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# Thesis

## The Producers

in Voluntary Organisation

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Degree Programme in Cultural Management  
(240 ECTS)

Date of submission for evaluation  
(4/2019)



HUMANISTINEN  
AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

## ABSTRACT

Humak University of Applied Sciences  
Degree Programme in Cultural Management

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Title of thesis: The Producers in Voluntary Organisation

Number of pages: 50 and 5 pages of appendices

Supervisor of the thesis: Jyrki Simovaara

Subscriber of the thesis: Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust

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My thesis is about the role of the producer in amateur and community theatre productions in the Tyne Theatre & Opera House in Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE England. The theatre building is listed by The National Heritage List in the grade one category. This 150-year-old theatre is owned and maintained by the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust.

The theatre is old, but not a museum. Besides the preservation of the theatre, the foundation of Tyne Theatre has been developing vivid communal activities in the venue. This community prepares two major musical theatre productions in a year. They are produced by the Tyne Theatre Productions, a production unit under the theatre's preservation trust. This thesis is aimed to advance the development of the Tyne Theatre Productions. It is important to develop this activity; the productions also have a significant value as a fundraising tool.

Tyne Theatre Productions, as well as other voluntary societies, may benefit more professional approach when organising the amateur productions. I propose that the amateur productions should hire a producer or nominate a production team to organise the productions. It would raise and develop the production quality and thus enable more ambitious productions and goals to be achieved. Deficiencies in organization can hinder the organization of funding and slow down the development. I have picked out some good practices from the latest professional production guidebooks. By anticipating common problems with productions, I am trying to find the way to avoid these potential issues in the future productions.

Special attention in this thesis is given to Production management-, budgeting- and marketing-tasks, and how they are organised in the Tyne Theatre. Production processes are getting more demanding; people with multiple skills and talents are required. When productions and budgets grow, the need for professional production skills increase exponentially. As more funds are invested in the production, the production is expected to generate more revenue from ticket sales. Naturally, some profit is expected to ensure the continuity of operations. For these reasons, I encourage producers in community theatres to learn more about marketing.

In conclusion, the Trust could benefit from having more committed producer or a production team to implement long-term plans. Producer or production team would develop the community theatre activities, productions and volunteer co-ordination. I believe that this thesis will increase understanding of production procedures in general, and it should benefit other volunteer organisations too. This thesis encourages small organizations to collaborate with each other.

I appreciate the ambitious efforts of the Tyne Theatre Trust to create an active theatrical community and make the Tyne Theatre and Opera House a welcoming and familiar place for everyone in the area. Tyne Theatre is a beautiful venue as well as a historical site. It is well worth visiting.

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Keywords: Producer, production planning, amateur theatres, community theatre, volunteer work

## TIIVISTELMÄ

Humanistinen ammattikorkeakoulu  
Kulttuurituotannon Ammattikorkeakoulututkinto

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Tekijä: Kati Jaura  
Opinnäytetyön nimi: The Producers in Voluntary Organisation  
Sivumäärä: 50 ja 5 liitesivua  
Työn ohjaaja: Jyrki Simovaara  
Työn tilaaja: Tyne Theatre & Opera House Preservation Trust

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Opinnäytetyössäni tarkastelen tuottajan roolia vapaaehtoisvoimin tuotettujen produktioiden suunnittelussa ja toteutuksessa. Käsitelen aihetta Koillis-Englannissa, Newcastle Upon Tynessa sijaitsevan Tyne Theatre & Opera Housen sisällä toimivan harrastajateatteriyhteisön kautta. Teatterin omistaa ja sen kunnostusta sekä varainkeruuta hallinnoi teatterin säätiö.

Tyne Theatre and Opera House on rekisteröity arvorakennukseksi The National Heritage -listalle. Tätä 150 -vuotiasta rakennusta ei kuitenkaan ole aikomus museoida. Teatterin säätiö pitää tärkeänä säilyttää tilat esitystoiminnassa ja pyrkii lisäksi kehittämään yhteisöllistä teatteritoimintaa. Harrastajateatteri -yhteisö valmistaa vuodessa kaksi mittavaa musikaalituotantoa. Niiden tuotannosta vastaa teatterin säätiön alaisuudessa toimiva Tyne Theatre Productions. Opinnäytetyöni tähtää Tyne Theatre Productionsin toiminnan kehittämiseen. Tuotantoja kannattakin kehittää, koska niillä on merkittävä arvo myös varainkeruun välineenä. Esityksillä kerätään varoja teatterirakennuksen kunnostustöihin.

Mielestäni Tyne Theatre Productions ja monet muut harrastajaryhmät hyötyisivät merkittävästi tuottajan tai tuotantotiimin tuomasta järjestelmällisyydestä tuotantoprosessiin. Puutteet organisoinnissa voivat estää rahoituksen järjestymistä ja jarruttavat monin tavoin harrastajaryhmien kehitystä. Esitän ratkaisuksi eri tuottajamalleja jotka nostaisivat tuotantojen tasoa ja mahdollistaisivat yhä kunnianhimoisempien tuotantojen ja tavoitteiden saavuttamisen. Vinkkejä kehitystyöhön olen poiminut tuoreista tuottajan opaskirjoista. Ennakointi ja tuotantoprosessin ongelmakohtien tunnistaminen ovat merkittävässä osassa toiminnan kehittämistyössä.

Tuotannon hallinnointiin, budjetointiin sekä markkinointiin liittyvät tehtävät ja niiden organisointi talon sisällä ovat tässä pääosassa. Niiden kautta esittelen yhteisön tuotantoprosessia, vapaaehtoistoiminnan koordinoitua ja siihen tehtyä kehitystyötä. Tuon näkyväksi sitä moninaista osaamista, mitä pienissä ja kunnianhimoisissa tuotannoissa kaikilta vaaaditaan. Tarve tuotannolliselle ammattitaidolle huomataan tuotantojen ja budjettien kasvaessa. Samalla kasvaa paine saada lippituloista katetta tuotantoon sijoitetuille varoille ja hiukan voittoa takaamaan toiminnan jatkuvuutta. Markkinointiosaamisessa on usein kehitettävää ja päivitettävää.

Uskon, että säätiö hyötyisi merkittävästi tuottajasta tai tuotantotiimistä, joka sitoutuisi nykyistä pitkäjänteisemmin ja kokonaisvaltaisemmin yhteisöllisen toiminnan kehittämiseen ja vapaaehtoisten koordinoituihin. Olen pyrkinyt käsittelemään valitsemani aiheita tarpeeksi yleisluontoisesti, jotta myös muut kehittyvät vapaaehtoisorganisaatiot voisivat soveltaa tässä ehdottamiani toimintamalleja ja suuntaviivoja omilla tahoillaan tai vaikka yhdistellen voimavarojaan.

Arvostan teatterin säätiön kunnianhimoisia pyrkimyksiä luoda teatteriin aktiivista yhteisöllistä toimintaa ja tehdä teatterista kutsuva ja tuttu paikka kaikille lähialueen asukkaille ja jonka kaunista ja historiallisesti arvokasta salia tulnaisiin ihastelemaan kauempaakin.

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Asiasanat: tuottaja, tuotannon suunnittelu, harrastajateatteri, vapaaehtoistyö

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The whole entertainment industry is getting more organised. Competition in the art industry has led the community theatres to seek more professional approach to reach the audiences. The point of this thesis is to provide comprehensive path to audience development and budget planning in volunteer based amateur and community theatre societies. Here you won't find tips for saving even more money, but instead how to be more organised stretching in the pennies we have got. Also, a few ideas how to get a bigger budget.

Most handbooks about art producing are aimed for professionals, and it is hard to find basic elements to guide the community theatre to the next level. The producers are working as a side job in amateur societies, and they are not willing to put their time and effort in reading all these thick guide books. Clearly, there is need for a mini-handbook. This is my pick-n-mix for starters to the objects of which are less-exiting in cultural producing: budgeting and budget management. It is focusing only the things that should be in order when the organisation is applying funds to cover some of the expenses. This thesis is for community theatre society in the Tyne Theatre and Opera house in North East England. I had the opportunity to work there for seven months, for Tyne Theatre Productions, as a part of my Cultural Producer studies.

### 1.1. 150 Years of History

Tyne Theatre and Opera House was built just behind the town moor in 1867 and it was labelled as working-class theatre. Lively cabarets and stars from London allured the "better class" too, but it was always more common than the Theatre Royal in down town of the Newcastle. Tyne Theatre has gone thru the same evolution as many others: renovation into a movie theatre in 1930's and dying slowly when TV came. Soon after the movie theatre closed down, a bunch of skilled young theatre enthusiast started the restoration work on the building. It was not easy to restore and run a theatre without any money, and finally they needed to let it go. Commercial entrepreneurs took over but gave up after few years. The building was left vacant. The same renovators from 70's took it back in year 2015, only this time a little older and



wiser. They put together Tyne Theatre Preservation Trust. The main purpose of this organisation is to maintain this 150-year-old theatre in working order.

## 1.2. Thesis Objectives

The main purpose of this thesis is building the Producers role in volunteer organisations. I have taken part in developing the processes and the organisation of Tyne Theatre Productions, to use its full potential in creating vivid amateur dramatics' society. Part of this process is handing over the production-administrative to the Production Committee. Together with Riikka Heiskanen, I have created a Production Manual, which is kind of Producer's Handbook for Tyne Theatre Productions.

I made a deliberate decision not to include the practical work flow in this one. Full update of production practices has already been done in 2017. It is based on Riikka Heiskanen thesis: "How to Build a Theatrical Society: Case Tyne Theatre Productions" (Heiskanen, 2016) and my personal experience working for Tyne Theatre Productions. This "Production Manual" is an important part of the evolution that gives us an understanding on strengths of the Tyne Theatre Society and how it should be better organised. This is why the making of the manual is shortly described in the next chapter.

I am trying to keep the theory to a minimum, starting with an overview of financial management followed by budgeting of the productions. These areas are not usually top interest to many in volunteer organisation. I found my inspiration trough many remarkable art management guide books, so I like to share some of those citations in between my notes.

The third topic is marketing. I try to draw attention to greater understanding of marketing as an overall planning, which is much more than just printing posters and leaflets.

By referencing professionally aimed production management guidebooks, latest publications on marketing and art management, and adding my own experience in this field, I tried to pick up the latest theoretical and practical information on budgeting, marketing and fundraising. I am fitting these theories in amateur

production. A permanent Producer as a part of fundraising strategy may not be the worst idea but is it worth the investment?

## 2 FROM PRODUCTION MANUAL TO PRODUCERS GUIDEBOOK

When I first started working for a new production, there was plenty of silent knowledge and no written instructions. So, I was kind of forced to start the operational research straight away when my internship started in Tyne Theatre Productions. I had only two weeks of overlapping office-time with previous Production Co-Ordinator before she started her Christmas preparations in a new town.

I gathered all the files of Tyne Theatre Productions and Tyne Theatre Trust in one digital folder and wrote down the missing parts. That was the beginning of Production-manual. Having all documents in one place, I studied previous shows, making notes. By observing and analysing documents and history of the theatre, little by little, the organisational structure started to make sense to me. I made process charts of the tasks and suggested small changes. If changes were agreed, I updated and altered the production documents.

My job was to keep ongoing musical-production organized, plan the next production and run daily fundraising action. As it is a volunteer organisation, there are no extra resources to hire experts in all different areas of production. I started to write my task open to see if it can be better organised. Are more resources really needed, or could we manage with the resources available only with better planning?

The end-result is compact, custom-made, common-sense Production Manual for Tyne Theatre Productions. The basic job prescription is in the manual, but it remains more of a list of duties without explanation on how the producer should do it, and why it should be done the way suggested. It was missing the thread of thought that ties all different task together. Much of producer's work is sitting alone on the computer. You need to feel that there is a connection with your work in the shadows and the artistic work happening on stage.

This thesis is connecting the dots and may ease Tyne Theatre Producers better to adapt in their Production Co-Ordinators role. I hope it helps to create more organized working environment for beginners, and also for those planning to apply for money.

It is the organising and preplanning that makes some art societies more successful than others.

### 3 MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

“There are four steps in the operational control process: establishing performance objectives, measuring results, comparing the actual outcome with the objectives, and implementing corrective procedures” (Byrnes, 267, 328).

The whole creative process may be very messy, filled with conflict, tension, and passion. Circumstances dictate sudden changes in the course of action. How can you have a dynamic, creative arts organisation and still have effective control systems? Even the word, “control”, is a source of discomfort to many.

An art organisation needs to be careful not to overcontrol a production or a project, but it still needs a set of mutually agreed upon rules, regulations, and guidelines. The challenge of the arts manager job is to find a way to create bridges between the inherent bureaucracy of organisation and the typically more free-form artistic projects. To increase compliance with the rules, the rules should be clear and simple to follow. (Byrnes,336). The Producer has a significant role in building trust between the organisation and the performers, translating their different working cultures to each other. But first, the house-rules should be clear to a new producer too.

#### 3.1. Filing the History and Present in Digital Form

As a part of production manual, I gathered all theatre-policies and agreements in one digital folder to give a good starting point to my successors. This package of shared folders explains the general non-profit culture of the theatre, the productions procedures and the basic fundraising management. There are simple manuals to different tasks and areas of fundraising and guides for the Director, the Musical Director and the Producer with key job specifics. It is also a review of all current financial processes, budget and marketing and some audience-research to start with(Appendix 1, file tree to the Trust documents).

The whole digital-folder with sub-folders is organized best to serve as a Tyne Theatre Productions Producer’s Manual but it can be shared to every volunteer who is working for the event.

### 3.2. Project Management Digi-Tools

I used Google Drive -shared folder as a storage for documents. At the moment Drive was the easiest way to share the files. One most important quality of the shared Drive folders is the easy access management. You can give someone access to all, or only for one document, and it is simple to change the settings afterwards.

In the future, the whole document sharing, archives and project management systems will probably change a lot. Free versions of task management, team work, or project management products such as Trello or OneNote can be adapted to be used for managing information and small projects. They are typically designed to work on multiple devices (computers, tablets, phones) via the web or as down-loadable Apps.

These kinds of shareable digital platforms are the future. Once you get used to the idea of having shared and up to date digital production-organiser you never want to go back to the old way. In addition, if you keep your files organised it is easy to transfer platform later on.

Unfortunately, there are still issues with the digital safety and users' resistance in using shared platforms. Shared platform should be interactive and reliable. There is no point to create a digital platform for production management if nobody uses it. As said, there is no perfect solution yet, but these services evolve and soon they will replace the email-shared folders & closed FB group -combination.

I believe in sharing. Digital tools are helping the Producer to keep everyone equally informed. When all production-data, updates and to-do-lists are open for everyone to see, it may lead to a better time management and more equally shared tasks. Future planning process should be open for all.

## 4 GENERAL MANAGEMENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Tyne Theatre is a receiving theatre for local, national and international touring performances. Tyne Theatre & Opera House Ltd was set up to operate and manage this business. The Limited Company is the Preservation Trust's subsidiary. (Tyne Theatre and Opera House web pages). Tyne Theatre & Opera House Ltd.'s mission is finding new audiences and quality shows to appeal the audience.

Income from the receiving theatre rentals are essential to cover every day expenses. The main struggle is to gather enough money to get through the financial year without sinking, but it is clear that the artistic goals cannot wait until the building is ready, as in old buildings the renovation is never over and done. There is no reason to preserve empty walls without filling them with singing, dancing and acting. The Trust's vision is to have also vivid communal activity in the theatre. Tyne Theatre Productions has created to fulfil this mission.

Like many non-profit cultural organisations, Tyne Theatre Trust has relatively flat organisational structure. There are not many layers of management between the employee and Board of Trustees. Trustees prepare strategic plan for the theatre and its productions. Based on theatre's goals and values, the Production Committee suggests the next productions and an action plan to their staging. A producer is nominated for every production to oversee that the production volunteers are directing their forces appropriately, organising and in doing so, helping them to focus in the art.

#### 4.1. Leadership and Management Practices

The fiduciary responsibility or trusteeship of the organisation's resources are one of the fundamental roles of the board. To exercise this fiduciary responsibility, the board must have accurate information about the assets and liabilities of the organisation (Byrnes William J, 415; Blazek Jody, 62).

The Board meeting focuses on the big picture of the theatre's financial health, on matching the mission with the best financial solutions and on the development of the organisation. Tyne Theatre Board of trustees has meetings approximately once a month. Trustees are keeping up with contributed income, fundraising development and fundraising activities. They also hear the latest news from business management, including audience development and sales reports. Production Committee brings production updates from community theatre to the meetings.

For the non-profit organisation, the financial health is only the beginning that enables their vision and mission.

#### 4.2. Working for Volunteer Organisation

The Committee and the Board participation requires long term commitment. Luckily, there are people thinking it is worth the effort no matter how much work is needed behind the scenes, who are always trying to innovate for new ways to take things and projects further and keeping the wheels turning.

Usually volunteers don't care to be too organized. Volunteers will gladly contribute great amount of their time and effort to the productions, as long as it has something to do with the art and social circles, and it takes only limited time of their commitment.

Further commitment on the theatre's administration comes only later on, if ever.

### 5 TYNE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

“Knowing how to create great art with inadequate resources is an unwelcome reality for many individuals in the arts and arts institutions in this century” (Voltz Jim, 2-3).

Luckily enough, there have been active volunteers willing to get on with production planning. Quite incredibly, they have managed to produce two musicals per year this far, with completely volunteer force. The students of Art Production as myself have been helping to create the administrative side of productions to keep up the rising production standards.

Tyne Theatre volunteers, artists and people behind the scenes are creating incredible work on bare-bone budgets. Every production is starting from scratch, first finding the right people and defining the budget. Budget depend on annual financial situation and calculations on future prospects.

The new Production Committee started in summer 2018 and its members are young local theatre practitioners, volunteer and semi-professional Actors, Choreographers, Directors and Stage Managers. Volunteers usually stay for 1-2 years, but some have stayed in administrative roles on off for decades. Unfortunately, Production Co-Ordinator has not been one of those. I hope the new Committee solves this continuity issue.

Often the same few people are in many different roles of decision-making. This is why I am trying to avoid using nominated positions over the tasks and processes to understand how the theatre is organized, and what more could be done to improve it. Exception is made in analysing Producer qualities. If these qualities listed below do not feel natural and inspiring, the Producer's position may end up being too exhausting.

## 6 EXCELLENT PRODUCER QUALITIES

“Arts managers with expertise and a successful record of managing marketing, PR, and fundraising campaigns are very much in demand” (Byrnes, 425).

“Arts managers must possess integrated management and financial skills, knowledge of the artistic process in which they are involved, and sensitivity of the dynamics and educational needs of the communities they serve” (Columbia University Teachers College, Graduate Program in Arts Administration, New York/ Byrnes, 73).

### 6.1. Multiple Supervisory Skills

Small, evolving organisation, such like Tyne Theatre Productions, needs a Producer with multiple skills. A producer with strong understanding of group process and good communication skills can smooth many unnecessary complications.

### 6.2. Information Hot Spot

Producers prefer easy-to-use digital communication systems. Productions tend to get busy towards premiere. There is no such thing as too much information in production process. Short, daily updates, instead of long email reporting every other week, makes producer visible, supportive and productive. Include the Board members to the production updates. Sharing information allows the team to be involved in key decision-making and strategic planning.

The Producer should verify with the Director often enough whether the production is still running on time, if everything is getting done without problems, and with the quality anticipated.

The Producer is responsible for distributing internal information to every department, to the Board Members and the Financial Controller until the end of the production. Volunteers cannot always attend the rehearsals, and this is perfectly

acceptable, as they are not working for the theatre. There should be a system to keep them well informed about progress and changes in timetable even if they were away.

Supportive climate encourages everyone to speak up. Producer should get along with people. Producer creates a schedule and a budget, gets people and resources together, defines the details and brief; organises. Producer is talking and listening, taking responsibility, sharing credits and empathy, offering solutions when outlining problems and keeping everyone informed through the production. (Byrnes, 17; Voltz, 126).

### 6.3. I Have Some Bad News

Do not be afraid of mistakes. In trusting and open environment, it is easy to admit mistakes and get support.

To many, the social situations are hard, especially when you need to deliver bad news. It is also tempting to write about the bad news instead of showing up in rehearsals, but in the end, it is always better to deliver bad news in person. Researchers of BYU from the University of South Alabama Alan Manning and Nicole Amare surveyed 145 people and found out, that people value clarity and directness with sensitivity and decorum over politeness and sidestepping. If you are trying to make a persuasive case for someone to change a firmly held opinion, strategic build up can play an integral role. And any message that affects their belief system, the ego-identity, that is what you have to buffer. (Manning Alan, Amare Nicole).

A producer should be a solution-centred life-long learner and a good listener with fearless attitude towards the progress. It is a good idea to make notes when someone points out any failures or even better, invents an improvement to it, these ideas are hard to remember later on.

It is not always easy to be a “word of order” in creative process with ambitious and insecurely egocentric art world. Producers’ skills are a mixture of patience, diligence, fortitude, perspective and a sense of humour.

“Solidify relationships with your board, volunteers, community and colleagues. Eliminate endless front-line fire-fighting and allow you to anticipate and plan for future of your institution” (Voltz, forewords).



## 7 PRODUCTION PLANNING

Next show needs to be decided almost a year before its premiere. Sometimes you hit the spot and sometimes it fails, good evaluations skills are needed. In Newcastle Upon Tyne, there are many volunteer-based amateur theatres and they are all doing musicals. Picking up one that sells enough tickets is getting harder every year. Luckily, Tyne Theatre has been building its image as musical-stage so it is hardly the first one to fall. Arts managers should watch what other arts institutions are planning and doing. Also, know “what is hot and what is not” by following several long-term trends in art society and in general. Small organisations like Tyne Theatre has very narrow margin to fail.

### 7.1. The Next Show is Going to Be..

In the beginning of the production the Board members, the Director and the Producer should meet and make sure that artistic ambitions meet with financial realities. Board needs to see the production plan and detailed budget to it.

Before approving the plan, the Board needs to feel that the production team can responsibly manage available resources. Often it is a producer proving on behalf of the team that they have an understanding of the economic, and strategic planning, the artistic creativity and the social commitment, and that the production has some educational value to its participants. The Producer should oversee the production, so the agreed plan and timetable are followed, keeping the board informed of any changes.

### 7.2. Saving to Death

Art world always used to scrimp and save. We can create some savings by analysing the expenditures but eventually there is no more ways to safe. Much better way is to concentrate on creating decent budget for the show that potentially appeals to a wide audience. Do a risk assessment calculation. Risk assessment estimates the balance of invested money and marketing towards income from ticket sales. Include audience development plan and fundraising strategy to it. The challenge is not to do the show

as cheap as possible, but to evaluate the right investment to the show, the balance between making profit and overspending.

Art is not operating beyond the economic system. Basic economic theories and laws influence the art productions too. Sometimes amateur theatre group live in a non-commercial bubble where there is no financial management, budgeting, account system or any operating budget. It is unlikely that this kind of lack of organisation leads in better artistic results. More likely, the lack of planning, budget and money will kill the art.

In the following chapters, I will argue that detailed budgeting, market planning and gathering data will benefit the organisation. Budgeting and marketing may take most of the Producers working hours and sadly, these usually are the weakest areas of expertise in amateur productions.

## 8 BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The organisation's vision and values are made concrete in budget planning; these choices build the image of the organisation. Everyone included in the community are expected to spend responsibly and act according the business plan, towards its goals.

Tyne Theatre is not about creating profit but returning money to repairs and maintenance. However, a non-profit organisation is still a business and it must collect as much as or more revenue than it spends, or it will go out of business (Byrnes, 402).

### 8.1. Defining Financial Management

Financial management helps managers to oversee the financial goals and objectives of the organisation. Budget planning, controlling the financial traffic and comprehensive reporting are all part of financial management. The long-term health of the enterprise depends on the organisations vigilance in monitoring the revenue, expenses, and investments of the organisation. (Byrnes 400-401).

Financial management struggles between controlled risk-taking and responsible spending. Following the periodic financial report and the economic signals of the

area, talking to colleagues and outside professionals is leading to the best financial decision-making.

### 8.2. Pennies From Heaven

The budget planner needs both a healthy scepticism and optimism. Necessarily, the process involves uncertainty; decisions are made about the indeterminate future that the organisation cannot control. A budget is the numerical expression of an organisation's dreams that serves as a guide or measure of acceptable financial performance. (Blazek, 67-68).

Overoptimistic budgeting is risky. Small organisations are very vulnerable to overspending. If expenses exceed revenue or productions goes constantly over budget it is time for a reality check. Continued overspending in the operating fund will erode the financial health of the organisation. It will be very difficult to build an endowment if funds have to be constantly transferred to the operating fund to offset deficits.

Evaluating the budget variances, updating the budget, monitoring cash flow and clear reporting is key to year-round budget planning (Voltz, 90-91).

### 8.3. Tyne Theatre Productions Budget Planning

The budget should include clear, understandable breakdowns of all income and expense items, with comparisons to actual end-of-year reports from 3 previous years and projection for the current year. This assumption would include ticket prices and seating breakdown of the events. In the end, the budget estimation should show the potential surplus of income over expenses. The budget charts a direction for allocating and maximizing the use of resources and ideally, identifies any financial problems that could arise (Blazek, 67-68, 72).

Participatory budget process should involve every department giving their detailed real-price-based estimation. An open, participatory budget planning -process prevent drama of given budget with cuts and without explanation. Cutting "their budget" is seen as an aggressive act that is tied to their worth and value, making the budget allocation process a competition for resources within the organisation (Byrnes, 350).

Every production-department should know the standard the show is aiming. In my opinion, creativity and quality content tops the hollow show with lavish rental set on any day. Instead of spending on things, we should consider on investing more to people and theatre society's wellbeing in the future.

The production budget should be ready for Production Committee to preview and to adequately evaluate the draft before the final production decisions. A copy of the draft budget should be mailed to Board Members and to all in Production Committee at least one week prior to the meeting.

## 9 PRODUCTION COMMITTEE ROLES IN BUDGETING

In present two big annual productions are handled individually, from the beginning to the moment, the final report is delivered to the Board of Trustees. Estimations are highly based on previous, realized expenses with incremental increases.

### 9.1. Journey Towards the Vision

One possibility is to put all annual productions together and only set a price ceiling. In other words, Tyne Theatre Production would have a fixed but flexible budget, based on the level of developing communal activity.

The Production Committee would share the given budget between productions but could also use the profit of the first annual production to create other smaller productions to multiply the profit. It requires careful and professional understanding of producing; otherwise, this may just end up melting the annual expected profit instead of doubling it. All project budgets should also include estimation of basic operational cost such as heating, cleaning and staff expenses to calculate the actual profit.

Care must be taken when projecting revenue. A few too many optimistic revenue projections could lead to a midseason budget crisis. Arts organisations sometimes find themselves adjusting revenue projections to match expenses. This dangerous method of budgeting usually leads to chronic financial trouble for the organisation. (Byrnes, 350).

## 9.2. Be Careful Out There

However, the budget does not actually reveal whether the organisation is financially healthy. It simply tells what is expected in revenue and what is planned for the expenses. The more open the information exchange is about the budgets and the current financial state of the organisation, the better equipped the organisation is to respond as a team to whatever financial crisis it may be facing (Byrnes, 348).

One method to secure production budget in volunteer-based production is to add all in-kind expenses in budget. Every volunteer position has monetary value calculated and their volunteering is budgeted as a contribution or a donation. The production applies funds to cover all expenses, and depending on how much they get, the production covers more or less expenses to volunteers during the rehearsal process. Downside of this method is that the production will progress only after the finance is covered and secured. If the production is launching before all cost are covered, everyone should understand and agree that they are taking calculated risk and theatre should have plan B to balance the operating budget.

Every project should have a named producer who keeps production budget updated. Its importance increases towards the premiere and it helps wrapping the production in the end.

If all productions use similar budget template in commonly used digital spreadsheet program it is easier for Financial Management to compare and analyse different projects together. Analysing past productions guides the decision-making and the future project planning.

## 10 FINANCIAL CONTROLLERS ROLE IN TYNE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

### 10.1. Financial Management Information System aka FMIS

All financial traffic, revenue and invoicing go through Financial Controller of Tyne Theatre and Opera House Ltd. Financial Controller should also have a memo of approved price inquiries as soon as the Trust has approved the purchases. Financial Controller takes all the transactions to theatres' Financial Management Information

System (FMIS). The system has balance sheet and statement of account activity integrated with all Tyne Theatre financial activity. Up-to-date system helps the organisation to see right away, if the financial situation is starting to go unbalanced. Financial management requires everyone's involvement and it is not Financial Controllers fault if the payments are lying in someone's home archives.

As Byrnes mention in his book, it is also important to learn how to read your data. Effective FMIS should help, not hinder goal achievement.

## 10.2. Tyne Theatre Productions and FMIS

Tyne Theatre Productions prepare and monitor their annual budget. Productions budget planning, updates and monitoring are the Producers responsibility. Tyne Theatre Productions' Producer keeps record of all the "Tyne Theatre Productions"-financial traffic and makes sure that Financial Controller gets all the production-related receipts, libretto-deposits and other documents as soon as payments comes in or goes out.

Tours and Friends Club memberships, Seat Naming and various donations need constant monitoring and updates in both systems, because all these Trust-related incomes comes through Operatic Company Ltd.'s system and therefore Financial Controller monitors them too. Productions' Producer updates the details needed to the Trust records. All invoicing and cash flow related to these fundraising activities go through the Financial Controller.

In this kind of non-profit organisation where money is tight it is crucial to inform Financial Controller right away if any financial act is about to happen. "The system is only as good as the people who use it. It is inexperienced or poorly trained staff, not the FMIS, which may lead an organisation into a financial crisis" (Byrnes, 416). It is also important to understand that the Financial Controllers maintains the account traffic; they are not alone responsible of the financial health of the organisation. It is up to management to take act when the balance is breaking.

## 11 PRODUCERS ROLE IN PLANNING

"There is no benefit to the art form or the community if the very people who love the arts are destroyed by it. Well-organized and creative

leadership, planning, organizing, leading, controlling are the four functions of management. Control over the enterprise and its budgets release the artistic process and gives more room to experiment instead of struggling with daily tasks.” (Byrnes, 16).

Bad play cannot be made good by excellent management, but a good production can be better with proper planning. Favour managing conflict and strategically planning to avert crisis rather to crisis management (Voltz, 126).

### 11.1. Realistic Budget

Every department will make detailed plan on how the money is planned to spend. A named Producer of the production will gather all estimations in one budget. Ideally, the Producer has accurate bids and a price estimation on all production expenditures. More often, the budget is more or less a draft on how the production is planning to use the given budget. Some of the cost can be easily copied from previous budget with minor index-correction, but most of the budget should be based on real, asked price estimation with taxes and other possible side expenditures included.

Highly detailed department-budget has many advantages. It helps to avoid quantity errors in items priced per piece like costume rentals, and it prevents unspoken, hidden costs. These are so obvious to those who made the list that they often just slip from the listing.

Details comprise well-planned estimation and from the details, you can form a picture of the final production. Detailed budget should be circulated in every department. Volunteers may have better connections and could arrange a better bargain in some item or combine pick-ups when the van is available.

### 11.2. Monitoring

Once the Trustees have approved the budget, producer’s responsibility is to watch over the expenditures. A production meeting agrees together when all the rentals and purchases should be in the theatre and who is responsible for ordering and buying the items. The Producer oversees that the orders are delivered as agreed and checks that invoicing details are correct. The Producer should keep the budget updated,

make sure that all the cash receipts are taken to the Financial Controller, together they go through the invoices. All invoices should be approved and checked before they are paid and filed.

### 11.3. Filing the Documents

HMRC recommends you keep all the original documents you receive. This does not mean you need to keep them on paper. Receipts are typically printed on thermal paper, a chemically coated paper that produces text and image when heat is applied to its surface. HM Revenue and Customs asks you to keep the original documents for six years. Thermal paper in receipts tends to fade over time and that is why receipts should be scanned for filing. As long as all the information is legible, a photo taken with your smartphone is perfectly acceptable. It is also important to scan the reverse side of any receipt that has information on the flip side – many shops print double-sided receipts. Write the name of the buyer, production and department to the receipt before you scan or take picture of it. Stage props can be tricky to categorise later on if bookkeeper does not know the play. (Crunch financial services, HMRC, Juurakko, 99).

## 12 PRODUCERS AS A STRATEGIC PLANNER

The budget should be followed in agreed timeframe. Every delay in production affects to others and that creates tension towards the premiere. Production process is organic: There are always changes in plans, but everyone should be well informed of those -so they can adjust before it is too late. For example, overspending in set cost may lead to cuts in marketing costs, but that affects ticket sales and profit, a chain of misfortune is about to begin...

### 12.1. Break a Leg They Say..

The production team should make a risk assessment plan for possible cancellation, especially for the situation where all the money is spent to the set, rehearsals and print, but the show is forced to be cancelled. No matter how good the plans are there is always a possibility of some outside force de-railing the production. On the other hand, if the tickets are selling like hot cakes, the production should be able to make quick decision on whether to add an extra show or not. Every production should start



with organizing roles and making a good action plan. It means that every department member knows their roles and responsibilities and the productions timetable when leaving the meeting. Good planning saves time later on.

Right after proper production launch it is time to start thinking of the marketing of the show.

### 13 MARKETING THE SHOW

#### 13.1. As Effective as Possible Given the Resources Available

The promotional aspect of the marketing is the most visible element, and it is usually divided further, types of advertising: newspaper, magazine, radio, television, direct mail, e-mail, a website, raffles, and other PR activities (Byrnes, 435).

A Media plan describes marketing process with detailed action plan. A plan helps to evaluate marketing costs. Basic action plan could be a timetable in a calendar with markings who is doing, what and when. Add detailed marketing costs to production budget: graphics and programme design, printing, distribution of prints, advertising, social media boost etc.

Social media can be inexpensive and effective, but organic visibility requires time to create content and interaction with customers. Time is what we have so little before premiere when we should be most active in marketing.

Media Plan should include an idea of measuring and evaluating the impact of marketing on productions media visibility. Knowing the impact of your ads in different media is helping you to target the little marketing budget more effectively next time.

#### 13.2. Public Relations

Charity campaigns, Open house-days, theatre tours, educational programmes, shows, news, articles and stories: all these activities are part of PR to mould the positive image.

Remember to network with many different customers groups. Random meeting can be a starting point of important and loyal customer relationship. Always have up to date info-package available. If opinion leaders or customers recommend the theatre

to others, it is a win for PR. Generally, people trust recommendations of other customers more than straight production marketing. (Juurakko et al., 95)

### 13.3. Art and Marketing, a Matching Pair?

“Artists dream of someone else taking care of the selling. In addition, very few organisations have enough capital to invest in professional marketing team. Minimum effort is invested on developing info- and marketing platforms. Usually it is the producer, who tries to do updates as a side job, many times without long-term plans or set goals.” (Producer Aino Halonen, interviewed on 2018)

It is hard to stay visible. Entertainment market is highly competitive. All Tyne Theatre marketing tries to increase visibility in a way that benefits organisations objectives and maximises its revenue. A marketing plan of non-profits should cover not only promoting individual shows, but also inform about the values and overall goals of the organisation. A good marketing plan is simple and precise, easy enough to implement (Juurakko et al, 71).

## 14 WHO IS THE CUSTOMER?

In order to find a new audience, and to better serve the regulars, we need to know, what they are expecting from their entertainment. Why some chose to buy tickets to Tyne Theatre instead of going another show or to the movies, library or museum, or just stay at home. Is there a way to reach these “others”?

Wider definition of customers includes ticket buyers and also production-volunteers and performers. Beside obvious customers, Tyne Theatre has visitors interested in history and building itself. All these customer segments can be divided into smaller groups with similar interest. Interest group can be pensioners interested in private tours, sweet tooth’s buying ice cream during the intermission or any group of people who has activities, hobbies or likes in common. By analysing the group with similar interests, we learn much of their habits as a consumer. We learn the best way to reach this segment, their interests and demands. It helps the theatre to offer the kind of programme and services the customers want, with the price they are willing to pay for it.

#### 14.1. Audience Development by Segmenting

“Marketers use the term *market segment* to identify individuals or groups, or organisations sharing one or more similar characteristics that causes them to have similar product needs.” (Byrnes, 435).

Segmenting is simply trying to recognize and reach a group of potential customers sharing the same interest. Potential customers are divided in groups based on age, gender, location, size of the family and customer relationship phase. When segmenting, we are also looking for uniting psychological factors like attitude, personality, consuming habits and lifestyle. Decide to whom you want to sell the show and investigate to whom it is easiest to sell. (Juurakko etc., 68-70).

Ask yourself, how can I reach this family, subculture or social class -is there some other vital activity that is common to this segment? The same message can be customized for the different target audience. Use multiple platforms to reach these different audiences. our visibility to them is put together when customer is comparing the offers.

Satisfied customer is open to new offers and potentially comes back. It is all down to developing customer loyalty. We try to convert single-ticket-buyers into members or subscribers. (Juurakko et al, 81; Voltz, 158).

#### 14.2. Visitors Turning Customers

There are numerous ways to gather data about the customers. The hard part is to collect data about non-customers and single-ticket-buyers. Is there a way to make someone who has never been in Tyne Theatre to visit there? What it takes to make a single-ticket-buyer to join the mailing list?

Automatic data analysing is segmenting people every time they open the web and use search-tools. These intelligent data analysing systems are unreachable for small organisations at the moment. While waiting to get these information generators in daily use Tyne Theatre tries to engage customers into email newsletter subscribers. By subscribing, they show their interest towards the theatre.

### 14.3. Newsletter Subscribers

From the marketing point of view, every newsletter subscriber is a win. Constantly growing direct mailing list of regular customers is one of the most valuable marketing tools and information channels for any arts organisation. They may be the future sponsors, at least they are potentially more open to loyalty programs such as Friends-Club -membership.

Theatres should build on customer development and lasting relationships. Statistics show that it is many times easier to get your message thru to those who have willingly given their contact details to you than sending an open invitation. Getting more e-newsletter subscribers is really worth the time and effort. Even better results come from personalised emails.

### 14.4. Are You Coming?

Customers crave personalization. According to AgilOne's research study of 3,000 consumers in the U.S. and the U.K., more than 70 percent of people expect personalised experiences when they interact with brands. Customers not only desire personalisation, they require it (Hong Pat).

Salesforce study shows that 63 percent of millennial consumers and 58 percent of Gen-X consumers are willing to share data with companies if it means receiving more personalised offers and discounts in exchange. (Alton Larry). These two studies do not shed light on the level of personalisation. Is it more like using customers name in mailings, or are we talking about personal discount programmes.

### 14.5. Bad Service

Customers purchase decision is a sum of many factors: recommendations, service, effective marketing and overall reputation of the venue. Comparing two similar options the winner is the one with better services and more attractive offer. Tyne Theatre is not only competing with other theatres but with all other offers to spend your free time.

Bad customer service experience is major reason for customers to reject the venue, others are quality issues, pricing or change in personal consuming habits. Only 4% of disappointed customers make complaints, usually they just never come back again.

Keeping this in mind the venue should have quality checks in services and benchmark other local offers. In comparison, reaching the new customers is about ten times more expensive than keeping the regulars. You should hold on to your regular customers as getting them back is 27 times more expensive. (Juurakko et al, 71).

#### 14.6. Tyne Theatre Contacts

Target audience development based on data gathering has only begun. Only basic contact information is saved from the donors and volunteers. In the future, there should be new columns for past contributions, targeted advertising and segmenting history (contact history). That would be helpful for organizing and preparing even more customized support materials for the campaigns.

#### 14.7. Setting the Ticket Price

Time and money are wasted trying to convince people to buy their “product” without really knowing to whom they were selling or communicating with. You need to consider how much to charge for the event based on what you think your community is willing to pay. You also need to know how price affects demand. (Byrnes, 426, 394).

Ticket sales are the best income for Tyne Theatre. Setting the right price for tickets is sometimes hard. If you sell out right away, it was probably a little too low. Organisation should follow the pricing of other goods and services, income levels of audiences, and change of trends that influence individual tastes to have a good grasp of the overall marketplace of the community (Byrnes, 435, 374).

There is also a concept of elastic demand. You might see this happen, if you drop your ticket price from £45 to £39 and instead of selling 10 tickets at £45, you sell 14 tickets at £39. Lower price produces greater demand (Byrnes, 393). Knowing your customers helps to set the right price. According to Heilbrun and Gray studies, once you set the price, you should stick to it; changes in ticket prices do not produce significant changes in demand (Byrnes, 393). Discount factor should be used carefully. It affects the image, the expenses and the quantity of sells but not always in a positive way. You have to sell hard when you sell cheap. (Byrnes, 385; Juurakko et al., 71, 74). It is the case in Tyne Theatre Productions as the ticket price is set between £10-£16. On the other hand, it is the same price range for most amateur musicals in the area.

Strategic pricing decisions coupled with dynamic pricing plans can enhance revenue (Byrnes, 385, 396). Demand-based pricing can bring in significantly more revenue per performance. It has been used in some shows. Make an offer to the early birds about the rows you want to sell first. Increase admissions on the weekends or discount the admission on weekdays but avoid last minute discount. Many customers wait for better offers, they are used to get the last-minute offers. It has led entertainment business into risky situation where people buy tickets every time later and later. By doing so, we are hurting the whole industry.

## 15 MARKETING IS TEAMWORK

Precise segmenting of the audiences gives Tyne Theatre more opportunities to divide marketing between the Tyne Theatre Ltd and Productions volunteers. Beside the daily marketing acts, we could have more targeted plans for the long-term audience- and image development, sales and measuring the success of these marketing acts.

### 15.1. a An In-House Marketing Team

The in-house Marketing Co-Ordinator has very good relations with the media. All media interaction, starting from press release, should be circulated thru Tyne Theatre & Opera House Ltd.'s Marketing Co-Ordinator. Almost all media inquiries are coming in thru her too. She works with PR daily and knows the venue long-term media plan, history and the photo archives. Her assistance gives Tyne Theatre Productions major advance comparing other small organisations in the area.

The marketing Co-Ordinator has been incredibly helpful with planning and executing significant part of Tyne Theatre Productions marketing. Magazine visibility is done via Tyne Theatre & Opera House Ltd marketing channels. The productions are mentioned in local where-to-go categories, there may also be 1-3 quarter page ads in monthly culture-magazine, depending on Tyne Theatre & Opera House Ltd monthly promotion deals with others. With her experience and professionalism, the show gets visibility in the media and inside the venue. But she is very busy too, announcing and promoting all receiving theatre productions, adding all show updates to the Tyne Theatre and Opera House's web site.

### 15.1. b Producer as a Marketing Co-Ordinator

Even the most loyal audience needs constant reminding of upcoming performances. Together with Tyne Theatre & Opera House Ltd marketing the Producer closes the deals of basic visibilities for in-house productions including posters, roll-ups, and flyers. Production does usually one or two poster distribution rounds and one window deco with roll-ups to increase the visibility. Flyer distribution depends on volunteer activity and could be more organized, likewise the social media activity. All help is needed to increase the marketing activity before the premiere.

The Producer of the show mainly does productions website updates and social networking. Usually among the actors, there are one or two natural talents in social media visibility. Ask them to guide others to be active too. More about the significance of social networking in the chapter 14.

Hardly ever the show is sold out with one press release. Traditional print marketing is slowly put aside anyway. Today marketing should be clever. Multiple new platforms with variation of selling techniques has become every day routine to reach the potential customers and new audiences. I find that the only way to survive in daily marketing routine is to use pre-scheduling posting tools according to the plan made before it gets busy. It is possible to reach much wider audience than today with proper planning and active participation of the volunteers in planning and executing the marketing of the shows.

### 15.2. Bring All Your Friends Too

Tyne Theatre have one huge advantage: several private spaces which could be offered for groups with affordable package of tickets and drinks. Yet another area in need of more marketing resources. Group sales could be more aggressive but for now there is no one in the theatre who has the time to put out offers and close the deals. Tyne Theatre Productions would need a person who takes care of audience development and group sales and all other efforts to maximize the customer base for productions, tours and special events. Group sales managers often use persuasive promises of lower ticket prices, good seats, educational materials, teacher training, personalised visits and theatre tours to close the deals (Voltz, 158).

### 15.3. What Are the Options?

The professional marketing company has a team to plan, write and create the marketing package for the customers. You pay for the efficiency, professional double-checked content and quality of the marketing strategy.

Follow the field and adapt clever ideas by integrating the essence of them to develop your event. Involve all in the production-team into the planning of marketing the show. They may give a new perspective to the marketing with their special connections. Customise your message by highlighting different qualities of the show to different target audience, but never tell whopper (Byrnes, 435). Pay attention to the agreed show licensing text, font size and logos when promoting licenced musical theatre productions. Licence holders like Music Theatre International Limited do not tolerate bending the rules.

Some big organisations have teamed all marketing under the same roof. The synergy grows and may bring more efficiency on marketing and benefit the brand. I saw an example on focusing all marketing in Helsinki Cultural centres trial, as a part of the bigger organisation development, in year 2017. ( Hel.fi web site). Using the essence of this idea is to team up with other live acts in the area to gain visibility as many local groups have the same needs. They want to give information about them, their community and the next shows, workshops and other volunteer activities. Teaming up could help to find mutual sponsor deal. One idea is trying to get sponsorship to create a special leaflet display stands for all local community theatre leaflets to present their upcoming shows and other activities, instead of competing of cafeteria window sills. A special stand would look more professional and appealing. Local museums and tourist attractions has already done something similar, why shouldn't we? These stands could be portable, and communities could take turns in presenting these local community theatres in fairs and openings.

## 16 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING

Tyne Theatre Producer's marketing role is to focus on promoting in-house productions and developing public relations by creating content for social network channels. Social media platforms work well in building a story, revealing the theatre



behind the scenes and listing special achievements inside the organisation. Social media visibility is inexpensive way to build positive brand and roots in local community. Be patient with the results, a single campaign very seldom gives instant jackpot in ticket sales (Juurakko et al, 79).

Active volunteer involvement is a way to build two-way communication between the theatre and the audience. Let the audience be a part of the process: peek into the rehearsals, repairs in the venue, painting the set, introducing the staff and professions. It is also quite easy to make a small questionnaire in social media, asking the likes and dislikes of the audience.

Strong social media presence guides the audience to the company-web sites. Unfortunately, website activity will not instantly translate into filling empty seats or a more positive PR-image, but website is *always open* -info channel. Keep the website updated: part of the audience development is to help people to find the information they are seeking (Byrnes, 441).

#### 16.1. Tyne Theatre Websites

What is the best website you ever visited? Why do you remember it? If it is not your company's website, it is probably time to make some changes to make it better.

The theatre has two separate websites. It is not ideal to have two separate web address for one venue, but it appears to be the most practical and inexpensive way to have web presence for two different functions the theatre has. Once "tynetheatreandoperahouse.com" concentrates on promoting the shows, the "tynetheatreproductions.net" is the Theatre Foundation's site. It is a window to Trust fundraising strategy, community activities, repairs and other project news.

Both pages are cross-linked with fundraising sub-pages like Seat naming, Friends club and volunteering. Productions website, logo and colours are mirroring the overall look of the Tyne Theatre & Opera House Ltd "main page" to prevent confusing the customers. Yes, it is the same building with multiple functions.

#### 16.2. Questionnaire as a Quality Control Tool

How to reach the audience, should we start the show earlier or later, should we offer more service, should we keep bar open after the show? We could ask these questions

from our audience. Audience should have different possibilities to give their opinion about your services. Web surveys are easy to create and handle. Web surveys are cost-effective but as a downside, inconsistent with response rates.

Keep the questionnaire short. Write simple, specific yes-or-no-questions. Share the link widely in various platforms. Before publishing send it to someone inside the house for testing. Pilot, testing and soft launch enables you to determine whether some questions may need to paraphrase, reordered or removed (Wang Ricco, Edelman).

It is recommended to give people free comment space in the end of questionnaire. An open answer can increase the response rate; however, evaluating the open answers can be tricky. Those who choose to answer the general open question could be different from respondents overall, either being more articulate or having a greater interest in the survey topic. (O’Cathain Alicia, Thomas J; Züll Cornelia, 1-6).

A quality-control system can be a simple printed questionnaire with tic boxes, like the one they use to collect opinions about the theatre tour in Tyne Theatre. Theatre tour ends to the lobby bar, where the visitors are given pen and questionnaire with a smile. Once they are there, should you ask one extra question too, for example: Would you send a Tyne Theatre “Seasons Greetings” card if they were sold here with stamp and you could leave it in box office to deliver? Tour-questionnaires are filed in the office from where the Head of Tour guides is collecting them.

### 16.3. Raffle

Create a raffle around the questionnaire. Inexpensive way to ask people their likes and dislikes is to put up a questionnaire with raffle off tickets. The raffle and questionnaire can be “on” all the time with monthly draw and changing questions. Participation could be done online or with a ballot box in the foyer. Monthly raffle-offs can be filmed and shown in Tyne Theatre Productions FB pages to get more traffic in there too.

Remember to explain the GDPR rules and get permission if you like to add participants names and contact info to your records.

#### 16.4. GDPR Law

General Data Protection Regulation changed in May 2018. The client approval to save their records and their chance to decline or approve commercial messages by ticking the box are two major changes shown to the customers. Personalised communications, targeted advertising, aggregating analytics to create trend reports and to track ad performance, post-click tracking, and audience measurement are all potentially okay under GDPR, as long as the controller ensures that users can easily opt out at any time.

The Theatre's responsibility is to figure out how data flows through the organisation, including what data is being collected, how it has been collected, where it is stored and who has access to it. It requires detailed data mapping and written document on how this all is done in the organisation. Data analyses should be de-identified and anonymised. It really helps when the majority of the gathered data is already permissioned, first-party data that comes direct from clients. It is also called "legitimate interest"-data. Under GDPR, EU citizens have the right to get a copy of all their personal data, the right to port their data between platforms, delete their data and the right not to be profiled or have their data processed at all. ( Eur-lex; Ribant Katrin; Schiff Allison).

Change was not dramatic for those who had secured and organized files. Many theatres used this opportunity to update their mailing list. They sent an info-mail to everyone and offered a chance to be erased from the theatres' files. To my surprise not many wanted to be forgotten, in fact more often they sent a reply wishing to be more often contacted.

#### 17 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Tyne Theatre already has the most interesting old theatre -interior and it only gets better as the renovation proceeds. The evening starts from outside when you step into the lights and glow of the venue. Drinks and food are a part of the night out experience for many, so it is clever to team up with the restaurants in the area and package food and ticket.

Link customers to your values. For example, Tyne Theatre has discussed of changing plastic cups to biodegradable cups in the bar. They are a little more expensive than regular plastic cups, but it is environmental choice, building a positive image about responsibility.

Teaming with local entrepreneurs, sharing the same interest can be beneficial in many ways. New successful service-ideas are quickly recycled. Demanding customers with the high expectations are also speeding service development. If audience like to buy ice cream in the interval we sell them locally produced ice cream. As the audience loves the facade of the Tyne Theatre, a local artist was asked to draw a picture of it for Christmas card. Again, good PR all the way.

## 18 EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO MARKETING

Why do consumers buy one product over another? How do you develop brand loyalty? How do you maximize customer engagement? FMRI (Functional magnetic resonance imaging) have been testing response when subjects evaluate products or brands. Brain activity in limbic systems (where our feelings, memory, and value judgments originate) lights up, while the data processing and analysis centres of their brains are left largely unstimulated. According to Harvard professor Gerald Zaltman, we make the consumer decisions in subconscious mind. In Zaltman's book, "How Customers Think: Essential Insights into the Mind of the Market" the professor reveals many exciting ideas that can be helpful to marketers and brands. Most effective marketing makes you feel something. (Baum Dan; Chierrotti Logan) This reminds me of the old jokes of pets and children in the commercials.

Successful business needs to take in count much wider selection of values in their image building than before social networking, poison pen writers are out there ready to eat you alive. Environmental values, reasonable economic and cultural values over hard-ass commercialism are all partly influencing to our customers daily decisions (Gronow in Niiniluoto Ilkka, Vilkkio Risto, Kuorikoski Jaakko, 52, 98; Dobbin Frank, Fligstein article).

### 18.1. Consumer Behaviour Studies in Bigger Scale

Trying to understand the consumers' behaviour have led to many lines of studies and theories. Latest addition to the pack is combining sociology and philosophy with economics. The idea is to use quantitative, mathematic approach to numeric data and uses statistical significance to model behaviour of economics.

The digital development is making possible to simulate economic patterns more accurately. Faster calculation of big data and analysing programs offer interesting tool when trying to anticipate consumer acts. Speed and increasing accuracy have given these simulations more credibility in anticipating future economics. (Vilkko in Niiniluoto et al, 12, 98). Interesting theories, such as Game Theory, and related to it, the Decision Theory are created from this study. Decision Theory is an interdisciplinary topic, studied by economists, statisticians, psychologists, biologists, political and other social scientists, philosophers and computer scientists.

All these theories are based on data gathering and analysing it, almost beyond understanding. We are truly moving fast to the era of knowledge economy. By analysing the data, we try to anticipate the next move of our customers and understand societies and their demand. Even small organisations could put their data in use for development purposes.

## 19 GATHERING DATA

The financial year reports are usually put in some dusty closet never to be seen again. Too few people are working too much, and gathering statistics is just too much on top of everything else. But the numbers and strategy behind the numbers are greatly underused if only tax authorities and your bookkeeper know in which direction your numbers point, is the organisation doing fine or if it is slowly sinking.

### 19.1. Data and Information

The term data has found its way into our daily vocabulary. Data typically comes to us in the form of figures, which we then process to form a meaningful conclusion. As we are interpreting the data results and making sense of it, data turns into information.

### 19.2. Get to Know the Customers

In the future, there would be wider selection of affordable services to gather information. Most likely, it is somehow linked with ticket sales system. Even now, most social media platforms offer free tools to monitor and analyse page-visitors. By following these meters, we get more understanding about our customers, their age range and when they are active and most likely reading the messages. By analysing your numbers, you get valuable information on current customers and efficiency of your ads. Well gathered data and understanding the real significance of the statistics is the backbone of future production planning and customer development.

### 19.3. Daily Used Info

This simplified example gives us the idea on how we can use the data and why it is important to have regular data-updates: From the Box Office report (*data*) it is found that we have sold 500 tickets in a 1000-seat venue. The *information* is that we have only sold 50% of the seats. We have expected that by this date we should have sold 65%. We get this information by comparing the sales on previous ticket sales. Comparing this with our risk assessment, production budget break-even and marketing plan, we could decide to increase advertising or create a new element in our sales campaign. We should also analyse what has changed in audience behaviour, is the situation beyond our control or can we do something different?

### 19.4. Measuring the Success of Experimenting

It is beneficial to automate data-gathering, but there is so much information available that it is better to focus on some areas of development at the time. The focus can be agreed when wrapping up the previous production. Setting the goals, experimenting new ways to reach audiences and evaluating result is one part of implementing of the customers development plan.

Numeric data is useful to have when suggesting changes to the production procedures. It can be unbearable to execute any changes if others cannot see the benefit of it. "If it's not broken, don't fix it"-people eat new ideas for breakfast, but this is gradually changing. Experimenting and monitoring new practices has been one

of the latest hot business strategies. If the experiment fails, it is possible to go back to the old ways or continue with a new experiment to find the best way to do things.

Innovative future planning and improvement ideas are useful to put in the funding applications, they show that this organisation is going somewhere, and it is worthy of support. Improvements that take the communal activity to the next level are in fact a good cause for applying sponsorship.

### 19.5. Applications and Data

Grants will be distributed for well-planned projects. Supporters understand the language of numbers. Again, comprehensive numeric data gives you and your project more credibility. Sometimes it is the best to draw a graphic presentation of the data to make your point. One of the main reasons of fund application rejections is that the organisation cannot show in their application that have control over their goals.

Risk assessment is part of a good project funding application and it is mostly made by analysing the similar productions. Prove that you have calculated your risk by quantifying the mission. Quantifying is about translating your goals into realizable steps using the data you already have and the future prospects. How much audience is expected, how many children get this unique experience? How many young talents have already performed here and been involved in the workshops? How many will be involved next year? (Blazek, 58). Realistic plans and budget with reliable prospects backed up with comparison of previous shows are much easier to approve than just an idea, without any data to back up. The value of productions is not only the profit that comes out of the ticket sales. The real value is in proving that the production serves and fills a need in the community.

## 20 APPLYING FOR FUNDS

All non-profit organisations are facing this question at some point: Should we apply for funds for this? Many different instances give money to arts but there are even more of applicants in line to get some. If you never apply, you are never getting any.

Set specific, realistic and rational fundraising goals and deadlines. Research other community campaigns. Make sure that your strategic fundraising plan lines up with

your mission. Build a persuasive set of criteria or reasons why this institution deserve support. What needs to be done and how it is planned to be done. (Voltz, 157-158). In addition, put your data in use as suggested in previous chapter.

Good applications stand out and match to the giving institution's targeted funding scheme. Without a match, the application is rejected. If they want you to include detailed budget, integrated with your business plan and all this should match with your vision and mission, you need to have these attached with the application. The most convincing application gets the money. Professional applicants stand out as they know how to fill the requirements and they are prepared far before the application period is announced. There is no reason why smaller organisation could not be prepared too. Below are listed some of the documents worth to do well before sending applications.

#### 20.1. Clarifying Vision and Mission

Mission explain the purpose of existing. Who are you now and exactly what you do, who you do it for, and how? Vision statement inspires an institution to be the best at what it wants to be. Vision is future, values and beliefs. Both should be short enough for someone to remember and repeat as an advocate for your arts organisation. (Voltz, 3-4).

Explain how the organisation is uniquely qualified to provide what is missing in your community. Audience and customers defining are done for the marketing plan, right, so this should be easy. Summarise the achievements, the experience of the volunteers, artistic success stories and the value of the next production and list the future goals: the vision and mission are hidden there in between (Volz, 113-115). You may even end up with catchy one-liner to boost your brand!

Having clear understanding of what is the unique role of the organisation and what it takes to get there, continue with the summary of the required resources. Most realistic goals are a good starting point, and some may need even further slicing to smaller steps, divided between several financial years. There you have short-term plans and long-term plans with budget to match. If the data analyse shows lack of capital to implement all these wonderful plans, it is time to start sketching a fundraising strategy to cover all these good causes. By doing so, you have just started a strategic fundraising plan.



## 20.2. a Fundraising Strategic Plan

Non-profit fundraising is challenging, exciting, and potentially complicated. Trustees approve and write open the fundraising process, timetable and fundraising guidelines. When annual action plan is out, it is everyone's responsibility. It should be acknowledged that fundraising is a crucial aspect of budget fulfilment and vision fulfilment on an institutional level. (Voltz, 91).

Internal Fundraising strategy is a listing of different membership options, different ways of gathering fund and maybe some new ideas, still bubbling under. It includes plans on developing fundraising events, reaching individuals, corporate sponsorship, contacting foundations and government agencies and cooperation with local administration, politicians and education planners. Strategic planning beyond simple fundraising into the realm of overall strategies and programs advances the entire institution.

Applying for funding is a constantly ongoing process for many organisations. Professionals often write the best applications and it is hard to compete with professionally made applications in voluntary-based organisations, but this is something worth learning. Good starting point is to make a list of possible sponsors and prospects and possibilities to team up with someone.

## 20.2. b Well Organized Prospect List

Trust members' constant research and knowledge about the donation history is valuable information when trying to find new funding channels. Records of Trust public relations history may ease future connections with prospective patrons, community leaders, media and local community. However, this information should be taken care with good confidentiality practises according GDPR-regulations, these are shortly explained in chapter 16.

## 20.2. c Prospects and Sponsors

“The corporate sponsorship and marketing-based fundraising seems to be the wave of the future. It is series of trade-offs, benefits, marketing deals, value for contributions, investment include contractual agreement for advertising space, media acknowledgement, prime box seats, endorsements, merchandising rights, and whole range of other marketable assets that the non-profit arts institution might be able to deliver.” (Voltz, 156).

Corporate sponsorship sounds a distant dream for small non-profits. Instead of “why on earth they would sponsor us” you should think “why not”? Bold, innovative offers and strong brand identity is needed to find these corporate sponsors.

In Tyne Theatre, it could be the intermission ice-cream offer, I used as an example in segmenting the audience. Tyne Theatre has been already selling ice cream, so they know approximate amount of the intermission-ice-cream eaters. If the prospect is fine and the target audience is the same, it is possible to find the local ice-cream company who is willing to do a marketing deal with the theatre for mutual benefit.

The donors, prospects and sponsors may want to support the historic building if they feel some kind of connection to the theatre. Most people give money because they can, they want to be of help and it makes them feel good. Most corporations are sponsoring art because it is good for their brand. Give them the opportunity to believe in your institution and feel the great thrill of supporting the arts. (Voltz, 155).

Once you get their support, give your donors updates of the accomplishments and always remember to thank them for their support. Your communication between the customers and media is strongly moulding the image of the organisation. The first step of over-all image building is planning cohesive yet individual mailing templates. Are we visible?

### 20.3. Communication Plan

Communication plan sets goals for public relations (PR). It has ideas to be used in publications, image-building material, ideas to underline the company values and deepen the connection between the audience and the venue. Communication plan is the place to write open the results of segmenting the audience and plans on reaching them.(Voltz, 158). Communication plan sounds official, but it should be down to earth with simple plans on how the messages reach certain audiences: season brochure could be a place to give progress updates in repairs and inform about the future repairs, a designated endowment campaign can be launched in the productions programme. In the foyer could be a specially designed stands for Volunteer newsletters and other special campaigns.

While communication plan is about how to get the message through, the marketing plan covers this too and focuses on over all brand selling.

#### 20.4. a Marketing Plan

“Today’s arts marketer and PR manager works with an expanded set of choices that includes a significant diversity of communication channels with consumers and the public. Marketing process should be related to the organisation’s PR, fundraising, and strategic plans.” (Byrnes, 425, 455).

Marketing plan starts with organisation profile: name, type of arts organisation, location, brief history, and years in existence. Marketing Plan outlines the organisations mission, goals, and objectives statements. The goals should be connected to the mission. This is what moulds the brand and character of the venue. (Byrnes 444-445).

As an example of combining the goals with the mission, here below is a summary of analysing the possibilities of organic social media marketing for Tyne theatre Productions. Audience segmenting is a key element on reaching possible audiences in social media platforms. To this we have paid very little attention before.

#### 20.4. b Organic Marketing and Support of Opinion Leaders

Tyne Theatre focus on light, entertaining program. A lot of comedy, music and musicals are on the menu. Tyne Theatre has something to offer for many different audiences. The two different organisations under the same roof have partially the same target audience and the amateur musical theatre productions are advertised in Tyne Theatre and Opera House Ltd “What’s On”-brochures. The impact of different marketing channels has been investigated very little so far. By evaluating recent amateur based musical marketing in social media, we identified a new, potential audience segment.

This audience is younger, living all over the area, but they are active in social media and most of them are theatre hobbyist. They are students and friends of actors. They get discount tickets, but they bring many more with them, as they share their good experiences in social media. They are kind of opinion leaders together with local culture-bloggers, so we need them to share and like our postings. Opinion of these two active groups are affecting great deal on ticket sales. They should be reached at early state of marketing the show. Right in the beginning of the rehearsals, they should have pictures and stories to post and comment as they will help you to spread

the word. The amateur theatre circles are relatively tightly-knit community so this campaign should be planned with the help of the current performers.

#### 20.5.a Volunteer plan

Volunteer plan could be many different things depending on organisation. Planning could start with questions: where does this organisation stand in the local community? Should there be more interaction with the local, national or professional field? What this interaction could be? (Voltz, 2). The answers to these questions are to be found by investigating local needs, asking volunteers about their motivation and comparing these opinions to the goals and future prospects of the venue.

Newcastle Upon Tyne is full of musical lovers. Many talented amateur and community theatre groups have their seasonal musical production in the area. As they are all competing on the same market there should be a plan to stand out from the others. One fine direction is to underline the educational aspect and maybe take it one step further. Some of the young adults have been involved in so many amateur drama productions that they are starting to be semi-professionals. They are willing to learn new things, stretch their talent to top the last performance. Tyne Theatre Productions supports their development, but as the budgets and rehearsal periods are so tight, there is no room for major flops or freedom to experiment inside the production period.

Already some of the actors have been trying their wings at directing, and musicians may develop into a Conductor or a Musical Director, but more funding is needed to get the educational aspect to the next level. Also, the next level is one step towards professionalism and professionals need salary.

#### 20.6. Strategic Plan or Business Plan

Strategic plan is clarifying the nature of the organisation for possible financiers by the history, achievements and future goals. All previously described documents are morphed together into the Strategic Plan, explaining your position in the market and in the art field. Government grant and many corporate foundations applications require Strategic Plan to be attached to an application. Define assessment, plans, goals, objectives and action-steps, appropriate timetable, financial plan and

personnel resources. Strategic planning supports the vision and provides focus to the mission. It defines organisational structure and priorities, shapes the audience development, and marketing plans. (Voltz, 113-115).

A Business plan contains a clear profit and loss statement and gives financial background info. Business plan should be easy to follow and realistic. Many sponsors are coming from business background, so it is clever to put the application for them in business form. The idea is to convince that the organisation is the best choice in the area to support and to get something back too. Also, it is always good to remind how art has a positive impact on economic development, tourism and overall quality of life (Voltz, 1).

For the internal use, the business plan and the strategic plan work as guidelines to anticipate and react to possible risks and to measure and reach goals. After defining your customers, it is easy to take the analysing further towards the market position and Competitive Analysis. Show that you know your customers and think your organisation from their point of view. (Entrepreneur Europe website; Juurakko et al, 23-24).

## 21 SUMMARIES

In year 1934 editor of the Theatre Arts, Edith J.R. Isaacs ends her list of qualities every theatre should have like this “It must have a goal the goal that is essentially a theatre goal. There is no reason under the sun why the leader of a fine theatre should not hope to gain money or power or preferment from enterprise. But these are by-products of theatrical success, not essential theatre goals, which must always be in some way related to the performance of good plays by actors of talent, and the consequent development of theatre’s innate power of entertainment, edification, exaltation, escape and social persuasion.” (Voltz, 27).

These words of Ms Isaacs summarize the role of the Producer as a supporter of artistic goals by trying to find best practices to make the whole production process the best possible experience for everyone involved and getting the public attention that the productions deserves.

### 21.1. A Young Organisation in a 150-Years-Old Theatre Building

Being a young organization, all the strategic, organizational, marketing, or communication plans are still pretty much under construction. The planning and implementation process are developing slowly. These tend to be cast away when a more urgent topic occurs. The history of 150 years gives the current owners a heritage and a great responsibility to guide the theatre for the future generations. The form of the in-house productions depends on many different aspects but the most important is a strong vision of the direction. I have great confidence in Tyne Theatre and Opera House. It had been standing there for 150 years and it will be standing for 150 more. It has found good people working for its success.

### 21.2. Motivation over Money

Many volunteers sign up simply because they love the show and the role in it, and it is more than the possible salary could ever offer. This is all good and I can identify myself there, but there is also downside to it. Work should be something you are paid for. At least, the commitment of the key persons should be somehow compensated. It is very common in the art world to pay for the items and rentals as at the same time no one is getting any salary. By accepting it we are decreasing our own value. As a producer I feel responsible to watch over the production practices and budgets, somehow trying to correct this current situation.

I know that many volunteers and employees in the art industry value their job and the surroundings. Many of the employees in the performing arts have had some amateur theatre background themselves and they can still remember unique camaraderie that rehearsals and preparing for the premiere can give for the young person. They feel it is important to pass on this to the next generation, even if it means hours of unpaid labour. Belief in the values and being part of the community carries a long way. They see the ticket buyer as a valuable donor, and it shows in their customer service. A little goes a long way, direct honest "Thank you" is what keep the volunteers ticking, but it does not pay the rent. Volunteers are available when they have time to be there. The future will tell, whether the organisation can keep up with only part time volunteer force or if they should invest in more dedicated fulltime personnel.

### 21.3. Irrational Decisions and High Hopes

None of the hardboiled businessmen will ever dip their toes to the art pool, there are much more secure ways to double their money. When most of the decisions are based more on emotion and values than rational thinking, human behaviour is much more irrational and influenced to individual emotions than economics like to think (Damasio Antonio, 51-54). Irrationally we value art, so there is hope to have financing into the arts in the future too. Our responsibility is to cherish the given funds and use them wisely. Arts organisations which closely monitor their costs seem better prepared to cope with tougher economic times (Byrnes, 400). As arts institutions grow, the board must transform and develop into boards of oversight, long-range planning and fundraising (Voltz,96). To me it seems that Tyne Theatre has reached this point.

### 21.4. Changes

“Unfortunately, once board member signs on, many feels that they are alienated from the artistry and passion of the company and are relegated to discussions and tasks that exclusively address financial problems, fundraising needs, cash-flow concerns, and audience development ambitions. The board should be involved in the inside story of the organisation; artistic planning, program development, and everything that fulfils the all-important mission statement. It is important for board members to feel informed, to be involved as VIP members of the institution.”(Voltz, 89).

The fear of alienation from “the action” is probably one reason why it is hard to get volunteers to take Production Co-Ordinator roles. One solution to is to divide Producers’ tasks to all, but I would rather see the actors focusing on the character building and rehearsals and someone else taking care of getting butts in the seats. Perhaps their character’s public visibility in promotions helps them to adapt to their roles, but actors and Director cannot be held responsible for planning the entire marketing. The building of public relations should be constant, targeted on building regular customer base and finding supporters between the shows. This could be one major role for Producers in volunteer organization. It would be ideal to have someone permanently working with production-related planning, because trust, good routines and continuity builds up slowly. Long-term solution could be a circle of producers, as suggested in chapter 9, or a pair of volunteers or one paid professional Producer, it depends entirely on future plans and direction of Tyne Theatre Productions.

Whenever the production creates a new concept it is possible to apply targeted funds for project co-ordinator's salary. The next goal could be groundwork for creating a dynamic and powerful artistic community, to organize educational workshops for all age groups, or cultivate and engage diverse, responsive and loyal audiences with loyalty programs. Together with other local amateur dramatics, Tyne Theatre Productions could conserve, renew and explore new artistic forms and create new communities. A new concept could also be an artistic goal, for example staging new, relevant and thought-provoking stories. Moreover, introducing the historic values, this theatre has much to give and has wide possibilities to evolve in many directions.



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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1. File tree for the Trust documents.









