

OCT Marketing Outline – Shafei Li, Bridget Hall and Tara Burke

Main Focus: To engage a younger student demographic in the OCT audience

Two strategies to engage student demographic (Pilot Strategies)

1. Lowering ticket prices from \$15 to \$12
2. Engaging Student populations from college campuses

Strategy #1: Lowering Ticket Prices

Reduced ticket pricing structure

- Cost/value analysis on which production would utilize reduced pricing structure as pilot
- Providing discounted tickets on certain days (specifically to target students)
- Weekend discounts, \$ 12 Student Discounts/Friday discount days
- Finding outlets near campuses to sell tickets (LCC and UO box office) OCT does not currently sell tickets at the box office. Making these tickets more accessible would get more students in the door because of the convenience.

Having coupons for discounted tickets in “Campus Survival Kit”

- This would come from the Marketing budget. Possible to do cross promotion with Campus Coupon company. Passing out or providing coupon booklets before/after the show. If you were present the coupon, you will get that discount.
- Coupon example: \$12 at the dollar and a free concession component.
- Rates for Campus Survival Kit (enclosed via pdf)

Start Small

- Choosing one or two productions like the upcoming play in May, and allowing discounted tickets on specific days of the production that are specifically available when showing the student ID at the door. The production could be run as a pilot project.
- OCT operates outside of the UO, the box office located on UO campus could provide a more centralized location for UO students. The box office has tickets for events all around Eugene and provides more accessibility for student population to receive tickets.
- Based on their location, OCT can promote these discounted ticket specials through Lane Community College while still having a flux in their regular age demographic (some students are nontraditional).

Small Staff-Cover more ground through coupon book

- The “Survival Kit” would be a great outlet to engage students. These coupons come out once a term and the timing for new performances could be scheduled around when the coupons are delivered. This would only be necessary if OCT was truly looking to make their **focus** on getting students in the door.

Summary

- Oregon Contemporary Theater strives to include affordable ticketing options for productions. However, students still live on tight budgets. This has been done with little success in the past, but we believe that this issue arises in placement of where the discounts are being offered.
- We want to dispel the judgment that by reducing costs, there is less value placed on the overall production.
- Providing discounted tickets comes through offering programming that can often include exposing new or underserved audiences to performances.

Strategy #2: Engaging Student populations from campuses

Creation of a Student Ambassador Position

Create a position for a student liaison that would take the title of OCT Ambassador bridge the gap between UO and OCT. Information on how this might be done:

- Contact the PODS department at the University of Oregon
 - “The Office of Professional Outreach and Development for Students (PODS) serves students in all A&AA disciplines to develop job search strategies, career goals and career development tools. This office works collaboratively with both administrative and academic units to provide comprehensive career services to students through a variety of activities including: linking students with professionals in the field, individual career advising, presentations to classes & student groups, coordinating workshops, panels, and the annual Career Symposium held in Portland.”
 - Discuss internship possibilities as well as opportunities for students to take this as a practicum on a quarterly basis

Job duties would include:

- Promoting ticket sales/deals on campus
- Creating a contact list for the departments that OCT wants to target
- Advertising in the periodicals, email lists and social media sites that are mentioned below:
 - BSU, Lane Weekly, Theatre, Around the O, Oregon Voice Magazine, The Torch and the Campus Survival Kit coupon book
 - Social Media Outlets from Organizations: Black Student Union Facebook page at UO, UO University Theatre Facebook Page, LCC Music, Dance and Theatre Arts Facebook page
 - E-Newsletters: School of Architecture and Allied Arts (UO), English Department Newsletter (UO), Lane Weekly (LCC)
 - Create a general write up that would appeal to these groups and then later tailor it to each group specifically
 - Mention the play/plot and ticket deals appealing specifically to students in these advertisements/write-ups
 - These advertisements would appear in emails and publications

(come out of marketing budget)

- Distribute and post flyers
- Creating activities for students on campus to interact with OCT in a way that would make them invested in the organization
- Help in putting together productions

Benefits of Creating a Student Ambassador Position - OCT

- Bridging the gap between students and OCT
- Creating a job that does not cost the organization
- Learning the wants and needs of students from students themselves
- Increasing outreach to a younger audience and expanding demographic
- By creating a position for students, more interest will be generated in the business by students

Benefits of Creating a Student Ambassador Position - Students

- Receiving credit either through internships or practicums
- On-site experience with professionals in the theatre world
- Networking opportunities
- Resume building
- Creative freedom in undertaking marketing strategies for OCT
- Opportunity to develop and lead student based activities to encourage student participation at OCT

Summary

- By creating a Student Ambassador Position, the gap between college-age students and OCT would shrink if not be covered.
- Allowing a Student Ambassador to be a large part of the marketing decisions that go on helps to target and bring in the desired demographic.
- Because this is a flexible position that can take shape in a number of different ways, budget and resources are not strained.

Timeline for strategy #1 (Six Month Timeline)

5 months out

- Select one or two productions to carry out reductions. This would be a pilot process.
- include cost (from play writing to cast and facilitates cost)
- Time setting (season, month, day, hour)

4 months out

- Do some research on LCC and UO box office (OCT Does not currently sell tickets at LCC and UO Box Office)
- Figuring out rates for Campus Coupon company (Coupons come out every term-once every 10 weeks)
- Connecting with Campus Coupon company and passing out or providing coupon booklets before/after the show.

3 to 2 months out

- Promote their "special Friday and weekends" discounts online (website, facebook, email, etc.) or on box office in different sites

2 to 1 months out

- Continue implementing discounts strategy
- Figuring out evaluation methods around discounted tickets through pilot project
- evaluating and summarizing all steps and strategy during six month.
- preparing next step based on prior experience

Timeline for strategy #2 (Six Month Timeline)

5 months out

- Develop OCT social network on campus
- selecting those students to training or cultivate them about OCT and this strategy contents
- Advertise for a student ambassador

4 months out

- Hire Student Ambassador
- Create contact lists for BSU, Lane Weekly, Theatre, Around the O, Oregon Voice Magazine, The Torch etc.
- Create a general advertisement while analyzing different group's features and incorporate OCT's current or upcoming productions. Make a write-up tailored to each group

3 months out

- Recalculate marketing budget to meet needs of preferred methods of advertising
- Check timeline and make sure all distributions will be produced and promoted within scheduled time period
- Consider and discuss Student Ambassador led activities for students

2 to 1 months out

- Carrying out the current students attendance strategy and observing its real situation
- Implement possible Student Ambassador led activities