

Marketing Plan – Sample Two Year

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(Note: Who are you writing this marketing plan for? Even though this will be an internal document to help you with your marketing needs, you should take the time and write your marketing plan with the level of detail needed for anyone to be able to pick it up, read it and understand what is going on within your chorus.)

INTRODUCTION – WHO WE ARE

History of our Chorus

Include a detailed history of your Chorus here. You may already have this historical summary written – you may already be using it for grant applications.

Current Challenges

What are your current challenges? Take some time to document your current state of the state. These challenges could be lagging ticket sales, the need to build new audience, the need for a new performance venue.

WHERE ARE WE?

What is our Mission?

Write out your mission statement here, with any additional elaboration or detail needed.

Who is our current customer?

What do you know about your current customer, your current audience? Pull any information you have and document it here. If you have every done an audience survey, what have you learned?

You may find that you do not know who your current customer is and you identify this as an objective of your marketing plan.

If you have done any work in customer segmentation, include that information here.

Who else could be a potential customer for us?

If you know who your customers are, think about who you want to cultivate, or grow incrementally. Identify them here.

Who do we compete with for our customer's time and money?

Who is your competition?

Do not forget to look outside the arts community. Your local gay bar could be a competitor for your audience. In fact, you may find that your biggest competitors are as simple as lack of free time, lack of discretionary income and browsing the internet at home.

Analyzing Your Local Market

This section requires a little research. Document what is known about your metropolitan area, city, town, etc. How many people live there? Where do you rank in terms of population with the rest of the country? What is the average household size?

What is their education? Median age? Household income? Interest in the arts? Interest in the LGBTQ community?

What percentage of them do you think identify as LGBTQ?

Much of this information is available online.

SWOT Analysis

A “SWOT Analysis” is a great team experience. Bring together your board of directors, or a committee of singing members, whoever you think would work together as a group and sit down to document what you believe are your organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). When you conduct your own analysis, remember you are looking at SWOT that impacts your entire organization, not just marketing. Your marketing efforts will certainly be impacted by anything you identify in this analysis.

Internal Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths: What are your organization’s internal strengths? What do you see that is in your favor? Here are some examples:

- A strong reputation for artistic and musical excellence within our gay and arts communities
- A long history within the community
- A very loyal base of ticket buyers who come to all of our shows
- Our audience sees our concerts as a good value for their dollar.
- We have one performance venue we use all the time

Weaknesses: What weaknesses do we have? These are roadblocks that are keeping us from doing everything we want to do. But since they are internal, we can control them and fix them. Here are some examples:

- We are currently \$X in debt, which keeps us from doing many things that we would like to do
- We do not have the volunteers needed to get the basics done today
- We want to expand our audience, but there is a lack of awareness about who we are and what we do

External Opportunities and Threats

Opportunities: We do see, however, opportunities that exist outside the organization that can help us achieve our goals. Here are some examples:

- Marriage equality is seeing greater acceptance nationwide and within our market.
- We have a portion of our audience that prefers to buy their tickets last minute.

We are seeing the emergence of online ticket sites and services such as Groupon that cater to this segment. There could be an opportunity to move last minute inventory through these sites and services.

- With the changing political climate, there is still an anticipated increase in public protests that support gay rights. We should be looking at these protests as an opportunity to show our support of the community by being present in some capacity.
- A new gay bar has opened in town – there could be some partnering opportunities to help us sell tickets.

Threats (over which we have little or limited control):

- The current economic situation, as our potential audience still continues to struggle to balance basic needs and entertainment.
- Rise in conservative “family values” and the backlash against the gay community, even with advances in SCOTUS and local states passing marriage equality laws.
- Our state legislature recently voted to cut back on funding for the arts.
- One of our top donors recently passed away, leaving a gap in our annual funding needs

Competitive Analysis

This is where you diagram your competition by specific categories. Prepare a chart that lists, by column, your organization and your top competitors. Then, analyze and report on each category. Here is a possible example; your report will have a column for each competitor with unique information on each category. You do not have to use all of these categories and may find others that are not included here:

	Our Chorus	Another Chorus in town	Big Performance Halls: Theatre, Orchestra, etc.	Bars	On Demand Entertainment / Stay at home
Annual Revenues	What is our annual budgeted revenue? Our competitors (discovered through research, or a guess-timate)?				
Sources	Where is the money coming from?				
Growth / Decline	Where are you seeing growth and decline? More individual donors? Less ticket sales? Speculate for your competition – but you may find it easy to find this information online				
Geographic Region	Who do they serve? Local? City wide? State wide? Beyond?				
Products	What is their “product?” For you it would be concert performances, outreach performances, CDs, etc. Do your competitor provide a product where you cannot compete, that could give them an advantage?				
Seasons	Do they have a season of performances? How long is their season? How many shows? “Bars” and “on demand entertainment” would probably have a “year round” season that never ends.				

Target Audiences	Who is their target audience? How does it compare to yours?
Prices	How much does it cost to participate?
Venues	Where do you perform? Where do you find your competitors?
Customer Service	Who provides direct customer contact? Who sells your tickets? Ushers? Has direct interaction with the customer?
Awareness	How aware is the community about your existence and the existence of your competition?

Message	What is your message to the community? Your competitor's message?
Direct Mail	How much direct mail do you do? What do your competitors do? Do any of your competitors "own" this marketing tactic? Is your mailbox full of their postcards and brochures?
Print Ads	How much print advertising do you do? What do your competitors do? Do any of your competitors "own" this?
TV Ads	Have you ever done TV Advertising? Do you see this as a viable tactic for the future? Do any of your competitors "own" this?
Radio Ads	Have you ever done radio advertising? Do any of your competitors "own" this?
Publicity	What kind of publicity? Press releases? News stories?
Internet	What are you doing on the internet? Do you have a web site? Email?
Social Media	What are you doing in social media? What is your competition doing? Have you noticed anything they are doing that you would like to do?
Other	Other categories of marketing tactics

List ten adjectives describing what benefits / thoughts / feelings our target audience gets from each competitor?	<i>Common themes from the competition:</i>	Building community and GLBT community	Quality performances	Can be yourself without repercussions	Relaxation
	Sense of community	Important to support mission	Special occasions	Sense of community	Connection / together with partner and family
	Stimulation	Serious choral music - quality	World class internationally renowned status	Party!!! Alcohol!!!	Family activity
	Escape	Value - reasonable ticket price	Belonging to something bigger	Eye candy	Safe
	Relaxation	Sense of belonging and connection	Freedom / escape	Dancing	Overstimulation during week
	Social events	Edu-tainment	Edu-tainment	Stimulation	Escape
	Status	Family activity	Stimulation	Escape	Sleep
	Be yourself	Emotional impact	Emotional impact	Flirting / sex	Watch / read / do what I want / on demand
	Quality performances	Social justice / human rights	Star power	Status / see and be seen	Internet
		Can be one's self		Expression	Walk around neighborhood

Three Key Issues

After you complete your SWOT analysis, take time to identify three key issues that are facing your organization during the time frame of this marketing plan. Here is an example:

1. The impact of our search for a new, less expensive place to perform.
 - a. This search will siphon off available resources for other efforts.
 - b. Our audience may be reluctant to go to a new venue
2. The impact of our outstanding debt on exploring new opportunities and expanding our resources.
3. We need to get our singing members and Board of Directors more engaged in selling tickets.
 - a. What keeps them from selling tickets? How can we help them?
 - b. We believe membership will become more involved in selling tickets for the concerts if we include this specific tactic in the marketing plan and position it as part of our overall plan.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

You have done your research. Identified your target audience. Identified your competitors and spent some time understanding them. Identified your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and identified three key issues that you need to keep in mind going forward.

So now – what do you want to do? Where do you want to go?

Our Visionary Goal

Close your eyes and imagine what success looks like. Here is another great team exercise: what is our visionary goal? This goal does not have to be attained during the time frame of this marketing plan, but it should be your light at the end of the tunnel. And don't be afraid to Think Big! Here is an example:

- To consistently sell out our performances.
- To become the first choice among our target audiences for entertainment that satisfies their mutual and exclusive needs for compelling artistic performance and making a difference in supporting a worthy cause (mixing entertainment and advocacy). When both conditions are met, we surprise and delight our audiences and build a loyal fan base.
- To become the “must see” holiday concert for our target audience.
- To change the minds and attitudes of the choral music loving heterosexual audience that disregards us because of our “gay” label. We choose to combat lack of understanding and knowledge with musical excellence.

Our Marketing Objectives

Identify **no more than 3 objectives** for the duration of this marketing plan. Make sure they are measurable. Here is one example:

Objective 1: Increase number of season ticket subscriptions by x% over two years

Strategy: Summarize your strategy for reaching this objective.

Summary of Tactics: You will have to document specific tactics later in the marketing plan. For now, give a summary of the tactics you will use and how many tickets, or other measure, will be sold / achieved by that tactic. Here is an example:

Appendix B details the marketing tactics that will be used over two years. Below are specific tactics that are identified to reach our goal, and total tickets sold as a result:

YEAR ONE Tactics	Tkts
Send a personal letter to all current subscribers, giving them a “heads up” and “advance notice” of the new season and new benefits that will be available to them if they renew early at the concert next week.	0
Ask from the Stage at our final concert of the current season – introduce the season and launch our “concert weekend” renewal campaign.	450
Facebook promotion through status updates from chorus and board members – Chorus members tell stories to their friends about what the Chorus means to them personally, and	10

why they want to see their friends support the organization.	
Season ticket brochure mailing – Theme of the social aspects, community and fun, celebration, all of the benefits that distinguish us from other arts organizations	110
Follow-up email blast to season ticket mailing list	20
Phone calls by board and chorus members to outstanding renewals – This is an existing tactic that has always worked well for us. We give subscribers a courtesy call to remind them that there is little time left to renew their current seats.	30
Total season tickets for Year One	620

YEAR TWO Tactics	Tkts
Executive Director and Artistic Director ask from the Stage	480
Social media promotion – Facebook and Twitter, etc.	20
Season ticket brochure mailing	110
Follow-up email blast to season ticket mailing list	40
Phone calls by board and chorus members to outstanding renewals	30
Total season tickets for Year Two	680

Objective 2: Increase Individual Single Ticket Revenue by x% over two years

Strategy: Summarize your strategy as you did with objective #1.

Summary of Tactics: Summarize your tactics as you did with objective #2.

Objective 3: Increase Season Ticket Subscriber Participation in Events by x% over two years

Strategy: Summarize your strategy as you did with objective #1.

Summary of Tactics: Summarize your tactics as you did with objective #2.

Two Year Communication Plan

What is your communication plan? Your marketing plan should acknowledge that you may have different messages for different audiences.

The two year communication plan references the 4 A's of Communication: *Attention, Awareness, Attitude, Action.*

Here is an example:

Communication Objective 1: Get current subscribers to renew season tickets

Target: current subscribers

Year One Message: *Renew your seats, and enjoy high-quality entertainment while feeling good about supporting the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus, an incredible group of ambassadors for the GLBT*

community. Continue to be a member of the Chorus family where we've welcomed you for years. Renew your seats today!

Year Two Message: *Celebrate our final year at Acme Concert Hall! It's a season of memorable favorites and new music!*

Tone (Feeling you want someone to take away/personality of product): You are speaking to me. Audience members have feelings of pride and enjoy being part of the club. We welcome everyone. People like to arrive early to enjoy the very social environment at the concert hall.

Communication Objective 2: Convert single ticket buyers to subscribers

Target: heavy arts users in our audience, go to a lot of shows, museums, etc.

Year One Message: *You have been attending our concerts. You love the Chorus. Become a subscriber to take advantage of incredible subscriber benefits while supporting the GLBT community. Become a member of the Chorus family so you can be in the know and take advantage of discounts on parking, restaurants and more!*

Year Two Message: *Now is the time to subscribe! Don't miss any of our performances at Acme Concert Hall before we move to our new venue next season!*

Tone (Feeling you want someone to take away/personality of product): You are speaking to me. Audiences have feelings of pride and like being part of the club. There are people like me here. We welcome everyone. The Chorus and the Chorus family recognize, respect, validate, and celebrate our relationship.

Communication Objective 3: Sell Single Tickets

Target: light arts users

Year One Message: *Get to know one of the gay community's long standing members! Come out for an evening of gay entertainment! Meet new friends!*

Year Two Message: *Get to know one of the gay community's long standing members. Be a part of one of the gay community's most important events this year. Come out for an evening of gay entertainment! Meet new friends! Think about joining the group!*

Tone (Feeling you want someone to take away/personality of

product): This is a cool thing to do to get to know people in our community and socialize with people of all ages who support the GLBT community. The Chorus welcomes me and people like me to join their community.

Marketing Objectives Budget

Summarize your marketing budget. If this is a multi-year marketing plan, you should have as much detail as possible for year one.

You can summarize your marketing budget by cutting and pasting marketing budget line items here, but we encourage you to summarize marketing dollars spent by marketing objectives listed on pages 8 and 9 of this sample plan.

You may discover in preparing this summary that you do not have enough dollars allocated to support a specific objective – so you may have to borrow dollars from another objective.

You will also want to include estimated man hours for these objectives: the less marketing dollars you have, the more marketing man hours you will need.

Two Year Media Plan

Summarize your marketing budget as a media plan – how much are you spending / how many man hours are needed in the following media areas:

- Email
- Direct Mail
- Online
- Print
- Social Media
- Other

Staffing Resources

Identify specific individuals that are crucial for the success of this marketing plan. This would include board members, staff members, volunteers. Identify actual people as much as possible.

Also, identify who you need that you do not have today: a marketing intern? Another volunteer with experience in social media?

Conclusion

Wrap it all up with a nice conclusion!

Appendix A: Performance Season

Include any detail you have for your concerts and other performances that will happen during the time frame of this marketing plan.

Appendix B: Detailed Two Year Marketing Tactical Plan

Get as detailed as you can with specific marketing tactics.

Here are some sample columns you can use:

1] Objective: Which of your three marketing objectives from pages 8 and 9 does this tactic help reach?

2] Tactic Description

3] New or current: is this a new tactic? Or one that you do every year?

4] Start and end dates

5] Customer segment, or target customer: who is this tactic reaching?

6] What's different from before: are we trying something different that we have never done before with this tactic? Are we using a different mailing list this time? Are we going from an eighth page to a quarter page ad size in this print ad?

7] Measure: how are we measuring it's success?

8] Media: what media type is this (email, direct mail, etc.)? The choice of media should correspond to the list of media in your two year media plan.

9] Budget: how much money or man hours is set aside for this tactic?