achieve them.

By studying your organization's recent history, you can identify a general direction that it has been following. This backward glance will help make evident the kinds of internal and external forces to which the organization's leaders have been responding over the years. This knowledge will help the planning committee formulate a new road map that will direct institutional activities in the years to come. Begin by responding to some of these general questions:

- Have programs and services shifted significantly?
- Is the organization offering more programs and services than before?
- Have some programs or services been dropped?
- Have new programs or services been added?
- Has overall attendance increased or decreased?
- Are some programs attracting growing audiences and is attendance dwindling for others?
- Is membership growing, shrinking, or remaining at the same level?
- Has infrastructure (board and staff size, financial support, equipment, and facilities) grown, shrunk, or remained static?
- Is growth in expenditure keeping pace with growth in income?
- Is audience growth paralleled by increasing admissions income?
- Is audience growth paralleled by increasing membership size?

If the answers to these questions indicate that your organization is on a trajectory of change, it may be helpful to measure the indicators of that trajectory over a period of time. A chart for historical analysis and a worksheet, including the questions discussed above, are provided in Worksheet 3.1, appendix A.

One of the most common scenarios to emerge from this type of assessment is the discovery that programs and offerings have proliferated while infrastructure has remained static. Many organizations have launched innovative programs in recent years to fulfill mandates for expanded arts education or audience development without growing the infrastructure that is needed to support them.

Dynamic arts organizations are typically responsive entities. Their leaders respond to needs.

New programs are created without adding staff support or launching sufficient marketing initiatives, thereby resulting in only modest audience development gains and significant strain upon the organization's resources.

On the other hand, some organizations may have concentrated on capital improvements or other forms of infrastructure growth without building the audiences that will benefit from and ultimately help support the expansion. By tallying growth or decline in the quantity of service and size of supporting infrastructure, you can obtain a sense of the balance between service and infrastructure and gain insights into areas that may need bolstering.

Arts organizations do not operate within a vacuum. There is always a constellation of organizations providing some kind of arts programming within the same area, whether theaters, art museums, or smaller community-based arts groups. These, too, are dynamic institutions that develop in response to a similar set of local and national forces, and that possibly serve a constituency that overlaps with your own. Before launching any new audience development projects, it is important to find out who these organizations are and what they are doing.

Questions you will want to consider include the following:

- Has the number of organizations offering arts programming and services increased or declined in your area?
- Are you offering some of the same programs and services as these other organizations?
- Are you serving audiences that are the same, different, or overlapping?
- Is your organizational infrastructure comparable to that of peer organizations (e.g., significantly larger, smaller, more comprehensive, on a par, etc.)?
- Does your organization have shared concerns with peer organizations?
- Does your organization face similar challenges?
- Are there resources and experiences you may be able to share?

- Might partnerships with one or more of these organizations improve service to shared audiences or improve impact of overlapping programs?
- Can you define the niche that your organization fills in the community?
- Can you eliminate some programs and strengthen other offerings to define a clearer niche and identity for your organization?

These are the kinds of questions that can be answered by analyzing the context within which your organization operates. A chart is provided on Worksheet 3.2 in appendix A,

Without an attitude of responsiveness, organizations face stagnation, loss of relevance, and ultimately extinction.

which can be modified to help gain a basic understanding of the comparative relationship of your organization to its peers. Having completed this chart, you can better answer the questions above and those following the chart. Ideally, the process of completing this chart will lead to a productive dialogue with other organizations that serve your area. Such dialogues can lead to the sharing of valuable insights and information and spawn strategic partnerships that can benefit all those involved, from the presenting organizations to participating audiences.

This step invites you to take a closer look at your organization's current relationship to its own audiences. As discussed in the previous chapter, most arts organizations participate in some kind of audience assessment on an ongoing basis, such as counting attendance figures for programs, utilizing surveys to determine the make-up of their audiences, or circulating questionnaires among their members.

Because most funding agencies require data from their grantees regarding age, ethnicity, and gender of audiences served, such surveys usually cover this basic information. Often, they also include categories regarding income, education level, and occupation. Sometimes they include opportunities for audiences to rate their level of satisfaction with the service or program offered.

These surveys usually provide the fundamental information that can begin to help organizations determine what kinds of audiences participate in their programs. However, they often lack information about habits or practices that might help you identify what level of engagement audiences enjoy in the art your organization specializes in. They consist of questions like "How often do you attend performing arts events each year?" or "How many books do you read annually?" or "Identify other cultural and educational activities you have participated in within the last year."

Even if your organization has not yet gathered such data, you may be able to make some general observations about the nature and habits of audiences and the effectiveness of different programs and services in meeting

their needs. To begin, address the following basic discussion questions (see Worksheet 3.3, appendix A, and Exhibit 3.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet):

• Is there a typical profile that describes the majority of your audience members?
• Are there distinct groups with shared characteristics and habits?
• Do these audiences cluster around different programs and services?
• Have the organization's audiences changed significantly within recent years?

> If the perception of an organization among its peers, funders, audiences, and the general public does not correspond to its leaders' vision, it may be difficult for the organization to fulfill its mandates.

• Is your overall audience growing or shrinking?
• Are certain groups within your audience growing or shrinking?
• Has the demographic profile of people who make up your membership changed?
• Are audience members getting "stuck in ruts" or are they experimenting with a variety of organizational offerings?

If your current data cannot provide the answers to these questions, then use what information they supply along with anecdotal evidence to form some basic assumptions about your current audiences. These will be sufficient to begin your planning process. It is advisable to adopt a more thorough audience evaluation process during the early stages of

strategic planning and audience development to collect baseline data against which future audience activities and attitudes can be measured, and to which implementation may be tailored.

Also keep in mind the evolving theory on cultural participation. RAND, in its work for the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds, developed a model to explain why people participate in the arts. This model examines the way cultural organizations attract new audiences, reach a larger share of existing audiences, and deepen the involvement of cultural participants. In thinking about your own current audience and the audiences you are trying to attract to your new programs, consider RAND's in-depth analysis of an individual's complex decision to participate in the arts.

The RAND model identifies four stages of an individual's decision to participate: a predisposition reflecting the individual's background, an individual's perceptions, practical considerations about participating in the arts, and the nature of the individual's actual experience. The model is based on the observation that attitudes toward the arts play a critical role in determining behavior. These sentiments may be shaped by a variety of factors, including socioeconomic factors such as education, income, and occupation; demographic characteristics such as age, race/ethnicity; personality characteristics; prior experience with the arts; and identification with a social network and a specific community. Some people are disinclined to participate in the arts due to their backgrounds and attitudes and those of their friends. Even people who are favorably predisposed to the arts may be unlikely or unable to participate because of such practical obstacles as the time or location of events. When people choose to participate in the arts, the nature of that experience plays a critical role in influencing their beliefs and perceptions, and thus the likelihood and manner in which they will participate in the future.[5]

When people choose to participate in the arts, the nature of that experience plays a critical role in influencing their beliefs and perceptions, and thus the likelihood and manner in which they will participate in the future.

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The following case studies highlight organizations that evaluated their audiences and designed responsive programs.

Conducting a Comprehensive Community Assessment to Identify Residents' Needs:

The Flynn Theater

The Flynn Theater for the Performing Arts in Burlington, Vermont, has expanded audiences for jazz, dance, and theater by building multilayered partnerships with arts organizations in three outlying communities. The organization began this initiative by conducting comprehensive assessments of residents' interests and needs in each community through demographic analyses, surveys, and meetings with local leaders. Based on the findings, the Flynn Theater designed responsive programming geared toward a variety of ages and background and developed off-site venues and partnerships with local arts organizations in outlying communities. The audience development initiative has resulted in a 5 to 7 percent increase in the size of the Flynn Center's audiences, growth in membership in the target communities, and the strengthening of the local arts organizations.

Using Informal Methods to Assess an Audience:

UA Presents

The University of Arizona/UA Presents strives to raise people's awareness about the arts and contribute to the quality of life in the community. It has specifically aimed to attract and retain both new audiences who are inclined, but not devoted, to the performing arts, as well as completely new audiences.

Over the years, UA Presents has realized the importance of informal and intuitive community assessment and planning in audience development. "We have learned that 'trial and error' is an acceptable market research method," Executive Director Ken Foster explains. UA Presents begins by assembling available data about community needs. Then they talk informally with people in the community. "Rather than conducting formal surveys," Foster comments, "we meet with the community members and listen carefully."

UA Presents found that it needs to be flexible when doing long-term planning for a community engagement since community needs shift continually.

Exhibit 3.1
Audience Profile Discussion Questions

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(This is a filled-in sample of Worksheet 3.3.)

1. Is there a typical profile that describes the majority of your audience members? Describe:

- Couples, 55–65 years old, white, and affluent

Are there distinct groups with shared characteristics and habits? Describe:

- People who like classical music versus those who prefer dance or jazz
- Families whose kids come only to the educational programs
- People who attend the jazz festival
- Dance students and kids who see the lecture/demonstrations in school

Do these audiences cluster around different programs and services? How?

- Different disciplines are clusters.
- The jazz festival is its own cluster.
- Education programs are a cluster.

2. Have the organization's audiences changed significantly within recent years? Describe how:

- Audiences are growing older.
- Fewer families or working people—people seem to be so busy!

**3. Is your overall audience growing or shrinking?
Are certain groups within your audience growing or shrinking? Describe:**

- Our attendance is flat.
- There are fewer people in their thirties and forties; they now have kids.
- The weekend audience is very different from the weeknight audience.

Has the demographic profile of people who make up your membership changed? Describe:

- Membership is pretty flat.
- It is the same people; they are just getting older.
- There are no new families in town.

4. Are audience members getting "stuck in ruts" or are they experimenting with a variety of offerings?

We haven't really tracked the audiences, but you see the same faces at classical programs; they never attend the jazz or new-music programs.

Changes within your organization, among your peers, and within your audiences may be indicative of larger patterns affecting your community. For example, if your organization is located in a downtown area that is losing its residential base, that may affect attendance at evening or weekend events. If local high schools are cutting arts programs, a new vacuum has been created that organizations may be competing to fill. If Spanish-speaking immigrants are migrating to your area in significant numbers, programs that address their interests may be required. It is important to take these kinds of issues into consideration during the organizational assessment phase of strategic planning.

It may be helpful to answer some of the following questions with the help of your steering committee and others who may be in a better position to monitor the changing demographics and resources of your area, such as staff from your local chamber of commerce, arts council, department of education, and others. (See Worksheet 3.4, appendix A for a corresponding worksheet.)

- Have area demographics shifted recently? If so, how (e.g., aging, becoming more ethnically diverse, experiencing rising or decreasing income or educational levels)?
- Has the community within which your organization operates developed new needs?
- Has the neighborhood where your organization is located undergone change?
- Are there any other external factors in your community that may have an impact upon your organization now or in the near future?

The case study below is about Intermedia Arts, an organization that actively includes the community in its needs assessments.

A Community Organizing Approach to Needs Assessment and Program Planning:

Intermedia Arts

The mission of Intermedia Arts in Minneapolis is to "serve as a catalyst that builds understanding among people through art." Intermedia Arts provides visual, performance, media, and interdisciplinary artistic presentations and arts education in schools and the community. Through these programs, Intermedia Arts supports community, youth, and artist development and stimulates dialogue about current issues.

Intermedia Arts uses a community organizing approach for needs assessment and program planning. Staff begins by conducting a series of focus groups with community members to discuss their concerns. Themes organically emerge from these roundtable discussions and are developed into programs, such as "Red and Black," a three-year project that explored the intersecting histories and traditions of Native-American and African-American people. Intermedia's programming starts with the community concerns and then finds the art that explores and supports those issues.

Projects are created through a collaborative process that involves other arts organizations, social service agencies, educational institutions, and community members at each stage, from initial concept through program planning to implementation. Usually, Intermedia Arts contracts with an artist and/or activist from the appropriate community to serve as the project's curator and coordinator. This further ensures that the project is firmly rooted in the community.

Although most of the information gathered through the steps in this chapter is tangible, measurable information, intangibles such as unified vision and outside perceptions also play a critical role in strategic planning. An organization can lose focus and effectiveness if its leaders do not share a vision, a common understanding of the potential role or impact of the organization. *Vision* refers to the internal image of the organization and its role, and *perception* refers to the external image of the organization, which is equally important to effectiveness and vitality. If the perception of an organization among its peers, funders, audiences, and the general public does not correspond to its leaders' vision, it may be difficult for the organization to fulfill its mandates. Such lack of correspondence can undermine audience development efforts, fund-raising activities, and marketing impact.

Therefore, it may be helpful to include a survey of your organization's vision within its inner circle (targeting board and staff) and its perception within the community (targeting key funders, peer organizations, audience members, and others), as part of the process of organizational assessment. Research of this kind can help to answer the following questions (see Worksheet 3.5, in appendix A):

- What was the original vision of the organization's founders?
- How was this expressed through the organization's mission statement, programs, and services?
- Is this vision still shared by the organization's current leaders?
- How is this expressed today through the organization's mission statement, programs, and services?
- Does the expression of this vision and mission still match the needs and demands of the community the organization serves?
- How is the organization perceived within the community?

- Is the organization recognized within its immediate circle and beyond for its programs and services?
- What image does your organization have within the community at large?
- Do public perceptions correspond with the organization's current vision, mission, and programs?
- Does it have a public "image" at all?

By responding to these discussion questions, the planning committee can begin to identify internal shifts in vision and mission and the external perceptions of these. Though past and present staff and board members can best answer questions about mission and vision, outside viewpoints are helpful in analyzing image and public perceptions. For this reason a sample perception survey form is provided (Worksheet 3.6, appendix A), which can be modified for use by various organizations conducting one-on-one, telephone, or written surveys.

If your organization's planning committee discovers that its members lack a clear, shared vision for the organization or learns that there is a disconnection between the organization's current mission, vision, and programs, it may want to begin redefining the organization's vision and/or mission statement early on in the planning process. While the final vision and/or mission statement may not be fully defined until the planning process is complete, a general consensus will be important to set the tone for decisions regarding appropriate target audiences and strategies. A vision exercise with a focus on audience development issues is provided in Worksheet 3.7, appendix A. Even planning committees that share a consensus about mission and vision may benefit from participating in this exercise, which can serve to reinforce and reinvigorate an organization's corporate understanding of and commitment to its mission and vision.

Build a Composite Portrait of Your Organization and Audience

The assessment exercises provided in this chapter should offer your planning committee a much clearer view of the organization it serves. This better understanding will form the foundation upon which appropriate, effective audience development strategies can be built. You should not be alarmed if this process reveals challenges that need to be addressed, such as a lack of correspondence between the organization's current vision and programs, or a disconnection between organizational leaders' vision and constituents' perception, or an imbalance between growth in service and expansion in supporting infrastructure.

Challenges like these identified during organizational assessment often provide the keys to developing appropriate goals for audience development. They serve as clues to issues, such as insufficient infrastructure, shallow marketing expertise, or blurry vision or mission, that can be addressed by strategies that enable the organization to become more effective and vital. It is at this point, where challenges are revealed and solutions offered, that strategic planning becomes truly exciting and audience development can effectively begin.

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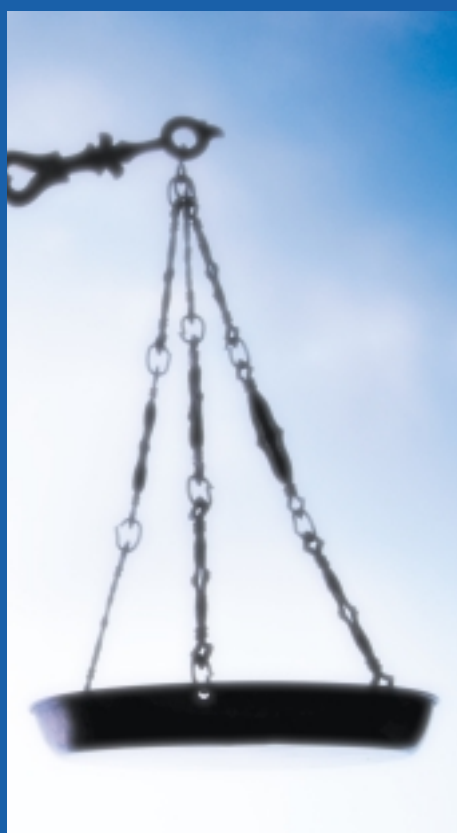
chapter 4

Setting Goals

During a seminar regarding the role of planning for audience development, a participant asked, "What is the point of all this research? How is it relevant to audience development?" The answer is that successful audience-building projects take place at that point where an organization's mission and path intersect with the needs of the community it serves. This is the point at which the project is relevant to the vision and mission of the organization, its current capacity and mode of operation, and the demands of the community.

This chapter focuses more clearly upon the central issues of audience development:

- an analysis of the current relationship between programs and audiences
- an analysis of unserved or underserved audiences
- the selection of target audiences for development activities
- the setting of goals describing the future relationship between these audiences, programs, and services.

These activities will expand upon the steps taken in the previous chapter, revisiting the observations that have been made and building upon them to form the goals that will direct new cultural participation initiatives.

Step 1   Segment Your Audience

One of the keys to successful audience development is segmenting audiences. This means identifying categories within your organization's current and potential audiences that participate in different kinds of activities, or at different levels, or for different reasons. There are many ways to categorize audiences, including geographic, demographic, and psychographic characteristics. Some helpful types of segmentation are detailed on the following pages, accompanied by case studies demonstrating how organizations used these categories to analyze the relationship of their programs to audiences.

Level of Engagement with the Arts

You can categorize people according to their level of engagement with the art form. Much has been written in the area of audience development on the "inclined" and "disinclined" audience member, especially in *Learning Audiences,* an important book for performing arts presenters about adult arts participation.[6] The RAND model suggests that strategies designed to increase arts participation need to consider carefully the audiences they are trying to target in terms of their engagement level. Strategies aimed at audiences that are not currently predisposed to the arts will need to change individuals' attitudes toward the arts and those of their social network. Those geared toward people who are currently predisposed but not participating will need to consider ways to overcome practical barriers to participation. Strategies intended to deepen the involvement of current participants should strive to enrich

the participation experience. In each case, the actual tactics you employ should be designed with the personal and social characteristics of the specific target population in mind.

Relationship to Organization

Another way to break your audiences into groups is by the nature of their relationship to your organization, such as deeply served core audiences, moderately engaged occasional audiences, or nominally engaged underserved audiences. An organization that offers both on-site programs and a range of off-site outreach programs might define groups that attend programs at an organization's headquarters as, most likely, audiences already well engaged with the arts, and those who participate in off-site outreach programs as more passively engaged with the organization and probably less engaged with the arts. If your organization serves a large geographic area or national range, your audiences might break down into those living in an area that is served with frequent live programs and those outside of that radius who benefit from other kinds of services or occasional live programs.

Characteristics or Demographics

Audiences can also be broken into categories according to age, gender, ethnicity, first language, educational level, income bracket, and profession in order to determine basic demographic patterns of attendance or engagement. You can adopt audience development goals designed to diversify the typical audience to better reflect area demographics—targeting people who reflect underrepresented characteristics regarding gender, age, ethnicity, and educational levels. There are, however, many other meaningful ways to categorize audiences by characteristics or demographics.

Constituencies

Another helpful way of segmenting audiences is to break them into constituencies: groups of people who can be defined in relationship to organizations, institutions, or professions such as schoolchildren, library audiences, or museum-goers. In chapter 3, you were asked to define your organization's audience by describing typical audience members and basic clusters that these audience members may fall into. In this step, you should revisit your findings and break your audience into

This case explains how Writers & Books segmented its audiences

Identifying Core and Peripheral Audience Segments:

Writers & Books

Writers & Books, a literary organization located in Rochester, New York, discovered through a strategic planning process that its audiences fell into two distinct categories: Core Audiences, people who were highly engaged with the organization and the literary culture, and Peripheral Audiences, people who benefited from outreach programs that offered them a limited engagement with literature. This analysis (demonstrated graphically in Figure 4.1) helped make clear that there were few incentives or opportunities for the Peripheral Audiences to go beyond the introduction to creative writing and literary appreciation they received through outreach programs. The creation of appropriate programming and marketing strategies that addressed this disconnection between Peripheral and Core Audiences became one of the primary audience development goals of the organization.

Figure 4.1

Audience Segmentation of Writers & Books

peripheral programs

outreach programs

central programs

Writers
&
Books
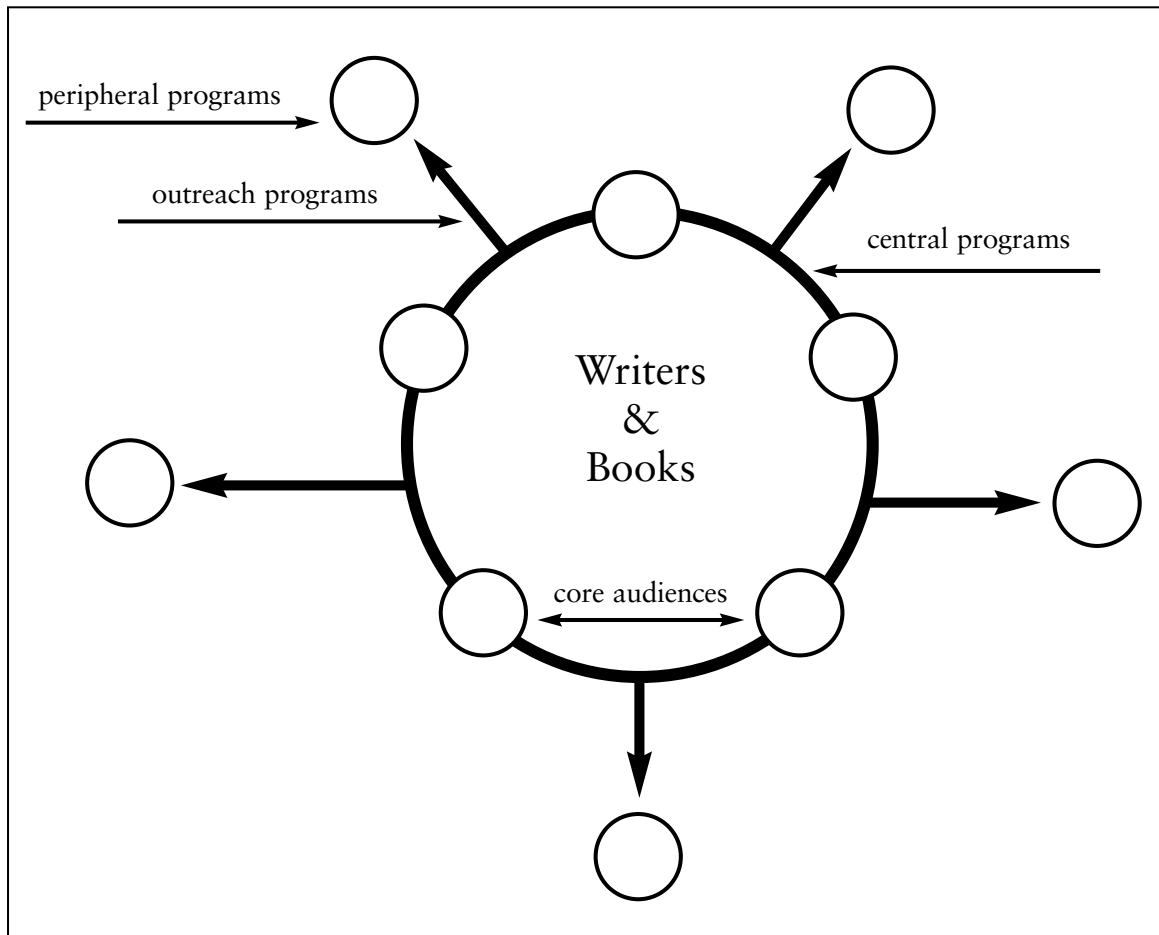
core audiences

categories that will be meaningful to audience development.

It may be helpful to consider audience groups as they relate to different aspects of your organization's offerings. One of the easiest ways to categorize audiences is to make a list of the different programs and services that your organization provides and describe the kinds of audiences that participate in these (use Worksheet 4.1a, appendix A.) This process can help provide a comprehensive picture of the categories that an organization's audiences fall into and why. It also provides valuable information about who is *not*

being served by the organization.

It is almost always helpful to break audiences into categories of "well served," "moderately served," and "underserved" when designing audience development goals and strategies. You may also wish to define other categories that are appropriate to your organization. Take this opportunity to also identify any unserved audience segments that you wish to reach. Once you have defined categories, it may be helpful to write this information in Worksheet 4.1a and 4.1.b, appendix A (see Exhibit 4.1 for filled-in samples of these worksheets).

Exhibit 4.1
Describing Current Audiences

(This is a filled-in sample of Worksheet 4.1a. It lists program and service categories and their corresponding audiences and highlights those audiences listed that comprise the majority of attendants at each program or service category.)

Program or service: Lecture demonstrations with the dancers
Audiences:
- Students K–6th grade
- Dance students at the university
- Our education program students

Program or service: Annual jazz festival
Audiences:
- The entire community
- Families
- Young people 20–35
- Ethnically diverse audiences
- People from all over the state

Program or service: Mainstage theater programs
Audiences:
- Subscribers
- White, upper-middle class, older people
- People from in town or who have a reason to be in town

Categorizing Audiences

(This is a filled-in sample of Worksheet 4.1b. It describes an organization's current audiences and defines the characteristics of the audiences that conform to each category.)

Category: Subscriber audience
Characteristics:
- Come to theater programs, some music
- Attend 3–6 times/year
- White, upper-middle class, older
- Live or work in town
- Also attend the symphony

Category: Jazz audience
Characteristics:
- Younger people
- Diverse, from all races
- Don't like subscriptions (have never subscribed)
- Never attend plays, maybe some dance

Category: Students in education program
Characteristics:
- Parents register them for programs
- Only come for the education program, never any performances
- Parents are not subscribers or ticket buyers
- Diverse, from all races

Step 2   Identify Unmet Needs

Once the previous steps have been completed, you should have a clearer idea of which programs and services serve what audiences. The next step in identifying audience development goals is to identify unmet needs for each audience category (Worksheet 4.2, appendix A, provides a format in which to list these). Unmet needs may range from basic introduction to modern dance for audiences who are unengaged or minimally engaged to advanced writing seminars or book discussion groups for people who are already active with the literary community in their area.

For example, an organization with a primary focus on promoting avant-garde per-

forming arts might determine that adults who had already attended performances might be better served by the addition of educational workshops currently not available through the organization. This same organization might also recognize that inner-city schoolchildren already reached once a year through in-school residencies might benefit from greater exposure to experimental drama through a summer camp program. Finally, this same organization might identify suburban schoolchildren as an audience currently unserved by the organization that might also benefit from engagement with the summer camp program.

Step 3   Describe Similar Organizations

More than likely, your organization is not the only arts group in your region. It is probably one in a constellation of entities addressing the area's various cultural needs, including other arts organizations, schools (at levels from pre-K through college to continuing education for adults), libraries, literacy organizations, social service agencies, and community centers for various age, ethnic, and professional groups.

It is important to identify these other organizations (as your planning committee has already begun to do in the chart provided in Worksheet 3.2) and to consider which of these organizations' audiences or constituencies overlap with those your planning com-

mittee has identified. To do this, take the list of organizations that comprise your area's constellation and, using Worksheet 4.3 in appendix A, itemize the primary audiences those organizations serve. Through this process, you will be able to identify which unmet audience needs may already be filled by other organizations and what needs are completely unmet. This information will help you define a niche for your audience development work, so as not to overlap needlessly with other organizations. It will also help you identify areas where strategic partnerships with other organizations may enhance service to specific audiences.

The process of selecting target audiences for development initiatives requires an understanding of:

• the potential pool of audiences
• the range of services currently provided to those audiences
• the most appropriate way for an organization to bridge the gap between potential audiences and programs or services

Targeting audiences is not simply a process of elimination. Organizations that adopt an "all things to all people" approach to audience development will most likely spread themselves too thin and become ineffectual. Once an organization's planning committee has conducted the research and analysis suggested above, it must revisit that information from the perspective of its mission and vision, and its organizational values, priorities, and culture.

Ideally, an organization's mission or vision statement will articulate in a general way not only whom the organization seeks to serve and enrich, but also how or to what end. At this point, your planning committee should analyze the organization's mission or vision statement and look for clues that will assist in selecting target audiences and setting goals for their development. (Planning committees that completed Worksheet 3.7 may wish to revisit their responses to that exercise.)

A series of discussion questions are provided below to assist your planning committee in this process (these questions are also provided in Worksheet 4.4 in appendix A). In analyzing your organization's mission statement, you will want to consider questions such as:

• What audiences are implied by your mission and/or vision statement?
• In what ways does your mission/vision statement imply that your organization will engage potential audiences with arts activity?
• According to your mission/vision statement, how will those audiences be enriched by participating in your organization's offerings?

Organizations that adopt an "all things to all people" approach to audience development will most likely spread themselves too thin and become ineffectual.

Step 5   Select Target Audiences

Having completed the above exercises, you should be prepared to define the audiences that you want to target for development and describe the impact your organization hopes to have upon these audiences. The following are some good general examples of desired impacts on targeted audiences:

• **To attract new audiences.** The primary criterion of success is the extent to which individuals who have not attended events in the past will participate in future events and performances.
• **To develop culturally diverse or culturally specific audiences.** The primary criterion of success is the extent to which the cultural/ethnic mix of audiences increases through the strategy, or the extent to which a specific cultural/ethnic group participates.
• **To deepen existing audiences' understanding of the arts.** The primary criterion of success is the extent to which audience members go beyond their current level of understanding and appreciation and either sample unfamiliar forms or learn more about forms and modes of presentation

with which they are already familiar.
• **To provide opportunities for audience participation in the arts.** The primary criterion of success is the extent to which audiences become more deeply involved in the creation, performance, or presentation of work.[7]

Target audiences and desired impacts might also be described in more specific terms, such as:

• **"One-time" audience members.** Encourage them to attend a greater number and variety of dance programs each year.
• **Writers.** Attract more new writers and continue to appeal to the writers in the existing audience by providing professional development opportunities.
• **Inner-city audiences.** Attract those currently reached by off-site outreach programs to attend intermediate level programs at headquarters.

Using the format demonstrated above, use Worksheet 4.5 in appendix A to list your target audiences and desired impacts appropriate to your organization.

The Kitchen chose to target a young audience, as described below.

Making Goals Specific:

The Kitchen

The Kitchen is a thirty-year-old organization in New York City. This community cultural center has a rich history as a laboratory for artists who work experimentally across disciplines. When The Kitchen decided to aim to increase and diversify its audiences, it set a specific goal of attracting younger people.

Creating this explicit goal has helped The Kitchen develop focused strategies to reach young people better. In order to achieve the objective, The Kitchen developed partnerships with schools, organized a street fair in front of its building, and created programming for kids. Not only has most of the programming for children and youth sold out, but Executive Director Elise Bernhardt also notes that their efforts have "brought in new blood and helped build our future audiences."

Once the target audiences and desired impact have been defined, you can translate this information into a set of audience development goals (use Worksheet 4.6, appendix A). A goal is a clear statement of a desired future state that will be achieved through the implementation of specific strategies. Goals should, whenever possible, include measurable results so that progress can be documented and monitored.

Examples of goals that correspond to the above list of target audiences and desired impact follow:

- Promote deeper engagement with dance by encouraging "one-time" audience members to attend a greater number and variety of programs each year.
- Maintain interest of existing writer audience members (currently numbering about fifty) and attract at least thirty new ones each year by providing professional development opportunities.
- Promote awareness and attendance of cultural opportunities among inner-city audiences by attracting those that currently participate in off-site outreach programs to attend a greater variety of programs at headquarters.

Although an organization's mission and vision may be broad, sweeping, and ambitious, its audience development goals should be specific and achievable. In setting goals, it is also important not to become bogged down by the specifics of strategies and implementation. These elements will grow out of the goals that you set and can be fully explored once your basic goals are articulated. (A step-by-step process for this is provided in chapter 5.)

Recently, the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company decided to set the specific goal of deepening the participation of the current audience.

Aiming to Deepen the Participation of the Community:

Bill T Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company

Shannon Snead, the development director at the New York City-based Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, observes that her colleagues at the organization have always done audience development and cultural participation work; they just did not use that terminology or get funding to do it. "Bill T. Jones was a pioneer in community outreach and involving audience members in developing works," she says.

Recently, the company set the specific goal of deepening the participation of its current audience. "We realized that we would engage an audience and then leave them, so we wouldn't be able to tap into and build on the loyalty we developed," Snead notes.

The company now works more intensively with the same group through additional repertory classes involving students and audience members. For example, the company has offered more beginner movement classes with kids and adults that have helped in breaking down barriers and demonstrating that dance is not an elite art form. By setting a clear goal, the company has been able to develop focused and effective audience development strategies.

chapter 5

Designing Audience Development Strategies

The sample audience development goals provided in the previous chapter make clear that audiences participate in a continuum of arts activities, from those that introduce them to the organization to those that provide more in-depth, advanced involvement with the organization and with the community that exists within and around the organization. One of the primary goals of audience development is to engage a greater number and diversity of individuals at different levels within this continuum. This is achieved by providing programs, services, information, and incentives that encourage individuals with a variety of levels of experience to enter into this continuum and to reach and, perhaps, redefine their desired level of engagement.

In this chapter, step-by-step exercises will lead you through the process of developing strategies for encouraging engagement and participation. Throughout this chapter, case studies provide concrete examples of the various audience development strategies that arts organizations have developed using similar planning techniques.

Step 1   Analyze Current Audience Development Strategies

Audience development strategies are already at work within your organization, whether or not they have been formally articulated. To gain an understanding of why certain programs, services, or marketing functions succeed in attracting certain audiences, and how these might be reconfigured to attract new target audiences, it is helpful to begin by looking at what strategies are already in place. You might also examine the offerings and marketing techniques of other organizations that provide services, arts or other, to target audiences in order to gain insights into their successful strategies.

Begin this step by returning to the list of programs and attending audiences that you developed in Worksheet 4.1a and responding to the following discussion questions, listed on Worksheet 5.1, appendix A.

- Are programs or services already in place that serve audiences targeted for development?
- If so, why are these programs successfully attracting these audiences?
- What strategies, expressed or inherent, are at work?

The example and discussion questions above focus on programs or services that successfully reach a specific target audience, but it is also important to examine programs that serve a range of audiences. Since audience development implies participation in a continuum, as opposed to a static relationship with art, programs or services that bring together audiences with different skill levels or interests have the potential to "mix things

In the following case study, planners at the Poetry Society of America recognized that an existing program served a hard-to-reach target audience in New York City. During a strategic planning process, they identified this program for expansion to provide service to that target audience on a national level.

Replicating a Successful Audience Development Strategy:

Poetry Society of America

Before the Poetry Society of America (PSA) launched its signature program, Poetry in Motion®, the organization had no program or service in place to serve members of the general public with little or no prior engagement with poetry. Poetry in Motion®, initiated through a collaborative effort with Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) New York City Transit, placed poetry posters in subway cars throughout the city. Within a year, the number of American people introduced to poetry through the PSA jumped from the thousands to the millions.

When the PSA engaged in a strategic planning process, planners recognized this program as a highly effective audience development tool. From this stand-alone project, planners extracted elements of a strategy that could be replicated in five cities across the nation within three years. This strategy included the forging of partnerships with transit authorities in other cities similar to that alliance between the PSA and MTA New York City Transit, as well as new elements, including a partnership with the American Institute of Graphic Arts, a trade association of graphic designers that offered access to free graphic design and pro bono printing services on a national basis. This audience development strategy, based on a program that was already in place, was so successful that the project exceeded expectations, spreading to more than five cities within the three-year expansion period.

up." Those who like contemporary plays may delve more deeply into Shakespearean works. Or people with an interest in one popular poet's work might discover works by new, lesser known poets. Therefore, you should return to your list of programs and audiences and ask the following questions as well:

- What programs attract crossover audiences (i.e., members from two or more distinct audience categories)?
- What strategies, expressed or inherent, are at work in these programs?
- Do they have potential as models for "cultivation" programs that attract and provide advancement opportunities for specific target audiences?

You can also gain insights into successful strategies by examining those programs and services (either of your own organization or another) that are currently thriving, asking the following questions:

- What programs consistently sell out, or nearly sell out?
- Why are these programs so successful?
- What strategy can be articulated that expresses the elements of these programs' success?

If you realize that certain target audiences overlap with the constituencies of other organizations, you may be able to identify successful strategies for serving these audiences by asking the following questions:

- What other organizations provide service, arts or nonarts, to the target audience(s)?
- Are there particular strategies that can be learned from these organizations in developing new arts programs to serve these audiences?
- Would a strategic partnership with these other organizations provide access to the target audience(s)?

Frequently, organizations' existing marketing strategies are out of sync with their audience development goals. Without appropriate marketing, programs that are well designed in content and format may fail to attract targeted audiences. While the next chapter will offer a more in-depth analysis of the functions of marketing, it may be helpful to begin examining current marketing strategies by answering the following questions:

- What marketing strategies are currently employed?
- What audiences are they targeting?

- What audiences are overlooked?
- Do audiences targeted by current marketing overlap with the target audiences indicated in chapter 3?
- If not, what new marketing strategies can be employed to successfully reach new target audiences?

The above questions examine such marketing techniques as advertising and direct mail, and the following questions look at the marketing message:

- What messages do marketing materials communicate?
- Are these messages in line with the organization's audience development goals?
- Are they presented in language and format and with images that are accessible to target audiences?
- Do they correct or reinforce misperceptions that may have been identified in the community perception survey in Worksheet 3.6?

Without appropriate marketing, programs that are well designed in content and format may fail to attract targeted audiences.

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The above discussion questions are provided to offer you familiarity with a range of strategies that can be used to tackle audience development goals. For this step, return to the audience goals you developed in the previous chapter and design strategies that will help you achieve them. Worksheet 5.2 in appendix A provides a template for listing goals and corresponding strategies (see Exhibit 5.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet). These may include a mix of programmatic and marketing strategies such as:

- Creating a new program that appeals to a specific new target audience, engages an existing target audience more deeply, or attracts a cross-section of audiences;
- Modifying a program by adding an orientation session to help new audiences better understand the upcoming presentation, or expanding the program with supplemental

activities such as independent discussion groups that provide deeper or more sustained engagement for those audiences that desire it;

- Changing the timing or location of an event to increase accessibility for target audiences that have previously been excluded due to these factors;
- Marketing a program or service more directly to potential audiences that fit the target audience profile and providing incentives to attend programs, such as discount admissions;
- Collaborating with a partner institution to present programs or services to audiences that may have previously been difficult to access;
- Choosing to work with artists who are particularly interested in audience development techniques.

Exhibit 5.1
Designing Audience Development Strategies

(This is a filled-in sample of Worksheet 5.2, showing some planned supporting strategies for reaching a goal.)

Goal: Reach the families of kids in our educational program and bring them into the theater for mainstage programs

Supporting strategies:

- Develop one mainstage performance each season that has family appeal. Market it to the educational program students.
- Have artists from the program present a lecture/demonstration in the schools.
- Offer discount tickets to educational program participants.
- Offer subscription ticket packages with the family programs at the center and other possible programs of interest to families.

The case study below describes how an arts presenter effectively employed some of these audience development strategies.

Starting Where You Are:

University Musical Society

In the early 1990s, the University Musical Society (UMS), which is based at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, reconsidered its mission and began striving to develop new diverse audiences and deepen the commitment of the existing audience. UMS changed its mission from "presenting the performance arts" to "nourishing, challenging, and changing people's lives." Between 1990 and 2000, the number of paid attendance at concerts increased from 71,600 to 121,000 and attendance at educational events rose from 4,000 to 60,000.

Ken Fischer, the executive director of UMS, believes that a key to increasing and diversifying audiences is to "start where you are." UMS began by assessing who currently attended its performances and then set specific objectives for reaching new constituents. UMS staff gradually built relationships with a broad range of organizations in the community, including the United Negro College Fund, health care institutions, and faith-based groups. Meanwhile, over the years, UMS hired full-time staff and volunteers who were dedicated to audience development and educational efforts.

Fischer points out that audience development efforts result in a long-term, rather than an immediate, return. While box office sales steadily increased, UMS's audience development efforts also eventually led to higher quality programs and a deeper connection to the community. Diversifying audiences ultimately resulted in greater financial stability for UMS.
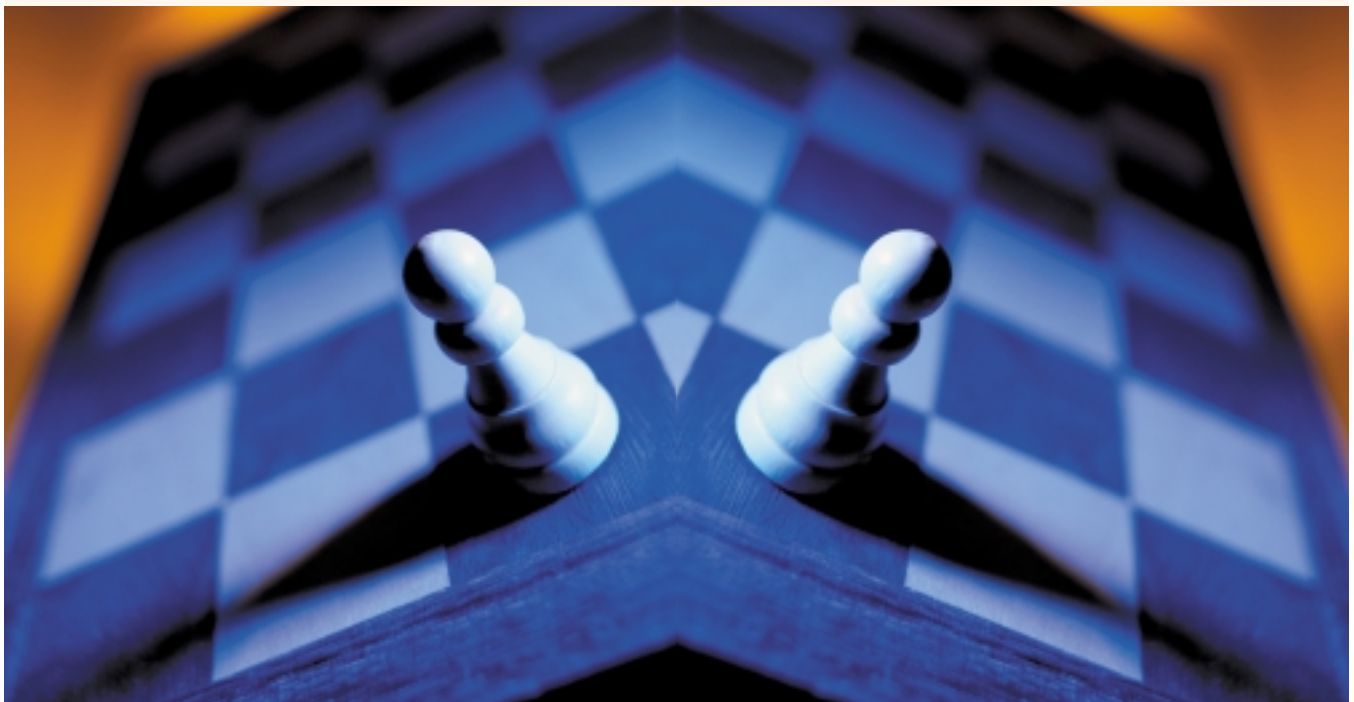
Once you have articulated a series of strategies that support your audience development goals, it is important to step back and look at the big picture. The strategies should work both individually and together as a whole to support a continuum of engagement among target audiences, the organization, and its partners. By looking at the big picture, you can identify ways that complementary strategies can be linked to increase effectiveness and reduce costs and effort.

Reviewing the strategies developed in the previous exercise, you may want to consider the following discussion questions (found in Worksheet 5.3, appendix A) and case studies that illustrate the various ways that strategies as a whole can enhance audience development goals.

- Do proposed programs and services as a whole provide access and appropriate content for all target audiences identified?
- Do the strategies support and complement each other? If not, can potentially complementary strategies be revised to reinforce each other?

> Programs and services should offer a continuum of access, thereby encouraging target audiences to participate at the level they are most comfortable with and advance as they choose.

- Do programs provide opportunities for advancement from one level of engagement to another?

The following case study shows how a literary organization created interlocking strategies to support an overall institutional goal of creating a more cohesive community.

Interlocking Audience Development Strategies:

Writers & Books

An essential thrust of Writers & Books's audience development strategies was to create a more unified literary community, with clearly laid-out paths into the community and back to the organization. In this way the literary presenter could help the accidental or casual literary participant become a serious reader or writer. To achieve this goal Writers & Books created an exciting and accessible center for a community built around literature and offered programs to attract wider and more diverse audiences. It also staged more culminating events for outreach programs at its building to introduce participants to its facilities and its other program offerings. Furthermore, Writers & Books created a major new program initiative, The Festival of Reading, an annual activity that showcases its programs, services, and community partners.

Although some programs will appeal only to a limited audience at a specific level of engagement or with particular interests, programs and services as a whole should offer something for every target audience identified. Similarly, not all programs will be easily accessible to every audience segment, but, as a whole, the programs and services should offer a continuum of access, thereby encouraging target audiences to enter at the level they are most comfortable with and advance as they choose.

This can be achieved by offering programs with stratified content that appeal to individuals at different levels of engagement, offering those at lower levels the opportunity to become more deeply involved while encouraging those at higher levels with richer experiences.

Another way to expand audience participation in a continuum of arts engagement is to provide tools and educational resources to third-party providers who serve as the liaisons between the primary organization and large target audiences. In this way, organizations can create a diaspora effect that helps to ensure that target audiences have prolonged, consistent access to arts, as opposed to limited, occasional exposure.

Two case studies follow that demonstrate this strategy.

Training Teachers to Teach Creative Writing:

The Writer's Voice

The Writer's Voice, a literary organization located in Billings, Montana, administered the Poets on the Prairie program. Originally, the organization was able to conduct 90 visits by poets and writers to 58 rural schools through this program. While school children clearly benefit from these one-time visits, the planners at The Writer's Voice recognized that a more thorough integration of creative writing into the curriculum was desirable. Although the organization could not itself take on the full responsibilities of such a consistent integration, planners developed a program to provide training to teachers regarding the use of creative writing in the classroom. By arranging to reward participating school teachers with college credits, The Writer's Voice was able to provide an additional incentive to encourage teachers to attend these workshops and take creative writing back to the classroom as an integral part of education.

Guiding Librarians to Continue Live Reading Programs:

American Library Association

The program planners at the American Library Association recognized that the organization could not take full responsibility to launch and maintain live reading programs at twenty or more libraries in the Midwest region over a sustained period of time. So in designing the Writers Live project, planners built in training for host librarians so that once the initial pilot phase of the project was over, these librarians could continue to organize live readings at their libraries and secure local funding to help underwrite ongoing cultural programming of this nature.

Membership strategies like heavily promoting attendance of events and providing discount attendance rates for members can be used to provide incentives that encourage occasional participants to become more deeply involved with the organization. Conversely, audiences who attend more than two programs might become eligible for a discount membership, thereby using programs to promote membership growth. A marketing strategy that offers audiences for one type of event free or discounted admission to a different type of program might encourage audiences to sample a wider range of programs.

Although each strategy should be linked to measurable results, the strategies taken as a whole should also provide opportunities to gauge the success of the overall audience development initiative. Organizations should not only be able to count how many new members of the target audience were attracted to specific programs, but how many audience members attended more than one program or sampled programs at different levels of engagement. This can be done through consistent audience surveys or through a ticket purchase system that routinely records audience data. Focus groups or telephone interviews can be used to supplement this data with information about why audience members selected programs for attendance and what their level of satisfaction was. (See Chapter 9 for more suggestions.)

Step 4 Forge Partnerships for Audience Development

Partnering with compatible organizations can prove a highly effective audience development strategy. By forging strategic alliances, organizations can pool their physical and human resources to present joint programs that support ambitious audience development goals. The key to partnerships is identifying the point where the two (or more) organizations' goals overlap and determining how each organization's resources complement the other's.

Resources can include:

- personnel
- systems and equipment (such as box office systems, communications technology, graphic design software)
- facilities (auditorium, seminar room, film screening room)
- funding
- expertise and contacts (marketing, planning, fund-raising)

- access to audiences
- programs and services

Appropriate partners may include:

- Peer organizations that have access to a different market or that may wish to merge competitive programs to save money and increase audiences;
- Other nonprofit arts organizations from different disciplines that may be interested in interdisciplinary programming as an audience development tool;
- Educational organizations;
- Public institutions, such as cultural affairs departments, libraries, or parks and recreation divisions;
- Commercial organizations, such as cafes;
- Trade associations that provide service to different sectors of the cultural community or economy, such as actors' associations, teacher support networks, and others.

Building Community Collaborations:

Danspace Project

Danspace Project, which was founded in New York City in 1974 to provide a venue for independent experimental choreography, aimed to introduce itself to a wider circle of potential audiences during The Living Room Project. The project involved bringing performances into such accessible environments as homes, community gardens, and places of business in its New York City East Village neighborhood. As Danspace Executive Director Laurie Uprichard says, "We realized that some of the neighbors were not coming to us, so we needed to go to them."

Danspace teamed up with neighborhood merchants, community cultural organizations, and other local groups to plan a residency by choreographer Yoshiko Chuma and her company "School of Hard Knocks." The organization created a Community Advisory Board that represented the diversity of the neighborhood and included many of the partners. They introduced their members and constituents to the project through performances at membership meetings, identified hosts for events, and provided space for receptions and special events. The community partners established a critical link to the community and helped Danspace design effective outreach strategies and become more responsive to community needs.

Partnerships can be simple mutually beneficial relationships that are limited to the achievement of a specific strategy, but they can also grow into larger, more complex relationships like those described in the following case study.

Creating Strong Partnerships for National Poetry Month:

The Academy of American Poets

A major publisher of poetry approached the Academy of American Poets about promoting a national poetry month a few years ago. The academy responded to the proposal by bringing together a planning group, including representatives from a range of potential partners offering wide-spread service to the field of literature. The academy eventually formed partnerships with the American Booksellers Association, Borders Books, the American Library Association, the Urban Libraries Council, the National Council of Teachers of English, *the Teachers and Writers Collaborative, Publishers Weekly, The New York Times,* and several other nonprofit literary organizations.

Out of this pool of cosponsors, several key partnerships evolved through which the academy nationally distributes posters and tip-sheets for booksellers (how to sell poetry books), librarians (how to present poetry in a library setting), and teachers (how to introduce poetry into the classroom) that catalyze hundreds of poetry events in the month of April. Through other partnerships, the academy hosts several high-visibility poetry events in cities across the nation to provide a national context within which the regional events take place. The academy can measure one of the most quantifiable impacts of National Poetry Month: increases in sales of poetry books. In the project's first year, this consortium of organizations led by the academy stimulated a 30 percent increase in poetry sales during National Poetry Month. The second annual National Poetry Month resulted in an additional 25 percent jump in sales, thereby fulfilling the academy's goal of putting more books of poetry into the hands of readers.

In order to identify potential partners for your audience development strategies, refer to the organizations you identified in Worksheet 4.3. Consider the national field as well to determine whether there are any larger organizations that have access to resources that can support audience development goals. Once potential partners have been identified, it will be helpful to ask the following questions about elements of successful strategic partnerships (Exhibit 5.2).

Forging partnerships requires thoughtful preparation. You should be prepared to meet several times with representatives of the strategic partners and ask them to consider these questions as well. Representatives of both partners should articulate their goals for the joint project and agree upon the criteria for success before starting work. In order to formalize partnerships, take time to prepare a written contract or letter of agreement specifying mutual responsibilities before committing to the project. These precautions will help ensure that the partnership is effective and prevent many common misunderstandings from occurring down the line.

Exhibit 5.2
Elements of Successful Strategic Partnerships: Questions to Ask About Potential Institutional Partners

Targeting audience: Does the potential partner's constituency/audience match one that you wish to reach with programs and services?

Shared vision: Is there a solid overlap between the potential partner's vision, mission, or central goals and your own?

Shared costs/effort: Is the potential partner prepared to "buy into" the project by sharing cost, labor, or pro bono goods or services?

Enthusiasm: Will the project be a two-way street? Is the partner as enthusiastic about the project as you are?

Strategic/tactical fit: Does the potential partner's constituency, resources, or programs and services complement your own and compensate for your own "weak" areas (and vice versa)?

Compatibility: Are your organization's values and the potential partner's compatible?

Geographic location: Does the potential partner offer service to a regional or national audience you seek to serve?

Commitment: Is the potential partner as committed to measurable results in this collaboration as you are? Will it share in evaluation procedures?

Creativity: Have you considered the field of potential partners creatively? Partners need not be "like" institutions; expand your vision to find interesting partners that can bring new skills, services, or outreach potential into the mix.

Forging Partnerships:

Hancher Auditorium

Hancher Auditorium in Iowa City joined forces with the Colorado String Quartet and local public libraries and churches to develop audiences for chamber music. Hancher wanted to break down the elitist view that chamber music is peripheral to the concerns of most people. In particular, the organization aimed to deepen audiences' understanding of the role of chamber music in Western culture and familiarize them with the inner dynamics of a chamber music ensemble.

Hancher Auditorium's close partnerships with three churches and three public libraries helped make the project a success. Over seven weeks, the Colorado String Quartet performed and participated in discussions with audience members at the churches and libraries. The intimacy and familiarity of the settings enabled the musicians and audience members to connect in ways that were not possible in a large concert hall. Many residency participants purchased tickets to the concert, a large proportion of whom had never before attended a chamber music concert.

The partners' clear communications with each other about mutual objectives and responsibilities contributed to the collaboration's effectiveness. Hancher was responsible for conceptualizing and coordinating the project, working with the facilitators, communicating with the musicians, and producing all the printed materials used to promote the project. The churches and libraries handled the logistics within their own facilities and publicity for their constituents. As a result of these successful partnerships, Hancher has continued collaborating with several of the churches and libraries.

Selecting the Right Artists:

Dancing in the Streets

Dancing in the Streets believes that carefully selecting artists and developing collaborative relationships with them has helped make its site-specific work in the Red Hook, Brooklyn, neighborhood successful. "We don't choose to collaborate with artists who see our project as just another gig," says Executive Director Aviva Davidson. "The work is best with artists who listen well, are respectful of the community, and think they can learn from the audience," she notes.

For six years, the organization has maintained a constant presence in the neighborhood and consistently employed the same artists in all aspects of the program. By creating pieces inspired by the particular location, the artists work closely with the community to delve into and explore its stories and history.

chapter 6

Integrating Marketing and Audience Development

The work of planning for audience development is not complete without an in-depth exploration of marketing. Frequently, arts organizations spend nearly all their time, effort, and money on developing and presenting programs, with little or no resources devoted to promoting the awareness and attendance of these by target audiences. Although developing carefully considered program strategies is critical to success, equally well considered marketing plans are essential to achieving audience development goals. As Wallace Chappell, the executive director of The University of Iowa's Hancher Auditorium, notes, "audience development and marketing go hand in hand; every ad has an educational purpose and helps raise consciousness."

It may be helpful to begin with some definitions. Often the terms "marketing" and "public relations" are lumped together for convenience. *Marketing* is a process that helps people exchange something of value for something people need.[8] It involves determining the needs of customers and constituents and designing strategies to meet those needs. Elements of the marketing mix include the product or service, distribution, pricing, and promotion. Promotional activities directly relate to pubic relations. Marketing activities are linked to increasing the consumption of your organization's products and services, such as attendance at events, sales of tickets, new membership sign-ups, and product purchases. They may include research (such as learning about the habits of potential audience segments, like what newspapers they read or book stores they frequent, or how they like to spend their leisure hours), advertising (including direct mail, print and other media advertisements, or strategic placement

of promotional materials), or print and electronic information services (such as promotional information on voice mail systems, newsletters, or calendars).

Public relations refers to the set of activities that shapes the visibility of an organization and its perception among the public. The public can be envisioned as a set of cocentric circles with the innermost circle representing those closest to the organization, the middle circles representing audiences and institutions at different levels of involvement with the organization, and the outer circles representing unengaged audiences, the general public, potential funders, the larger arts field, and so

> Marketing leads to changed behavior, and public relations results in changed attitudes.

on. Public relations activities can range from research (such as focus groups and perception surveys) to community relations (including informative reception and voice mail systems, distribution of identity brochures, advocacy and participation in community groups) to media relations (such as sending out press releases and media alerts and inviting press to events).

Marketing leads to changed behavior, and public relations results in changed attitudes. Public relations differs from marketing in that the end result of good public relations is not measured directly through increases of attendance or sales, but through improved visibility, awareness, and public perception of the organization and its offerings. Consider the marketing and public relations functions simultaneously to develop strategies that not only complement each other, but also support overall audience development goals.

Step 1   Position the Organization

In order to develop marketing and public relations goals and strategies, it will be helpful to revisit some of the exercises completed in previous chapters. Reviewing Worksheet 3.5 will help you formulate goals and strategies that address the organization's overall identity and perception. The purpose of Worksheet 3.6 was to determine whether or not your organization suffers from an "image problem." Common image problems include:

- public misperception ("only for people who know a lot about theater already" or "only for jazz enthusiasts");
- indistinct identity ("that organization that has something to do with dance" or "I always get you mixed up with that other organization");
- lack of recognition (the program director for Writers & Books complained that too many people said "Riders & Who?" when he mentioned the name of the organization).

If these or other perception problems apply, you may need to articulate goals and strategies that address issues of overall organizational identity and visibility. One common strategy for overcoming an image problem is to adopt a positioning statement that is widely disseminated through all marketing and public relations efforts. A positioning statement expresses in simple, concise terms what an organization does and how it is unique from others.

Upon launching its newly reconfigured programs and services, the Poetry Society of America developed the following positioning statement with the assistance of a marketing professional: "Placing poetry at the crossroads of America." In seven simple words, this phrase states what the organization does, counteracting any former misperception that the organization provided services only to poets or to audiences in New York City, where its headquarters is located.

The process of articulating a "positioning statement" can help clarify the image that you have for the organization and wish to promote publicly. If your organization does not have a positioning statement, or cannot readily create one, you may wish to add this as a strategy supporting marketing and public relations goals.

Step 2   Set Marketing Goals

The first step in setting marketing goals is determining whom you want to reach. Identify market segments according to geographic, demographic, psychographic, or other characteristics and then select target markets. Return to the two-column list of target audiences and desired impacts developed in Worksheet 4.5. As you articulate marketing and public relations goals and supporting strategies through the exercises in this chapter, you may wish to list them in draft form on Worksheet 6.1, appendix A.

By forming hypotheses that explain why your organization does not currently have a desired impact upon its targeted audience, you will be able to identify strategies that overcome current obstacles and challenges. For example, planners might look at why "one-time" audience members are not attending a greater number and variety of programs each year. Suggested hypotheses might include:

- they are not interested in other programs;
- other programs are at inaccessible locations or inconvenient times;
- they don't know about other programs;
- there are few incentives to attend other programs;
- there is a lot of competition from other organizations for attendance at other programs.

The first two of these reasons can be addressed by programmatic strategies regarding form and content, and the other three can be corrected through public relations and marketing strategies. These might include:

- promoting greater visibility of programs through local media, including features and advertisements in the local newspapers and radio stations;
- distributing fliers at places that potential audiences frequent, including libraries, and community centers;
- announcing upcoming programs at all events and selling discount advance tickets;

- distributing fliers promoting upcoming events or seasonal calendars of events at all programs;
- offering a "teaser" for upcoming events at programs to peak interest;
- offering "two-for-one" admissions, with the ticket stub from one event providing free or discount admission to next event;
- cosponsoring events with competing organizations or making events distinct from competing programs and marketing them more aggressively.

Once you have completed articulating marketing and public relations goals and strategies that correspond to overall institutional visibility and specific target audience goals, you may discover that these overlap significantly. In this case, it will be helpful to merge them into more inclusive goals. Though a goal such as "conduct more marketing" is too vague to produce measurable results, it might be possible to merge several goals into a statement such as "Improve marketing of programs to target audiences to achieve stated attendance goals."

Market research involves understanding your constituents' preferences and perceptions and assessing the threats and opportunities present in the environment in which you operate.

Arts organizations can use a number of valuable research techniques to assist in developing and subsequently evaluating marketing and programmatic strategies. Some of these have already been explored in previous chapters, including written and telephone surveys. In this section, in addition to looking more closely at the uses of surveys, other forms of research such as focus groups and discussion groups will be introduced, along with case studies that demonstrate their uses.

Market research involves understanding your constituents' preferences and perceptions and assessing the threats and opportunities present in the environment in which you operate. It can help your organization make better decisions about the performances and programs you plan, the venues you select, the ads you purchase, and the prices you charge. Before collecting and analyzing new data, seek out market information that may already be available, from a local or state arts council, or other research group.

Written surveys provide one of the easiest ways to learn more about current and potential audiences or program partners. One of the advantages of surveys is that they are fairly easy to distribute and collect. Another advantage is that a larger number of participants can be studied over a longer period of time at less cost than by other means of research available. Surveys can be used to gather fairly reliable baseline data. Similar or slightly modified surveys can then be employed periodically over several months to a year to test for changes in perception or behavior that can be used to evaluate and inform implementation.

Written surveys can be distributed at live programs or any appropriate site where potential audiences gather. They are most appropriate for gathering quantitative data, measurable information that can be easily tabulated to provide numerical or percentile data (e.g., 27 percent of current audiences prefer jazz, and only 17 percent favor classi-

cal music). They can also be used on the Internet through electronic forms, making it possible to gather data from widespread users. Several samples of surveys targeting audiences, partners, and providers are included at the back of this chapter (Exhibits 6.2-6.5).

Live surveys or interviews are another useful tool. They can be conducted person to person at programs or sites, such as theater lobbies and libraries where potential audiences might gather, or over the telephone. Live surveys offer opportunities to gather qualitative data. Qualitative data are less easily measurable, more subjective information, such as opinions, perceptions, and more wide-ranging characteristics and preferences. This kind of information is usually given in response to open-ended questions like "What kind of services do you think our organization should provide to children?"

It is best to design surveys with the help of a marketing or research professional who is well-versed in the art of stating questions clearly and organizing the responses to yield easily tabulated, meaningful data.

Uses of surveys include:

- determining characteristics, habits, or interests of current and target audiences (for instance, if a survey indicates that a large percentage of target audiences listen to a certain radio station, the organization might decide to regularly promote programs on that station);
- identifying needs and quantifying experiences of program partners (for example, a survey of librarians revealing that the availability of high-quality printed promotional materials would significantly improve their ability to market live programs and provide valuable information regarding marketing strategies for a collaborative program);
- discovering opinions and preferences regarding programs (for instance, the

majority of current audiences would prefer to attend evening theater programs on weekends rather than weekdays);

- testing hypotheses and evaluating the success of strategies (such as finding out whether the addition of after-school drama programs for schoolchildren attract a greater number of family memberships).

Focus groups provide another way of gathering qualitative data from current and potential audiences. Typically designed and led by a professional facilitator, focus groups bring together small groups of people, usually ten or less, to discuss specific aspects of an organization or program, such as image and reputation, promotional materials, or program format and content. Focus groups can help uncover more subjective shades of perception and a fuller range of opinions than surveys. Usually, focus groups are used to test just a few hypotheses, such as "Suburban families would be interested in our organization if they only knew about it," or "Writers or artists no longer feel adequately served by our changing organization." Focus groups are frequently conducted in pairs that use the same set of questions with distinct categories of participants, such as males and females, current audiences and lapsed audiences, or urban and suburban audiences.

Organizations may wish to hire a marketing professional to design and conduct focus groups that comply with rigorous methodology. Such methodology includes:

- thorough screening of participants;
- an environment that supports objectivity;

The following case study demonstrates how surveys can be integrated into the planning and evaluation process for audience development initiatives and how *pro bono* assistance can be tapped.

Using Surveys to Plan and Evaluate an Audience Development Effort:

University Musical Society

The University Musical Society (UMS), located at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, strives to engage, educate, and serve Michigan audiences by presenting an ongoing series of world-class artists who represent the diverse spectrum of the performing arts world. The Martha Graham Dance Company was involved in a three-week residency at UMS that explored Graham's life, her seminal work, and her impact on the arts. The goals of this project were: (1) to develop new audiences for modern dance through a cross-pollination process intended to bring audiences to dance performances from other art forms, such as music and visual arts; and (2) to deepen the existing dance audience's understanding of and commitment to the art form. Working in partnership with both university and community organizations, UMS fostered participation by both new and existing audiences for dance through panel discussions, workshops, open rehearsals, demonstrations, recitals, and performances.

UMS used audience surveys to help plan and evaluate many aspects of the project. A social scientist at the University of Michigan Center for the Education of Women developed a questionnaire that UMS distributed to audiences during the residency at performances and exhibitions. A student tabulated the survey results. The survey findings informed UMS's marketing decisions, especially regarding targeting audiences from other art forms. The questionnaire also served as the basis for survey instruments that have been used in other UMS audience development efforts.

- expertly prepared questions that yield useful, reliable data;
- a trained focus group facilitator to pose questions and help direct discussions;
- opportunities for observation, such as one-way mirrors or recording devices;
- objective expert analysis of responses;
- payment of stipends to participants.

Although professionally directed focus groups such as these are expensive, they typically yield more reliable, objective data than more informal focus groups that are led by associates of the organization. However, such informal focus groups can be just as effective, especially if designed with the help of an experienced marketing professional.

Discussion groups and town meetings provide another way of gathering qualitative data about specific subjects. Such meetings can include participants numbering from less than ten to thirty or more. Smaller groups provide a better opportunity to "take the pulse" of all present; larger groups allow a better chance to measure general consensus or range of concerns for a greater population of people. Organizations may wish to invite a marketing or research professional to design and facilitate these meetings.

Discussion groups can be used to bring together groups of people such as current audience members or representatives of specific constituencies, such as teachers, local business owners, or community leaders. They provide an excellent opportunity to determine where a consensus exists among a larger group of individuals, learn a range of responses to specific issues, or gain insights into a spectrum of needs or interests. For example, a discussion group could be used to develop a wish list for performing arts programs in a certain area. Then the list could be

Using Focus Groups to Understand Different Audience Segments:

just buffalo

During an audience development planning project, just buffalo literary center, based in Buffalo, New York, hired a marketing firm to conduct four focus groups, targeting Supporters (current users who were also contributors to the organization), Participants (current users who did not make financial contributions to the organization), Mixed Readers, and Young Suburban Families.

The report from these focus groups indicated that: "The Supporters tend to be interested in writing and the creation of prose and/or poetry. The Participants are far less interested in the creation of works and are much more interested in reading and appreciation. The Mixed Readers and Suburbanites who have children are extremely interested in reading programs that involve their children as well as programs done jointly or simultaneously. Such programs would fit time constraints and also fulfill parental notions of helping the children to progress. There is potential to broaden the horizons of just buffalo with greater appeal to the reading rather than writing public. This broadening would necessitate reaching out to the suburbs and widening the appeal of programming to include more children's programming, more popular orientation of the works studied."

The focus groups also revealed that Young Suburban Families were not aware of the just buffalo programs that already existed for children. The findings shaped a selection of audience development initiatives that called for both reconfigured programs and improved marketing of existing programs.

prioritized, building a consensus regarding which of these programs would be of greatest value or most effectively provided by the organization.

There is a growing body of literature on the subject of marketing for the arts (see appendix B for a partial list), as well as a large field of professionals who can provide guidance. Many organizations are fortunate to include marketing professionals among their board members who can provide guidance and *pro bono* services. It may also be helpful to meet with representatives from peer organizations who have successfully integrated market research techniques into planning and evaluating programming and marketing strategies.

Information Systems allow organizations that are committed to learning more about their audiences and communicating with them more directly to store, tabulate, and access data about audiences. Most organizations have information systems for fund-raising and membership purposes that encompass database programs with records for past, present, and future donors or members and fields that provide a range of information about these individuals or institutions. Such data can prove invaluable to improved audience development, whether better serving existing audiences and preventing attrition, or successfully attracting new audiences, encouraging repeat visitation, or winning back lapsed audiences.

The creation of audience-related information systems requires new initiatives and systems to gather information about audiences.

This is most effectively done at "point of purchase," at the time and place where the audience member buys a ticket or attains admission to a program. Even free programs can require audience members to provide basic data before admission. The data gained from such systems can be tailored to an institution's needs, whether it is simply name, address, and telephone number, or more comprehensive information. For example, some organizations may want to tag on additional questions such as "How did you hear about tonight's program?" or "Did you know that we also offer dance workshops?" as a way to gather additional information that can assist with marketing efforts.

Once organizations have gathered such data and stored it in database programs, they can successfully track attendance and cross-promote programs, encouraging people who attend opera programs to sample classical music performances, for example; or reinforcing visitation patterns by actively promoting poetry programs to past poetry audiences; or sending out special audience development pieces, such as a mailing offering free admission to those who bring a guest to the next program.

Database programs that gather information about ticket buying or subscriber habits further enhance an organization's efforts when also linked to fund-raising software. Integration of box office and fund-raising software provides organizations with the optimal level of information about an individual's involvement with your organization.

Step 4   Create a Marketing Plan

Most organizations convene key board and staff annually to plan the coming year's programs and services. They review the success of the past season's programs and look ahead to see what is on the horizon, both internally and externally (e.g., major events that should be recognized with programs in the coming

year), before developing a programming plan. This plan serves as the basis for program-related budgeting, fund-raising, and implementation for the next twelve to eighteen months. Unfortunately, organizations are rarely as thorough in planning their marketing efforts.

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Although a significant portion of an organization's marketing planning can be interwoven into program planning, other aspects of marketing and public relations may be completely overlooked if not systematically planned. For example, long-term initiatives, such as creating a database to log and track information about audiences or launching an identity campaign designed to promote familiarity with the organization among older members of the community, will fall between the cracks if not planned and scheduled.

The chief reason many arts organizations fall short in this area is lack of personnel and expertise. When funding is scarce for basic staffing, equipment, and program expenses, it is hard to put aside the time and money needed to conduct consistent marketing and public relations functions. However, any organization that has succeeded in doing so can attest to the fact that effective marketing and publicity can significantly increase revenues, both earned and contributed, in a relatively short period of time.

Improved marketing can help increase the effectiveness of membership programs and annual fund-raising drives targeting individuals. Foundations and corporations will be much more likely to fund organizations that they have heard about and that are visible and vibrant within the communities they serve. Improved attendance, along with increases in admissions revenues, are another direct result of improved marketing.

A marketing plan includes the following elements:

- *Product(s) or service(s):* what your organization offers—performances, workshops, lectures, or programs—and how it is packaged. The product or service should be designed to meet constituent needs.
- *Distribution*: the location and venue of your products or services. This includes facility capacity and ticket distribution strategies.
- *Pricing:* what you charge. When setting prices for a product or service, consider the fixed and variable costs involved, the audience's ability to pay, and the price range of similar products and services. The price should correspond with the value of the service you provide. Pricing may be differentiated so that various customer segments pay different prices based on such factors as the seat location or time of purchase.
- *Promotion:* how you convey your image and motivate people to respond. This involves designing a message and communicating it to target audiences. Communication channels include newsletters, press releases, advertising, signage, lobby displays, videos, brochures, and Web sites. Public relations strategies are a part of promotional plans.

Marketing plans will produce results only if they are well implemented. In the plan, clearly delineate who is responsible for each strategy and tactic, when they will happen, and the resources needed for each item. (Worksheet 6.2 provides a sample format for a marketing plan; see Exhibit 6.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.) Begin by developing a marketing plan each year, with tasks scheduled and evaluation periods built in to ensure that both short- and long-range marketing goals are achieved in a timely manner. By clearly articulating marketing strategies in the exercises suggested at the beginning of this chapter, and enumerating and scheduling appropriate tasks in the following chapter, you should succeed in creating the basic framework of a marketing plan.

This framework can be reviewed, revised, and expanded upon during annual (or more frequent) marketing planning sessions. The annual planning of marketing efforts should include both creative brainstorming sessions about new ways to get the word out and get people through the doors, as well as systematic scheduling of basic marketing and public relations mechanisms. Supervision and support provided by a committee of both board and staff members can help to concentrate the expertise and abilities that are needed to create and fulfill the plan.

Exhibit 6.1
Creating a Marketing Plan

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(This is a filled-in sample of Worksheet 6.2.)

Main Marketing Goals:

Goal 1: Reach families with kids in the education program.
Goal 2: Involve jazz festival audience in programs year-round.

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	START DATE	END DATE	RESOURCES NEEDED
Product(s) and Service(s)				
Develop one Mainstage performance each season that has family appeal.	Artistic Director	Spring 2000	Fall 2000	$15,000
Hold lectures and demonstrations by artists in schools.	Education Director	Spring 2000	Fall 2000	$8,000
Book one Mainstage jazz performance each season.	Artistic Director	Spring 2000	Fall 2000	$10,000
Conduct non-jazz mini-performances at the festival.	Artistic Director	Winter 2000	Summer 2000	$5,000
Distribution				
Create a partnership with local Y to present performances for families on its stage.	Outreach Coordinator	Winter 2000	Winter 2001	$4,000
Sell discounted tickets to other performances at jazz festival.	Marketing Director	Spring 2000	Summer 2000	$800
Pricing				
Create special family discount subscription rate.	Marketing Director	Spring 2000	Spring 2001	$900
Offer coupons for other performances to those attending jazz festival.	Marketing Director	Spring 2000	Summer 2000	$500
Promotion				
Create photo exhibit in lobby of jazz festival highlighting other offerings.	Marketing Director	Winter 2000	Summer 2001	$3,500
Design brochures geared toward families and distribute them via direct mail to Y family members.	Marketing Director	Spring 2000	Fall 2001	$4,000

Promotion through Community Relations:

ASU Public Events

Arizona State University Public Events has relied mostly on community outreach and media publicity, rather than advertising, to promote its performances and public events. For an audience development project involving fourteen Asian-American communities, the organization developed a promotion plan and was able to get small articles about the project placed in local Korean-American church bulletins. In addition, an editor of *The Asian Sun Times* served on a community advisory group for the project and helped generate newspaper coverage. This media exposure had a significant impact on attracting people to the performances.

The following audience surveys (Exhibits 6.2–6.5) used by the Flynn Theater, Lafayette College's Williams Center, the Florida Center for the Book, and the Academy of American Poets show different formats for gathering information from audience members.

Exhibit 6.2

YOU CAN HELP US DO OUR JOB BETTER!

AUDIENCE SURVEY FOR NATIONAL SONG AND DANCE OF MOZAMBIQUE, APRIL 14, 2000

We want to know more about our audiences so that we are better able to serve you, and we thank you for your assistance in this survey. This survey is also part of a long-term study of performing arts audiences at sites receiving funding from the Lila Wallace–Reader's Digest "Audiences for the Performing Arts Network" and the Flynn is one of ten such networks across the nation. The information you provide will be kept confidential and anonymous. You may provide your name if you wish but it is voluntary. Thanks to *Lake Champlain Chocolates,* you will receive a chocolate if you return your survey at the end of the performance!
Thank you for your cooperation.

What performers or shows would you like to see at the Flynn?

What categories of performances would you attend if more were offered?

❑ Jazz ❑ Theatre ❑ torytelling ❑ Pop/Rock ❑ Classical
❑ Blues ❑ Country ❑ amily Programs ❑ Broadway Musicals ❑ Ballet
❑ Bluegrass ❑ Opera ❑ Tap/Percussive Dance ❑ Performance Art
❑ Film and Video ❑ Other _____

1. How satisfied were you with the performance you have just seen and/or heard?

   ❑ Extremely satisfied ❑ Very satisfied ❑ Somewhat ❑ Not very satisfied ❑ Not at all

2. How did you hear about this performance?

   ❑ Newspaper / Which one _____ ❑ Flynn Web Site
   ❑ TV / Which one _____ ❑ Flynn Season Brochure
   ❑ Radio / Which one _____ ❑ Word-of-mouth
   ❑ Flynn Letter/Mailer ❑ Through attendance at lecture, workshop or seminar
   ❑ Flynn Marquee bi-monthly calendar ❑ Other (specify)_____

3. Have you ever attended another performance sponsored by the Flynn Theatre?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Don't know

   IF YES, how often have you attended performances sponsored by the Flynn Theatre in the past year?

   ❑ One time ❑ 2 to 5 times ❑ 6 times or more

4. How likely are you to attend a performance(s) in the future as a result of your experience with today's performance?

   ❑ Extremely likely ❑ Very likely ❑ Somewhat ❑ Not very likely ❑ Not at all

5. About how often each year do you attend performances of this same art form presented today?

   ❑ One time ❑ 2-5 times ❑ 6-9 times ❑ 10-12 times ❑ 13 or more times

6. A. Are you a Flynn member?   ❑ Yes   ❑ No
   B. Are you a Flynn "Subscriber"? ❑ Yes   ❑ No

7. Did you attend and/or participate in a lecture, seminar or workshop related to today's performance?

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

8. In the past, have you attended and/or participated in a lecture, seminar or workshop related to other performances sponsored by this organization?

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ Don't know

   IF YES, have you attended a lecture, seminar or workshop sponsored by the Flynn on DANCE?

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No   ❑ Don't know

9. Would you be interested in attending a workshop, seminar, or discussion on DANCE sponsored by the Flynn?

   ❑ Yes   ❑ No

10. About how often do you attend arts and cultural performances or events each year?

    ❑ One time ❑ 2-5 times ❑ 6-9 times ❑ 10-12 times ❑ 13 or more times

11. Are you?   ❑ Female ❑ Male

12. How old are you?   _____ Years

13. What is your race/ethnicity?

    ❑ African Descent/Black   ❑ Caucasian (and not of Hispanic origin)
    ❑ American Indian/Native American ❑ Hispanic
    ❑ Asian/Pacific Islander Descent   ❑ Other _____

14. What is your highest level of education?

    ❑ Less than High School   ❑ Some College
    ❑ High School Graduate (or GED)   ❑ College Graduate (Bachelor's Degree)
    ❑ Vocational School after High School ❑ Post Graduate

15. What is your occupation?

- ❑ Professional and technical
- ❑ Manager and administrator
- ❑ Sales
- ❑ Clerical or office worker
- ❑ Blue collar
- ❑ Service
- ❑ Other (please specify)_____

16. What is your approximate annual household income?

- ❑ Less than $15,000
- ❑ Between $15,000 and $24,999
- ❑ Between $25,000 and $34,999
- ❑ Between $35,000 and $49,999
- ❑ Between $50,000 and $74,999
- ❑ Between $75,000 and $99,999
- ❑ $100,000 or more

17. What is your Zip Code? _____

18. Who did you come with today? (Check all that apply)

- ❑ By myself
- ❑ With family
- ❑ Other (please specify)_____
- ❑ With friends
- ❑ With a group

Please give us your comments on the performance!

19. How many people live in your household?

_____ Total people   _____ Children under age 18   _____ Adults age 65+

20. Do you have an interest or hobby related to the performing arts?

❑ Yes   ❑ No

IF YES, what is it? _____

Thank you for your help! Your answers will enable us to present the kinds of performers/performances you enjoy.

You can also mail this survey back to us: Flynn Theatre, Att: Telos Whitfield; 153 Main St. Burlington, VT 05401

Date of survey *4/14/00* ID # _____   Name of Presenter *Flynn Theatre*

Title of Event NATIONAL SONG AND DANCE OF MOZAMBIQUE PERFORMANCE

Exhibit 6.3

Lafayette College's Williams Center
Eiko and Koma Video Questionnaire

1. Which of the following best describes your interests? (you may check more than one)

    ❏ Classical musical   ❏ Jazz/world music   ❏ Ballet   ❏ Theater   ❏ Modern dance

2. The Eiko and Koma video I saw this evening…(you may check more than one)

    ❏ Gave me a good introduction to their performance style.
    ❏ Made clear the connection between their performance goals and environmental awareness.
    ❏ Left me unclear about what their artistic style is really all about.
    ❏ Left me unclear about the scope of their work at Lafayette.

3. Based on what I saw in the video…

    ❏ I would like to attend at least one of their performances.
    ❏ Attending a workshop and then seeing a performance would be my preference.
    ❏ I'm anxious to see the entire trilogy.
    ❏ It may be interesting work, but it's just not my taste.

4. In particular, I would like to receive additional information about:

    ❏ *Land*
    ❏ *Wind*
    ❏ *River*
    ❏ Workshops that deal with connections between the arts and environmental issues.
    ❏ Workshops dealing with the visual arts and Eiko and Koma's set design for *River.*

5. As Lafayette arranges for other video evenings such as this, would you have an interest in assisting?

    ❏ yes   ❏ no

6. If so, in what ways are you willing to help out?

    ❏ Hosting a video evening in my home.
    ❏ Hosting a video presentation at my place of work or other location.
    ❏ Helping with arrangements for a video evening in someone else's home.
    ❏ Suggesting names of people who may be interested in learning about this project and the performance series.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

Exhibit 6.4

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FLORIDA CENTER FOR THE BOOK
AUDIENCE SURVEY

1. What type of books do you read? (check all that apply)

❏ novels   ❏ poetry   ❏ biography/autobiography   ❏ history
❏ spiritual/self-help   ❏ other _____

2. What type of book events do you attend? (check all that apply)

❏ author lectures   ❏ book discussion groups   ❏ readings   ❏ writing workshops/seminars
❏ book fairs and exhibits   ❏ other _____   ❏ none

3. Where do you prefer to attend book events? (check all that apply)

❏ library   ❏ bookstore   ❏ theater/performance space   ❏ college/university
❏ coffeehouse/bar   ❏ other _____

4. When do you prefer to attend book events? (select two best times)

Weekdays   ❏ Daytime   ❏ Evening
Weekends   ❏ Daytime   ❏ Evening

5. How often do you attend book events?

❏ Never   ❏ 1-2 a year   ❏ 3-5 a year   ❏ 6+ a year

6. How often do you read the book(s) featured at events you attend?

❏ Never   ❏ 1-2 a year   ❏ 3-5 a year   ❏ 6+ a year

7. Why do you come to book events? (check all that apply)

❏ name recognition of author or book   ❏ interest in books in general
❏ interest in a specific topic   ❏ meeting new people with similar interests
❏ free admission   ❏ other _____

8. How do you find out about book events that you attend? (check all that apply)

❏ newspaper advertisements and listings   ❏ radio/TV announcements
❏ library/bookstore newsletters & calendars   ❏ internet listings
❏ word-of-mouth   ❏ other _____

9. What is your main occupation? (check only one)

❏ professional   ❏ educator/academic   ❏ clerical worker   ❏ retired
❏ sales/service   ❏ student   ❏ homemaker   ❏ writer   ❏ other _____

10. What is your annual household Income?

    ❏ under $20,000   ❏ $41,000-$60,000
    ❏ $21,000-$40,000   ❏ $60,000+

11. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

    ❏ some high school   ❏ college grad.
    ❏ high school grad.   ❏ grad. degree
    ❏ vocational training   ❏ prof. degree
    ❏ some college (field)

12. Please indicate your gender, ethnicity, and age.

    ❏ female   ❏ male

    ❏ African American   ❏ Asian/Pacific   ❏ Hispanic/Latino(a)
    ❏ Native American   ❏ White, not Hispanic   ❏ other _____

    ❏ under 18   ❏ 18-24   ❏ 25-34   ❏ 35-44
    ❏ 45-54   ❏ 55-64   ❏ 65+

13. Please indicate your zip code.

    _____ primary residence zip code
    _____ secondary residence zip code (if it applies)

If you are a seasonal resident, please circle months you reside in Florida.

Jan   Feb   Mar   Apr   May   Jun   Jul   Aug   Sep   Oct   Nov   Dec

14. Are you willing to participate in a 10-minute phone survey about book events?

    ❏ yes   ❏ no

If so, provide phone number and check best time.

Phone _____

    ❏ Morning   ❏ Afternoon   ❏ Evening

15. If you would like to receive more information about area book events, please provide name and address.

Name _____

Address _____

Exhibit 6.5

NATIONAL POETRY MONTH 1998
Participant Questionnaire

The Academy of American Poets is delighted that you are joining us in the celebration of National Poetry Month. To ensure the continued success of this project, we need your help. Please take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire and return it to us by fax or mail. THANK YOU!

1. How did you hear about national Poetry Month? (Check all that apply.)

    ❑ Advertisement in   ❑ Article in   ❑ Through the World Wide Web
    ❑ Information from a publisher's sales representative
    ❑ Other

2. How did you celebrate National Poetry Month? (Check all that apply.)

    ❑ Displayed the National Poetry Month Poster
    ❑ Arranged a special display of poetry books
    ❑ Hosted one or more poetry readings
    ❑ Announced NPM in a newsletter or other publication
    ❑ Created special advertising for poetry books
    ❑ Managed a contest for the writing of poetry
    ❑ Ran another kind of poetry-related competition
    ❑ Other

3. Please describe briefly any special events or activities you produced for NPM.

4. How did you publicize your NPM events?

5. Bookstores: Did you have a measurable increase in poetry book sales this April, compared to prior months? If so, what was the percentage of increase?

6. Were there any lasting effects from last year's National Poetry Month?

7. Teachers: Please tell us how National Poetry Month helped you share poetry with your students.

8. Libraries: Did you see an increase in the borrowing of poetry books during April, and/or in requests for information about poets and poetry?

9. Where you able to raise any philanthropic support, or other income, to support your NPM activities?

10. Did you visit the Academy's National Poetry Month Web-Site? What did you think of it?

11. Did you participate in any of the professional discussion forums on the site?

12. What kind of services or support would be most helpful in making NPM a success for you in the future years?

13. Other comments:

Please fax this completed questionnaire to: (212) 274-9427

or mail to: The Academy of American Poets
                  584 Broadway, Suite 1208
                  Department NPMQ
                  New York, NY 10012

chapter 7

Building Organizational Capacity

At the beginning of this handbook, several exercises focused on determining whether your organization was ready to undertake *planning* for audience development. The questions in this chapter will focus attention upon evaluating how prepared your organization is to *implement* its plan and what effects implementation will have for your organization. Once programmatic, public relations, and marketing goals have been set and strategies designed, you need to identify the resources that will be required to support these strategies. Only after you enumerate these resources can you accurately project implementation schedules and budgets. This chapter provides several examples of typical organizational implications of audience development and planning exercises to help you identify new resource needs before launching new audience development initiatives.

The case below demonstrates the broad implications successful audience development strategies can have for organizations.

How Increased Cultural Participation Transformed an Organization:

The Center for Cultural Exchange

During the past decade, Portland Performing Arts' (PPA) audience development activities have dramatically changed all aspects of the organization. Founded in 1983 in Portland, Maine as a modest summer music series, this organization augmented its activities to include a year-round performing arts series, multiethnic community initiatives, and numerous educational activities. Over the years, its audience grew in numbers and diversity.

The institutional transformation culminated in 1999, when PPA changed its name to the Center for Cultural Exchange and opened a new facility to house its programs and offices. "Our audience development success has had a very positive impact on our fund-raising" notes Co-Director Bau Graves. Indeed, the center raised $750,000 during its capital campaign to renovate its facility. The money came fairly easily from foundations and corporations because of the organization's successful track record in embracing diversity and engaging the community.

The new 7,200 square feet, three-floor facility, located in downtown Portland, was designed to accommodate the wide variety of events the center sponsors. It is a space built for change: it can adapt from a concert hall, to a banquet hall, to a dance hall, to a meeting room. The center acts as a forum for artists who best exemplify world traditions, reflect contemporary trends, explore artistic frontiers, and nurture the artistic and cultural life of the community.

In chapter 2, appropriate board and staff members from the planning team were advised to complete the *Organizational Infrastructure Assessment Survey* in which they indicated whether different aspects of their organization were in excellent, sufficient, or insufficient condition to meet present needs. Having articulated new goals that will most likely call for expanded resources, your planning committee should now revisit this survey and revise its responses to indicate whether organizational resources are adequate to meet *projected needs*. Common challenges faced by organizations engaged in major audience development projects and sample strategies that address them are described below. These examples may help you form insights about projected resource needs.

Board Development

Strategic planning provides an excellent opportunity to engage the members of a governing board more deeply with an organization. It builds familiarity, commitment, and a sense of stakeholding in the institution. The planning process can also reveal hidden problems or heighten awareness of known shortcomings or challenges regarding governing boards. For example, upon embarking on an audience development planning process, the governing board of one organization quickly encountered several stumbling blocks. It became clear that the board, largely made up of business, marketing, and other professional representatives, had widespread expertise but little familiarity with the organization's programmatic offerings. Furthermore, a com-

munication barrier between those board members from the business world and staff members from the field of literature and academia emerged, centering around a debate that pitted ideals of aesthetic quality against goals for increasing audience quantity.

By actively addressing these challenges in

> Strategic planning provides an excellent opportunity to engage the members of a governing board more deeply with an organization. It builds familiarity, commitment, and a sense of stakeholding in the institution.

the planning process, a debate ensued that provided for a redefinition of organizational values and improved communication between board and staff factions. As mutual understanding and respect grew, the planning committee articulated strategies that called for increased interaction between board and staff, including the formation of several joint committees that expanded opportunities for the exchange of ideas and expertise. Improved board-staff relationships can prove essential to the success of audience development projects.

Another example is an organization whose planning committee realized that there were a significant number of inactive members "taking up seats" on the board. At the same time, planners identified several underrepresented areas that needed to be filled by new board members. In this case, the planning committee devised strategies that called for reforming board expectations and rotation policies while improving recruitment procedures to identify board weaknesses and attract new

board members who could fill these needs. In particular, this organization succeeded in rotating off inactive board members and recruiting new ones who provided increased expertise in areas of public relations and marketing, fund-raising, and corporate relations.

Staff Development

Unfortunately, many small to midsize arts organizations are understaffed and undercompensated. Staff members often perform the work of two while receiving the pay of less than one full-time equivalent in the business field. Inevitably, work in the field of the arts requires a certain missionary zeal. However, extreme conditions of understaffing and undercompensation can undermine effectiveness, leading to high turnover and lack of continuity and commitment. In addition to short staffing or high staff turnover due to inadequate compensation, many organizations suffer from lack of professional expertise in functions that are critical to success. These can range from fund-raising, financial management, public relations, and marketing to basic clerical and reception skills. When only one or two staff members are called upon to fulfill a range of functions, planning

Extreme conditions of understaffing and undercompensation can undermine effectiveness, leading to high turnover and lack of continuity and commitment.

and implementation can suffer.

For example, at one small literary organization, the same staff member was charged with both office management (answering telephones, typing letters, ordering supplies, and maintaining office equipment) and membership (which included all the complex activities of targeting and soliciting new members,

CITYFOLK built its board to support successful efforts to increase cultural participation, as explained in the case below.

Transforming the Board to Support Audience Development:

CITYFOLK

CITYFOLK was founded in 1980 in Dayton, Ohio, as an organization committed to the traditional arts. Over the past several years, CITYFOLK has extended its programs beyond concert presentations to include storytelling activities involving community members and a National Folk Festival. These additional programs have led to both audience and organizational growth.

CITYFOLK has modified its board of directors to reflect this programmatic change. The board has become more racially and culturally diverse as a result of the addition of community members. CITYFOLK's board also added trustees who have fund-raising abilities and connections. Since corporate sponsorship is a key component of the National Folk Festival, CITYFOLK specifically recruited board members who could help attract corporate support.

serving existing members, and maintaining the membership database). As the clerical and management demands increased, the staff member was too busy putting out fires to devote the time, concentration, and effort required to run a successful membership program. As a result, member numbers and revenues declined over a two-year period.

Through a strategic planning process, all current job descriptions were analyzed; staff members were asked to rate the effectiveness with which they felt they could address the varying demands of their jobs; and a new staff chart was developed with more appropriate job descriptions. Rather than dividing up incompatible tasks among full-time staff members, part-time and freelance staff members with greater expertise in appropriate areas were hired to fulfill specialized functions such as membership, fund-raising, and financial management. Another small literary organization's planning committee recognized that by hiring one full-time clerical staff person, the two other staff members would have greater time and focus to achieve the work they were most qualified to do.

Human Resource Management

Few midsize to small arts organizations have staff manuals and basic systems for personnel management in place, such as periodic evaluations, standard pay raise, bonus, hiring, or firing procedures. Adopting such systems can help ensure that staff members understand their job descriptions, expectations, and benefits and can guarantee that communication lines remain open to reveal any shortcomings or challenges that need to be addressed. Considering the challenges of securing adequate staffing for nonprofit arts organizations, it is essential that all staff members perform at their highest potential and are appropriately rewarded for their work to promote satisfaction, provide incentives, and prevent high turnover.

Facilities

Though larger arts organizations, or those that share facilities with other institutions, often have ready access to a variety of public spaces, from large-size auditoriums to small

Audience development initiatives also frequently require creating new roles and positions, as illustrated in the case below.

Hiring Staff for an Audience Development Initiative:

Danspace Project

While planning The Living Room Project—an audience development initiative that involved bringing dance and music performances into people's homes—Danspace's Executive Director Laurie Uprichard recognized that it was essential to hire staff who were dedicated to the project. Additional staff were needed to devote the necessary time to develop relationships with the hosts and handle the complicated logistics associated with the large number of performance sites.

A production manager was hired to work with the artist to coordinate production specifics at each site and help with scheduling. A production assistant was also enlisted to work directly with Yoshiko Chuma, the artistic director of the dance company, and manage contact with performers.

Danspace's staff changed their perspective about audience development as a result of the project. "We all now realize that we can break down the preciousness of the relationship between artists and the audience and reach audience members in many intimate ways," Uprichard observes.

meeting rooms, many small to midsize organizations are not so fortunate. Even some organizations that have ready access to public spaces may lack adequate office space. Issues regarding facilities may include lack of access to appropriate spaces for programs; inadequate office space, including semiprivate offices for those functions that require privacy or intense concentration; or perception or access problems concerning public spaces, including basic problems such as inadequate parking or poor disability access.

For example, one cultural organization located within a larger arts organization was concerned that the upscale nature of the neighborhood and facility might undermine attendance by targeted audiences from less affluent or more ethnically diverse neighborhoods. The strategy addressing this challenge was to seek out appropriate auditoriums for different programs through cosponsorships with public libraries and other arts and cultural organizations serving similar target audiences. Another organization discovered through focus groups and surveys that visitors to the headquarters did not feel comfortable entering the organization's facility. The strategic plan addressed this issue by calling for a redesign of the entrance, with improved street signage, reception area, and general traffic flow.

Sometimes strategic planning processes can unveil significant facilities needs that must be addressed through major capital improvement projects. If this is the case, organizations are advised to adopt a goal and series of strategies that provide for an in-depth, professional analysis of space needs, and careful budgeting and financial planning to adequately address the financial implications.

Equipment

The implementation of audience development projects can require expanded equipment, ranging from computer hardware and software to improved communications technology for voicemail systems and Internet access. Often, the equipment of nonprofit organizations evolves in an unplanned way, through donations or piecemeal purchases. As audience development calls for increased communications and information sharing among departments (particularly marketing and membership) and expanded information storage and access systems, it may be helpful to develop a master plan for equipment and technology growth with the help of an expert. This can be done at the time of planning or integrated as a strategy that is scheduled for implementation early in the project.

Program Planning and Evaluation

All organizations have some kind of program planning process that takes into consideration program expectations from funders, members and audiences, trends or events in the community or field, and organizational traditions. Yet all too often this planning process is not informed by long-term goals that impact the future or by evaluative data that provide valuable information about the successes and challenges of past programs. Without integrating this sort of backward- and forward-looking thinking into the planning process, organizations run the risk of falling into programming ruts and/or ineffectual programming.

Just as an organization's financial management system incorporates a system of checks and balances, and opportunities to compare quarterly revenues and to test actual figures against projected budgets, so should the organization's program planning process. A good strategic plan will help provide the long-range goals and intermittent benchmarks that can guide a formal program-planning procedure. The adoption of the evaluation strategies described in chapter 9 helps in the process of measuring progress and refining initiatives on a regular basis.

Marketing and Public Relations

Many arts organizations do not have dedicated staff for marketing and public relations. Typically falling upon the shoulders of programming staff, who are often swamped with a range of demands from planning programs to setting up chairs, these essential tasks are

often left to the last minute (which is too late) or performed piecemeal (which is ineffective). Preparing and adopting a formal marketing plan (as described in the previous chapter) is one strategy to help ensure that these tasks don't fall between the cracks.

One small arts group tackled the challenge of planning and implementing more complex, consistent marketing efforts by establishing a joint board and staff public relations and marketing committee that meets periodically to plan for the future and evaluate recent strategies. Although many organizations cannot afford to hire a full-time employee for publicity and marketing, such functions can be adequately handled by a part-time or freelance individual or a professional firm. Other organizations meet increased needs in this area by refining job descriptions and providing training opportunities for staff members with appropriate skills and interests. Often, if a program staff member is relieved of basic clerical duties, he or she can effectively take on public relations and marketing duties. It is also essential to create a budget and allocate appropriate resources for public relations and marketing functions.

Finances

Although most organizations have basic financial management systems and capacity—at least enough to ensure adequate budgeting, cash flow, and accounting procedures—it is not uncommon for organizations to lack the systems that can help track income and expenses in specific areas of operations. This kind of tracking system, usually maintained in spreadsheets, makes planning and evaluation more realistic and meaningful. It makes it possible to measure the financial implications of specific programmatic, fund-raising, or marketing initiatives more accurately, and to budget more effectively for the future.

The acquisition and setting up of appropriate software systems can require the assistance of an expert, but existing financial management staff can usually learn to utilize

The case below describes how Intermedia Arts needed to build its marketing capacity as it strove to increase cultural participation.

Organizational Growing Pains Resulting from Success:

Intermedia Arts

Intermedia Arts, a multidisciplinary arts center in Minneapolis, has found that its success in audience development has created organizational pressures. During the past several years, Intermedia has deepened its relationship with its audiences by actively engaging with diverse groups in planning and implementing cutting-edge, community-based programs. Attendance, volunteerism, membership, and contributions have all increased.

Yet this achievement has created strains, especially in the areas of production and marketing. The expanding multidisciplinary programming has required additional technical support. Furthermore, Intermedia's marketing efforts have gotten more complex since it has needed to reach out to a variety of new communities and create promotional materials in many languages.

To handle these additional demands, Intermedia has hired a full-time staff person in production and a second full-time person in the marketing area. "For a while we faced staff shortages," comments founding executive director Tom Borrup, "but now we are catching up and building our infrastructure while continuing to increase audience participation."

such systems effectively. These systems often have the capacity to generate cash-flow reports and quarterly statements simply and efficiently and can actually cut down on staff time. Some organizations seek this solution, and others may look to outside sources for financial management, either through a free-lance professional or a financial service organization. One small arts organization discovered that by "contracting out" payroll and associated paperwork and tax activities, it actually saved money and operated more efficiently, freeing up the part-time financial manager to focus on more demanding and, ultimately, rewarding planning and management activities.

Fund-raising and Development

As demonstrated above, expanded audience development may call for increased resources and will have financial implications. Strategies to secure additional funding must be planned and implemented to ensure the success and sustainability of the project(s). Fortunately, audience development work tends to improve the fund-raising potential of organizations, increasing eligibility for grants, raising visibility, and heightening interaction within the community and the field at large. The planning process also tends to increase board commitment to the organization, making it easier to recruit the board assistance that is critical to successful fund-raising.

Typical fund-raising and development issues that need to be addressed by many organizations are: shortage of dedicated professional staff, insufficient board involvement in fund-raising, poor donor information management systems, lack of planning, and lack of formal cultivation procedures. If your organization does not have a fund-raising staff member or a board member well versed in the field of fund-raising and development, it may be helpful to engage a professional, either paid or pro bono, to help evaluate your capacity and make recommendations for improvement.

Membership

Members comprise an important sector of most organizations' audiences. They are the people who are dedicated enough to the organization to support it with their dollars and desire the incentives and benefits that link them more closely with the organization. Membership also provides a vehicle for audience development. Through membership, occasional audience members can be pulled into the inner circle of the institution and provided more in-depth engagement opportunities. Membership is also a marketing vehicle: members are the easiest audiences to market to and learn about. Finally, membership is typically an underdeveloped source of financial support for organizations.

Usually, audience development initiatives call for a tune-up of membership with the goal of keeping current members satisfied and attracting new members. Typical strategies range from improving information storage/access systems, to increasing dedicated professional staffing of membership functions, to redefining membership benefits to support audience development goals. For example, the Poetry Society of America realized that the organization could support its mission of promoting poetry nationally by "delivering" more poetry to its members. In fulfillment of this strategy, the organization negotiated a discount on poetry books through a nationally accessible book store specializing in poetry. While fulfilling an aspect of its mission, the Poetry Society also succeeded in making membership more attractive to potential members who might not otherwise have an interest in joining an organization that did not provide live services in their area.

Once you have finished revising your *Organizational Infrastructure Assessment Survey* to reflect the future demands of audience development (as suggested earlier in the chapter), articulate your organizational capacity goals and strategies that address these needs. Goals and strategies can be recorded for each of the above-described areas of infrastructure on Worksheet 7.1 in appendix A. For now complete only the "goal" and "strategies" sections of Worksheet 7.1. The other sections will be discussed in chapter 8. (See Exhibit 7.1 for a filled-in sample of Worksheet 7.1.) The examples provided above suggest some of the strategies that can be adopted. Ideally, the planning committee will include representatives with expertise in each of the functions addressed who can help with the development of appropriate goals and strategies. Also guidance from the board or staff members of peer organizations who have conducted strategic planning and/or audience development initiatives may prove helpful.

Exhibit 7.1
Setting Organizational Infrastructure Goals and Strategies

(This is a filled-in sample section of Worksheet 7.1.)

Board Development

GOAL: Add younger and more diverse board members, and those with connections to families with children.

Strategies	Task Facilitator	Schedule
1. Collect names of attendees at the jazz festival to review for people who are connected to those currently involved with the organization. (Use the event that has the younger and more diverse audience to help get those people involved elsewhere.)	Marketing Director	Ongoing
2. Invite people who represent this constituency (parents of children in the school, or jazz festival ticket buyers, etc.) to join a committee on the new Mainstage series, the organization's benefit committee, or a focus group. (Create an opportunity to meet these folks, hear from them, and see how they work.)	Community Outreach Coordinator	Spring 2001
3. Ask leaders from other boards in the community who represent this constituency to suggest people your organization might consider. Hold a lunch with the board chair from the Urban League or the local PTA and pick his/her brain.	Board Chair and Executive Director	Winter 2000
4. Attend a board fair and overtly advertise for the kind of people you are looking for to join the governance team of your organization.	Executive Director	April 2001

Scheduling and Budgeting

A good plan requires not only well-considered goals and thoughtful strategies, but also a schedule for implementation, delineation of who is responsible for each task, and a budget. Otherwise, it is too easy to create a plan that sits on the shelf or is implemented sloppily. Therefore, once the planning committee has completed the process of articulating and refining the goals and strategies of the project, you will need to enumerate the associated tasks and assign key staff or board members responsibility in achieving these activities. This level of detail most likely will not require the attention of the full planning committee, and often is best conducted by staff members who are better versed in day-to-day operations and divisions of responsibility.

The case study below emphasizes the importance of careful scheduling and budgeting.

Understanding the Costs and Time Needed for Audience Development:

UA Presents

The University of Arizona/UA Presents collaborated with several healthcare organizations in the Tucson community to plan a residency with Stuart Pimsler Dance and Theater. The goals of the project were to create new audiences for the arts, place the creative process at the core of the project, and develop new and lasting partnerships.

UA Presents began by convening monthly meetings with the artist and health and human service agencies in the community to determine the scope of the residency and formalize partnerships. The artists then collaborated with the community partners to conduct "Caring for the Caregiver" workshops, which enabled healthcare professionals to express their emotions through creative movement. The project concluded with Stuart Pimsler Dance and Theater's performance of the final work that they created during the residency.

Throughout the project, UA Presents learned a lot about scheduling, managing, and budgeting for audience development. "Our organization had not previously been involved in the production of a new work on such a large scale," notes Ken Foster, executive director of UA Presents. As a result, the organization underestimated the amount of work and time needed for the production and, in particular, did not allocate enough money in the budget for administrative assistance and technical support. In retrospect, Foster believes that designating a single project manager on the presenter side at the outset would have facilitated a smoother process. He also learned that "audience development can't be done without sufficient resources to support it."

An example below suggests one way of organizing this information. To begin, you may want simply to list tasks in chronological order, with the facilitator(s) listed in the right-hand column. For some complex tasks, facilitator(s) may include a supervisor, along with a trustee or staff member; for simpler tasks, a single facilitator may suffice. At this point, refer to the right-hand columns on Worksheet 7.1 and identify responsible parties and set the schedule. An example of task setting and responsibility assignment is provided in Exhibit 8.1.

Exhibit 8.1
Sample Implementation Schedule

Goal: Increase attendance at programs by new audiences.

Strategy: Promote attendance at programs among customers at local bookstores.

Tasks	Facilitator	Schedule
Forge strategic alliance with bookstore.	Program Director	Fall '00
Plan pilot series of events and develop marketing campaign.	Marketing Committee, Partners	Fall '00
Present pilot series of two events at one site.	Program Director	Spring '01
Conduct midterm evaluation of program; revise program and marketing as needed.	Program Director, Marketing Committee, Partners	Fall '01
Present second series, expanding to four events at two sites.	Program Director	Spring '02
Revise program and marketing as needed.	Program Director	Fall '02
Present third series, expanding to eight events at two sites.	Program Director	Spring '03
Evaluate overall effectiveness of series.	Program Director, Marketing Committee, Cosponsors	Fall '03

In the example provided in *Exhibit 8.1*, scheduling information is filled in to the far right column, indicating a *phased implementation* of the strategy over a three-year period. This is a common way of implementing new audience development strategies that is recommended for many reasons. Phased implementation:

- prevents excessive strain upon organizational resources;
- provides opportunities to learn from mistakes and gain from successes in first, or pilot, phases of implementation to inform subsequent activities;
- builds in planning and evaluation opportunities;
- supports sustainability of projects, providing for gradual growth in resources, expertise, and commitment of all parties involved.

Phased implementation can be adopted for projects that have both local and national impact. It can also be used to enact change within an organization's infrastructure, build up board or staff resources over a period of time, gradually achieve an equipment or facilities master plan, or launch new fund-raising initiatives.

The following case studies provide two examples of multistaged implementation schedules. Both of these projects ultimately expanded to include nationwide implications; however, phased implementation is equally effective for projects with local impact, as demonstrated by the description of Phase One of Poets House's Poetry in the Branches project. Once you have read these case studies, determine how best to utilize this concept in scheduling the tasks called for by your organization's audience development projects.

Making a Project Sustainable Through a Phased Schedule:

American Library Association

In planning the implementation of the Writers Live project, the American Library Association identified three phases of implementation. During Phase One, the organization piloted the project, working with twenty libraries in three states to increase the number of live readings of literature and other literary programming presented by libraries. After successfully completing this pilot phase, the organization launched Phase Two, widening the project's reach to a greater number of libraries in nine states. During this phase, the librarians who participated in Phase One were encouraged to continue presenting events in their libraries with reduced support from the American Library Association. In this way, sustainability of the project was enhanced. Phase Three calls for the institutionalizing of the project through the creation of model programs that can be utilized by the national field of libraries.

Gradually Rolling Out and Expanding a Program:

Poets House, Poetry in the Branches

Similarly, the planners of Poets House, based in New York City, designed a phased implementation for the Poetry in the Branches (PITB) project. A three-year Phase One of the project was preceded by a year and a half of planning and preparation with participating library branches. In the first year, system-wide training seminars for librarians were held; poetry books were purchased, cataloged, and displayed by the branches; and resource stipends were distributed. Poetry programming included three adult programs and two three-session workshops for young adults in each participating branch. In the second year these efforts were complemented with more in-depth training and mentoring along with survey courses in poetry for librarians. Periodic meetings of branch staff were held to monitor the model programs and provide additional technical assistance. In the third year, while programs, training, and evaluation continued, the branch libraries took on the responsibility of planning and implementing PITB public programs.

Following the successful completion of Phase One, the planners at Poets House began developing Phase Two, another three-year project with goals that include implementing the model in additional local library systems, formalizing the project into a model with nationwide potential, expanding partnerships to help disseminate the model, and exploring the earned income capacity to the project to ensue its long-term sustainability.

Step 3   Forecast the Budget

Begin sketching the budget for your project early in your planning process. You need to accurately forecast what components of the project will actually cost. The required resources for an audience development initiative depend on the scope of the project. A project involving a touring dance company in a performance with live music as the centerpiece will cost more than a project using local writers in a reading on a stage. An audience building project involving many art forms, partners, activities, and venues will have higher costs than ones with fewer of these elements. You should consider the full range of expenses in the planning stage of an audience development initiative, including costs associated with artists, venues, publications, marketing, evaluation, and administration.

Estimate conservatively when projecting expenses and potential earned and con-

tributed income. Underestimating expenses to meet revenue goals will lead to problems down the line, when costs outstrip income and the project has to be reduced in scope. Revenue projections should be forecast as accurately as possible to avoid last minute cost overruns and the need to cut programmatic elements. By making judicious projections on ticket sales and admission revenues, unexpected events like a freak snowstorm or a big sporting event on the night of your major performance will not skew your whole budget.

The process of breaking down strategies into tasks and scheduling them over the period of implementation makes budget forecasting much simpler. Once task lists and implementation schedules for strategies have been developed, those members of the planning committee who have a clear understanding of

the financial implications of diverse functions can create income and expense projections. This can be done in a columnar format that helps to reveal whether implementation of the project as planned will result in net profits or losses. Final adjustments of the plan, whether rescheduling aspects of implementation or securing advance funding for certain aspects, can be conducted once preliminary budget projections are completed.

A suggested format that can be designed with most spreadsheet formats might look like Table 8.1. (See Worksheet 8.1 in appendix A).

According to this budget analysis, the net financial impact of implementing this strategy over three years will be a gain of $2,900. This budget projection makes clear the importance of seeking contributed income in advance of launching the proposed programs and of attracting growing paying audiences to gain the earned income that will help to ensure the program's continuation.

The process of budgeting may lead to some changes in scheduling or scope of the strategies suggested. Additional fund-raising may need to be conducted up front, expansion of some projects may have to be sched-

Table 8.1

Task	Spring '00	Fall '00	Spring '01	Fall '01	Spring '02	Fall '02	Final
Launch new Series:							
Program costs	0	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($15,000)
Admissions revenue	0	$500	$500	$600	$600	$700	$2,900
Fund-raising income	$5,000	0	$5,000	0	$5,000	0	$15,000
Profit or loss	$5,000	($2,500)	$2,500	(2,400)	$2,600	(2,300)	$2,900

Underestimating expenses to meet revenue goals will lead to problems down the line, when costs outstrip income and the project has to be reduced in scope.

uled contingent upon financial growth, and so on. In this way, organizations can assure that implementation of their plans will not result in financial destabilization. In fact, financial stability and organizational sustainability should remain at the heart of any plan or project, safeguarded by thoughtful budgeting and periodic evaluation.

Partnerships can help reduce costs. Once you have determined your audience development goals and target audiences, consider the possibilities of *in-kind* services through project partners. For example, partnering with an NPR affiliate radio station on a project involving a live performance may increase the audience reach of the performance to meet audience development goals, but it could also reduce costs of recording and production. University-based arts organizations have many advantages of venues and services that they can access within the university system to help defray costs related to educational programs, evaluation, and publications. Other arts organizations may want to consider collaborating with educational institutions, corporations, or public libraries to tap pro bono services.

The following two cases demonstrate different aspects of budgeting for long-term projects.

Budgeting for "If All of Seattle Read the Same Book":

Washington Center for the Book at the Seattle Public Library

The "If All of Seattle Read the Same Book" project was a multiyear residency program sponsored by the Washington Center for the Book. The premise of the project was that book and discussion groups that take place in libraries, people's homes, and bookstores are excellent vehicles for building people's participation in literary activities and broadening their exposure to contemporary books and writers. This project aimed to reach the wide range of book groups and independent readers in the Seattle area and attract all of them to read the same book during one month per year. The center sponsored a multipart residency by the author as a way to conclude the reading month and to reach even more folks who may not have been reading the author's work as part of the city-wide effort.

In the presidency stage, the project involved developing reading group toolboxes that gave readers more information about the author and providing multiple copies of the books to branch libraries throughout the city. A recording of the chosen title being read aloud was also produced for broadcast on public radio, and a Web page on the library's Web site on the project was produced.

During the residency, the author met with library donors for a reception, gave a talk, had breakfast with library staff who run book groups, spoke informally with book groups and individuals at three libraries, had lunch with five winners of a "lunch with the author" raffle, and participated in a live radio interview and call-in program. After the residency, the library provided copies of the radio interview to interested book groups and individuals and provided additional copies of the book group discussion toolbox.

Primary administrative costs for the project were covered by the library. Space rental was not an issue due to the availability of library facilities. Also, many in-kind services were provided by project partners, including the local public radio affiliate, and the Seattle newspaper. Table 8.2 shows how the budget was constructed for this project.

Creating a Budget for a Martha Graham Residency Project:

University Musical Society

The Martha Graham residency project at the University Musical Society at the University of Michigan was a celebration of Graham's life and work as a choreographer, dancer, arts patron, and woman who influenced the visual arts and women's role in society. The residency project, a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Graham's birth, involved multiple partners both on and off the University of Michigan campus in a multifaceted residency designed to reach over 3,400 students and community members in the Ann Arbor community. The Graham company was in residency at the University of Michigan, where it rehearsed for over three weeks. The full dance company was in residence for the one week in which the majority of residency activities occurred. The primary goals of the residency were to encourage audiences to participate in arts activities of various disciplines and to develop "crossover" audiences between musical performances, dance performances, and visual arts exhibits.

Components of the residency included: a video retrospective of Graham's life and work; open rehearsals of the Graham Company; a demonstration of Graham technique for dance students and community members; seminars and panel discussions with critics and scholars on Graham's life and work; an exhibition of Graham scores, costumes, and set designs from the Library of Congress; music classes with residency artists; an exhibition of the work of the sculptor Noguchi; and development of a residency program book and history.

Table 8.3 shows the $284,353 expense budget for the project. The budget is broken down by costs covered by cash ($198,553) and costs contributed in-kind ($85,800). The budget responsibilities and commitments of all project partners are clearly delineated. Revenues that supported the project included corporate contributions, foundation grants, individual donations, and ticket sales.

Table 8.2

Budget for "If All of Seattle Read the Same Book"

PROJECT BUDGET — YEAR 1 **Pre-Residency Program Costs**	Totals
Toolbox Content Development	1,200.00
Toolbox and Display Design	4,000.00
Toolbox Production	5,000.00
Publicity	10,600.00
Critical Reading Workshop Training Supplies	500.00
Author Reading Training Supplies	500.00
Reading Trainer Honorarium	400.00
Reading Trainer Travel	1,050.00
Books for Library Book Groups	2,500.00
Distribution of Toolboxes	1,300.00
Production for Webpage	500.00
Library Book Group Facilitator	1,260.00
Radio Reader	5,000.00
subtotal	**33,810.00**
Author Residency Program Costs	
Author's Fee	7,500.00
Author's Travel Expenses	1,300.00
Donor's Reception	1,000.00
Author's Main Speaking Engagement	1,500.00
Author Breakfast w/ Library Staff	500.00
Author Appearances with Book Groups	500.00
Author Lunch w/ Raffle Winners	300.00
Author Radio Interview and Taping	500.300
subtotal	**13,100.00**
Post Author Residency Program Costs	
Author Interview Tape Distribution	125.00
Documentation and Assessment	3,250.00
Production of Supplemental Toolboxes	1,875.00
subtotal	**13,100.00**
Administrative Costs	
Staff Position: Director @ 25% time	18,286.00
Staff Position: Associate Director @ 25% time	12,367.00
Fringe Benefits	7,352.00
Administrative Assistant	1,600.00
Consultants	4,000.00
Office Supplies	500.00
Postage & Mailings	500.00
Telephone	500.00
Indirect Costs	2,800.00
subtotal	**47,905.00**
Grand Total	**$100,065.00**

Table 8.3

Budget for Martha Graham Residency Project

Travel and expenses for 3 scholars		2,625.00	
Dance Gallery/Washtenaw Community College:			
Space usage		400.00	
subtotal	**190,723.00**	**40,775.00**	
Adminstrative Costs			
University Musical Society:			
Artistic Administrator @ 5%	1,920.00		
Education Coordinator @ 10%	2,400.00		
Development Director @ 2%	1,560.00		
Executive Director		7,000.00	
Marketing Director		3,200.00	
Other Staff (box office, program editor, etc.)		12,000.00	
Administrative costs	1,000.00		
Marketing - postage	950.00		
Ann Arbor Symphony:			
Promotion		3,500.00	
U. Michigan Dance Department:			
Department Director @ 15%		7,500.00	
Administrative Assistant		600.00	
Use of Practice rooms		600.00	
Phone		200.00	
U. Michigan Center for Education of Women:			
Staff Time		1,000.00	
Mailing and postage		1,500.00	
Phone and Office		500.00	
Refreshments at events		100.00	
U. Michigan School of Music:			
Staff Time		750.00	
Museum of Art:			
Staff Time		4,300.00	
Ann Arbor Public Schools:			
Transportation		925.00	
Staff Time		750.00	
Teaching Materials		200.00	
Dance Gallery/Washtenaw Community College:			
Staff Time		400.00	
subtotal	**7,830.00**	**45,025.00**	
Total Expenses	**198,553.00**	**85,800.00**	
Total Project Cost			**$284,353.00**
REVENUE			
NEA Dance on Tour	5,000.00		
Corporate Grants	25,000.00		
Individual Gifts	20,000.00		
Ticket Sales	62,287.00		
subtotal	**112,287.00**		

Documenting

Documentation is a means to record many aspects of a project, including both the artistic and audience development processes, in order to reach a variety of goals. These goals include not only ones for audience development and evaluation, but also communication, education, fund-raising, improvement of the artistic process, and the creation of historical archives. Methods for documentation may include writing, videotaping, or audio recording, to mention just a few. Documentation enables an arts organization to tell its story, learn from its experience, and preserve information about what it did.[9]

Documentation enables an arts organization to tell its story, learn from its experience, and preserve information about what it did.

It is critical to determine your goals for documentation at the outset of your project. Arts presenters who document their projects most effectively tend to be very clear at the early stages of the project about their objectives for documentation. In contrast, some of those projects that are not documented well usually have less specific goals for documentation or determine them late in the process. When establishing documentation goals, it is critical to base them on your organizational and audience development goals and identify end uses and recipients of documentation.

Documentation can be used as a vehicle through which you can tell the story of what you want to accomplish and what you have achieved. By documenting activities, an organization can use that information to facilitate interaction with its audience. Reactions to videos, photos, or recordings of programs and activities can be starting points for conversations about what the organization is trying to accomplish. The documentation becomes a crucial element in the "feedback" loop that the organization creates with its audience.

When setting documentation goals and uses it is helpful to refer to the project's original aims and your target audiences. Consider what documentation methods might help you articulate those goals and tell your story. If your message is "domestic violence is a part of our community, and we must not be silent about it," ask yourself, "How can the documentation we produce deliver that message and tell the story of our consideration of that issue?"

Consider the target audiences you have identified. Can documentation help you reach them? Can photographs, or stories in the media about similar people, attract more of the same to your next performance? If dozens of children participated in a school demonstration by a dance company and the paper covers it, doesn't that documentation help you attract more children to your next program targeted toward that audience?

It is also useful to list the other constituents you want to reach through documentation. Work with your staff to identify whom you want to tell your story to and

> Documentation can be used as a vehicle through which you can tell the story of what you want to accomplish and what you have achieved.

why. You may want to use documentation to reach potential donors so they will give to your organization in the future. Maybe you need to report to the funder of your current project that you spent the grant money well. Perhaps you want your public officials to know about your work so that your organization is recognized as a valuable member of the community. In addition, you may aim to attract media attention to publicize your programs, court an organization with which you hope to collaborate in the future, or interest teachers in your work so you can develop younger audiences. Maybe you also want to show skeptical board members how successful certain types of programming can be. All of these are appropriate documentation goals. (See Worksheet 9.1, as well as Exhibit 9.1, which shows a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

Exhibit 9.1
Setting Documentation Goals and Identifying Methods to Reach Them

(This is a filled-in sample of Worksheet 9.1)

GOAL	METHODS
To communicate with project participants	- Newsletter to community participants - Survey of audience's interests and reactions to the work - Community participants periodically write in project journal and read each others' comments - Pamphlet on project process and outcomes sent to participants after project - Photographs included in newsletter and lobby gallery
To use for educational purposes	- Video edited for classroom use - Guidebook on project for teachers - Pamphlet on project process and outcomes sent to other presenters and used by teachers
To improve the artistic process	- Videotape of rehearsals and master classes
To use for fund-raising purposes	- Newsletter to current and potential funders - Video (edited and high quality) sent to funders - Guidebook on project for teachers sent to funders - Pamphlet on project sent to funders - Press clippings to funders - Photojournal to funders
To assess the impact of the project	- Audience survey - Videotape of audience participation and reaction - Project impact described in pamphlet - Journal of community participants' comments assessed
To create historical archives	- Newsletter stored in archives at local historical society - Videotapes kept in archives - Pamphlet on project stored in archives - Press clippings archived - Photojournal archived - Programs and promotional materials archived

Start planning for documentation early and do it in conjunction with planning other aspects of your audience development project. The best documentation plans identify appropriate methods of documentation, include a budget and schedule, determine who is responsible for specific activities, and are coordinated with collaborators' plans. (See Worksheet 9.2 for guidance related to planning documentation.) Determine end uses and recipients of documentation when you are in the initial project-planning phase. During this stage, establish the rights and ownership of the work and obtain good legal advice about copyrights and contract agreements related to the documentation of artists' work and performances.

During a planning meeting at the beginning of a project, participants can ask themselves: "What might be happening during each stage of the project that is worth keeping track of and what is the best way to record it?" and "How can documentation help us measure how we reach our project goals?" Plan to collect a range of information—quantitative and qualitative, positive and negative—through documentation, since sometimes it is usually not clear at the outset what will help tell a meaningful story. Your marketing staff, the people backstage videotaping, and your fund-raising staff can all be involved with planning documentation.

Your organization needs to have the professional skills and technical capacity for your chosen documentation methods. If you do not have these skills on staff, there are outside experts who may be required for different types of documentation, including videographers, survey consultants, writers, Web site designers, or audio recording engineers.

Staff members involved in documentation need to have a clear sense of their responsibility. The extent to which your organization can do documentation well depends on whether your leaders delegate responsibility and make people accountable for making it happen. If no one has clear responsibility for documentation, it will just fall into the cate-

> If no one has clear responsibility for documentation, it will just fall into the category of "things that we will do if we have time" and may go by the wayside.

gory of "things that we will do if we have time" and may go by the wayside.

The required financial resources for documentation depend on the scope of your documentation effort and could range from a few hundred dollars to over $25,000. It is common for arts providers to underestimate the amount of resources needed to edit documentation so that it can be used effectively. Begin sketching out your budget for documentation in the early planning phases of your project. Once you have identified your goals and selected your documentation methods, estimate the expenses and revenues associated with your documentation plan.

There is a wide range of ways you can document audience development initiatives for performing arts projects, including the ones listed below:

• Programs
• Promotional materials
• Press
• Reports
• Meeting and interview notes
• Newsletters
• Journals and note-books
• Photographs
• Publications
• Surveys and studies
• Audio recordings
• Web sites
• Video

The type and scale of documentation depends on the artistic discipline, available resources, project goals, level of planning, and the philosophies of the presenter and collaborators. In some cases, projects are documented extensively because one of the collaborators, such as an artist or university department, spearheads and pays for the documentation. In other situations, projects are documented thoroughly at each stage of the process because they entail informing a large number of participants and encouraging the involvement of community members, or they are an integral part of the development of the work.

By using an array of methods and weaving the different forms of documentation together, a performing arts or literary organization can create a feedback loop that facilitates dialogue between artist, organization, communi-

ty, and audience. Input collected from community members in the early stages of a project in the form of documented interviews, surveys, or oral histories can be used to shape the final artistic product. Materials that track the output of the project, such as a video, programs, photographs, and educational materials, can be used to inform funders, potential audience members, sponsors, and new board members. By recording what happened and chronicling people's reactions, arts

By using an array of methods and weaving the different forms of documentation together, a performing arts or literary organization can create a feedback loop that facilitates dialogue between artist, organization, community, and audience.

organizations can communicate about their work and preserve information in archives. Although every method can document audience development, some, such as surveys, studies, and video, may be more suitable for tracking and capturing progress of individuals and groups over long periods.

Use a single documentation method to reach a variety of audiences and serve many purposes. For example, video documentation can be used efficiently to create a rehearsal tape for artistic purposes, a promotional video for marketing and fund-raising, and an edited video for educational reasons.

You can use documentation for a broad range of purposes and to achieve a variety of positive results. Identify the wide range of end uses and audiences of documentation early in the planning process. Major uses and results of documentation are described below:

- Enhancement of audience-building process
- Communication with participants
- Education
- Enhancement of the artistic process
- Marketing and promotion
- Fund-raising
- Demonstration and dissemination
- Assessment of project impact
- Orientation of new staff and board members
- Fulfillment of grant contract obligations
- Creation of historical archives

Many projects that involve a large number of community participants use documentation to improve the process of building the audience and community. The Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz and Performing Arts, for example, created a photography exhibit on the history of local jazz that traveled to various neighborhoods and helped generate community pride and interest in the club's programs. Similarly, Dancing in the Streets regularly showed a forty-five-minute video of a multimedia performance by Marty Pottenger at the tunnel work and performance site in New York as a way to reach out to working people and get them interested in the project.

Various documentation methods can help to "get the word out" on a community-wide basis. Photos in the media, snippets of audio recordings on the radio, and broadly mailed newsletters can all be used to reach a large set of community members; a photo exhibit or even a Web site journal may have a more limited audience.

You can use documentation for a broad range of purposes and to achieve a variety of positive results.

The case studies below highlight two arts presenters that used documentation effectively to support their efforts to increase cultural participation. A few samples of documentation are also included at the end of this chapter (see Exhibits 9.2 and 9.3).

How Video Documentation Can Be Used to Build Audiences:

Lafayette College's Williams Center

The Lafayette College Performance Series, housed at the Williams Center in Easton, Pennsylvania, was launched in 1983. Its mission is to enrich the cultural life of the Lehigh Valley region and to serve educational objectives of Lafayette College through a diverse range of performances, exhibitions, and residency programs. One of the Williams Center's audience development projects involved a long-term residency with performance artists Eiko and Koma, who performed each component of their trilogy *Land, Wind, River in Easton.* Their residency was primarily concerned with the development for the stage of their site-specific piece, *Outdoor River,* which had originally been performed in the Delaware River at the bottom of the hill from Lafayette College. The goal for the residency was to develop new alliances for the Williams Center presenting program within the environmental community. The video documentation of the original performances of *Outdoor River* was integral to the audience development process of this project. A video was produced about that performance that explained the work, provided a context, and incorporated audience members' reactions. The video was then used as the centerpiece for informational "video evenings," which brought together potential audience members who were interested in environmental issues for a discussion about contemporary movement, the ideas Eiko and Koma explore in their work, and the way art can illuminate social and/or political issues. These "video chain letter" evenings, which are a form of documentation, helped to develop audience interest in advance of the performances.

Integrating Documentation into Audience Development and Evaluation:

Center for Cultural Exchange

The Center for Cultural Exchange (formerly called Portland Performing Arts), located in Portland, Maine, has a mission to promote a broad appreciation for the best interplay between culture and artistic expression. The House Island Project was designed to build sustainable audiences for ethnically specific work through community partnerships and long-term residencies with master performers and public celebrations of traditional culture. The participating communities were Cambodian, French Canadian, African and African American, and Irish.

The center documented the project exhaustively. It sees the time and money spent on documentation an investment that paid off in terms of benefits for marketing, fund-raising, evaluation, and community enrichment. The center engaged the artists, community members, and scholars in providing interpretive programs and materials with the performances to educate general audiences about unfamiliar art forms and traditions.

During the planning phase, Portland Performing Arts took extensive field notes at over twenty-five community meetings to record discussions about community needs and proposed residency activities. Note taking enabled the center and the participating artists to record the thoughts of community members and helped shape the performances. The visiting artists kept journals of their own meetings with community groups to capture their thoughts about needs and interests.

During the project, Portland Performing Arts shot over 100 hours of video. The raw video material was edited to produce a five-minute segment on Maine Public Television, which helped to promote the performance and generate audience interest.

Concluding the project, Portland Performing Arts published and distributed a twenty-four-page booklet *House Island Project: Advancing the Cultural Heritage of Maine's Ethnic Community,* which documented all aspects of the project. This publication included four commissioned papers by scholars from the various ethnic groups involved. Portland Performing Arts distributed the publication to community participants, current and potential funders, and other presenters, which has helped raise the organization's profile.

Exhibit 9.2

HOUSE ISLAND PROJECT

Advancing the cultural heritage of Maine's ethnic communities

An initiative of Portland Performing Arts, Inc.

The Center for Cultural Exchange (formerly Portland Performing Arts) in Portland, Maine, published and distributed a 24-page booklet which documented all aspects of its House Island Project, an initiative to build sustainable audiences for ethnically specific work. The publication includes four commissioned papers by scholars from the community on the various ethnic groups involved. It was distributed to community participants, current and potential funders, and other presenters.

Exhibit 9.3

In the
American
Grain:

The Martha
Graham
Centenary
Festival
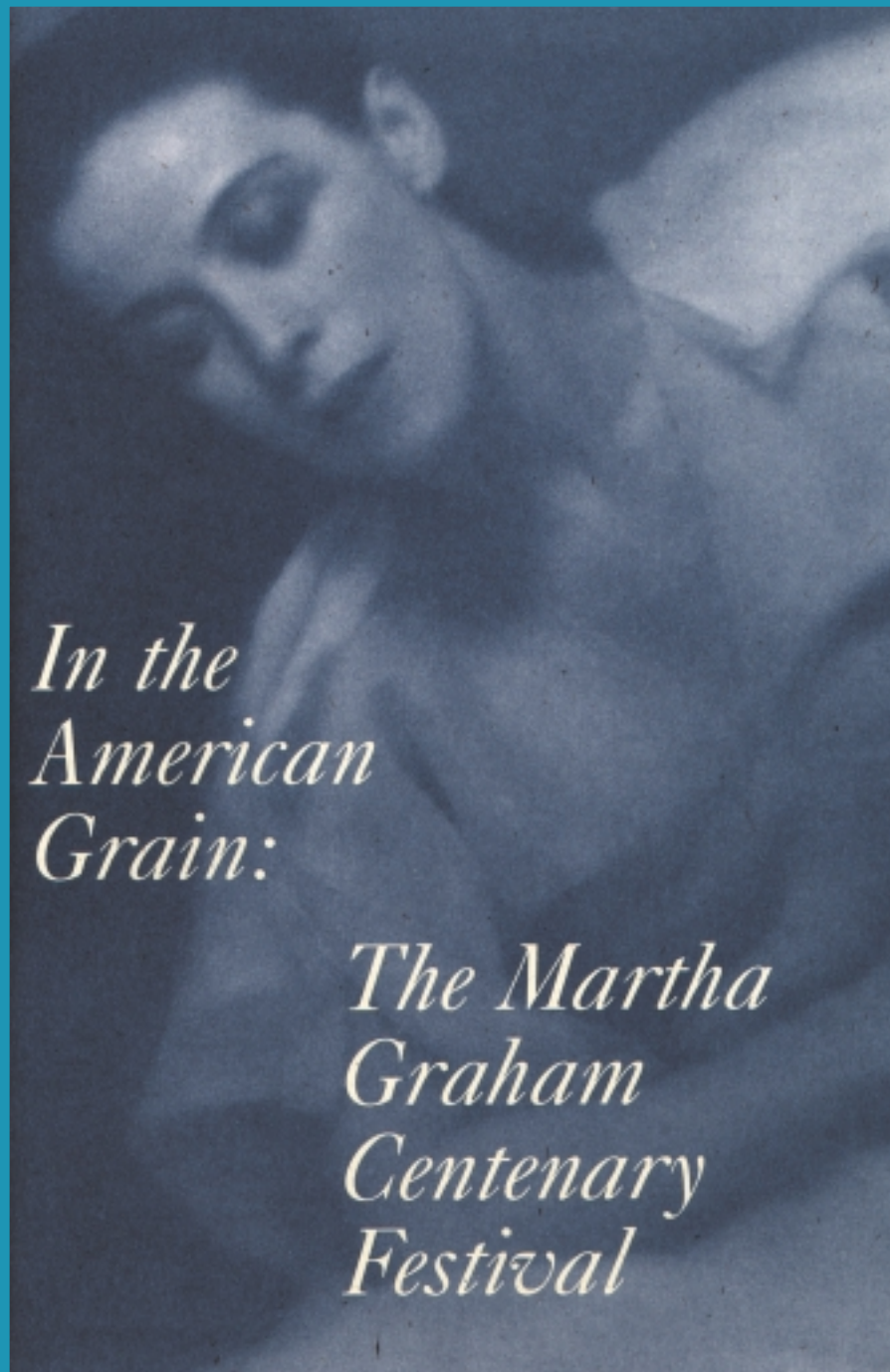
The University Musical Society, based at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, created a 120-page program book that documented a three-week residency that explored the life and work of Martha Graham and strove to develop new audiences for modern dance.

chapter 10

Evaluating

Build into your organization's audience development plan a process for evaluating progress. A thorough, thoughtful process of assessing both individual goals and strategies and the overall plan need to be defined and scheduled prior to implementation. By planning evaluation early in the process of an audience development project, evaluation data and results can be used for multiple purposes. Frequently, arts organizations see evaluation as an onerous task imposed by funders at the end of a process. Instead, you should see the evaluation as having multiple internal and external purposes and benefits.

When planning for evaluation is combined with good audience development planning, arts groups can monitor progress toward goals, make course corrections, and ultimately articulate the value of programs. Arts organizations should strive to identify desirable concrete outcomes from programs and design evaluations that provide relevant information about those outcomes to various stakeholders. Documentation is a key

> See the evaluation as having multiple internal and external purposes and benefits.

component of evaluation, since recording elements of a project is a necessary first step in assessing it.

This chapter only provides a brief overview of evaluation methodology. (For additional information about this topic, see the program evaluation listings in appendix B.)[10]

Documentation is a key component of evaluation.

[10]This section is reprinted, with adaptations, from Callahan Consulting for the Arts, a Washington-based consulting firm that has provided extensive training services for the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, in conjunction with Innovation Network, on the art of evaluation and has written on the topic. See "The Art of Evaluation: Transforming the Research Process into a Creative Journey," *Dance/USA Journal,* Winter/Spring 1999; "The Art of Evaluation, Part II: Transforming the Research Process into a Creative Journey," *Dance/USA Journal,* Spring, 1999; "The Art of Evaluation, Part III: Transforming the Research Process into a Creative Journey," *Dance/USA Journal,* Summer 1999.

Step 1 — Decide How to Measure Success

An effective evaluation involves gathering the appropriate information to determine how close, or far, you are from meeting the goals at key points throughout your audience development project, as well as to assess what you have learned along the way. By periodically reviewing progress toward goals, planners and facilitators can determine whether the strategies are effective and determine how to adjust these strategies if goals are consistently unmet.

To evaluate the project's success, what questions do you need to answer? To assess if you have met your goals, what information about those who implement, participate in, or are served by the audience development project would be most useful? What data will best help you to conduct and improve this type of program in the future? Often arts organizations respond to these questions by saying they want to determine the "impact," "effectiveness," or "usefulness" of the pro-

gram. It is critical to articulate how your organization is defining such broad terms. The effectiveness of a new commissioning project is assessed differently than the effectiveness of a new community outreach program to an underserved area of town.

Defining such broad terms requires working with stakeholders to identify some of the possible indicators or types of evidence by which the project is assessed. A suitable indicator for a new performance/residency program may include specific quantifiable outputs, such as audience size or ticket income, which are measured with discrete numbers. It may also include outcomes, or measures of the effects of the program, such as the quality of the artistry, degree of satisfaction of artists involved, amount of public attention received, involvement of community members, and interesting stories about those who participated.

Step 2 — Determine Who Will Conduct the Evaluation and Develop an Evaluation Budget

It is important to distinguish between the kinds of evaluations that can be completed internally by staff versus those that require expert assistance, since the type of evaluation undertaken affects both your organizational capacity and budget. In cases where organizations lack the time or resources to design formal studies, conducting a limited survey of members, staff, or audiences may prove helpful. Interns can help collect and record the data as long as staff carefully trains them and supervises the process. Holding individual or group interviews with your administrative staff or performers at the end of a season can help to clarify what went well and what didn't. Conducting such research will produce

information to inform and improve your operations. Staff can decide upon some basic questions and gather useful information that supports or tests assumptions about programs.

However, the drawback of smaller, in-house studies is that they cannot be used to derive substantial conclusions or make major decisions, because the research is too limited in scope and sophistication. At a given point, evaluation requires expert assistance to ensure that its design, methodology, data collection, and analysis are sound and valid. This is particularly true in instances where organizations are considering changing their policies or budget priorities based on the

results of the evaluation of a certain project or program. The validity of large-scale evaluations hinges on an empirical process of asking the right questions of the right people, analyzing the information using scientifically valid procedures, and generating useful, clear reports that are tailored for the reader(s) who will rely on them for decision making and policy development. Such a process requires a firm grounding in research methodology and statistical analysis. Use the scale of your audience-building project to help you determine the scope of your evaluation.

The most common problem that occurs in evaluation, particularly for the novice or underskilled researcher, is the tendency to draw conclusions and recommend or make changes too quickly and easily based on limited information. Once a bit of research has been done, there is a tendency for those involved in the study to feel "smart" and "insightful." This can be a dangerous place because one risks the possibility of drawing conclusions and recommending changes that held true for a limited sample of participants studied, but not for the entire population of those served by your program. The bottom line is, in considering organizational or policy change, if you base a decision on an incorrect conclusion from an evaluation, what might it cost your organization?

When considering consultant assistance, it is crucial to select someone who is trained in research methods, statistics, and quantitative and qualitative analysis. In addition, you may seek guidance from local universities that provide academic training in evaluation within their programs in public administration or management. Professors can serve as excellent resources and may even assist with identifying graduate students with the necessary skills. If your organization plans to conduct evaluation on an ongoing basis, you may consider providing training for a staff member in research methods and statistics, so that a significant amount of the work could be done internally.

The cost of evaluation can vary broadly, depending on the type and scope of the study. An internal survey can be conducted and analyzed for minimal amounts of money, particularly if interns or volunteers are involved in collecting the data. Hiring outside consultants can vary from around $5,000 for designing and administering a survey to as much as $60,000 for a year-long extensive study with multiple instruments and numerous respondents. Consultants should be able to provide detailed budgets that explain these costs; such fees seem high, but the research process and related analysis and reporting are labor intensive. (To assist in defining evaluation tasks and scheduling see Worksheet 10.1 in appendix A.)

Whether small or large, conducted internally or commissioned from consultants, any evaluation can and should have staff closely involved. Your participation and ownership is critical to its success and you should understand and approve all aspects of the evaluation design.

Once a bit of research has been done, there is a tendency for those involved in the study to feel "smart" and "insightful." This can be a dangerous place.

Develop an Evaluation Design and Employ Methods to Gather Information

Before you can determine what tools and techniques will be appropriate for evaluating your project, determine how stated goals and strategies translate into evaluative data. This can be done by reviewing goals and strategies that correspond to phased implementation. Ideally, most of the goals and strategies that have been articulated by your audience development planning committee will be tied to quantifiable results.

Using a logic model that identifies inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes will help inform your evaluation design. Inputs are the resources you employ for audience development, such as funding, facilities, or such stakeholders as artistic directors, artists, curators, board members, funders, and community members. Activities are what happens during your cultural participation initiative. Outputs describe the results of your efforts, such as the number of audience members served. Outcomes are the effects of your program. Exhibit 10.1 (page 114) shows a sample logic model for the Downtown Dance Collective. You can use Worksheet 10.2 to create a logic model for yourself, providing a framework for your evaluation.

There are some basic questions that need to be answered in planning your evaluation:

- What are your goals for the project?
- What are your target populations or audiences?
- What strategies will help you meet each goal?

Answering these questions will help to identify what you need to know. When thinking in broad ways about your audience-building program, what critical questions do you want to answer? Exhibit 10.2 (page 115) gives an example of Downtown Dance Collective's evaluation plan, and the far left-hand column identifies the critical questions that they wanted to answer in evaluating this project. (See Worksheet 10.3 for a blank version of this evaluation plan.) The other columns guide them in how to effectively answer the questions: What will indicate success? What is the source of that information? Once these questions are answered, it will be much easier to identify the tools you need to collect that information. For example, a survey may be best for measuring a change in audience composition, but focus groups could assess attitudinal changes most effectively.

There is an important and inherent connection between the logic model and the evaluation plan. The logic model provides a map, or outline, of a program's goals and strategies; simply put, it tells you where you wish to go and how you will get there. When implemented, the evaluation plan systematically provides information that allows you to measure the degree to which you are meeting your goals to ensure that you are getting to where you want to go. Therefore, the questions asked in the evaluation plan must directly relate to the goals in the logic model; answering the questions helps to monitor and, if need be, adjust the goals.

Once you have examined your goals and identified what success means to you and the strategies that will lead to success, you should determine what will allow you to measure progress and systematically integrate them into an evaluation plan that becomes part of your overall project. By adopting a combination of evaluation tools and techniques, including those described in chapter 6, organizations can reliably measure both quantitative and qualitative progress toward goals.

Quantitative methods use standardized measures that fit diverse opinions, experiences, and demographics into predetermined response categories. Audience surveys are perhaps the most common example, where respondents are asked to check boxes that define their zip code, age, etc. The advantage of quantitative data is that they measure the

In the following case study from Poets House, the evaluation included quantitative goals, such as increasing the number of branch libraries participating, frequency of programming, audience size, and percentile increases in circulation of poetry books. Additional measurements included qualitative information regarding ease of access to programs, resources by librarians, and level of satisfaction with the project. As demonstrated below, the organization used a set of tools, including data collection, evaluation questionnaires, and discussion groups, to measure progress toward these goals and refine program strategies along the way.

Determining What to Measure:

Poets House

At the beginning of the Poetry in the Branches Project, Poets House planners collected baseline data from partnering Branch Libraries regarding the number of poetry books acquired annually for their collections and circulation of poetry books. In addition to monitoring changes in these factors over the course of the project, Poets House was also able to count the number of live programs presented and the number of audiences participating in these, which totaled 25,000 people directly impacted by the project in the first year.

To monitor more qualitative information, questionnaires were given to participating branch staff to evaluate the success of specific activities (an example is enclosed at the end of this chapter). Poets House also held periodic discussion meetings with the participating branch staff to review the project and to share evaluation and statistics, including a half-day progress meeting midway through the Phase One implementation period.

reactions of a great many people to a limited set of questions, thus facilitating a comparison and statistical aggregation of the data. This provides a broad, generalized set of findings, which means that they can be used to learn about the entire population that you are studying.

By contrast, qualitative methods typically produce a wealth of detailed data about a much smaller number of people and cases. Qualitative data provide rich depth and detail through direct quotation and careful description of programs, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors. The advantage of using detailed descriptions, direct quotations, and case studies is that they are collected as open-ended narratives. One of the most common qualitative techniques is the group interview, or focus group, where a moderator conducts a group discussion among five to ten people to learn their opinions, attitudes, and thought processes about a given topic. The

group dynamic encourages a deeper level of discussion and allows the moderator to probe for topics that are important to the arts organization.

The most common evaluation instruments are surveys, focus groups, individual interviews, case studies, reviews of internal documentation such as field notes and memos, and direct observational methods. The instruments chosen depend on what information you strive to obtain. If the performance of your premiere sells out and receives three standing ovations, your own observational research can conclude a positive audience response—there is no need to design a study. Conversely, if you are evaluating the merits of your membership services in ways that might lead to programmatic change or that have financial ramifications, such as an increase or decrease in annual dues, it may behoove you to engage an outside party to do some in-depth qualitative and quantitative research

Exhibit 10.1
Downtown Dance Collective Program Evaluation Logic Model[11]

(See Worksheet 10.2 for a blank version of this chart.)

MISSION: To serve the nonprofit professional dance community in creative development and performance.

GOAL (hopes and dreams for the program): To nurture an active, vibrant dance community that creates work and enthralls audiences, and where artists are mutually supportive of each other's work and professional needs.

OBJECTIVES (measurable, interim goals): To strengthen relationships with artists, increase artist satisfaction with presentations and related services, engage audiences more with the ongoing programming, commission four new works per season, increase the number of artists who tour in other cities following their season at DDC.

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
What resources do you need for the programming/initiative?	What happens during your program/initiative?	What does your program/initiative produce?	How will your clients or constituents be different as a result of your program/initiative? What will they know or be able to do?
- Artist staff time (choreographers, composers, dancers, actors, designers) - Administrative staff time (marketing, finance, fund-raising, programming, audience development) - Funding (grant, individual donations) - Facility/theater	- Curate the season - Market events - Create contextual materials - Produce performances and postperformance chats - Hold performances, forums, and workshops - Rehearse - Travel to see work and meet presenters	- No. of artists presented - No. of performances held - No. audience members overall - No. repeat & crossover audience members - No. of artists commissioned - No. of rehearsal hours provided - No. of tours/performances generated by presentation	- Artist's creative process is satisfying to them - Positive relationships develop between artist and presenter - Audience has deeper experience w/art form - Audience samples variety of programs - Bookings increase for artists

[11]This model as well as the Downtown Dance Collective Evaluation Plan (Exhibit 10.2) was developed by Callahan Consulting for the Arts and Innovation Network, for the Association of Performing Arts Presenters' Winter Institute. (See footnote 10 on page 109.)

Exhibit 10.2
Downtown Dance Collective Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Questions What critical questions do you want to answer?	Indicators What will indicate a successful answer to the evaluation questions?	Information Required What is the source of the information you will need?	Data Collection Methods What tools will you use to collect the information you need?
Question 1 To what extent was artist satisfied with services?	- Repeat request for services by the same artists - Positive feedback from artists about services - Referrals to new artist f or services	- Review of service requests - Artist feedback	- regular documentation of artists' request for services - interviews or surveys from artists - staff reflection, through regular meetings and/or development and refinement of best practices/lessons learned document
Question 2 What is the impact of DDC's Efforts on audiences?	- Audience members' involvement with DDC increased - Audience sampling various genres of performance	- Track new membership figures - Data on which combination of performances people are buying - Data on contributions to various fund-raising appeals	- new members data to compare with ticket buyer data - ticket-buying records - surveys of why people are giving to various appeals
Question 3 To what extent has DDC strengthened the dance artist's sense of community?	- Positive sense of community expressed by artists - Examples of community collaboration	- Artist feedback - Stories from artists and staff	- surveys - focus groups or interviews with artists - notes from meetings with artists - anecdotal responses from events and interactions

and analysis through a combination of surveys and interviews.

The most powerful tool for increasing the validity and reliability of any study is the use of multiple measures—the combination of a number of research techniques on various participants to gather more data that confirm results. Using multiple measures decreases the likelihood of drawing wrong conclusions.

The selection process of evaluation participants is critical to ensuring the validity of the evaluation. A random, anonymous sampling process can help control a number of potential biases and is one of the most powerful tools for obtaining useful and valid information. Since the selection of participants is so important, deciding upon sampling procedures and size are areas where a small amount of expert advice can go a long way

Using multiple measures decreases the likelihood of drawing wrong conclusions.

toward increasing the validity and usefulness of your evaluation. In instances where participants hesitate to be interviewed, offering incentives such as cash, payments, or free tickets may help, as shown in the case of Washington Performing Arts on the following page.

The case study of CITYFOLK below shows how a presenter can use both qualitative and quantitative evaluation techniques.

Using Both Qualitative and Quantitative Evaluation Methods:

CITYFOLK

CITYFOLK, based in Dayton, Ohio, is dedicated to celebrating diversity and affirming the human spirit by providing the best in folk, ethnic, and traditional arts. For the Dayton Stories Project, CITYFOLK organized an extended residency with Roadside Theater, Junebug Productions, and the local Human Race Theater to engage the community in the artistic process and increase participation by African-American and Appalachian audiences. CITYFOLK used both formal and informal methods to evaluate this effort to elicit, perform, and document the stories of the people of the city.

Each residency visit ended with an evaluation session. During final meetings with story circles, residency actors engaged in discussion with participants about their experiences. After the culminating community-sharing event at the end of the project, the advisory committee, residency companies, and story circle participants held a day-long evaluation meeting. In addition, CITYFOLK staff members measured the project's effectiveness by observing participants. They knew that the project was successful when they saw participants smile and the "light bulbs go off over their heads."

CITYFOLK conducted more formal assessments by distributing evaluation forms at events, which included such questions as "did this evening presentation give you a better understanding of another culture?" Audience survey results revealed that individuals who did not usually participate in cultural activities were very satisfied and deepened their understanding of the arts.

Encouraging Participation in Evaluations:

Washington Performing Arts

Washington Performing Arts Society (WPAS) in the District of Columbia employed a variety of methods, including surveys, interviews, and group debriefings, to assess the effectiveness of "Oyelo Outload with the Nuyorican Poets." The project aimed to nurture audiences from the Latino and African-American communities and introduce them to poetry and text-based performance art.

WPAS used surveys from workshop participants and audience members to assess the "user-friendliness" of the workshops, the skill level of the poets conducting workshops and performing, the accessibility of tickets, the number of new audience members, and the interest in poetry performances. Furthermore, WPAS gathered feedback through interviews and group debriefings with artists and partners. WPAS required that they participate in these discussions before they were paid, to ensure that they dedicated enough time to the evaluation process.

Step 4   Analyze Evaluation Data

In reviewing data, remember the following two principles: (1) Evaluation is not punitive; and (2) there is no pass-fail system—a grade is not given. Rather, evaluation allows you to learn about and improve programs. Your realities—good, bad, and in-between—comprise and define the reality of what arts organizations live through every season. Addressing issues and problems that arise is part of the process.

The good news is that we live in an age in which computers have radically simplified the process of analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data. What researchers used to work on for weeks with index cards, the average personal computer can now perform systematically in a much shorter time. However, computers only know what we tell them, so your challenge is to combine your insight and experience with technology to consolidate large amounts of information into a summary form that can help stakeholders grasp, absorb, make decisions, and, if need be, modify programs.

For simpler evaluations, spreadsheets developed on a PC can consolidate data. Software such as D-base, Excel, and MS-Access can perform limited quantitative statistics such as cross-tabulation, averages, and standard deviations, but do not produce extensive visual aids. For in-depth evaluations and statistical analysis, more sophisticated software such as SPSS can produce graphics that illustrate the trends and distribution of data.

Qualitative data are usually studied using *content analysis,* a systematic review of the material to identify issues and themes. You can review data by reading them carefully, noting salient points and recurring themes. Word processing and database software are excellent aids in coding and sorting data.

The report that summarizes the evaluation is crucial; often it is the only documentation and evidence that stakeholders, including funders, review and consider. The report remains in your organization as the record and testimonial of your hard work.

After a lengthy research process, you may wish to produce an all-out encyclopedia of numbers, percentages, and facts, but your work is best served by summarizing the data and stating your main findings. As long as you can justify your observations if asked and they can be clearly traced to the original data, summarizing helps the reader. It may be useful to involve several stakeholders in this process, incorporating their response and feedback into the report before it is disseminated. Extracting a one- to five-page executive summary will convey the report's salient points to a broader readership.

Drawing conclusions should be done carefully, preferably in conjunction with someone who understands research methods and statistics. There is a tendency for the well-intentioned or novice researcher to attach too much weight and too many conclusions to limited, or biased, data. For example, in a small midwestern children's theater company, conclusions were drawn about a program's value based on one focus group (limited data collection) of twenty-six participants (three times the usual size, meaning that each person spoke for a short time). The participants were parent volunteers who were talking about how well their children performed (self-reporting that may indicate a positive bias). The bottom line is, if your conclusions are wrong, what might it cost the organization?

However thoughtfully designed, carefully conducted, or statistically valid, evaluations are useful only if the stakeholders review, consider, and act on their findings. After reviewing the findings, stakeholders should collectively consider and develop any final recommendations. A positive evaluation is not necessarily a perfect evaluation. There is some likelihood that your research may unearth some mixed or negative information or help pinpoint areas for growth and improvement. Sometimes the negative information helps us most because it challenges our assumptions.

We tend to worry about what and how to report to funders, particularly if some of the information in our evaluation is mixed. Funders do not expect you to be perfect, but they want to be kept informed about your programs. You may choose to produce internal and external versions of the report, whereby the former reports on internal minutiae that are important to your staff and the latter version is shorter and speaks to overarching themes that are more suitable for public distribution.

Finally, keep in mind that evaluation should be an ongoing—rather than a one-shot—process. Periodic evaluations clarify which activities are falling between the cracks, which strategies need to be refined or abandoned, which evaluative systems need to be improved, and which unforeseen challenges or boons have occurred. When these are systematically brought to light, the planners in your organization have the opportunity to learn and to consciously maintain or change course.

chapter 11

Making a Commitment to Cultural Participation

Audience development is critical to the future of the performing arts and literature. Well planned and evaluated audience development projects have the potential to transform the cultural landscape. Projects described in this handbook are already having major impacts upon the visibility of and consumer demand for the arts in this nation. Projects that have been piloted locally and are now in the planning stages for national implementation will also make significant contributions to the visibility, appreciation, and demand for quality performing arts and literature.

The success of a cultural participation project depends upon the quality of its planning and evaluation. If these mechanisms are not intrinsic to the host organization's culture, it is unlikely that the project will achieve its full potential. For these reasons, this handbook concludes with a set of recommendations that will help make planning and evaluation an integral aspect of organizational operation.

What the previous chapter makes clear is that planning and evaluation are not discrete activities. Evaluation not only reinforces past planning, but informs future planning, creating a vibrant continuum that brings organizations to whole new levels of vitality and achievement. Planning happens not just on the periodic, grand-scale level but also on a daily basis, whether it is a staff member's conscientious effort to fulfill a planned task in a timely fashion or a board member's sug-gestion of a new marketing strategy to achieve a stated audience development goal. Planning takes place when routine procedures of program scheduling are transformed by the integration of audience feedback from a season's worth of attendance surveys, or joint board/staff committees meet on an ongoing basis to consider specific initiatives.

When planning is fully integrated into an organization's way of doing business, it:

- empowers board and staff members, increasing understanding of their own importance to the well-being of the organization;

> Well-planned and evaluated audience development projects have the potential to transform the cultural landscape.

- improves efficiency and builds a greater sense of accountability, especially when evaluation is conducted thoroughly and consistently;
- makes possible changes that seem otherwise insurmountable, whether repositioning an entire organization, attracting new audiences, building a wider, more reliable donor base, or constructing an adequate infrastructure;
- transforms crisis-management organizations into forward thinking, effective institutions;

Well-planned audience development initiatives have the potential to change the lives of millions of people and relocate the arts at the center of everyday life.

- renews vigor and vision in organizations that may have become complacent or enmeshed in old problems or patterns.

The complete integration of planning into an organization can be achieved by:

- Engaging full board and staff in planning and evaluation: This promotes a sense of commitment and accountability at all levels. If this does not occur, both implementation and evaluation will break down and planning will fail to become an ongoing process.
- Maintaining open communication with strategic partners and third-party providers: This can include featured artists and workshop leaders as well as strategic liaisons like the community leaders, librarians, or school teachers described in case studies, sharing insights, information, and concerns that will inform new and existing initiatives.
- Assigning key board and/or staff members responsibility as "plan watchdogs": Assignment of such watchdogs will help keep fulfillment of goals and implementation of new strategies from falling between the cracks of business as usual. These persons may also be responsible for compiling evaluation data and making periodic planning reports to the full board and staff.
- Scheduling frequent staff, departmental, or special committee meetings to ensure consistent implementation, evaluation, and periodic revision of goals and strategies: Monthly staff meetings can help to ensure that the day-to-day practices are in place to support implementation and to reveal any unforeseen challenges. Departmental or committee meetings may be required to address certain strategies (such as marketing plan, development, or membership reconfiguration).
- Holding annual planning and evaluation meetings with board and staff: Such meetings provide the opportunity to take stock, measure progress, and determine the effectiveness of strategies and appropriateness of goals.
- Planning to plan again: By building in a schedule for the next major planning process, organizations ensure that they will remain responsible to themselves and responsive to the environments they serve.

Ongoing planning and evaluation is essential to an organization's relevance to its community and the field within which it operates. As long as an organization has a mission to fulfill and a vision to guide its leaders, planning will serve as the tool that can translate mission into service and vision into results. As the case studies highlighted in this manual make clear, well-planned audience development initiatives have the potential to change the lives of millions of people and relocate the arts at the center of everyday life.

Notes

[1]ALN participants are included in the acknowledgments.

[2]National Endowment for the Arts Research Division, *1997 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts,* Note no. 70, September 1998.

[3]"Examining Why People Participate in the Arts," RAND Research Profile, RAND, 1999.

[4]Bruce Coppock, executive director, Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, "Tweaking the System," a speech delivered at the October 10, 1995, Grantmakers in the Arts annual conference.

[5]"Examining Why People Participate in the Arts," RAND Research Profile, RAND, 1999.

[6]Nello McDaniel and George Thorn, *Learning Audiences: Adult Arts Participation and the Learning Consciousness,* (New York: Association of Performing Arts Presenters, 1998).

[7]Romalyn Eisenstark Tilghman, *Audience Development, A Planning Toolbox for Partners* (Washington, D.C.: Association of Performing Arts Presenters, 1994).

[8]Gary Stern, *Marketing Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations* (St. Paul, Minnesota: Amherst Wilder Foundation, 1990).

[9]The section on documentation is derived from Paul Connolly and Marcelle Hinand, *For the Record: Documenting Performing Arts Audience Development Initiatives* (Washington, D.C.: Association of Performing Arts Presenters, 1999).

Appendices

Appendix A: Worksheets

2.1 Establishing a Commitment to Audience Development

2.2 Organizational Infrastructure Assessment Survey

2.3 Evaluating Your Record of Programs and Services

2.4 Understanding Your Audience

2.5 Assessing Community Relations

2.6 Assessing Your Organization's Capacity for Planning and Managing a Successful Audience Development Initiative

3.1 Historical Analysis of Your Organization

3.2 Contextual Analysis

3.3 Audience Profile Discussion Questions

3.4 Community Snapshot Discussion Questions

3.5 Vision and Perception Discussion Questions

3.6 Sample Perception Survey

3.7 Refining Vision and Mission

4.1a Describing Current Audiences

4.1b Categorizing Audiences

4.2 Identifying Unmet Needs

4.3 Describing Similar Organizations

4.4 Revisiting Organizational Vision and Mission Discussion Questions

4.5 Selecting Target Audiences

4.6 Setting Audience Development Goals

5.1 Analyzing Current Audience Development Strategies

5.2 Designing Audience Development Strategies

5.3 Coordinating Audience Development Strategies Questions

6.1 Setting Market and Public Relations Goals and Strategies

6.2 Creating a Marketing Plan

7.1 Setting Organizational Infrastructure Goals and Strategies

8.1 Forecasting a Budget

9.1 Setting Documentation Goals and Identifying Methods to Reach Them

9.2 Planning and Managing Resources for Documentation

10.1 Benchmarking Progress and Scheduling Evaluation

10.2 Program Evaluation Logic Model

10.3 Creating an Evaluation Plan

(See Exhibit 2.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

1. Why is increased audience development important for your organization?

2. How will it benefit your organization?

3. How will it benefit the community your organization serves?

4. How might it benefit the field at large?

5. How might it benefit society at large?

This survey is designed to help reveal the strengths and limitations of your current organizational infrastructure. It may be helpful to fill this out with the help of a small committee, including key board and staff members who are fully cognizant of your organization's infrastructure issues. Please check the appropriate descriptive terms for each of the following aspects of your infrastructure.

Human Resources

Board	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Breadth/depth of board professional expertise	_____	_____	_____
Attendance rate at board meetings	_____	_____	_____
Level of familiarity and involvement with organization	_____	_____	_____
Contribution (cash, service, or product) to organization	_____	_____	_____
Recruitment/evaluation procedure	_____	_____	_____
Committee structure	_____	_____	_____
Board leadership	_____	_____	_____
Understanding of formal statement of expectation	_____	_____	_____
Up-to-date bylaws and/or constitution	_____	_____	_____

Staff Expertise	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Expertise in field of literature	_____	_____	_____
Program planning and development	_____	_____	_____
Financial planning and management	_____	_____	_____
Membership experience	_____	_____	_____
Public relations experience	_____	_____	_____
Marketing experience	_____	_____	_____
Fund-raising experience	_____	_____	_____
Database design familiarity	_____	_____	_____
Database management	_____	_____	_____
Communications technology	_____	_____	_____
Clerical support (typing, filing, reception)	_____	_____	_____
Maintenance (cleaning, supplies, etc.)	_____	_____	_____
Volunteer coordination	_____	_____	_____

Personnel Management	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Staff manual	_____	_____	_____
Formal hiring/firing procedure	_____	_____	_____
Annual evaluation procedure	_____	_____	_____
Appropriate compensation: competitive salaries	_____	_____	_____
Health benefit	_____	_____	_____
401(k) or other retirement plan	_____	_____	_____
Regular staff meeting	_____	_____	_____
Communication between board and staff	_____	_____	_____

Facilities

Check off the term that best describes organization's facilities (including dedicated, shared, or easily accessed pro bono facilities):

	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Private office space for executive staff	_____	_____	_____
Shared office space for administrative/clerical staff	_____	_____	_____
Small meeting rooms for seminars, workshops, etc.	_____	_____	_____
Mid-size auditorium (seating @100–250)	_____	_____	_____
Large auditorium (seating @251–500+)	_____	_____	_____
Storage space	_____	_____	_____
Restrooms	_____	_____	_____
Catering facility	_____	_____	_____
Handicapped accessibility	_____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Equipment

Check off the term that best describes organization's equipment (including dedicated, shared, or easily accessed pro bono equipment):

	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Office furniture	_____	_____	_____
Computer station	_____	_____	_____
Printer	_____	_____	_____
Software: word processing	_____	_____	_____
Database system(s)	_____	_____	_____
Graphic design/desktop publishing	_____	_____	_____
Spreadsheet and accounting	_____	_____	_____
Reproduction equipment	_____	_____	_____
Telecommunications systems	_____	_____	_____
Desk set	_____	_____	_____
Voicemail system	_____	_____	_____
Intercom	_____	_____	_____
Other electronic communication	_____	_____	_____
Facsimile machine	_____	_____	_____
E-mail capacity	_____	_____	_____
Internet access	_____	_____	_____
Web site	_____	_____	_____
Conferencing equipment	_____	_____	_____
Public address system	_____	_____	_____
Video recording equipment	_____	_____	_____
Audio recording equipment	_____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Administration
Please check off the term that best describes practices and/or capacity in the following areas:

Program Planning and Evaluation

	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Formal planning process (annual/seasonal)	_____	_____	_____
Use of surveys or other tools to gather feedback	_____	_____	_____
System for gathering/processing audience data	_____	_____	_____
Worksheet year- or season-end evaluation process	_____	_____	_____

Public Relations and Marketing

	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Formal planning process (annual/seasonal)	_____	_____	_____
Use of surveys or other tools to gather market data	_____	_____	_____
System for gathering, processing market data	_____	_____	_____
Regular media contact process for events	_____	_____	_____
Regular marketing of events	_____	_____	_____
Ongoing publicity/marketing of overall organization	_____	_____	_____
Formal year- or season-end evaluation process	_____	_____	_____
Attractive printed materials (stationery, press release)	_____	_____	_____
Effective, attractive promotional materials (calendar, identity brochure, newsletter)	_____	_____	_____

Finance

	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Annual budgeting procedures	_____	_____	_____
Bookkeeping/accounting procedure	_____	_____	_____
Quarterly budget to actual analysis	_____	_____	_____
Quarterly cash flow projecting	_____	_____	_____
Fulfillment of earned income capacity	_____	_____	_____
Management of investments	_____	_____	_____
Management/growth of endowment	_____	_____	_____
Debt avoidance	_____	_____	_____

Fund-raising and Development

	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Annual fund-raising and development planning process	_____	_____	_____
System for gathering/processing donor data	_____	_____	_____
Formal year- or season-end evaluation process	_____	_____	_____
Cultivation process (w/Board input) for donors	_____	_____	_____
Solicitation process (w/Board input) for donors	_____	_____	_____
Foundation support	_____	_____	_____
Government support	_____	_____	_____
Corporate support	_____	_____	_____
Small/local business support	_____	_____	_____
Individual contribution	_____	_____	_____
Major donor contributions	_____	_____	_____

Membership

	Excellent	Sufficient	Insufficient
Annual membership planning process	_____	_____	_____
System for gathering/processing member data	_____	_____	_____
Formal solicitation/benefit fulfillment process	_____	_____	_____
Annual evaluation process	_____	_____	_____
Desirability of benefit	_____	_____	_____
Participation at all levels of membership	_____	_____	_____
Frequency of communication w/members	_____	_____	_____

1. Does your organization have a reputation for presenting programs and services of high artistic merit?

   Describe your most visible or most successful program and services:

2. Are programs and services well attended?

   Which programs are attended at capacity levels?

   Which programs are under-attended?

3. Is there a regular process for planning and evaluating programs and services?

   Describe this process:

1. Have you conducted in-depth research about your existing and potential audiences?

   Do you have baseline data about your current audiences?

   Do you consistently survey your audiences?

   Have you conducted qualitative as well as quantitative research (e.g., interviews, focus groups, and town meetings versus multiple-choice surveys)?

2. Describe your current audience:

   How many people actually attend your events and participate in your programs?

   What are their characteristics (ethnicity, age, gender, education and income levels, place of residence, level of access to arts programming, etc.)?

   What are their habits (do they attend more than one program annually; attend a variety of programs; frequent bookstores, libraries, cultural organizations, etc.)?

What are their interests (what kind of arts do they enjoy; do they prefer participating in the arts alone, attending live events, going to workshops, discussing literature or performances)?

3. Describe the audiences that are under served by your organization:

Are there significant sectors of your area's population that are under represented in your current audiences? Please describe these:

Are there more people who are similar to, or share the interests of, your current audiences who are not participating in your activities? Please describe these:

4. Identify possible target audiences for development:

Can you identify those audiences that are not already being served by other organizations in your area of operation?

Have you identified obstacles that would prevent you from successfully serving these audiences, or serving them more deeply?

Can you determine which of these under served audiences correspond well to your organization's offerings or mission?

1. Identify the institutions with which your organization is already in direct contact.

   Peer organizations (i.e., similar institutions in the region or nation):

   Other organizations serving your current or potential audiences (e.g., other arts groups; sports organizations events; public and private libraries, schools, etc.):

   Trade or other service organizations that serve parallel constituencies (e.g., Association of Performing Arts Presenters, American Library Association, National Association of English Teachers, etc.):

   Funders:

   Government agencies and task forces (e.g., cultural affairs offices, education or literacy task forces, etc.):

   Media:

   Others:

2. List key organizations or institutions with which your organization is not currently in contact, but should be:

3. List key segments of your community that your organization is highly visible to or engaged with (e.g., opera lovers, children, literary audiences, librarians, cultural affairs office):

4. List key segments of the community to which your organization is invisible (see list above):

   Peer organizations (i.e., similar institutions in the region or nation):

   Other organizations serving your current or potential audiences (e.g. other arts groups, sports organizations, schools, etc.):

   Trade or other service organizations that serve parallel constituencies (e.g., Association of Performing Arts Presenters, American Library Association, National Association of English Teachers, etc.):

   Funders:

   Government agencies and task forces (e.g., cultural affairs offices, education or literacy task forces, etc.):

   Media:

   Others:

Answering the questions below will help your organization assess its capacity to initiate and carry out an audience development initiative. Your board and staff can discuss differing views about your organization's capacity and determine how your organization can do better in those areas that need improvement.

Vision	Yes	Somewhat	No
• Does your organization have a clear vision for the audience development project?	____	____	____
• Has your leadership defined success and failure for the project and established benchmarks for performance?	____	____	____
• Do your audience development goals and activities stem from and align with your organization's mission?	____	____	____
• Do your organization's leadership, board, and staff share and buy-in to the vision?	____	____	____
• Have you communicated this vision to your organization's current audience and the community?	____	____	____
• Is the work your organization wants to present aligned with your project's goals and vision?	____	____	____
• Is your leadership interested in and committed to your organization's audience development goals?	____	____	____
• Has your leadership translated the shared vision into specific measurable project goals and clear expectations and plans for all involved with the project?	____	____	____
• Is there agreement among all project participants that the plan is the best way to proceed?	____	____	____

Willingness and Ability to Change

• Are the leaders of your organization willing to allow your organization to change if it is necessary to carry out the audience development project vision?	____	____	____
• Is your organization open to bringing new people into the organization and involving existing constituents in new ways?	____	____	____
• Is your organization willing to consider changing the composition of its staff and board to reflect new types of people who become involved with the organization?	____	____	____
• Is your organization capable of devising new marketing, public relations, and fund-raising strategies to support outreach efforts into new communities?	____	____	____

Organizational Capacity and Resources

• Does your organization have adequate financial and human resources to carry out the project?	____	____	____
• Does your organization have the administrative infrastructure and systems to support and track audience development activities?	____	____	____

	Yes	Somewhat	No

- Is your audience development effort being planned within the context of an overall organizational strategic plan? ____ ____ ____
- Have all the areas or departments in the organization been involved in planning the project? ____ ____ ____
- Are your marketing strategies based on solid data and integrated with programmatic and audience development plans? ____ ____ ____
- Does your organization have the necessary infrastructure to communicate with your target audience and other constituents? ____ ____ ____

Connection to Community

- Does your organization view itself as an integral part of its community? ____ ____ ____
- Did the community participate in forming the vision for your project? ____ ____ ____
- Does your organization actively gain knowledge about the interests, concerns, and motivations of the community? ____ ____ ____
- Have sufficient data about the current and potential audience informed your project goals? ____ ____ ____
- Does your organization engage in ongoing dialogues with the community to guide organizational decisions? ____ ____ ____
- Does your organization develop programs that are relevant to the wants and needs of the community? ____ ____ ____

Ability to Tell the Story About Audience Building

- Does your organization have a clear sense of who its key constituents are? ____ ____ ____
- Has a strategy been developed to communicate with all key constituents involved in the project, including staff, leadership, board, artists, audiences, media, funders, and potential audiences? ____ ____ ____
- Does your organization have a plan to collect information, document aspects of the project, and utilize that documentation to communicate with key constituents? ____ ____ ____

Select one benchmark year against which you will compare figures for the most recently completed fiscal year. The benchmark year should provide figures that predate major institutional changes that have directed recent growth. As a rule, this year should not be more than ten years ago.

Aspect of Operations	Benchmark year	Past fiscal year	Numerical growth/decline	Percentile growth/decline
Service				
No. of workshops				
No. other programs:				
Attendance/readings				
Attendance/workshops				
Attendance/other:				
No. of members				
Other: _____				
Total annual program expense				
Support Infrastructure				
Total annual income				
Contributed income				
Admission income				
Membership income				
Staff size (FTE)				
Board size				
Other: _____				

Historical Analysis Discussion Questions

1. Have programs and services shifted significantly? Describe shift.

   Is the organization offering more programs and services than before?   Describe.

Have some programs or services been dropped? Briefly describe.

Have new programs or services been added? Briefly describe.

2. Has overall attendance increased or decreased?

Are audiences growing for some programs and dwindling for others?

Is membership growing, shrinking, or maintaining at the same level?

3. Has infrastructure (board and staff size and skills, financial support, equipment and facilities) grown, shrunk, or remained static?

4. Is growth in expenditure keeping pace with growth in income?

Is audience growth paralleled by increasing admissions income and/orprogram grants?

Is audience growth paralleled by increasing membership size?

Organization's Name	Main Purpose	Audience Description	Annual Attendance	Performances	Educational Programs	Number of Members	Other
(your organization)							
(other organizations)							

Contextual Analysis Discussion Questions

1. Has the number of organizations offering arts programs and services proliferated or declined in your area? List major changes:

2. Are you offering some of the same programs and services as these other organizations? List these:

3. Are you serving audiences that are the same, different, or overlapping? Describe:

4. Is your organizational infrastructure comparable to that of peer organizations (e.g., significantly larger, smaller, more comprehensive, on a par, etc.)? Describe:

5. Does your organization have shared concerns with peer organizations? Describe:

6. Does your organization face similar challenges? Describe:

7. Are there resources and experiences you may be able to share? Describe:

8. Might partnerships with one or more of these organizations improve service to shared audiences or improve impact of overlapping programs? Describe:

9. Define the niche that your organization fills in the community:

10. Can you eliminate some programs and strengthen other offerings to define a clearer niche and identity for your organization?

(See Exhibit 3.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

1. Is there a typical profile that describes the majority of your audience members? Describe:

    Are there distinct groups with shared characteristics and habits? Describe:

    Do these audiences cluster around different programs and services? How?

2. Have the organization's audiences changed significantly within recent years? Describe how:

3. Is your overall audience growing or shrinking? Are certain groups within your audience growing or shrinking? Describe:

    Has the body of people who make up your membership changed? Describe:

4. Are audience members getting "stuck in ruts" or are they experimenting with a variety of offerings?

1. Have area demographics shifted recently? If so, how (e.g., aging, becoming more ethnically diverse, experiencing rising or decreasing income or education levels)?

2. Has the community within which your organization operates developed new needs? Describe:

3. Has the neighborhood where your organization is located undergone change? Describe:

4. Are there any other external factors in your community that may impact your organization now or in the near future?

Vision

1. What was the original vision (shared sense of the organization's potential role or impact) of the organization's founders?

2. How was this expressed through the organization's mission statement, programs, and services?

3. Is this vision still shared by the organization's current leaders?

4. How is this expressed today through the organization's mission statement, programs, and services?

5. Does the expression of this vision and mission still match the needs and demands of the community the organization serves?

Perception

1. How is the organization perceived within the community?

2. Is the organization recognized within its immediate circle (volunteers, members, audiences) and beyond (funders, business community, general public) for its programs and services?

3. What image does the organization have within the community at large?

4. Do public perceptions correspond with the organization's current vision, mission, and programs?

5. Does the organization have a public "image" at all?

Use this or a modified survey to conduct interviews with fifteen or more representatives of your organization's community, including current and potential funders, major donors, former and current members, former board members, staff at peer organizations, and others. Surveys such as this are most effective if conducted by an "outsider" (e.g., someone not currently on board or staff of the organization). It may be necessary to offer the participants anonymity to best ensure frank responses.

Name of survey participant (optional): _____

Organization or constituency represented: _____

Name of interviewer: _____

Date of interview: _____

1. Are you familiar with [organization name]?

   ❑ very familiar   ❑ somewhat familiar   ❑ unfamiliar

2. Have you attended the organization's programs or participated in its services?

   ❑ frequently   ❑ infrequently   ❑ never

   If yes, please list the programs or services you have participated in:

   ❑ performances   ❑ lectures   ❑ workshops or seminars   ❑ membership   ❑ other

3. What was your impression of this (these) program(s):

   ❑ excellent quality   ❑ satisfactory quality   ❑ unsatisfactory

   Please explain response:

4. What do you think is the most important offering of [organization name] to the community?

5. Do you think [organization name] might serve the community better?

   ❑ yes   ❑ no

   If yes, how?

6. On a scale of one to five, rate the organization for the following qualities:

Professional   5 4 3 2 1   unprofessional
Responsive to community 5 4 3 2 1   unresponsive to community
Exciting and interesting   5 4 3 2 1   static and uninteresting
Accessible to audience   5 4 3 2 1   inaccessible or elitist

other (please describe):

7. Please explain your responses:

8. What improvements would you like to see in [organization name]?

9. What would you like [organization name] to continue doing?

10. Any other comments?

Invite your planning committee to participate in the following group exercise. It can be helpful to have committee members answer the questions individually, then share the responses with the group at large, to discover the full range of responses made to the questions and to build a consensus.

1. Imagine that you are reading an article written ten years from now describing the impact that your organization has had upon its area of operation. List the most important elements of that impact:

2. According to this article, what organizational values or priorities does this impact imply?

3. What is (are) the program(s) or service(s) that has(have) brought about this impact, according to the article?

4. What people are affected by these programs and services, and how are they affected?

5. If your organization already has a formal vision statement, do the answers to questions above correspond to it? If not, how would you revise its vision statement to reflect the above responses?

6. Similarly, compare your organization's mission statement with the responses to the above questions. Does it need to be adjusted to reflect the desired impact, institutional values, and means of expressing them that were articulated through this exercise? If so, how would you revise it?

7. Are the programs and services described in question 3 currently in place?

8. Are the audiences described in question 4 currently served at the level described in the hypothetical article?

Make as many copies of this sheet as necessary to list all program and service categories (such as performances, reading series, workshops, membership, etc.) and their corresponding audiences. When complete, highlight those audiences listed that comprise the majority of attendants at each program or service category. (See Exhibit 4.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

Program or Service: _____
Audiences:

Program or Service: _____
Audiences:

Program or Service: _____
Audiences:

Select categories that can be used to describe your organization's current audiences and define the characteristics of the audiences that conform to each category. Categories may describe type of involvement with organization, level of engagement with the arts, demographic characteristics, corresponding constituencies, or other categories that are appropriate to your organization. Use one sheet for each set of corresponding categories that you select to describe audiences. (See Exhibit 4.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

Category:_____

Characteristics:

Category:_____

Characteristics:

Category:_____

Characteristics:

For each audience category described in Worksheet 4.1b list unmet needs. Make as many copies of sheet as needed.

Audience Category	Unmet Needs

Make as many copies of this worksheet as you need to describe other arts organizations within your area of operation.

Organization: _____

Primary service: _____

Primary audiences:

_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____

Organization:

Primary service:

Primary audiences:

_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____

Organization: _____

Primary service: _____

Primary audiences:

_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____

Discussion Questions

Invite your planning committee to reread the organization's vision and/or mission statement and consider the following questions.

1. What audiences are implied in your mission and/or vision statement?

2. In what ways does your mission/vision statement imply that your organization will engage potential audiences with the arts?

3. According to your mission/vision statement, how will those audiences be enriched by participating in your organization's offerings?

4. What parameters does your organization use to define theater/literature/performances/dance in its vision/mission statement?

Ask your planning committee to define appropriate audiences for development initiatives and describe the desired impact upon these audiences.

Target Audience	**Desired Impact**
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

For each target audience described on Worksheet 4.5, articulate a corresponding audience development goal defining the desired impact of initiatives upon the target audience. Goals should, whenever possible, include measurable results so that progress can be monitored.

Goal 1: _____

_____

Goal 2: _____

_____

Goal 3: _____

_____

Goal 4: _____

_____

Goal 5: _____

_____

Goal 6: _____

_____

Goal 7: _____

_____

Goal 8: _____

_____

Goal 9: _____

_____

Goal 10: _____

_____

Discussion Questions

Begin this exercise by returning to the list of programs and attending audiences that you developed on Worksheet 4.1 and responding to the following discussion questions.

1. (a) Are programs or services already in place that serve audiences targeted for development?

   (b) If so, why are these programs successfully attracting these audiences? What strategies, expressed or inherent, are at work?

2. (a) What programs attract crossover audiences (e.g., members from two or more distinct audience categories)?

   (b) What strategies, expressed or inherent, are at work in these programs?

   (c) Do they have potential as models for "cultivation" programs that attract and provide advancement opportunities for specific target audiences?

3. (a) What programs consistently sell out, or nearly sell out?

   (b) Why are these programs so successful?

   (c) What strategy(ies) can be articulated that expresses the elements of these programs' success?

4. (a) What other organizations provide services, arts or nonarts, to the target audience(s)?

   (b) Are there particular strategies that can be learned from these organizations in developing new literary programs to serve these audiences?

(c) Would a strategic partnership with this (these) other organization(s) provide access to the target audience(s)?

5. (a) What marketing strategies are currently employed?

   (b) What audiences are they targeting?

   (c) What audiences are overlooked?

   (d) Do audiences targeted by current marketing overlap with the target audiences indicated in Chapter 3?

   (e) If not, what new marketing strategies can be employed to successfully reach new target audiences?

6. (a) What messages do marketing materials communicate?

   (b) Are these messages in line with the organization's audience development goals?

   (c) Are they presented in language and format and with images that are accessible totarget audiences?

   (d) Do they correct or reinforce misperceptions that may have been identified in the community perception survey in chapter 3?

Make one sheet for each audience development goal and describe corresponding strategies. Note: Some strategies will have crossover applications supporting more than one goal. (See Exhibit 5.1 for a filled-in version of this worksheet.)

Goal: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Supporting Strategies: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Reviewing the strategies enumerated in the previous exercise, planners may want to consider the following discussion questions.

1. Do proposed programs and services as a whole provide access and appropriate content for all target audiences identified?

2. Do the strategies support and complement each other? If not, can potentially complementary strategies be revised to reinforce each other?

3. Do the strategies provide opportunities to measure the overall success of their implementation?

Make one sheet for each marketing and public relations goal and describe corresponding strategies. Note: Some strategies will have crossover applications supporting more than one goal.

Goal: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Supporting Strategies: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(See Exhibit 6.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

Main Marketing Goals:

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	START DATE	END DATE	RESOURCES NEEDED
Product(s) and Service(s)				
•				
•				
•				
Distribution				
•				
•				
•				
Pricing				
•				
•				
•				
Promotion				
•				
•				
•				

When working through Chapter 7 of this handbook, fill out only the "goal" and "strategies" sections. Later in chapter 8, you will be referred to this form to complete the "task facilitator" and "schedule" columns. (See Exhibit 7.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

Board Development

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Staff Development

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Human Resource Management

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Facilities

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Public Relations and Marketing

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Finances

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Equipment

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Program Planning and Evaluation

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Fund-raising and Development

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Membership

Goal:		
Strategies	**Task Facilitator**	**Schedule**

Use the template below to create a budget for your audience development initiative.

Strategy/Tasks	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Project cost/income
Task costs:	- $	- $	- $	- $
	- $	- $	- $	- $
	- $	- $	- $	- $
Task income:	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
Year-end Profit/Loss	+/- $	+/- $	+/- $	+/- $
Strategy/Tasks	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Project cost/income**
Task costs:	- $	- $	- $	- $
	- $	- $	- $	- $
	- $	- $	- $	- $
Task income:	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
Year-end Profit/Loss	+/- $	+/- $	+/- $	+/- $
Strategy/Tasks	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Project cost/income**
Task costs:	- $	- $	- $	- $
	- $	- $	- $	- $
	- $	- $	- $	- $
Task income:	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
Year-end Profit/Loss	+/- $	+/- $	+/- $	+/- $
Strategy/Tasks	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Project cost/income**
Task costs:	- $	- $	- $	- $
	- $	- $	- $	- $
	- $	- $	- $	- $
Task income:	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
	+ $	+ $	+ $	+ $
Year-end Profit/Loss	+/- $	+/- $	+/- $	+/- $

It is important for the presenter, artists, and community partners to determine and agree on goals of the documentation at the start of the project. Specify your goals in the left-hand column. In the right-hand column, identify possible documentation methods you can use to reach those goals. (See Exhibit 9.2 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

Goal	Methods

The chart below provides a framework for developing a documentation plan. For each documentation method you include in the left-hand column, specify the associated tasks. For each task, indicate who is responsible for and involved with making it happen, the financial resources needed, and the schedule. Develop this plan with artists or community partners involved with the project and identify areas where you need to improve coordination. Integrate this plan with your audience development, programmatic, and marketing plans. Update the plan regularly and use it to keep track of your progress.

1. Method:	People Involved	Costs	Schedule
a) Task:			
b) Task:			
c) Task:			

2. Method:	People Involved	Costs	Schedule
a) Task:			
b) Task:			
c) Task:			

3. Method:	People Involved	Costs	Schedule
a) Task:			
b) Task:			
c) Task:			

4. Method:	People Involved	Costs	Schedule
a) Task:			
b) Task:			
c) Task:			

Goals and Strategies	Benchmarks (qualitative or quantitative results)	Evaluation Strategy	Schedule

Begin by filling in the goals and objectives for your audience development initiative. Then identify the program's inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. (See Exhibit 10.1 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

Goals (hopes and dreams for the program):

Objectives (measurable desired accomplishments):

Inputs ➡	Activities ➡	Outputs ➡	Outcomes
What resources do you need for the program/initiative?	What happens during your program/initiative?	What does your program/initiative produce?	How will your clients or constituents be different as a result of your program/initiative? What will they know or be able to do?
•	•	Immediate ➡ Long Term	
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•

First, write down the critical evaluation questions you want to answer. Then determine the indicators, information, and data collection required to adequately respond to these questions. (See Exhibit 10.2 for a filled-in sample of this worksheet.)

Evaluation Questions *What critical questions do you want to answer?*	Indicators *What will indicate a successful answer to the evaluation questions?*	Information required *What is the source of the information you will need?*	Data Collection Methods *What tools will you use to collect the information you need?*
Question 1:			
Question 2:			
Question 3:			

Resources

The following publications and organizations can provide additional information about cultural participation and audience development. Many of them were used in researching and writing this handbook.

Cultural Participation and Audience Development

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