



## Marketing Plan | 2015

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# Table of Contents

## **Introduction and Overview of Plan**

Organizational History and Mission	4
Current Marketing Strategies	5
Summary of Marketing Objectives	6
Increase number of new donors	
Raise funds to support the historic building	
Better communicate the Emerson brand	
Diversify their marketing strategies	
Proposed Marketing Strategies & Desired Outcomes	7

## **Situational Analysis**

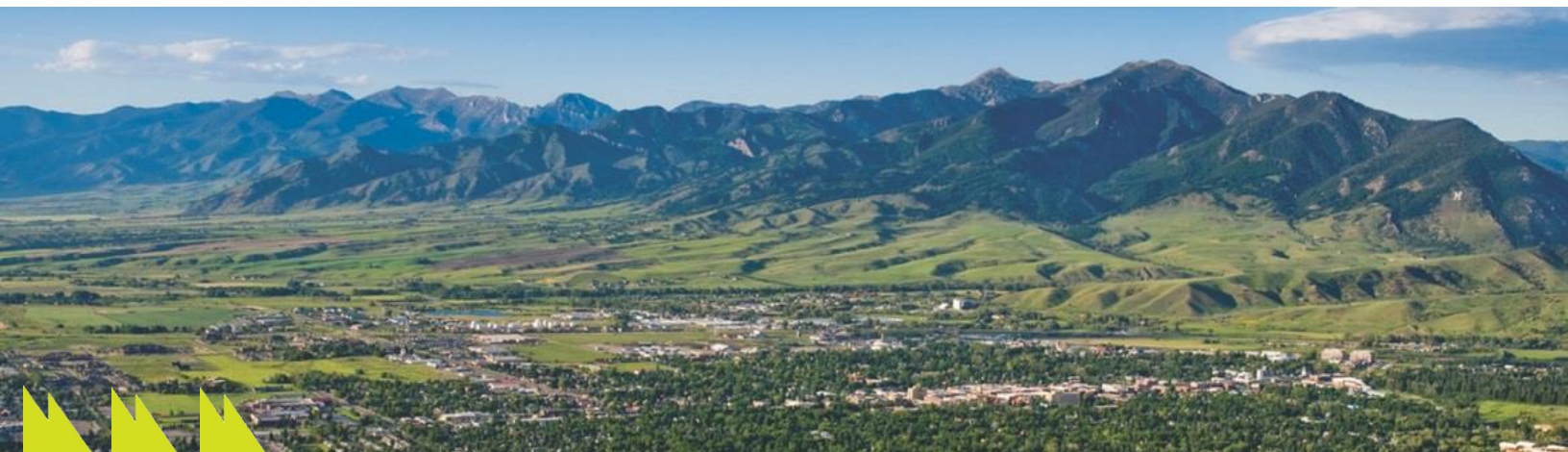
Environmental Scan Analysis	7
Economic Scan	7
Demographic Scan	9
Cultural Scan	10
Organizational SWOC Analysis	11
Product, Price, Place and Promotion	
Audience Analysis	12

## **Marketing Scheme**

Marketing Strategies	13
Social Media and Web	13
Consistent Brand Messaging	16
Crowdsourcing	20
Timeline	23

Bibliography	24
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Bozeman, Montana and the Bridger Mountains [top]  
Emerson Center for the Arts & Culture



# I. Introduction and Overview of Plan

## Organizational History and Mission

The Emerson Center for the Arts & Culture is a thriving arts and community center for arts and culture activity in beautiful Bozeman, Montana. It is a place for the community to come together to art appreciation, expression and participation. The organization is a proud steward of Bozeman heritage, and it lives within the historic Emerson Elementary School, built in 1918 just a few blocks from downtown Bozeman, and is home to 48 studios, 6 gallery spaces, ballroom, theater and a restaurant the Emerson Grill. There are three main non-profit galleries in the building, including the Jessie-Wilber Gallery, a state-of-the-art contemporary arts venue, the Weaver Room and the Lobby, which exhibit local and regional artists. According to the Emerson's website, the school was attended by thousands of Bozeman youth before its closure in 1991. "With the building facing demolition in 1992, a grassroots coalition of community members dedicated to historic preservation and celebration of the arts formed a non-profit board, raised funds, and bought the building from the City of Bozeman (Emerson Center for the Arts & Culture, 2015)."

The Emerson is home to over 50 different arts and/or culture related-businesses and provides public rental spaces to the community through their ballroom, Crawford Theater and Weaver Room gallery space. The community can rent space in the Emerson for studios, meetings, performances, receptions, classes and other activities. They are very dependent on rental spaces for funds.

With exciting events, exhibits and education classes to engage the community, the Emerson always has something for everyone and they are able to provide a diverse array of activities, exhibitions and events with support from community volunteers and donors. The Emerson continues to serve as the vital arts hub of Bozeman and reaches over 250,000 visitors annually. They host over 660 community events and exhibits, many of regional and national recognition, and 75 community nonprofit meetings, events and fundraisers each year. They host many free community outreach events such as a weekly summertime concert series *Lunch on the Lawn*, Friday night Art Walks, *Halloween Open House*, an annual *Garden & Home Tour*, gingerbread house making and the *Holiday Bazaar* at Christmas Stroll. The Emerson also leads the way in regional public art through many city-wide arts and culture projects that truly have a lasting impact in the community. The organization has received state-wide recognition as an exceptional presenter of contemporary art and art education programs.



The Emerson continually promotes both youth and adult arts education and is very involved with local schools, annually serving more than 1,000 Gallatin Valley students. They host almost 70 year-round arts education programs for children and adults of all abilities, 9 summer art camps and access to classes in the Frances Senska Pottery Studio.

The Emerson's mission is to build community by promoting art and culture, set within a historic building. As a community center for arts and culture it works in collaboration with other arts, culture and civic organizations to stimulate economic and social development in Bozeman, helping to make this regional destination an even more vibrant place to live, work and play.

### **Current Marketing Strategies**

Currently, much of the Emerson's marketing strategies are event-based, and leadership within the organization is moving this towards a greater focus on the larger brand as well as targeting a broader audience for greater donor support. Email marketing through Constant Contact is the most consistent and has proven to be a relatively successful strategy thus far with a 35% open rate. They are looking to simplify their email designs by building specific templates for each type of offering so that there are distinct design aesthetics assigned for events, education based content and other specific emails.

The Emerson website is definitely in need of improvement, but they are currently working on a new site that will launch in May or June 2015. Many people reach their website through search or through the Constant Contact emails. They are also able to track how people hear about their education classes through online registration forms. Social media use is improving, and they have acquired a solid following of about 1400 people, but they need to better utilize that following. Social media and web will be discussed in greater detail below.

They also print posters and direct mail materials, purchase print ads, distribute press releases and PSAs but these are most often event based, usually for just a few larger events throughout the year. Press releases and any direct mail beyond a simple postcard is specifically done only for major events such as their main fundraiser *Celebration for the Arts*, which requires a save the date, invitation and other printed materials. Some other events are issued postcards and posters are printed for every event and hung inside the Emerson as well as throughout coffee shops downtown. Graphic design work is contracted out to designers in the community who offer them nonprofit rates. They usually work with local companies when it comes to printing materials. While it is essential for them to develop their web and social media marketing, consistent direct mail strategies will be equally important to maintaining an older audience.



Press releases are sent to approximately five or six publications annually, no longer including the Bozeman Daily Chronicle which removed its camp insert for kids, and only distributed for their three major events: *Celebration of the Arts*, *Lunch on the Lawn*, and the *Garden and Home Tour*. Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on the other hand, are usually always distributed for events and even education classes.

As mentioned, the majority of the Emerson's marketing is specific to events and the type and amount of marketing that they do depends on the specific event. *Celebration of the Arts* is their largest fundraiser, and with tickets priced at \$125 each, it is targeted at an older audience with greater wealth who would be able to contribute the most to the Emerson's funding needs.

They are beginning to incorporate some more creative strategies such as a 30 second video to be played in the baggage claim area of the Bozeman airport, which is becoming a high traffic airport as Bozeman rapidly expands. This is an important change for the Emerson, which historically has lacked broader messaging strategies, and it is also aimed at newcomers and tourists, demonstrating not just broader brand messaging, but a changing target audience.

## **Summary of Marketing Objectives**

### Increase number of new donors

The Emerson is focused on targeting new donors and sponsors, specifically cultivating younger donors and also targeting newcomers to the Bozeman area. They have a loyal client base that has grown up in Bozeman or lived there for many years (50-60 years of age) but they have difficulty acquiring support from newcomers. It is very important that they cultivate new donors in more of a large-scale sense, with greater number of small donations from a larger number of people. They want to see more donors and more memberships. They are specifically looking to promote support during the winter months, which tends to be more of a lull. They also hope to increase donor support throughout the entire year, rather than only at the end.

### Raise funds to support the historic building

The Emerson is constantly in need of funds to support their historic building, and it seems that this need has been increasing as they have a lot of building maintenance that needs to be done. They need to create awareness among audiences that financial support is necessary to keeping them alive and keeping the historic building. They would like to put out a call to action to the community to keep the Emerson alive, and remind them that it is the place that they continually come back to for films, shows and classes. This call to action would entail a broader marketing campaign instead of specific event marketing.



### Better communicate the Emerson brand

There are many people who do not know what the Emerson does or that they are a nonprofit (therefore it is very difficult for them to get donations). The reality is that they are a nonprofit and they do a great variety of different things, so it is difficult to market all of this. Turnover in administration and graphic design services have not helped them develop this holistic identity. They need to develop their marketing more from a branding perspective, which they are already starting to do, but it could be much more developed. Currently most of the Emerson's marketing is very event-based which makes it all rather disconnected from the larger brand identity.

### Diversify their marketing strategies

Currently, the Emerson's marketing is primarily based around events. They also do not have a committed marketing budget. They need to develop more creative campaigns to get their messaging out to the community, letting them know who they are and what they do. They want to bring new ideas to the table in regards to marketing and to bringing in potential new donors. They also need to improve their social media platforms and campaigns in order to have more active brand marketing to a younger audience online.

## **Proposed Marketing Strategies & Desired Outcomes**

### Social Media and Web

The Emerson should adopt other social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube and Instagram, as well as continue to develop their existing social media. This strategy focuses on building richer content to better connect the Emerson's media marketing to its larger mission. Stronger media would help them build a larger local community in support of arts and culture, create deeper connection to audiences, and reinforce the larger brand and identity of the Emerson.

### Consistent Brand Messaging

The Emerson has begun to build a stronger brand identity and strategies for consistent messaging but these have not yet been implemented. This strategy focuses on how and where to use these materials to create consistent messaging. Improving their brand messaging would allow for better audience understanding and connection to the Emerson's mission, reinforce the organization's brand, and would develop greater consistency across all communication.

### Crowdsourcing

Creating an effective crowdsourcing campaign would help the Emerson increase its new donor and member base, raise funds to support the historic building, and would initiate a



call to action in support of the Emerson and its mission. The strategy outlines the process of developing a crowdsourcing campaign as well as possible suggested donations and their corresponding rewards.

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## II. Situational Analysis

### Environmental Scan Analysis

#### Economic Scan

The Emerson earns a large part of its annual income from public rentals. The community can rent space in the Emerson for studios, meetings, performances, receptions, classes and other activities. A large number of artists and arts and culture businesses and organizations continually rent space in the Emerson for their products or services. The Emerson is very dependent on rental spaces for funds, but these provide a consistent stream of income into the organization. They also depend on ticket sales from certain events such as films, concerts, theater, dances, workshops, lecture, comedy, and other events which range from \$5 for a general film to over \$100 for some of the special workshops. They often offer discounts to students and seniors and tiered pricing including advance pricing, at the door pricing and VIP tickets.

The Emerson heavily encourages arts education and its youth and adult classes are a primary element of the organization's programming. Classes cost \$35 per person for adults and \$60 for a family. They also offer art camps, such as the Spring Break Art Camp for ages 4 through 12, at a higher cost from \$95 for younger members up to \$175 for non-members in the older age group. Some special intensive workshops for adults may cost up to almost \$500 for three days but they organization assumes additional costs to pay for materials, food, beer and wine as well as extra costs for the artist-instructor. Other classes and workshops for youth and adults of all ages and abilities are offered throughout the year from \$3 for open studio time up to the more expensive, specialized workshops. There is something for everyone, no matter age, ability or income level. The large variety of classes clearly demonstrates the success of the programs and their ability to be not only successful art education programs but viable options for income.

Grants and donations, event sponsors and memberships are all additional sources of funds for the organization, which maintains strong community support. For the fiscal year ending in June 2013, roughly 10% of the Emerson's income were from contributions, 80%





associated with “program services,” 1% from investments and 9% from special events (Members Give, 2015). It seems reasonable to assume that a great deal of their income is derived from space rentals, event ticket sales, education classes and memberships, with other funds being generated through fundraising, grants and donations, equaling approximately 20% altogether. The Emerson receives grant support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Montana Arts Council among other philanthropic organizations.

Memberships underwrite the Emerson exhibits, art education programs and Emerson-sponsored events, and are comprised of six membership levels and four business membership levels, each with detailed benefits that increase with the gift given. General membership starts at \$35 which includes discounts on classes and purchases from select Emerson businesses, updates and invitations to member-only events. The upper level general memberships at \$500 and \$1,000 include additional items such as premier seating at select events, recognition in the annual report, breakfast and tours of the building, and special events with certain artists or performers. Business memberships range from \$500 to \$5,000 and include perks from recognition in the annual report to free space rentals, private dinners, and event sponsorships and donor wall recognition.

The Gallatin Valley in which Bozeman is situated is one of the fastest-growing areas in the Northern Rocky Mountains, and Bozeman has become a competitive and attractive place to live and work (Gallatin Business Resource Network, 2015). Gallatin County leads the state in economic growth, and doesn't look to be slowing down anytime in the near future. Bozeman is near Yellowstone National Park, surrounded by five breathtaking mountain ranges, just a few close miles from some of the best fishing and recreation areas in the nation and settled in between two ski-resorts, one a world-class resort and home of the elite Yellowstone Club. It has become a hot-spot for world-class recreation, tourism and growth. Business and home construction is booming, driven by new job creation, retirement and investment funds moving in the county and from the growing technology and manufacturing sectors, as well as the presence of a successful research university (Orhai, 2013). From 2000 to 2010, the Bozeman population grew 35.52% which is much higher than the state average of 9.67% and much higher than the national average of 9.71% (USA.com, 2015).

Bozeman is home to many higher income residents, a large potential donor base, with new residents continually moving to the city and new people visiting, yet there is high competition between the large numbers of nonprofit organizations in the community. According to the Emerson's Community Outreach Coordinator, Bozeman businesses are being hit hard by all of the non-profits and it is increasingly difficult to find support. With



such dramatic change and growth, the Emerson must be ready with dynamic and flexible strategies to capture donor support and new members.

### Demographic Scan

The Emerson's primary focus is arts education, appreciation and participation through classes and workshops, exhibitions, and events. While supporting adult learning, the Emerson caters much of its programming toward K-12 youth, doing its best to spread ideas of creativity and self-expression in order to enrich people's lives throughout the community. The organization serves more than 1,000 Gallatin Valley students across 36 schools, and provides almost 70 year-round Arts Education Programs for children and adults.

In 2013 there were estimated to be 39,860 people living in Bozeman according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015), with 15.7% under age 18. The population under age 18 is relatively low when compared to the state average of 22.6% and national average of 23.3%. There are also a low number of elderly persons in Bozeman, with only 8.1% of the population over 65. This is low compared to the state average of 14.8% and the national average of 14.1%. This data suggests that there is a higher number of people in Bozeman ages 19-65, which would support the fact that the Emerson should be reaching out to a younger support base for donations and memberships, rather than those over age 65 (U.S. Census Bureau, last revised February 5, 2015).

The Emerson is not faced with very diverse audiences. The population of Bozeman is significantly white, with 93.6% white alone in 2010 which is even higher than the state average of 89.4% white alone. By far the highest ethnic demographic other than white was Hispanic at 2.9%, still undeniably low. At the furthest end of the diversity spectrum, only 0.5% of the population is black or African American. The population is not very diverse but it is well educated, with 53.6% of persons age 25 or more having earned a bachelor's degree or higher. This is very high when compared to the state average of 28.7% and the national average of 28.8% (U.S. Census Bureau, last revised February 5, 2015). It is clear that educational opportunities are not just important to the Emerson, but they are embedded in the community culture itself.

### Cultural Scan

The Emerson Center for the Arts and Culture is all about community both inside and out. This message is found within its mission as well as demonstrated in the work culture of the organization which has developed a strong and positive team of staff and volunteers. It is located near the vibrant downtown area and is an easy walk from the downtown galleries during Art Walk evenings. Everything that the Emerson does revolves around engaging the public with arts and culture through appreciation, expression and participation for all ages.



This artistic and cultural vitality is essential to the Emerson, as the only arts and culture center in Bozeman, and it is also identifiable within the community itself which is vibrant with a wide array of galleries, local downtown businesses, breweries and coffee shops, artists and cultural activities led by the Emerson and others. The Bozeman community is characterized by an appreciation of nature, investment in education and a commitment to healthy living. The community now endeavors to safeguard the values of Bozeman as unprecedented recent growth threatens to undermine its local culture (Bozeman Cultural Council, 2015).

The NEA Survey of Public Participation in the Arts is the nation's largest population survey of arts participation trends. In 2012 they reported that large segments of the adult population are taking part in at least one kind of arts activity, so we know that there is a strong interest in arts activities across the population. Nearly half of the nation's adults (49%) attended at least one type of visual or performing arts activity that year. Museum-going saw a decline. Twenty one percent of adults visited an art museum or gallery in 2012, down from 23% in 2008. On the other hand, festivals are becoming a more popular entry point to the arts, especially for younger adults (ages 18-24), and showed an increase in attendance in the NEA survey. The drop in participation for theatres and museums and increase in festival participation may be due to changes in technology, shifts in behavior, or a move away from traditional delivery of art and culture (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). This is good news for arts organizations such as the Emerson that do not rely on static exhibits but rather dynamic and changing events and unique opportunities for cultural experiences and participation throughout the course of the year.



## Organizational SWOC Analysis of Product, Price, Place and Promotion

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Price</b>	A lot of different pricing options; varied pricing structure; student, senior, VIP pricing; tiered membership; some events are free but many are not	Pricing is confusing because there is so much going on, especially the classes; too many options; membership benefits could be better	By adjusting membership and volunteer benefits they could get more members and event help; can sell more tickets/memberships	Difficulty developing better benefits for membership tiers; more flexibility in pricing means that the structure will be more complicated and confusing
<b>Product</b>	Great variety in event and product offerings; always something to see and do; high quality local and regional artists; caters to a wide age range; emphasis on education	Potentially too much going on at once; sometimes the same artists and events featured again; possibly too many commercial spaces; too much emphasis on youth education; limited workshops	Few others offering a similar cultural product or service; bring in larger artists; wide range of possibilities because there is no other arts center; increase adult lifelong learning	Don't have budget to bring in bigger artists or expand gallery spaces; limited studio spaces (can't accommodate all types of mediums for workshops, etc.)
<b>Promotion</b>	Strong new brand identity; well-known in the community; loyal support base; developed strong awareness of specific events	They struggle with getting new people in the door; could be doing more and doing it better; too much emphasis on event marketing; lack of brand and content marketing; social media, web and email need improved	Have a lot to potentially promote; a lot of room to grow now that they have a new brand; dual role as community/arts center; need to strengthen overall brand; a lot of strategies they haven't explored	No dedicated marketing budget; marketing person has to request funds; marketing is month-to-month; market heavily June-Jan so Feb-May has less; difficulty reaching sponsors because of all other nonprofits
<b>Place</b>	Many different venues (galleries, shops, businesses, theater, education classes, restaurant); staff is growing and is very strong and positive; work well together; heritage in historic building; stewardship and interest of place	Needs to be a more welcoming environment with more interaction with visitors; not a lot of extra space; building is old (in need of repair)	Emerson is the only cultural center in town; they have a niche; Bozeman is growing rapidly; large potential support base to tap into; they know they already have the true "Bozemanites" on board; tourism season is getting bigger; more people visiting	Very high number of nonprofit orgs in Bozeman; steep competition for business sponsors; old historic building constantly needs maintenance; expensive repairs and small budget



## Audience Analysis

The Emerson receives 250,000 visitors annually, which is a conservative estimate because this is attendance from events and doesn't include those people that walk in every day to visit the galleries and businesses inside. It is fairly difficult for the Emerson to gauge who their specific audience is because they do so many different things, and different audiences attend different events. Partly because the Emerson is the one and only arts and culture organization and community center in Bozeman, they do not necessarily want to focus on one type of event or only one specific audience. Their demographics tend to be rather split up, but the education component, which is a large part of the Emerson's mission and identity, is definitely targeted at youth.

It could be generalized that children and parents, mostly children ages K-12, are their main audience. Despite the changing audience demographics for their rotating slew of events throughout the year, the Emerson is always hosting education classes. Therefore they are always targeting children and parents who want to take classes, and these programs have benefited from consistent success. Even the exhibits and other events tend to take on an educational role, and with Bozeman's strong cultural emphasis on education, it comes to no surprise that this is so important to the community's arts and culture hub.

Transitioning into the present and future, the Emerson wants to target new donors, members and sponsors with its marketing. There are so many people in the community who still are not familiar with what the Emerson does or even the fact that they are a nonprofit, which makes it very difficult to receive donations. The reality is that they *are* a nonprofit and they do a huge variety of different things, so it is very hard to market all of this. They have a loyal client base that has grown up in Bozeman or lived there for many years, but they have difficulty acquiring support from newcomers. It is generally an older generation in their fifties and sixties who have a passion for the arts, nostalgia for the Emerson, and are able to give back to the Emerson.

It is very important that they cultivate new donors and members, especially in more of a large-scale sense (small donations from a larger number of people). It is something that they really want and need to address. They hope to target a younger generation of supporters, likely in their late twenties or thirties, and figure out how to get them in the door and to then support the Emerson. They are in need of funds to support their historic building which requires a great deal of maintenance to be sustained.

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### III. Marketing Scheme

#### Social Media and Web

##### Current Media

The web based media that the Emerson is utilizing is fairly active, but they are only using a few digital sources very extensively. These sources include their website, Facebook page, e-newsletters, and digital community calendars.

I found the website to be relatively unorganized and somewhat difficult to use when trying to find important elements that should be readily available but were not, such as the mission statement. The design is lacking, and much of the visual content seems to warrant better curation. The organization just rebranded, so I was surprised at how the quality of their new logo mismatched the seemingly “random” aesthetics of the website. The site does effectively provide information on upcoming events but, like much of the Emerson marketing, I find that it promotes the event without nurturing the intriguing story that is so essential to generating interest. I would like to see galleries, videos, press, artist and event features, interviews and testimony that provide access to the history and mission of the organization as well as the stories behind the programming and events.

The Facebook page is somewhat richer than the website, and they post most days, but the posts are sporadic, with content posted continuously for two or three days and then nothing. Posts include information and photos about auction items, tenants, artists and businesses, teasers for upcoming events and exhibitions, images of artwork, ticket purchases, workshops, events photos, schedules and other updates. Posts also include other news, videos and events going on in the community and within the university that are relevant to the Emerson’s mission. They have laid the foundation for a very strong social media presence but, as with the website, I would like to see greater emphasis on stories, testimonies, interviews, photos, and less promotional jargon about tickets, event times, fundraisers and schedules. They need to focus on what makes the Emerson valuable, and they just need to do more of it, consistently and with purpose.

The Emerson sends out a weekly e-newsletter listing upcoming events and programming in the building. Their eNews generally contains information on upcoming news and events, classes and workshops, artists and information about rentals, memberships and donations. They are of decent design but the design does not connect well with that of the website. The emails are all very similar to one another, without much variation and even with the same lead content each time. They are well organized but lacking in variety and dynamic design which could be accomplished by creating features and utilizing more effective imagery.



## Objectives

- Build a larger local community in support of arts and culture
- Create deeper connection to audiences
- Reinforce the larger brand and identity of the Emerson; improve brand recognition

## Strategies

While the website, Facebook page and eNews require improvements in order to be at their best, I recommend that the organization adopt other media channels in addition to those basic three. Instagram, Flickr, YouTube and Twitter are platforms that would provide an additional level of content and greater exposure for The Emerson. They would also help to build connections with audiences and share stories to reinforce the organization's larger brand and identity.

I was very misled by the fact that The Emerson used a Twitter icon in their eNews but I was unable to locate a profile for the organization. It is likely that they did not notice the automatic inclusion of the Twitter thumbnail in their mailings. Twitter can be easily paired with Facebook to share stories and events, engage with audiences and also link The Emerson to other arts and culture organizations, businesses and events. It is a fast and easy method of social media that provides instant connection and quick updates. The unfortunate aspect about Twitter is that it is not as popular as other social media platforms such as Facebook, and organizations and audiences tend to have a more difficult time understanding how to use Twitter effectively. It also has limitations on content length because the tweets are to be very concise for fast and easy consumption. It is more applicable to engage other organizations, community partnerships and younger audiences.



**Emerson Center for Arts & Culture @TheEmerson**  
We're feeling inspired by the amazing sharing power of  
community co-op projects like [@foodisfreeproj](#) [#wintermarket](#)



**Emerson Center for Arts & Culture @TheEmerson**  
Bozeman is lucky to have so many vibrant local artists like  
Meredith [@disheswithsoul](#) [#wintermarket](#) [#localclay](#)  
[disheswithsoul.com/mystory/583283jei8](https://disheswithsoul.com/mystory/583283jei8)



Instagram and Flickr would be very helpful tools for The Emerson to share its story. Currently, the website and Facebook page are effectively marketing upcoming events; the information is relevant and up to date, but there is too much text and too little testimony, evocative imagery and personal stories that communicate the real message within the mission. Using photo sharing applications such as Instagram and Flickr would not only broaden the reach of the organization but provide an easy method of sharing artist and artwork photos, images from events and imagery that can help to build dimension in the stories initiated through the Emerson. The website is lacking in any sort of robust gallery and the images on Facebook are not tagged or organized in such a way as to be very effective. The Emerson offers an endless variety of cultural programming and education activities, most of which are represented by a headliner, brief description and an image or two online but very few of them portray the depth of impact that these robust activities have within the community.

Instagram and Flickr also provide the opportunity for participants to engage with the stories, feel better connected with what is going on at the Emerson and participate in online social imaging activities, connecting their own life experiences with Emerson programming. Both channels tend to attract an audience in between the ages of 18-35 which is a big portion of the population relevant to the Emerson, which, like most organizations, struggles to reach a younger adult population.

For similar reasons as Instagram and Facebook serve to illustrate the robust programming and events associated with the Emerson, video channels such as YouTube and Vimeo also provide methods of reaching wider audiences while also more effectively capturing the mission and stories that characterize the organization. There is little to no video material currently utilized on The Emerson web media even though the organization has hosted and partnered with film festivals, innovative workshops and lectures and other exciting and creative events. After living in Bozeman for seven years, I have been surprised to find out just how inventive and original some of The Emerson happenings really are, because one finds very little engaging material on their website. I would like to see The Emerson utilize video previews of films, engage with artists through interviews and recorded lectures, and utilize video montages of their programming to better capture the people, stories and real impact, because those are the elements that truly give the organization its value.

As the main arts organization in Bozeman, there is great potential for The Emerson to build its “word-of-mouth” reputation, and I think that better utilizing and expanding its web media channels will help to cultivate results in that arena. Additions of web media strategies would greatly elaborate on the story-telling aspect that is currently missing from their marketing.





### Implementation

There should be at least one post per day (not direct event marketing) to Facebook, Twitter and either Instagram or Flickr as well as create occasional web videos for YouTube and other social media as needed. Content should focus on the stories and details that connect to the larger brand and create interest with the audience rather than purely promotion. They should also not be entirely focused on Emerson events, but also connect to related things happening outside of the organization. Such material might include news, video, photos, tours, how-to-guides, articles and blog posts, Q&A articles, interviews and community events. These outlets should still incorporate some promotional activity, especially in the case of special offers or discounts, and should provide opportunities for follower participation and response.

As for technology resources, the greatest challenge would be the development of a branding video for web and media use. The Emerson could potentially outsource to a student (or local) videographer who may accept ticket or rental trade for shooting and editing services.

As with any web channel, a consistently effective online media presence would require staff time and energy to take photos, develop content, encourage sharing and participation maintain and active presence with daily post to all platforms. In an organization with only seven staff members, only one of which is dedicated to community outreach, adding another task, even so small, can be daunting when piled on top of an already immense workload.

### Evaluation

Success should be evaluated through growth seen in number of followers as well as activity on each social media platform. This data should be consistently tracked and evaluated, but also an in-depth evaluation performed every trimester along with the brand messaging evaluation discussed later on. Are followers sharing and interacting with content? How do patterns in social media compare to event attendance or ticket sales? What types of posts receive the best responses?

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## **Consistent Brand Messaging**

### Objectives

- Create deeper connection to audiences by providing a consistent message that can easily be interpreted and understood
- Reinforce the larger brand and identity of the Emerson; improve brand recognition
- Develop greater consistency in all communication at every organizational level



## Current Messaging

The Emerson's marketing has improved over time, with more content-based marketing on social media and less pure promotion, but it still persists in some ways, and definitely throughout the website. For a long time, the Emerson was very inconsistent with its message which was not ever really portrayed much at all or at least in any way that was effective. With as much as they had going on, it was necessary for them to have a strong brand and strong communications, but the reality was the opposite. All focus seemed to be placed on specific event promotion, with little tied back to the mission, values and objectives of the organization. For an outsider and especially for anyone new to the Emerson it would be nearly impossible to tell their identity without digging much further. This still persists to a great extent but the Emerson is making strong strides forward with improvements in social media, rebranding, an upcoming website renovation, newly established brand standards and positioning statement (Emerson Center for the Arts & Culture, 2015):

*The Emerson Center for the Arts & Culture is a place for the community to come together to celebrate, create, inspire and learn within our old historic building. With exciting events, exhibits and education classes, we are able to do amazing things at the Emerson with support from community volunteers and donors. The Emerson continues to serve as the vital arts hub of Bozeman and reaches over 250,000 visitors annually. You are sure to find something to celebrate at the Emerson!*

## Strategies

It is important for the Emerson to develop a consistent story around its brand that can serve as the root for all of its messaging and be consistently carried on throughout all of its communications. This is vital for diversifying their marketing strategies while also reinforcing a strong brand. The positioning statement above was created just recently and serves to describe the organization and what makes it unique, in a way that can be easily translated. So far, while this brand identity has been strengthened within their brand standards, it has not yet been adapted to the Emerson's marketing. It needs to be built in their communications at every level.

In their brand standards, the Emerson's Community Outreach Coordinator has developed a great base of vocabulary or "hit words" as well as words and phrases associated with their core foundation. What is missing is how these things can and should be used, as well as where they should be used.

Every volunteer, intern and staff person should be given the positioning statement, key words and phrases and a fact list to maintain consistent messaging throughout the organization. Much of the marketing they might be doing is relationship marketing and those relationships need to be reinforced by the same consistent messaging about who the



Emerson is and what they hope to achieve. Public statements, PSAs and press releases should all be checked against the positioning statement and key words. Eventually repetition will intrinsically connect this messaging with the Emerson's brand. This becomes especially important for those who may be in charge of social media or web content, the Community Outreach Coordinator must ensure that all those who have access to social media content are familiar with the messaging. If multiple people are contributing to social media, it would be in the best interest of the Outreach Coordinator to develop media standards, demonstrating examples of particular content and messaging. They must also lay out expectations for all online behavior to other team members who may be involved.

Consistent brand messaging must be consistently present in the look, voice and language of the Emerson's messaging across all marketing channels. It should also be customized per each marketing material dependent on the specific audience that is being targeted. The communicator must ask certain questions to determine how the same messaging might look or sound different for a certain audience.

- 1) Who am I talking to?
- 2) What "language" do they speak?
- 3) What platforms do they prefer?
- 4) What motivates them?

To move away from promotional event marketing towards communicating greater brand identity, the Emerson should also consider using questions in order to pull out connections between events and activities and the larger message of the organization.

- 1) Why are we offering this event or service?
- 2) Why is it important to the community? Why would people want to come?
- 3) Why is it unique or significant?
- 4) How does it relate to the Emerson's mission?
- 5) What does it relate to in the community? (Other ideas or events in the community)
- 6) How can this be conveyed visually and verbally? What materials or content do I have to convey this message? How can I tell the story?

### Implementation

Much of this will fall into the hands of the Community Outreach Coordinator who should serve as the steward of the brand ensuring that the branding standards that have been created are actually enforced. It will require additional time to reinforce, analyze and evaluate for consistent brand messaging among all marketing platforms but it is an essential part of ensuring that the organization is sending the right message and maintaining the right identity in the community, especially for newcomers.



Implementation should start immediately, especially with the web redesign being completed in May and June. Staff should work to polish all branding in order to launch not only the new site at the beginning of the summer but a complete refined branding message throughout all platforms from media, email and web to printed materials, radio, press releases and physical displays, while also providing staff, interns and volunteers everything they need to reinforce the brand in person as well.

The process itself will require few resources, mostly just staff time, but may require more time from the graphic designer to implement branding changes throughout digital and printed materials.

### Evaluation

This person should be persistent about check points throughout each year to monitor how the brand is being portrayed on all outreach platforms from social media posts to an address by the director at a fundraising event. They might develop a rating system from which to collect information and analyze how well the brand's key points are being portrayed at each level. This evaluation would be done three times during the first year and could be limited to twice the following year if the branding has proven to remain consistent. This would allow for the organization to continually evaluate progress and make adjustments. They could also distribute a branding survey to members evaluating their understanding of the brand and what has shaped that understanding whether that be social media, their interaction with the space or attendance at events.

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## **Crowdsourcing**

### Current Fundraising

The Emerson currently does not employ any crowdsourcing strategies. Most of its fundraising is generated through fundraising events and memberships. Current donations and support come from a loyal support base of Bozemanites who have lived in Bozeman for many years. The Emerson is looking for creative ways to gain new support and to cultivate a new (and somewhat younger) donor base.

### Objectives

- Increase number of new donors
- Raise funds to support the historic building
- Initiate a call to action in support of the Emerson and its historic building

### Strategies

Crowdsourcing enables the pooling of funds from the collective effort of individuals interested in a specific cause, organization or objective. If executed effectively,



crowdsourcing can be a very successful method of generating funding for a specific purpose and building a broader support base. It requires strong branding and presentation of goals and objectives in order to take on the sort of momentum necessary to sustain the funding campaign and give it a certain “viral” quality. It is most effective for people or organizations that already have strong support and community backing, requiring less persuasion. For an organization such as the Emerson, which has developed a strong support base in Bozeman over a long history, it could potentially be a great way to create needed funding to help preserve its historic building.

It works because it is direct, and because people like to invest in something that is meaningful while also receiving benefits in return. Many people want the opportunity to see their name associated with something bigger and different than their day-to-day life, but may not be able to contribute a larger donation that they think an arts organization might expect when it calls for donor support. It is extremely rewarding to help fund a project and see it come to fruition, receiving a small part of it in return. Crowdsourcing campaigns provide quick and easy options for backing, from as little at \$10 up to larger gifts, all with tiered benefits. The process is much like memberships but it is special, time-sensitive, limited and catered specifically to a 21<sup>st</sup> century audience.

Many crowdsourcing projects rely on support from people already familiar with the person or organization, but if the marketing and benefit packages are put together in a creative way and it gets to the right people at the right time, a crowdsourcing proposal can be backed by a slew of complete strangers who are inspired by the project’s objectives.

The Emerson could develop a campaign around the preservation of its historic building, focusing on keeping the energy and heritage of the Emerson, and the Bozeman community alive. The campaign would be targeted at potential donors and supporters ages 25 to 65 who may not be considered part of the traditional high donor bracket but are very supportive of the community arts center, have families and have enough income to donate at least a small amount. The target of the campaign would need to focus on a few specific renovation objectives that can be easily imagined and will be visually apparent to those who visit the Emerson. A conservative goal would be \$10,000 but could potentially go up to \$20,000 or \$30,000 or even higher depending on confidence to acquire backers. The campaign would also require a time limit as well, which could potentially range from one to three months, allowing enough time for promotion while still maintaining momentum.

Goals must be clearly outlined and any additional supportive materials would be necessary to promoting the campaign. These would include a short video about the Emerson, the project and its objectives, visuals clearly demonstrating need and creating visual branding for the campaign, stickers and sharable social media “stamps” for people who back the project to confirm and proudly display their commitment. Everything must be easy to share



through social media and email and should take a variety of forms from Facebook and Twitter posts, hashtags, virtual or printed stickers and stamps, videos, images and physical posters and mailers with QR codes and links to the campaign. Promotion might also include more creative guerilla marketing so that people visiting the Emerson or shopping downtown can't miss the campaign because it literally might be chalked under their feet.

Gifts could be donated by artists and organizations that use the Emerson for studio space or are highly supportive of the Emerson. Most would be limited edition in order to emphasize the special time-limited nature of the campaign. Backer amounts and corresponding gifts might include:

- \$10 – Name listed on website in support of the Emerson
- \$25 – All above + Limited Edition button (designs created by local artist; buttons donated by Tart)
- \$50 – All above + Set of Paul Heaston “Bozeman” postcards; printing donated by AlphaGraphics
- \$120 – All above + Limited Edition T-shirt (designs created by local print artist)
- \$300 – All above + unframed 9” x 12” limited edition Emerson artist print (with a note from the director)
- \$500 – All above + 11” x 14” framed limited edition Emerson artist print (with a note from the director)
- \$1000 – All above + name on plaque installed near the site

### Implementation

The campaign would require quite a bit of staff time in order to organize, market and monitor the campaign. Ideally, it would be best for this to happen after the website launches and overall brand messaging has been refined, during the summer months when the Art Walk is in full swing and when the Emerson is the most active, which would provide plenty of opportunities to remind people about the campaign. In order for the funding campaign to be successful it would have to be well planned but also supported by partners willing to help organize or donate gifts for backers. The Emerson's costs would mostly be staff time and some funds to market the campaign including funds for posters, postcards or handbills, and social media promotions, but fortunately this type of funding platform works really well with just word of mouth, and if the Emerson can build the energy around it, the campaign could potentially be very successful.

### Evaluation

The success of a crowdfunding campaign could be easily measured because the sites that host these funding campaigns, such as Kickstarter and Indiegogo, track donations and progress toward the goal, which would clearly demonstrate effectiveness.



## Timeline

### April 1

- Begin work to refine organizational messaging across all communication

### April 15

- Setup Twitter and Instagram (or Flickr) accounts
- Distribute messaging materials to Emerson administration, interns, volunteers (this includes messaging statements and terms, expectations and fact sheets)
- Begin working with videographer on branding video and crowdfunding video

### April 30

- By the end of April, maintain consistent activity on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram; increase daily posts to 3 per day on both Twitter and Facebook, and 1-2 per day on Instagram (original content, replies and retweets or reposts)
- Perform first brand messaging evaluation at the end of April, and make any necessary adjustments in conjunction with launch of new website.

### May 15

- First drafts due for branding and crowdfunding videos

### June 1

- Launch new website; finalize brand messaging improvements for all communication
- Final draft of branding and crowdfunding videos complete; content might include event footage, facilities, performances, location and behind the scenes interviews with artists, visitors, members and administration
- Marketing for crowdfunding campaign is finalized and initiated, first on social media and web; install time-clock on homepage that will start counting down on July 1

### July 1

- Crowdfunding campaign kicks off; marketing efforts continue

### August 31

- Perform second brand messaging evaluation; make any necessary adjustments
- Crowdfunding campaign ends

### December 31

- By the end of 2015, increase Facebook likes from 3,772 to 4,200 (400+ likes)
- Perform third brand messaging evaluation; make any necessary adjustments



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