

Running head: AUDIENCE ATTENDANCE TRENDS: FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

Audience Attendance Trends:
Factors for Consideration in a
Marketing and Communications Plan
at the University Theatre, University of Oregon, 2002

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to describe factors that affect patron attendance at University of Oregon University Theatre (UT) productions. The study included a partial literature review of effective marketing and communications trends in theatre in the United States during the past ten years (1992-2002). The study implemented a focus group of non-alumni UT patrons from the Eugene/Springfield, Oregon zip code area who seldom (two to three times) or rarely (once) attended UT productions in the past two to three theatre seasons. The study also included phone survey data from alumni participants who were unable to participate in a scheduled focus group session. For the purposes of this study, focus groups were viewed as small, temporary groups assembled to share information around a mutual interest. This descriptive study was used to develop recommendations for future marketing plans at UT.

Table of Contents

I.	Acknowledgements	3
II.	Abstract	4
III.	Overview of Project	7
	Statement of Problem and Background	7
	Statement of Purpose	13
	Significance of the Study	17
IV.	Discussion of Related Literature	18
V.	Methodology	29
	Participants	29
	Apparatus	30
	Procedures	31
	Data	34
	Data Collection Tools	35
	Data Analysis and Interpretation	36
	Data Presentation	37
VI..	Summary of Findings	38
	Participants	38
	Phone Survey Participants	38
	Focus Group Participants	42
	Data	44
	Data Analysis	45
VII.	Synthesis of Literature Review, Focus Group, and Phone Survey	65
VIII.	Recommendations, Speculations, and Summary	72

	Audience Attendance Trends	6
IX.	Assumptions	97
X.	Definitions	99
XI.	Limitations	104
XII.	References	105
XIII.	Bibliography	108
XIV.	Appendices	
	Appendix A: Recruitment Device for Selecting Focus Group Participants	109
	Appendix B: Phone Survey and Focus Group Participants Profile Data	113
	Appendix C: Sample Consent Forms	121
	Appendix D: Discussion Guide	123
	Appendix E: Transcription of Focus Group Discussion	126

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OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

Statement of Problem and Background

For centuries, theatre has satisfied the visual, verbal, physical, and other sensory needs of those who perform and those who observe. Theatrical performance has presented concepts in ways for new understanding. Socially, theatre has increased participants' team-building, collaborative, and individual skills. Economically, theatre has provided work for artists in various performing, technical, and visual arts. Theatre has attracted residents and visitors to destinations, encouraging additional spending at local restaurants and shopping areas. Politically, theatre has been wielded as a powerful tool for creating social change or promoting accepted ideas. Wallace (1997) explored the value of theatre as nexus, bringing people together in significant and effective ways. Wallace explained that,

Theatre has brought together old and young, religious and irreligious, intellectuals and tradespersons, and people of all colors and national backgrounds. The theatre can be a very flexible and useful space, valuable in both developing or showcasing a broad range of talents and interests. The action of theatre can reach out into the community and beyond. The place of the theatre can bring together people from within and without the region. Theatre, therefore, can strengthen bonds, develop talents, and connect a community to the larger world simultaneously. (p. 1)

People have been recognized as a particularly essential element of theatrical performance. As Reid (1998) stated,

Theatre is a people industry. Its plays, musicals, operas, and ballets explore personal relationships. The performances pivot on the interaction of acting people and audience

people....So the infrastructure to initiate and house a live performance is based primarily on the interpersonal relationships between all the users, whether workers or audience, of a theatre building. Consequently, user friendliness is the epicentre of the debate. (p. i)

In this people-centered industry, could user unfriendliness be a major reason behind the declines in audience attendance at theatres across the United States today? Harris (1996) documented that from 1987 until 1996, the level of public attendance at theatre arts events decreased from 62% to 50%, except for opera or musical theatre which maintained a constant 23-24% of general public attendance (p.7). Harris's study suggested that this decline was reflected in attendance across the broad arts sector. Libbon (2001) confirmed the decline in theatre arts audience attendance. Libbon stated that "watching television" topped the list of Gallup's March 1999 poll asking American adults how they prefer to spend their evening hours. The category, "going to the movies or theater" ranked fifth in the poll at an 11% rating. Libbon suggested that, "If you take movies out of the equation, you might expect to find 'going to live theater' somewhere near 'entertaining friends or relatives,' which pulled a paltry 5 percent of respondents, or 'listening to music,' at 4 percent" (p. 28).

Which people has theatre "brought together" as Wallace suggested? According to Peithman and Offen (1999), the early Guthrie Theatre audience researchers Morison and Fliehr determined that if the population of a given area was 100,000, only about 20% (20,000) of the population participated in arts. However, this number included all arts participants, the potential theatre audience, not actual attendance prospects (p. 18). Peithman and Offen advanced that, "Studies indicate that most arts organizations in the United States currently reach three percent or less of their population, and that attendance has peaked at about this level. Therefore, if your immediate community ...has a population of one hundred thousand, you can expect a potential audience of about three thousand (p. 18)." Eugene/Springfield, Oregon

statistics compared with this population figure. This information posed the question: could the University of Oregon University Theatre (UT), an opera company, a ballet company, and five other theatres in the area expect to share that potential audience of three thousand or were there ways the theatres could work together to increase each company's share of attendance? This question was considered too broad to be addressed in this study.

Peithman and Offen (1999) suggested that theatres have maintained the same demographic base for their audiences over the past two decades, those who were, "above the national average in education, income, and proportion of professional and managerial occupations represented" (p. 18). They suggested that this limited demographic audience base decreases the potential size of an audience. This brought up the questions: (a) who was intentionally or unintentionally being excluded from UT productions or season programming? and (b) how could UT reach those being excluded? These broad questions were unable to be addressed within the scope of this study.

Libbon (2001) described the average person attending a Broadway production or Broadway show-on-tour as a Caucasian female in her 40s with a college education. Libbon stressed the 1998 League of American Theatres and Producers finding that, "In 1998, 69 percent of the audience for touring shows was female; the average age, 46; fully 88 percent of the audience was Caucasian; and two-thirds of all theatregoers had at least a college degree, and a median household income of \$69,700" (p. 28). Libbon noted that younger theatregoers were also primarily women. The question arose: was *this* 'average' theatre attendee reflected in the 'average' attendee at UT? Answers to this question required a detailed demographic study; therefore, this study did not address the question.

Libbon (2001) suggested that one reason many of those in the Gallup poll did not attend theatre arts events was the high price of tickets: "The *Entertainment Marketing Letter* reported that the average ticket price for live theatre's 1998-1999 season was a hefty \$50.30" (p. 28).

Other suggested reasons for the decline in theatre audience attendance were the competition between the large number of not-for-profit theatres in today's society (425 in 1997); sports; and the mass entertainments of movies, television, videotapes, digital technology, and the Internet (Wise, 1998, p. 50, Eyre, 2000, McCarthy, 2001). According to the Harris (1996) survey of American audiences, more specific factors for nonattendance by potential audience members included lack of time (35%); lack of performances in a given area (32%); difficulty in going to performance locations (28%); difficulty in finding parking (23%); the costs of eating out, hiring a babysitter, and related needs for the event time (19%); lack of information on performances (17%); difficulty in obtaining tickets (16%); and worries about going out at night (16%). These issues were addressed in the focus group discussion through questions and prompts (See Appendix D Discussion Guide).

Theatre director and critic Eyre (2000) speculated that theatre attendance has declined because the audience knows the product before buying it. Eyre argued that there is little magic to today's theatre presentations. Rather, he suggested that performances have become a product which is explained completely before the audience arrives, and that those attending have chosen to purchase the manufactured product. Eyre advised that theatres (a) offer cheaper tickets and greater accessibility and (b) engage and involve other art forms and people in the creative processes of theatre. He maintained that in following these suggestions, theatre would be more widely appreciated and that theatre audiences and participation would increase.

Keck's (1996) study of theatre in higher education at the University of Oklahoma implied that some educational theatre programs focus primarily on performance space and performers, neglecting their audience (p. 1). Keck recognized the need of the box office and the need of the student experience in making theatre economically viable. He stated,

Naturally the primary goal of educational theatre is to instruct, inspire and nurture the arts of acting and design to its students as well as to create an environment of understanding and appreciation. However, without an audience to view the work of the students, the educational process is deficient. Because theatre is a communicative art form, it is imperative that students experience the feedback of an audience to complete the educational process....As more and more educational theatre programs find their budgets being reduced, a greater demand is placed upon box office sales. (pp. 1-2)

Keck continued with questions and potential solutions for educational theatre programs to consider while both producing a variety of plays that build student knowledge and skill and maintaining financial success. His suggestions, discussed later in this study, implied successful audience development and marketing strategies.

To counteract the national decline in theatre arts attendance, organizations nationwide implemented effective theatre arts marketing research and development programs (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997, McCarthy, 2001). Initial resources suggested that effective trends included theatre companies across the nation sharing their practical marketing 'tricks' with one another in resources like *The Stage Directions Guide* (Peithman and Offen, 1999) or the more theoretical base of McDaniel and Thorn's (1990) *Workpapers*. Where the *Stage Directions Guide* provided basic guidelines for conducting audience surveys, designing great brochures, and dealing with a variety of age ranges in the audience, *Workpapers* offered ideas about how theatre arts organizations could develop in the future including better trained theatre managers, changes in contributed income, and an increase in cultural diversity. The literature review portion of this study provided a selective examination of audience marketing and development trends nationally and locally.

Discussions with J. Gilg (2001), UT Director of Development and Publicity, suggested

ways in which the national decline in audience attendance related to UT's goals and to questions explored within the focus group (See Appendix D for the Discussion Guide used in the focus group setting). Some of the broad questions explored within this study included: (a) What are attendees' overt considerations in deciding whether or not to attend UT productions, (b) what appear to be the underlying motivations to decide whether or not to attend UT productions, (c) what do attendees "get" from UT (by statement and by inference), (d) do non-subscribers have different needs and/or different perspectives of UT than subscribers, (e) what do attendees feel UT does best and least well, (f) what changes would attendees like to see in UT productions and why, (g) what evidence would they accept that desired changes are or will be occurring, (h) do attendees see UT as fast-paced and contemporary or as conservative and cautious, (i) do they see UT as being friendly or cool in reception, (j) how do attendees feel about communications from UT, (k) how does UT stack up with locally competitive theatres?

This set of concepts was derived and modified from the qualitative research proposal designed by Templeton (1994) for *Sales and Marketing Management* (pp. 227-228), Krueger's (1994) general outline of focus group questions, and discussions with J. Gilg (2001) regarding UT. These broad questions were revised and developed into simpler, clearer questions to be asked of the participants in the focus group sessions (See Appendix D for Discussion Guide).

This study sought to describe the relationship of the national decline in theatre arts audience attendance to the decline noted in UT attendance during the past few seasons. This study focused on selected alumni and non-alumni attendees of UT in one limited locale who attended UT productions between one and three times per season. This study developed and administered one focus group in order for UT to assess the knowledge and attitudes of one specific set of UT audience members. The focus group generated a list of positive and negative factors affecting attendance at UT by non-alumni attendees in the Eugene/Springfield zip code

area who have infrequently (one to three times per season) attended UT productions in the past two to three theatre seasons. Originally, this study was framed to study attendance in the following groups: (a) UT alumni attendees and (b) UT non-alumni attendees, both sets of whom live in the Eugene/Springfield zip code area and have infrequently (one to three times per season) attended UT productions in the past two to three theatre seasons. The original study was unable to be implemented as designed. Only 2 of the 26 contacted UT alumni could attend the scheduled alumni focus group session. The session was designed for 8-12 participants. Alumni phone survey data was used for analyses and recommendations when appropriate.

Factors derived from an analysis of literature of effective marketing practice trends in theatre during the past ten years (1992-2002) were compared to the data collected in the focus group and phone survey conducted with the selected UT audience members outlined above. Results were analyzed for the purpose of building recommendations for new marketing and communications strategies at UT. The strategies centered on enhancing the experiences of attendees and targeted improvements in UT marketing and communications materials.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this combined descriptive focus group and partial literature review study was to describe some positive and negative factors affecting selected patron attendance at the University of Oregon University Theatre (UT) mainstage productions. From these factors, recommendations were developed for future marketing and communications plans at UT. Recommendations from this project could be used to develop future play selection processes, working relationships with local groups, marketing and communications strategies, and other related activities structured within UT's marketing goals and objectives. The study included a partial literature review of effective communications trends in theatre arts in the United States during the past ten years (1992-2002). The study also implemented a focus group with targeted

patrons from the Eugene/Springfield zip code areas who attended UT productions seldom (two to three times) or rarely (once) during each of the past two to three seasons. J. Gilg (Oct. 2001) considered these part-time attendees to be a large potential audience. This group of audience members was considered “Maybes” as described by Morison and Fliehr’s marketing concepts noted in Peithman and Offen (1999):

The Maybes are uncertain about the importance of arts in their life. They may be interested in, yet intimidated by the idea of theatregoing. If so, it may be that they are not familiar with it or feel that ‘culture is only for the rich or the highly educated’your first step is to determine what reasons the Maybes may have for not coming to your shows. Then your course is clear: Create marketing and publicity strategies that speak directly to those concerns. (p. 17)

For example, the Eugene Opera, of Eugene, Oregon, launched a campaign titled, “Come As You Are.” In this marketing campaign, patrons of the Opera volunteered to have their photographs taken while they were at an event produced by the Opera. The Opera then had permission to use these images as part of promotional materials letting potential audience members know that all were welcome no matter one’s attire, education, or economic status.

Attendance during the mainstage season at UT decreased dramatically over the past three to four seasons. J. Gilg (Sept. 2001) estimated a loss between 20-30% in UT’s subscriber base since 1999. J. Gilg also noted UT’s desire to increase its attendance and earned and contributed income at productions and other events. This study sought to describe some of the unknown factors leading to the decreased pattern in attendance and how to target individuals to attend UT. This study identified some of those factors as they exist in a small sample of participants through a focus group of eleven participants and phone survey data of over 60. Factors stemming from this small sample could not be generalized to the larger body of UT attendees but

were used in developing recommendations for further study.

A qualitative method, or methods which, “focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings...and involve studying those phenomena in all their complexity” (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001 p. 147), was believed to be necessary to serve the purposes of this study to describe, interpret, and evaluate the nature of some positive and negative factors affecting UT audience attendance. A variety of potential qualitative methods were discussed with J. Gilg (Oct. 2001), UT Director of Development and Publicity. A phenomenological study, “to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of a particular situation, i.e....what is it like to experience such-and-such?” (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001 p. 153) was deemed necessary to the study. Due to the nature of a theatre audience’s ability to perceive, understand, and experience productions and events in a multitude of ways, multiplicity of perceptions, perspectives, and understandings was sought in the research.

Research designs discussed included case study methods, interviews with specific attendees individually or in couples, and focus groups. Interviews and case study methods were quickly discarded due to the time and monetary factors involved in conducting these types of research (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001). Past audience studies at UT focused on student and general attendees’ knowledge of and attendance at UT events. These studies included: (a) two research projects conducted in the past six years on UT attendance and awareness factors of UO students (Goldyn, 1996, Huang, 1998) and (b) a doctoral dissertation of the history of UT attendance and marketing factors for students (Bartruff, 1977). During the past UT mainstage season (2000-2001), survey questionnaires were distributed to all audience members and information gathered regarding: (a) the zip code area from which each attendee came, (b) how each attendee heard about the specific production, season or UT overall, (c) how often they attend theatre in general, and (d) what other theatres they attend locally (J. Gilg, Sept. 2001). The information gathered was

perceived by UT as useful but containing insufficient data to understand why audience members of various demographic bases attended UT productions. The data offered few suggestions for targeting the needs of those attending or not attending. Additionally, the questionnaire data could be unreliable and unrepresentative of the larger UT audience; some attendees could have filled out the questionnaire when it was offered at each of the four mainstage productions last season, rather than only once (J. Gilg, Sept. 2001). Following the suggestions of Leedy and Ormrod (2001), the researcher perceived that a focus group would be successful for this project in that time was limited and that participant interaction could be more informative than individually conducted interviews (p. 159). Additionally, focus group methodology was chosen for gathering the needed data for this project because a segment of a target research population was able to be inexpensively interviewed in a small group (Templeton, 1994; Leedy and Ormrod, 2001; Peithman and Offen, 1999).

Drawn from Templeton (1994), focus group research goals were determined: (a) how UT serves its current audience, (b) what audience expectations are of UT productions, (c) what plays the audience wants to see, (d) what ‘turns the audience off’, (e) do audience members like what they see at UT, (f) are ticket prices attractive or repellent, (g) how accessible is the facility, (h) who is attending and who is not attending UT, (i) what might draw non-attendees in, and (j) how does UT currently target and communicate with their audience. These topics blended with the broad motivational, experiential, and attitudinal questions discussed on page 12 of this study. These blended questions were then categorized by question type, including: (a) welcome and introduction, (b) opening, (c) focus reveal, (d) experience with UT, (e) accessibility, (f) attendance decisions, (g) attitude, (h) value, (i) communications and information, (j) creative materials exposure, (k) participants’ questions, and (l) closing. Simpler, clearer questions for each category were revised and edited for use during the focus group session. These revisions

followed suggestions from Krueger (1994), J. Gilg (2001), Aibel (1994), and the project advisor, B. Jones (See Appendix D Discussion Guide for actual questions).

The outcome of this project was a focus group report drawing on Templeton (1994) and housed within an academic paper. This report drew from the discussions and responses during the focus group and phone survey. The paper focused on formal presentation of the data found in the literature review and focus group data. The report included recommendations for a marketing and communications plan to address UT's future goals. Recommendations explored strategies and suggestions for consideration in a marketing plan, but did not create the plan itself.

Significance of the Study

McCarthy and Jinnett (2001) stated that information is critical to engaging audiences. Audiences required information about theatre companies and their programs and staff before they chose to attend (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). In the McCarthy and Jinnett study, information about how target populations decide to participate, where their interests lie, and how they receive information was significant to “designing effective engagement strategies” (pp. xii-xiii). Within one small section of a selected segment of its audience, this study filled the need of UT to know (a) who is being served, (b) who is not being served, (c) how and what UT could improve, (d) how UT relates nationally to comparable theatres, and (e) how might programming, marketing and communications materials, planning, and production elements be modified to better serve the audience. This study filled a fraction of UT's need to know, understand, and clearly communicate with and reach one portion of their audience who participated in the focus group discussion. Through recommendations for a marketing plan, this study endeavored to assist UT in future audience development.

DISCUSSION OF RELATED LITERATURE

The partial literature review portion of this study provided grounding for the analysis and response to data within the focus group research component. The subtopics within the partial literature review included (a) focus group methodology, (b) historical perspectives of the University Theatre, (c) theatre audience development, motivation, and communications and marketing practices and trends, (d) Eugene/Springfield area demographics, and (e) comparative materials, some suggesting what forms theatre of the future will take in the United States. Without working knowledge of elements within each of these areas, the researcher ran the risks of producing ineffective data collection tools, being unable to offer effective, current recommendations for considerations in a marketing plan, or duplicating methods that had been attempted by others with little success.

The subtopic of focus group research and question design methodology was chosen to guide the implementation of the study. Reviewing the history of the UO University Theatre assisted in discerning past audience research and marketing strategies at UT. The literature review of practices, trends, and historical perspectives provided grounding for the final document and response to findings within the focus group research component. The focus group and demographic research localized the understanding of the national trends in theatre audience marketing/communications research and development. The relevance and pertinence of these trends to the focus group data for the UT was analyzed and interpreted for the data presentation.

History of the University Theatre

Studies and interviews regarding the history of UT established the researcher's understanding of the history of audience relations and development at UT. Main literary sources for historical knowledge of UT and its audiences were two documents by students in the UO Arts and Administration Program and one dissertation by a student in the UO Theatre Arts

Department. These three studies suggested that many potential audience members, particularly students, are uninformed about UT, its current location, and the events it offers. The studies indicated that known show titles increased attendance at UT productions. They also recorded research styles that had previously been conducted so that the current researcher would not replicate these methods.

Bartruff's (1977) study described the history of UT between 1949-1975. The focus of the work was on programming and marketing trends during that time span. Bartruff noted an increase in promotional and marketing materials between the years studied, however, there was a decrease in attendance at UT between 1963-1970. He also noted that attendance at UT productions was high in earlier years when performances were held at MacArthur Court. No conclusions were drawn based on these noted audience trends. Two short audience surveys were conducted during this timeframe, but UT did not utilize any of the data for analysis and interpretation.

There were no studies similar to Bartruff's from 1977 to the present. Production photos, playbills, and a video showcasing past UT productions were found in UT and UO archives, but other records of marketing, programming, and audience attendance were not found. J. Gilg (October 2001) expressed his belief that the only other audience research conducted specifically by UT since Bartruff's study were two in-house surveys, one in the early 1980s and one during the 2000-2001 season. As with Bartruff's study, the data from these surveys was not utilized with clearly specified purposes. Bartruff's document provided a history and documentation of audience trends at UT that is otherwise unrecorded.

Following Bartruff's study and the surveys explained above were two master's papers conducted through the UO Arts and Administration Program. The study by Goldyn (1996) analyzed potential ways for UT to target general UO student audiences. Goldyn chose this

study to build upon the work of Bartruff and the patron survey data from the early 1980s (described above) that was not analyzed or used to implement any changes. Goldyn conducted in-class campus surveys asking approximately 7-10% of the student population (653 of 1000 targeted students) their gender, age, class standing, living accommodations, majors, most frequently attended activities, theatres they attended in the past twelve months, the types of theatre they liked, if they attended shows with others, where the various UT theatres were located and their prices ranges, how they knew about events, and reasons they attended theatre productions. From the data analysis, Goldyn described a lack of student knowledge of UT events and location. Goldyn's work assisted this study by laying some ground work and reference points. Goldyn's inquiries into the history of UT and references list provided a firm starting point for the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the current project.

The third study, following the two above, examined the influence of leisure time participation in performing arts events on personal identity among East Asian undergraduate students at the University of Oregon. Huang (1998), also a student in the UO Arts and Administration Program, used email surveys to explore participation patterns of these students. Huang then analyzed students' self-interpretations regarding their attendance, particularly at UT events. Most respondents infrequently attended performing arts events in both their home countries and in Eugene. Participation patterns varied by age and gender; younger students and female students were more likely to attend performing arts events. Title of the event was a major motivation to attend a performing arts event. Despite low rates of attendance, respondents were generally satisfied with their participation levels. Regarding identity issues, the respondents' participation in performing arts events reflected their role identities as international students.

Demographics for the Eugene/Springfield Area

Studies showing demographic statistics for the Eugene/Springfield, Oregon area assisted

the researcher in understanding the interest and changes in the local arts market and so informed the recommendations for future marketing and communications plans at UT. A preliminary study of arts organizations in the area was conducted by Arts Alliance (1979). This study explored the general makeup of arts groups within Lane County, Oregon in the mid-to-late 1970s and briefly overviewed who attended events at these organizations. However, this study was not effective in determining any broad implications or relationships to past or current trends.

A study more significant to the current project was conducted by Dawson (1988). This study, used in locations throughout the United States, explored the lifestyles, belief systems, and values of individuals and how they preferred to spend their leisure time. This particular study explored and analyzed these issues in order to describe the lifestyle choices, patterns, and values of residents in the Eugene/Springfield area. Though no assumptions could be made relative to the current project, Dawson's study provided the researcher with a recent historical picture of the potential arts audiences and general leisure activities of audiences in the Eugene/Springfield area. Leisure activities of choice were primarily focused on physical exercise for all lifestyle categories. Dawson's study also assisted the researcher in a better understanding of the psychographic studies explored in Templeton's (1994) focus group research methodology that was chosen as the basis for the focus group conducted in this study.

Of most benefit, in terms of demographic research in this study, was a market profile developed by Scudder & Associates (1997). A quantitative examination of the market in Eugene and Springfield, Oregon, this study examined housing, income, employment, purchasing power, purchasing patterns, and the like of residents in these two interconnected cities. This recent market profile significantly informed the researcher's understanding of the makeup of the Eugene/Springfield area population and their purchasing power, division of residences, age, education and income levels in order to make recommendations for future marketing and

communications plans at UT. It provided detailed, clearly developed data on consumers in the region that the other studies were unable to provide.

Focus Group Research Methodology

Literary sources for focus group research and design of questions methodology provided an overall framework for this qualitative study as well as practical guides for how to collect, analyze, and interpret the data. An initial overview of types of studies possible and the basic theories, guidelines, and limitations of focus groups were discussed in Leedy and Ormrod (2001). Greebaum (1994), Krueger (1994), and Templeton (1994) provided definitions of and historical perspectives on focus groups, examples of preparing and conducting focus groups, descriptions of the role of the moderator during focus groups, and models for recruiting participants. They also outlined cost and ethical considerations, the value of focus group research, and careers in focus group moderating.

As a leading focus group moderator and a contributing editor of *Sales and Marketing Management*, Templeton (1994) provided particular insight into focus group research methods. Templeton's work was chosen as the guiding focus group research methodology for this study because of her expertise, her intuitive nature within the details and fluidity of focus groups, and the examples and direction she provided for a first-time moderator. Though primarily grounded in business research, Templeton's psychographic, demographic, and creative materials approach translated well to the arts field and the variety of information needed from a theatre audience. The translation of this material to the specific arts example of UT was an important component of this study. The use of Templeton's materials were intended to extend the strength and value of this study.

Templeton's guide addressed the role of the moderator as participant, prime mover, contractor, and partner. It also explored ways to handle the panelists, the client, and the data.

These roles and methods were employed in the action research component of the current study. Templeton outlined details of the proposal, plan, and report processes of focus groups while considering the psychographic issues to be considered. Templeton then offered suggestions for writing a detailed report and the functionality and use of focus groups as a research tool. The text offered useful trouble-shooting ideas in working with clients and panelists. An extensive appendices offering samples of schedules, proposals, screening devices, discussion guides, introductions, scoring, and reporting was utilized for reference and use in this study.

Though Templeton well addressed the areas outlined above, Krueger (1994) proved a better guide for developing the order of questions and a final explication of the discussion outline for the focus group session conducted in this study. Krueger suggested clear, well-delineated outlines for the flow of the discussion from the welcome through to the closing remarks.

Aubel's (1994) recommendations for conducting focus groups provided additional clarity and purpose for collecting and analyzing data as well as excellent tools and suggestions for the planning, conducting, questioning, analyzing, and reporting of focus groups. These tools were used as supplements to those in the Templeton guide. The focus of this international government publication was the need for, "involvement of project staff in the research process in order to promote staff development and to initiate dialogue between the project and its intended beneficiaries" (p. iii). The concepts in this statement were developed into the current study through the researcher's continual contact with UT, the client organization. UT was consulted and involved in all elements of this study from the initial planning stages to the review and confirmation of questions to be explored during the focus group.

Comparison Examples

Comparison examples were sought for attendance trends and marketing plans at similar university theatre program as well as for models of research methodology and data analysis.

Other examples provided suggestions for the future of theatre in educational and not-for-profit settings.

Eyre (2000), Reid (1998), Munk (2001), Hancock et al. (1999), and Langley (1990) provided historical and contextual information regarding the role of theatre, some particularly focused on university theatre, and how theatre paved its way and survived during the twentieth century. Eyre, Munk, Hancock et al., and Reid described some of the conflicts theatres have experienced in maintaining their audiences while still being able to perform quality works. All authors described various crises points theatres experienced due to loss of support from governmental, corporate, foundational, and individual financial systems as well as increased competition from new technology. All authors offered suggestions for the maintenance, development, and life of theatre in and for the future. Issues were viewed from social, political, and cultural standpoints. These works provided this study with national and international exposition by leaders in the field regarding the problems related to the decline in audience attendance levels.

Studies conducted by Keck (1996) and Thompson (1997) proved valuable to this study as they focused on marketing models for university theatre arts programs. These were particularly valuable since studies related to audiences at university theatres were sparse (McCarthy et al., 2001).

Keck's study of the theatre arts program at the University of Oklahoma suggested that some educational theatre programs focus primarily on performance space and performers, neglecting their audience. Keck asserted that though the primary goal of educational theatre is to instruct, inspire and nurture the arts of acting and design to its students, it is also essential that students experience the feedback of an audience. Keck offered potential solutions to increasing attention on one's audience by describing those techniques put into practice at the University of

Oklahoma. Keck also contacted other nationally recognized university theatre arts programs to determine how they market their productions. Keck's suggestions related to the ability of educational theatre programs to produce a wide variety of play styles and still be financially successful through successful marketing and audience development. Keck did not, however, examine the broader picture of audience motivation and development or marketing strategies. Nor did the study fully analyze the data collected from other university theatre arts programs. Rather, the study focused on strategies that were changed or added at the university theatre program of the University of Oklahoma.

Thompson (1997) examined the university theatre program at Texas Tech University. Where Keck (1996) focused on strategies implemented in one location, Thompson presented historical background on the marketing of universities and specific programs within university systems. From the study, Thompson developed a new marketing model for the Department of Theatre and Dance at Texas Tech University to improve their practice of attracting graduate students and other audiences. Though this study centered on a specific target group, the information presented translated well to the current study, particularly in relationship to the regional theatre company studies conducted by McCarthy (2001) and Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund (1997). The suggestions Thompson offered related to university theatre arts settings proved useful in making recommendations for a marketing plan at UT.

Of further benefit in making recommendations was a study by Duncan (1996). Duncan's (1996) master's thesis described the group sales programs at the California Repertory Company and the University Players at California State University. Group sales were a means of substantial revenue for the groups in this study. Group sales were also found to be a significant factor in audience development in a study of regional theatre companies by the Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund (1997).

Theatre Audience Development, Motivation, and Communications Trends

Works falling within this topic area assisted the researcher in understanding current audience attendance trends, theoretical perspectives on theatre audiences and marketing, and examples of marketing and research strategies suggested or implemented in other locations. These works were significant as reference tools most probably used by a wide variety of theatre practitioners and organizations throughout the United States. As such, they were viewed as a reflection of, if not the actuality of, national trends in the practice of theatre marketing, communications, and audience development.

Data on audience attendance rates and influencing factors were found in a number of articles and studies. Harris (1996) collected data on the importance of the arts in the lives of Americans. Harris's analysis of the collected data was somewhat slanted, making attendance at arts events appear greater than a closer look at the data reveals. Still, the study offered a look at data reflecting national audience attendance trends. Harris also explored issues that deterred participants from attending arts events. The issues Harris raised were cited throughout this study and incorporated into the discussion guide questions and prompts. Libbon (2001, February) cited audience attendance and leisure time data and references from the National Endowment for the Arts, Gallup polls, and the League of American Theatre and Producers. This article explored the fact that only 11% or less of the current American adult population attends live theatre. Libbon provided a view of what the average theatregoer in America today looks like: white, female, and over 40. The information in these and other studies provided evidence and support of the decline of theatre attendance across the country.

Recommendations for marketing strategies were found in a number of studies and texts. Traditional, proven strategies were described and modified in Marconi (2001). Marconi outlined the broad marketplace and a wide variety of target audiences, particularly those of the baby boom

generation, and “Generations X and Y”. The text focused on the changes in mass marketing, mass media, and mass communications that recently occurred. Marconi took information on the changing mass market and related it to marketing principles and applications of the past. In this way, he offered suggestions for building effective practices in future marketing. Melillo and Lavender (1995) also provided a comprehensive overview of marketing, but focused within the arts sector. This text described the traditional business marketing mix of the “4Ps”: products, price, place, and promotion. These texts offered explanations of historic national trends in marketing and communications methods. This information was useful in making recommendations for the traditional elements of a marketing plan at UT.

Less traditional methods were found in recent guides and studies. Peithman and Offen (1999), presented a guide offering basic outlines and simple suggestions for any theatre company to conduct research on their audience or to develop effective communications tools with current and potential audience members. Case study examples, effective research methods, and marketing tools and concepts were supplied in a clear, concise, and efficient manner.

The Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund (1997) qualitative study was part of an initiative that began in 1991. The Funds goal was to assist 42 not-for-profit theatres around the United States in expanding and diversifying their audience bases. The study told the stories of the participating theatre companies and discussed various marketing strategies employed. It suggested the described scenarios as possibilities for other groups to consider. However, it did remind readers that any organization for which they work would need to determine how best to reach their own target audiences. Recommendations emerging out of this study focused on marketing strategies in attracting audiences at the participating theatres. It suggested reconsidering subscription options and availability, personalizing approaches to audience members, creating new marketing tools, and implementing evaluation tools and response

mechanisms. The Lila Wallace study provided an excellent guide in the analysis and recommendations portion of this study with UT.

McCarthy and a variety of co-authors (2001) posed a new outline for understanding and promoting arts participation. These studies, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, sought to create a picture of the state of the performing arts in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century. The studies looked at audience attendance trends, stability and sustainability of performing arts organizations, and the effects of emerging technology on the arts. Then, they made projections regarding the future of the performing arts. The studies found that if current trends continue, performing arts groups will choose either to remain small and volunteer oriented or to become very large organizations. These studies endeavored to increase policy and financial support for nonprofit arts culture in the United States. Above all, the studies asked that those interested in the well-being of the performing arts focus their attention on the public purposes and benefits of the arts. They discussed the behaviors and decision-making of arts participants within different target audiences. Through specific targeted strategy recommendations, the studies hoped to assist arts organizations in identifying, communicating with, and increasing participation of target audiences most relevant to their mission and goals. The information in these studies and guides was useful in understanding current audience development trends and in making recommendations for a marketing plan at UT.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Stakeholders

Stakeholders in this research project included: (a) UT and Theatre Arts Department (TA) faculty, staff, alumni, graduate students, undergraduate majors, minors, prospective students, and other student participants, (b) University Theatre subscribers, attendees of fewer than four shows each season, student attendees who were not regular UT attendees or TA students or participants, and TA alumni in the local region who do not regularly attend UT productions, (c) past and potential donors, sponsors and other contributors of money, goods or services, (d) local non-university theatres drawing from a similar audience pool including but not limited to Lord Leebrick Theatre, Willamette Repertory Theatre, Actors Cabaret of Eugene, Lane County Community College Music Theatre Dance Department, and Very Little Theatre, (e) other local non-university theatres drawing from a less-similar audience pool including Eugene Opera, Young Women Playwright's Collective, Encore Theatre, and various local high school theatres including but not limited to Thurston High, Eugene South, and Eugene North, (f) the researcher as conductor of the project with UT and as an employee for all UT productions in the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 seasons, and (g) the University of Oregon and all its affiliates.

Focus Group Participants

This study utilized one focus group to generate a list of benefits and constraints affecting attendance by UT non-alumni attendees who live in the Eugene/ Springfield local zip code area and who infrequently (one to three times) attended UT productions in each of the past two to three theatre seasons. Phone survey data asked participants about their media listening and viewing habits, income and age levels, and theatre attendance habits. This same information was collected from phone survey contacts unable to participate in the focus group. These additional

contacts included (a) other UT non-alumni attendees and (b) UT alumni attendees, all of whom live in the Eugene/Springfield zip code area and infrequently attended UT during each of the past two to three theatre seasons. Individuals in these groups established initial relationships with UT but the relationships could be developed into stronger ties. Members of the Eugene/ Springfield community were chosen as the most likely attendees of local theatre events. The study sought multiple perspectives of participants. Information from a selected portion of participants was desired. Eight to 12 individuals from the contacted group participated in the focus group discussion. The candidates for the phone survey and focus group were found and contacted using UO/EMU Ticket Office records and UO Alumni Office records covering the Eugene/Springfield zip code areas. Participants were selected through a phone survey recruitment process (See Appendix A Recruitment Device). Participants self-selected to participate in the phone survey as well as the focus group sessions.

Researcher

The role of the researcher in shaping and influencing the study was acknowledged from the beginning. The researcher took the roles of critic-gatherer and participant-observer in the focus group, attendee at UT productions, and part-time employee at UT. The researcher filled the role of moderator for the focus group session that was conducted and kept a journal log recording the personal reflections, changes of perspective, and descriptions of events that occurred when interacting with focus group participants. Additionally, the researcher relied on texts and experts in the field for data relevant and legitimate for this project and time.

Apparatus

Conference room 312 in Villard Hall on the UO campus hosted the focus group session. Video and audio recording devices taped the sessions for later transcription and research purposes. A transcriber recorded the transcription data from the audio and video cassettes. The

researcher held the transcription in printed form as well as on a backup disk. A journal log kept by the researcher recorded the events of the focus group session along with reflections and observations about the event. Similar journal logs recorded data, quotations, and summaries from literature reviewed. Gregg-ruled pages collected themes of the benefits and constraints patrons encounter at UT productions discussed during the focus group session. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) remarked that this format, often used in ethnographic studies, allowed a researcher to record events or observations on the left-hand side of the page complemented with personal interpretations on the right-hand side (p. 158). The authors continued to comment that this format allowed observations to occur simultaneously with almost uninterrupted participation (p. 158). This style allowed the researcher to differentiate between interpretations and actual events throughout the data analysis and interpretation process. Two research assistants were trained in Gregg ruled formats by the researcher, in leisure benefits and constraints issues through a course in 'Arts Program Theory,' and in benefit and constraint issues specific to this project by the researcher. All documentation was held in printed format or on the researcher's personal home computer with backup disks. The researcher destroyed all audio and visual records following completion of the study.

Procedures

As previously discussed, a variety of possible qualitative methods, including case study methods, interviews with specific attendees, and focus groups, were discussed with J. Gilg (Oct. 2001), the client contact at UT. Direct mail, interviews, and case study methods were discarded due to the time and monetary factors involved in conducting these types of research. Survey questionnaires were used as a research tool during the 2000-2001 UT mainstage season. J. Gilg (2001, October) and the researcher determined that a survey method was less useful for this study than the in-depth analysis another method could potentially provide. Focus group

research was seen as an excellent method for gathering the needed data for this project in that a larger segment of the target research population could be inexpensively interviewed in-depth in small groups (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001; Templeton, 1994; Krueger, 1994). Additionally, the desire was for collaboration to be reflected in the research method as theatre is a collaborative art (J. Gilg, Oct. 2001).

This was a descriptive study as outlined in Leedy and Ormrod (2001) and took a constructivist viewpoint (pp. 114, 153-154). The basic methodology employed was a descriptive study combining a partial literature review and qualitative onsite data collection through focus group research. This combination allowed for greater balance in the richness and precision of the study. The preconceived categories and descriptions of experts in the field guided the precision of the study, while the exploratory approach of the focus groups enriched the study. Factors derived from the focus group discussion were compared to factors derived from an analysis of literature of effective marketing practice trends in theatre during the past ten years (1992-2002).

Two focus group sessions were scheduled to involve two-to-two-and-one half-hour interviews with 8 to 12 voluntarily self-selected sample participants for each group. The alumni focus group was not conducted due to lack of available participants. Many of the alumni could not be reached or were unable to attend at the scheduled times. The UT alumni attendee focus group was scheduled for either May 9, 2002 or May 14, 2002 at 7:00p.m. Please see pages 51-52 of this study for further information on alumni contacted during the phone survey portion of this study. The protocol for recruiting participants followed the outline below:

1. UO/EMU Ticket Office and UO Alumni Office staff generated lists of contact information for UT alumni and non-alumni attendees in the Eugene/Springfield area who attended only one-to-three UT productions for each of the past two to three seasons
2. The researcher received the lists of contact information

3. The researcher conducted the phone survey screening and recruitment process from her home and office phones.
4. As each potential participant was screened, responses were recorded on individual recruitment screener forms. A chart for recording confirmed participant data was included in the process so that the types of participants sought was visually seen.
5. Once all participants for the non-alumni UT attendee group were confirmed, they were sent a confirmation letter with a reminder of the date and time as well as directions to the location, for parking, and what they would be given to eat during the session. This information included a copy of the voluntary consent forms for participation in the study and for audio or videotape release
6. The day before the session, the researcher contacted participants to confirm their receipt of the confirmation letter, to check with participants their intention at that moment to attend the session, and to answer any questions they had.
7. At the end of the focus group, participants received a letter of thanks along with a gift certificate for two tickets to a production of their choice during the rest of the Spring term UT 2001-2002 season.

The non-alumni UT attendee focus group was conducted on May 7, 2002 at 7:00p.m.

The focus group session was held in Room 312 in Villard Hall on the UO campus. The researcher used preset questions to guide the discussion (Templeton, 1994; Krueger, 1994; Leedy and Ormrod, 2001). Focus group questions (See Appendix D Discussion Guide) involved attendees attitudes and beliefs about theatre at UT while phone survey data centered on external demographic data such as gender, age, and economic level (See Appendix A Recruitment Device). Focus group questions also considered participants reactions to UT repertoire choices,

accessibility, availability, marketing media, and quality of productions (J. Gilg, Nov. 2001, Templeton, 1994).

Specific categories and questions tailored to the UT focus group panel were derived from Templeton (1994, pp. 267-70) and Krueger (1994) and were included in Appendix D. The general outline and types of categories and questions suggested by Templeton and Krueger included the following: (a) introductory questions to help the panelists and researcher become acquainted to each other and the topic, (b) an opening question to encourage discussion on the general topic of theatre, (c) a focus reveal question to narrow the topic to UT, (d) questions related to panelists' levels and types of experiences with UT, (e) questions of accessibility, (f) questions of attendance patterns and decision-making, (g) questions of attitude toward UT productions, (h) questions of the value of UT productions, (i) questions of quality and types of effective communications and information from UT, (j) marketing media, (k) any questions participants may have, and (l) wrap-up questions to close the session. Some of the specific data collected in the focus group and literature relative to the range of questions above included: (a) ticket pricing and income levels, (b) ticket availability and flexibility, (c) competition and partnerships with other theatres, (d) selection of productions, (e) dates and times of productions, (f) types of marketing and advertising most effective in awareness of productions, (g) knowledge of UT theatre spaces, (h) awareness of parking availability, (i) seat selection, and (j) comfort. Pages 12 and 16 of this study described how these categories, topics, and the focus group questions were developed.

Data

This study was an exploration to describe what a small number of selected audience members find positive and negative about their theatrical experiences at UT and to discover why they chose to attend or not attend UT productions. Much of the data collected was outlined in

the previous section. Other data collected included practices and methods of focus group planning and implementation, study question design literature, data from comparative studies, and recent theatre audience attendance patterns within the United States and specifically at UT. Literature review materials explored what the trends in audience attendance and effective theatre audience research and development were in the last ten years (1992-2002) as well as what conditions impacted these practices. Additional data regarding how to conduct focus groups was utilized from observations with the research group Conklin-Fiskum-McCormick in Portland, Oregon. During the 2000-2001 UT mainstage season, questionnaires were distributed to all audience members and demographic information gathered about those who responded. The researcher reviewed and examined the quantitative data of these questionnaires for use in determining who attended UT in the recent past.

Data Collection/Tools

A partial survey of literature of theatre audience marketing research and development trends and focus group research was framed through periodicals, books, news articles, web sites, video cassettes, and similar sources. Topics, databases, and search patterns were included in the limitations section of this study. The review of literature section of this study discussed some of the literature found. A journal of quotations and summaries of this literature was employed. Subject categories were listed in one column on the page and quotations in the column next to it. This method of data collection was further described on page 31 of this study.

Phone survey data was collected through individual contact forms pre-formatted following the outline of the Recruitment Device found in Appendix A. This data was then transferred and compiled to create an overview profile of respondents and the collected data.

The focus group data was collected initially through video and audio cassette recording by the researcher and assistants from the UO Arts and Administration Program. The

recordings documented the verbal discussion among participants moderated by the researcher. The data was transcribed and recorded by a person trained in transcription referred by UO Disability Services. The transcriber recorded the transcription verbatim to the text of participants' language and phrasing from the recordings. Simple charts were used to record the repetition of concepts during each focus group session. Two research assistants were trained in the use of these charts by the researcher and in leisure benefits and constraints issues through a course in 'Arts Program Theory.' The researcher trained the assistants to identify terms, themes, and issues related to issues of benefits and constraints specific to this project. Assistants recorded preset and emergent concepts discussed during the session. The researcher checked these emergent issues through a detailed analysis of the video and audio transcription as well as her action research journal of the focus group session. Conceptual charts were maintained for collection of data from the literature. The researcher's personal observations, thoughts, and perceptions were documented and interpreted in a Gregg ruled format (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001, p. 158).

The focus group questions, questionnaire, and charts were pretested, reevaluated, and redesigned with the faculty advisor, with a group of students from the UO Arts and Administration Program and the client at UT before the focus group session was conducted.

Data Analysis/Interpretation

The data streams (literature and focus group/phone survey) were analyzed and interpreted separately and together. These streams were integrated to reach the project outcomes. Analysis of focus group and phone survey data had emergent issues and qualities but was most clearly developed when compared to the trends described in the literature review. An outcome of the analysis was to provide a general description of focus group attendees' experiences at UT through the filter of national trends. Though the individuals and their levels of

participation and attendance at UT were varied, the data analyses attempted to determine common themes among the focus group participants. The focus group and phone survey data were examined and analyzed in relationship to the themes found within the partial literature review component. Data analysis and interpretation methods for the focus group, phone survey, and literature were further described on pages 45, 54, and 56 of this study.

Data Presentation

The outcome of this project was a focus group report drawing on Templeton (1994) and based within an academic paper. This report drew from discussions and responses during the focus group and phone survey data as well as the literature review described above. The partial literature review portion of the data presentation included a comparison of larger audience trends within the local market (focus groups). Data were initially analyzed and presented in the three separate research components of literature review, focus group, and phone survey. Following the delineation of data analysis, these analytical components were synthesized together among related concepts. The collected data was used to make recommendations for UT's local market in relationship to the national trends. Recommendations for a marketing and communications plan were categorized and flowed from the analyses and syntheses of the data. These suggestions were not the creation of a plan itself, only strategies and suggestions for consideration when UT develops a plan. Linked outcomes were the description of trends in theatre arts marketing and communications research and development, the relationship of these trends to UT, and recommendations for a marketing plan at UT.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Participants

*Phone Survey Participants**Non-Alumni*

UT ticket holder contact information was received through the UO/EMU Ticket Office. Requested were ticket holders who attended only once, twice, or at most, three times per season for each of the past two to three seasons and who lived in the Eugene/Springfield, Oregon zip code area. Many of the contacts provided by the Ticket Office were subscribers, but not all subscribers attended each show during the past two to three seasons. All information was presorted so that individuals requesting no contact from the university were removed from the lists before the researcher received them. A final list of 131 contacts was provided to the researcher. From the list of 131 prospects, 73 could not be reached. Thirteen of the telephone numbers were disconnected or the person was no longer available at the listed number. The researcher conducted the phone recruitment process for the non-alumni focus group between Monday, April 30, 2002 and Saturday, May 4, 2002 at various times, primarily during afternoon and evening hours.

Forty-five potential participants were contacted during this time. Of these 45, 14 refused participation in the phone survey. Reasons given for non-participation in the survey included: (a) "I have not been able to attend because of a broken hip, and I have been giving away my tickets," (b) "I have not attended this year," (c) "My partner recently passed away and I have not been attending much," and (d) "I'm traveling on a theatre tour right now." Some of these respondents offered additional information regarding their impressions about UT. These impressions included: (a) "UT experiments a lot within reason," (b) "It always falls together," (c) "The set was really well done and the acting was great for *The Adding Machine*," (d) "Keep

up the good mix of traditional and experimental work,” (e) “You can see from every seat, especially if you’re short,” and (f) “I didn’t enjoy *Angels in America*, *Matchmaker* was okay, and I didn’t go to *The Adding Machine*.” Of the 31 who chose to participate in the phone survey, 8 did not meet the initial focus group participation criteria of attending UT “once or at most, three times per season during the past two to three seasons.” Reasons given for the inability to meet this criteria included the following: (a) busy personal schedules, and (b) “can you improve the acoustics? I have trouble hearing even when I’m fairly close to the stage so I don’t go much anymore.” These explanations reflected the two highest ratings of reasons for lack of attendance in the Harris (1996) study: (a) lack of time respondents felt they had to attend productions and (b) difficulty in attending a particular performance location.

Of the remaining 23 phone survey participants, eight attended UT performances between 1-2 times during the past year, and 15 attended between 5-6 times during the latest season. Seven participants attended theatre events, other than those at UT, 1-5 times this season, while five participants attended between 6-10 times this season, and 8 respondents attended more than 11 times this season. Four respondents were alumni from non-theatre arts departments; six respondents were connected to UO as current staff members or former staff or faculty members. Seven respondents had family members who attended or worked at UO. Respondents represented all but three of the local zip code areas with 97405 having the majority of participants at 11 responses; zip code area 97401 had five participants. Thirteen respondents were female, 10 male. Ten respondents were between the ages of 41-65, 12 respondents were over 65, and one person was between 31-35. Five respondents had incomes between \$75,000-99,999 and four respondents had incomes between \$60,000-\$74,999; there was a mix of respondents with other levels of income. Three gave no response. Most respondents (20) read the *Register-Guard*, 12 read the *Eugene Weekly*. Seventeen listened to KLCC-FM and 14 to

KWAX-FM. The majority of respondents watched PBS (16) with the next majority watching CBS (14) followed by ABC (9) and NBC (7). Twelve of the 23 phone survey participants were able to attend on the selected focus group date. Of those who were not able to attend the session, these were some comments made: (a) “Failure to have temperature control can make it uncomfortable in the theatre which makes it hard to concentrate,” (b) “We really enjoy the staging,” and (c) “I would like to see the information when your study is done.”

Alumni

UO Theatre Arts Department alumni contact information was received through the UO Alumni Office and consisted of Theatre Arts and Speech and Communications majors since 1950 who currently live in the Eugene/Springfield, Oregon zip code area. All information was presorted so that alumni requesting no contact from the university were removed from the lists before reaching the researcher. A final list of 100 records was provided to the researcher. Six of the potential participants were removed from the list because they currently work in or are students in the UO Theatre Arts Department. From the list of 94 prospects, 68 could not be reached. Thirty-two of these telephone numbers were disconnected or unavailable, or the persons were no longer able to be contacted at that number. The researcher conducted the telephone recruitment process for alumni between Saturday, May 4, 2002 and Saturday, May 11, 2002 at various times, primarily during afternoon and evening hours.

Twenty-six alumni were reached through the phone survey. Of these 26, 5 refused participation in the phone survey. Reasons given for non-participation in the survey included: (a) “I’m a really busy person and am not interested in helping anyone else right now,” (b) “I work nights so am not able to attend or participate right now,” and (c) “I have not attended for at least 10 years.” Of the 21 who chose to participate in the phone survey, 14 did not meet the initial focus group participation criteria of attending UT “once, twice, or at most, three times per

season during the past two to three seasons.” Reasons given for inability to meet this criteria included the following: (a) “I work nights” (2 responses), (b) “I haven’t been to any shows at UT in the last few years” (3 responses), (c) “I’ve been gone from UT for 20 years and haven’t gone back” (2 responses), (d) “I’m too busy with the theatre I’m with now” (1 response), (e) “I think maybe I attended only one time in the last three years” (2 responses), (f) “I have kids” (2 responses), (g) “I have shows the same nights” (1 response), and (h) “I don’t live here any more but my cell phone is still connected in the area” (2 responses). Some of these responses regarding nonattendance at UT events reflected those of the Harris (1996) study regarding lack of time and the costs of hiring a babysitter or related expenses for the event time. Replies reflective of the fact that respondents had not attended for a number of years would require further detailed clarification to understand. This clarification was not within the scope of this study.

Of the remaining seven alumni phone survey participants, six attended UT performances between 1-2 times during the past year and one person attended between 5-6 times during the latest season. Four participants attended theatre events, other than those at UT, 1-5 times this season, while three participants attended between 6-10 times this season. Four respondents connected to UT as current staff members or former staff members at UO. All felt they participated heavily in shows while attending the university. All respondents resided in either the 97405 or 97402 zip code areas. Five respondents were female, two were male. Six respondents were between the ages of 36-60 and one person was over 65. Six respondents had incomes between \$20,000-\$50,000 and one person gave no response. Most respondents (6) read the *Eugene Weekly* and the *Register-Guard*, listened to KWAX-FM and KDUK-FM, and the majority (4) infrequently watched most television stations.

Only two of the seven alumni phone survey participants were able to attend either of the selected focus group dates. The researcher attempted to contact additional alumni to

participate, but no one else was reached. The group was canceled since not enough alumni contacts could participate in the expected focus group session of 8-12 people.

Focus Group Participants

Non-Alumni

Twelve of the 23 phone survey participants were able to attend on the selected focus group date. Eleven of the 12 scheduled participants arrived on the date and time scheduled. The one absentee called later to inform the researcher that an emergency had arisen at that time.

Participants were welcomed by one of the research assistants who asked each participant to sign copies of the consent forms that they had previously viewed. The assistant also directed them to the food and beverages provided by UT. These were available for snacking throughout the session. Once the video and audio recording equipment was setup appropriately, the session began. Two breaks were taken during the session, allowing participants to stretch and the video technician to change digital recording tapes. The session started at approximately 7:00p.m. and ended at approximately 9:30p.m. (Please see Appendix E for the transcript copy).

The general makeup of the twelve focus group participants was as follows: One had attended UT between 1-2 times during the past year, and 11 attended between 5-6 times during the same time. Two participants attended theatre events, other than those at UT, 21-25 times this season, while three participants attended between 6-10 times and 11-15 times respectively this season. Two respondents attended between 1-2 times this season and two did not attend any other theatre events this season. Two participants were alumni from non-theatre arts departments; 3 had connections to UO as current staff members or former faculty members. Five respondents had family members who attended or worked at UO. Participants represented all but four of the local zip code areas with 97401 having the majority of participants (5); zip code area 97405 had four participants. Eight participants were female, 4 were male. The majority (5)

of participants were between ages 66-70 and three were between ages 71-75 and between 31-55 respectively; one person was over 75 years old. Four had incomes between \$75,000-99,999, four had incomes between \$20,000-39,999, and two had incomes over \$100,000. One person did not respond to the question on income. Most participants (11) read the *Register-Guard*, 8 read the *Eugene Weekly*; only one person regularly read the campus paper, *The Oregon Daily Emerald*. Seven listened to KLCC-FM and to KWAX-FM. The majority of participants (9) watched PBS with the next majority watching ABC (6) followed by CBS (5). This group was highly representative of the previously mentioned “typical” theatre patron in the U.S.: white (11 participants), female (8), over 40 (9), and with high incomes (6).

Data Collection Assistants

Four data collection assistants helped with the focus group process. Three of the assistants were students in the Arts and Administration Program at the UO. One of these individuals, with a background in video production, served as the video recording technician. Two others were trained in recording benefits and constraints issues as described on page 36 of this study. One of these individuals also monitored the audio recording device and welcomed and oriented participants to the room as described on page 42. The fourth data collection assistant was a student transcriber with past employment experience in collecting transcription data. This individual took the audio and video recordings and wrote the transcription data for the researcher in both print and disk formats.

Researcher

The researcher filled the role of moderator and critic-gatherer for the focus group session. The role of the researcher in shaping and influencing the research was acknowledged. The researcher kept a journal log recording that included personal reflections, changes of perspective, and descriptions of events that occurred when interacting with focus group participants.

Data

Literature

The data collected through the literature centered on theatre audience attendance trends, audience development and communications strategies, and what conditions impacted these practices, all within the past ten years (1992-2002). Information was gathered from Harris (1996), Libbon (2001), Wolff (2001), Peithman and Offen (1999), McCarthy, et.al. (2001), Wise (1998), and Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund (1997). Other collected data assisted in understanding, planning, designing, and implementing focus group studies (Templeton, 1994; Krueger, 1994; Greenbaum, 1994; Aibel, 1993). Additionally, benefits and constraints of patrons cited in other studies were sought (Harris, 1996; Libbon, 2001, Lila Wallace, 1997). Examples of comparative study methods employed and recommendations developed were found (Keck, 1996; Thompson, 1997, Goldyn, 1996; Wei, 2000; Duncan, 1996).

Phone Survey

During the 2000-2001 UT mainstage season, questionnaires were distributed to all audience members and demographic information was gathered about those who responded. The researcher reviewed and examined the quantitative data of these questionnaires for use in determining questions to ask in the phone survey. Data collected in the phone survey included frequency of attendance at UT during the last two to three seasons; frequency of attendance at non-UT related local theatre events during the past season; frequency of type of theatre attended; age, income, and location distribution; relationship to the University of Oregon beyond UT; preferences in local communications and media outlets. Please see Appendix A recruitment form.

Focus Group

Benefits and constraints in attending UT were suggested by focus group participants and recorded by trained assistants. Specific data collected in the focus group included: (a) prior and

current experience, (b) accessibility, (c) risk factors, (d) attendance decisions and decision-making factors, (e) perceived and real value, (f) attitude and perceptions, (g) communications and information flow, (h) creative materials exposure, (i) perceived effectiveness and quality of productions, (j) satisfaction with ticket pricing, availability, and flexibility, communications, selections of productions, and services offered, and (k) knowledge of UT theatre spaces. The data as a whole assisted in describing what these audience members found positive and negative about their theatrical experiences at UT and in discovering why they chose to attend or not attend UT productions. Please see the attached Appendix D for a copy of the discussion guide.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Literature

The primary goal of the literature data analysis was to identify common themes in studies and reports of audience attendance, development, and communications trends. These themes were identified through pattern seeking between and among documents and recorded on Gregg-ruled forms created for these analyses as described on page 31 of this study. The relevant pieces of information were broken into short phrases or sentences that reflected specific concepts. These concepts were listed with supporting information from the literature. Current and future national trends were developed from these themes. These descriptions were later compared and contrasted with the data collected in the focus group and phone survey. Additional analyses and interpretations were developed through inductive reasoning.

Research.

The Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund (1997), Harris (1996), and McCarthy et al. (2001) studies suggested that research was elemental to any audience development strategies employed. As Peithman and Offen (1999) suggested,

Any plan to increase the size of your audience begins with information. The more you

know--about your own theater company, your potential audience, your broader community, the marketing means at your disposal, and other factors--the more likely you are to be successful. (p. 3)

However, data about university theatres was lacking. As McCarthy, Brooks, Lowell, and Zakaras (2001) noted, "There are almost no data at all on organizations that file [with the IRS] under the umbrella of non-arts nonprofit institutions, such as university theatres" (p. 9).

University theatres, such as UT, could begin with the data available from nonprofit organizations in the field and transfer that information into their own marketing research goals and strategies. UT, and other university theatres, could research the psychographic and sociographic characteristics of participants, the factors influencing participation, participants' perceptions of the organization, as well as UT's competitors and potential partners within its market (Thompson, 1997, McCarthy et al., 2001).

In addition to basic audience research, assessment and evaluation strategies were incorporated into many theatres marketing structures (McCarthy and Jinnett, 2001). From the assessment and evaluation process, feedback loops were created for new research to be conducted and marketing strategies revised. The two most commonly noted reasons for evaluating and monitoring marketing strategies were, "That money has been well spent, and that the intended increase in sales is due to the promotional strategies employed rather than the external environment" (Thompson, 1997, p. 119). Evaluation and assessment allowed organizations to determine the effectiveness of their marketing strategies.

Attendance trends.

As noted earlier, studies showed that audience attendance at theatre events has declined nationally (Harris, 1996, Libbon, 2001, Wise, 1998). Though the performing arts were more available throughout the United States recently more than any other in its history, the overall

percentage of those attending did not increase and a small percentage of attendees accounted for overall attendance figures (McCarthy, et.al., 2001, pp. 25, 27-28). Additionally, noted was that,

Broadway plays...are bringing in record audiences, and the demand for commercial recordings is stronger than ever...Other stories, however focus on theatre groups...cutting costs or closing doors because they are unable to attract the audiences and contributions needed to meet expenses. (McCarthy, 1999, p. 1)

McCarthy et al.'s (2001) study speculated that the increase in attendance at Broadway productions was due to an increase in leisure time and leisure spending power in combination with increased overall population and education levels. The number of performing arts organizations grew 80% between 1982-1997, but revenues declined, causing new nonprofit groups to be small and emphasize local participation and volunteerism (McCarthy et al., 2001, p. 3). Another study suggested that, "Audiences are coming and becoming more diverse...audiences are becoming more deeply engaged in their programs and activities. Institutions seeing the biggest gains are those that are making service to their communities as important as promoting artistic quality" (McCarthy, 1999, p. 1). McCarthy further suggested that niche markets will increase and grow in strength as well as numbers in the future.

In November 2001, Wolff stated that since terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. occurred on September 11, 2001, 21% of performing arts groups estimated between 20-50% decline in attendance at their events, and another 34% of groups estimated a 1-20% decline since that time. Ticket sales declined between 23%-35% at these organizations, though before that date, subscription sales and single ticket sales were unchanged or better than the previous season. These numbers were based on a web survey with 855 organizations responding from 49 states in the study (p. 2). Ways in which these events and short-term trends could shape the future of theatre arts attendance could remain unknown for many years.

McCarthy et al (2001) and Harris (1996) found that those most likely to attend performing arts events were those who were well educated and those who were exposed to arts and abstract thought early in life. McCarthy, et al. further speculated on those who attend. They suggested that those attending are interested in the social dimension of participation, seek public recognition or prestige, and enjoy associations with like-minded people. The studies showed that more women than men participate in the arts and that hands-on participation occurs with people at younger ages. Attendance and participation through the media were similar no matter what the age (McCarthy, et.al., 2001, p. 24). Additionally, it was clear from studies that audiences at performing arts events are aging (Houston, 1999, McCarthy et.al, 2001).

Audience development strategies.

Many types of strategies were suggested for developing an audience base. With any strategy, an organization's objective was to, "Create a love affair between people and art that will have a lifelong impact on the minds and spirits of those who partake" (Morison and Dagleish, 1987, p. 39). But this statement raised the question: how does an organization create and support lifelong love affairs with so many audience members? Effective strategies found in the literature sought to incorporate the importance of the audience (Hancock, Sept. 1999). For university theatres it was, "imperative that students experience the feedback of an audience to complete the educational process" (Keck, p. 1). S. Houston of Jump Start Company in Texas declared that, "For an increasingly diverse population, we need to find ways to build a diverse audience without being paternalistic toward communities in a flavor-of-the-month way" (Sullivan, Sept. 1999). The McCarthy et al. (2001) study suggested that strategies to reach those not predisposed to participate in the arts needed to focus on influencing and changing attitudes. McCarthy et al. further suggested that (a) strategies focused on those predisposed to arts participation but not currently participating need to assist this group in overcoming practical

barriers such as costs, time, location, and transportation and (b) strategies deepening the involvement of those who are current participants need to focus on enriching these participants' experiences and forming habits of attendance (p. 3). In each case, increasing an audience segment's demand was significant to increasing attendance and ticket sales.

Word-of-mouth and media outlets continued to be noted in the literature as the primary methods for audiences to hear about events and organizations (Goldyn, 1996, Peithman and Offen, 1998). Technology was another key factor to reaching today's audiences, especially younger generations. As W. Hammock of Horse Cave Theatre in Kentucky questioned, "This technology-heavy age is changing the way people's minds work--not just what they're doing but how they think...how do you get through to them?" (Sullivan, Sept. 1999). The literature described theatres considering and incorporating elements of remote live performances, robotics, artificial intelligence, special effects, automation, technical imagery projection, wireless systems, internet-related events and activities, and software generated sets into productions (Hancock et al, 1999, McCarthy et al, 2001). Tanaka (1999) predicted, "In theatre, as is true for the rest of society, technology is defining the next bold frontier...theatre artists are...harnessing technology for aesthetic and practical ends" (p. 24).

The literature showed that no matter which means--technology, media outlets, word of mouth, etc.--were chosen, the key to any strategy was defining and knowing the target audiences an organization seeks for its overall programming as well as for specific productions.

As Kotler and Fox (1995) discussed,

By identifying target markets that will most benefit from the program the following developments will be achieved: (a) strong following and standing in particular market segments, (b) greater knowledge of a market segment's needs and behavior, and (c) operating economies in production, distribution, and promotion. (p. 227)

Comparison examples.

Keck (1996) suggested that university theatre should move away from primarily using newspaper advertisements, press releases, cover shots for papers, color posters, some direct mailings to members, faculty, and staff, and complementary ticket vouchers. In place of these methods Keck suggested other means of marketing and publicizing events such as increased direct mailings, standardized advertisements and playbills, increased information in playbills, reduced numbers of complementary ticket vouchers, increased benefits for subscribers, and increased press releases throughout the season. At the University of Oklahoma, the changes Keck described increased the overall attendance by 9,500 tickets in a three year time span with an average increase in ticket income from \$3.71 to \$6.60 per person during the same time period. Other contributing factors to this increase included the completion of a new theatre space with 72 additional seats per show and the addition of 10 performances per season. Production quality and the diversity of shows offered remained consistent throughout the time period (pp. 41-45).

The literature supported group sales as one highly effective means of targeting specific audience segments. At South Coast Repertory Theatre, targeted group sales accounted for 10% of their annual income while at the Mark Taper Forum, group sales accounted for 11% of annual income (Duncan, 1996, p. 1). At California Repertory Theatre, group sales accounted for 10% of attendance figures and 12% of ticket revenue within three years of implementing a group sales program. (Duncan, 1996, p. 1). Additionally, permission marketing and one-to-one marketing, utilizing two way communications methods via the internet, email, direct mail, and other means could be considered (B. Jones, May 22, 2002). As Toper noted in Thompson (1997), “Forget mass marketing! Today’s marketing challenges are those of pinpoint personalized niche marketing” (p. 92).

Eugene/Springfield demographics.

Scudder and Associates (March 1997) collected consumer information on 525 respondents in the Eugene/Springfield, Oregon zip code areas. At the time of the study, Eugene's population was 126,325 (40% of Lane pop); the average age, 44.6 (36% between 25-44, 19% over 65); 17% of incomes fell between \$25,000-\$34,999; 32% of jobs were in the manager/owner/professional category. In Springfield the average age was 45.5 years (26% 35-44 years old, 21%, 21-34; 18% 65+). Some other demographic details of the study were as follows: (a) 75% of residents live in a house, 15% in apartments; 66% own their residence, 33% rent; (b) 53% are female; (c) 54% are married; (d) 59% have no children at home; (e) 36% of the population has had some college, 23% high school only, and 21% are college graduates; (f) 97% have automobiles; (g) 37% eat out 2-3x per week, 28% eat out one or fewer times per week; those mostly likely to eat out 6 or more times per week were students, service/retail/restaurant employees, those with incomes over \$70,000, and singles living with others; those less likely to eat out were those with incomes between \$10,000-\$14,999, and those who were married, retired, or female; (h) big ticket spenders were those living in zip code area 97401, those with incomes between \$45,000-\$54,999, and those who were "owner/professional/managers". The number of households with income over \$50,000 dropped by 5.4% between 1995-1996; this implied less buying power throughout the city. Of preferred activities, the list included (a) movies (43%), (b) dining out (23%), (c) TV (19%), (d) sports (16%), (e) friends at home (14%), (f) 87% physically active, particularly jogging/walking (37%), biking (19%), fishing (12%).

Of newspaper outlets, it was expected that 63% of the population subscribes to the *Register-Guard*, the largest local daily newspaper. The average subscriber generally lived in Eugene zip code are 97405, was over 65, married, had an income over \$45,000, and was a business owner/ professional/manager or retiree. About 24% of the population read the local

weekly paper, the *Eugene Weekly*; these readers were primarily those who are students, who were single living with others, who were college graduates and who lived in Eugene. Of radio outlets, most listeners chose KLCC-FM (primarily those who live in Eugene), KUGN-AM 590 (males 45-54/over 65, females over 65), KMGE-FM 94.5 (Females 25-44), KNRQ-FM 95.3 (males 25-34), KUGN-AM 97.9, KPNW-AM 1120 (males 65+), KGNU-FM (females 25-44, zip code area 97404, Springfield residents), and KZEL-FM 96.1 (Springfield residents). Of television outlets, the most watched were KEZI (23-33%), KMTR (17%), KVAL (22%), and CNN (15%) while 13% have no preferred station. Females watched less television while singles who lived with others, students and those with incomes less than \$10,000 watched more.

Current national scene.

The study by McCarthy et al. (2001) showed that currently, educational institutions, like the UO, were the most frequent type of performing arts presenter. McCarthy et al. stated that thirty-seven percent of presenters belonging to the Association of Performing Arts Presenters are educational organizations. These organizations tended to see arts as a peripheral part of, unrelated to, or only complementary to their mission (McCarthy et.al, 2001, pp. 65-66). The biggest challenge for these types of presenters was when, “Maintaining educational principles and creating commercial successes seem to come into opposition. While few in educational theatre programs will argue against the need to develop an audience, the means to achieve that end remains in dispute” (Keck, 1996, p. 5). A concern raised in the literature was: how do organizations meet the needs and requests of audiences? If audience and artists needs conflict, how do organizations balance these needs? (Sullivan, Sept. 1999). These questions were addressed in the recommendations and summary portion of this study.

Jackson (1998) showed that consumer leisure patterns and spending patterns changed significantly in the United States over the last 10 years. Home-based leisure increased in

importance to consumers (Jackson, 1998, McCarthy and Jinnett, 2001). McCarthy et al.'s study (2001) stated that consumers preferred greater flexibility in their consumption patterns and choices in time, place, and style of consumption (pp. 27-28, 33). Studies showed that audiences are aging and families are having fewer children, which means a smaller educated population for the twenty-first century (McCarthy et.al., 2001, p. 109, Thompson, 1996, p. 4). The decline in public school arts education funding and program offerings throughout the 1990s decreased the number of students in the U.S. exposed to the arts in their early schooling. Some literature suggested increased rates of arts experiences for school children may result from fulfillment of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act which lists arts as basic to the education of all children (Modrick, 1998, Langley, 1990).

McCarthy et al. (2001) noted that changes in funding for not-for-profits shifted dramatically over the past ten years. Direct national public funding declined during the 1990s, while state and local agencies provided increased funding. Earned income and costs of production remained stable while contributed income increased. However, the type of giving changed with greater demand placed on earned individual contributions; this demand cost more in organizational time and money (pp. 88-89).

Future national scene.

Literature of current trends for the future of theatre in the United States, suggested that small, prolific, volunteer-based organizations would grow and become more sustainable than mid-size theatres (McCarthy et. al., 2001, pp. 33-35, 75-76, 107-109, Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). Particularly noted in these studies was that this sector is seeing a successful increase of niche market theatres as markets increasingly segment. Market and financial pressures increased during the past ten years, and in order to remain healthy, organizations chose to remain small or to become part of the large commercial sector (McCarthy et. al., 2001, pp. 33-35, 75-76,

107-109). McCarthy et al. continued to suggest that there would be a decrease in the number of professional live performances but that the overall number of live performances would grow due to the increase in amateur presentations. They expected the division between high and low art to decrease while the division between large and small performing arts organizational divisions would increase. They predicted that more partnering among organizations, creating organizational hybrids among the corporate, not-for-profit, and volunteer sectors would occur (McCarthy et al., 2001, p. 7-8). They also predicted increased importance on universities as developers of young talent, production quality, value, and diversity as mid-size theatres must choose to “go large” or “stay small” (McCarthy et al, 2001, Hancock et al, 1999).

A special section on the future of theatre in *American Theatre* (Sept. 1999) claimed that competition from technology will continue to increase. This examination also stated that an increase of recorded arts and the use of internet, digital, and other technologies to communicate with audiences will dominate and that younger generations will continue to be more in touch with technology (pp. 17, 24-29). McCarthy (2001) predicted that as technology advances productivity in the home and workplace, leisure behavior and spending patterns will continue to change dramatically. Additionally, McCarthy et al. (2001) suggested that the population will decline while education levels will increase; however, the numbers of well educated people will be fewer in total.

Phone Survey

The primary goal of the phone survey data analysis was to identify participants’ responses regarding their relationship to UT, sociographic makeup, and potential participation in the focus group sessions. The data was recorded on spreadsheet charts created for these means. Additional analyses and interpretations were developed through inductive reasoning.

Alumni.

Of the twenty-six alumni reached through the phone survey, seven qualified to participate in the phone survey. Fourteen of those contacted did not attend UT once during at least the past three seasons. Responses given by this group of participants stated that they are disconnected from UT events and were not attending on a regular basis. Seven replied that they did not attend UT productions for many years; length of actual time away from UT productions was between 5 and 20 years. Additional research and communications tailored to the needs of this group would need to be created and implemented to answer the question: what are the needs of these individuals and why are they not attending? Two responded that they work at night so were unable to attend. Perhaps they did not know UT offers matinee performances. Two replied that they were presently busy with their own theatre groups. In what ways could UT partner with these groups? Two others responded that they have children, making it difficult to attend events. This raised questions such as: are there ways UT could offer special opportunities, events, or childcare for families with children? Of the remaining seven alumni phone survey participants, all but two had prior commitments or obligations for the scheduled focus group dates. What could UT do to increase participation by alumni of the program, including UT events as one of their regular commitments or obligations? These and other significant questions were raised through this study were incorporated into the recommendations section beginning on page 72.

Non-Alumni.

Of the 45 potential participants in this phone survey, 31 chose to participate and only 8 did not attend UT at least once during the past two to three seasons. Among the 23 remaining phone survey participants, most participants (15) attended UT on a regular basis (5-6 times per season). Many of these participants were regular theatregoers within the community; 13 of them attended other, non-UT, local theatre events more than 6 times during the last season. There

were a large number of respondents (17) who connected to the university: (a) four were non-theatre arts alumni, (b) six were current or former staff or faculty members, and (c) seven had family members who attend classes or work at UO. The highest densities of UT attendees in the survey represented zip code areas 97405 and 97401. More women (13) than men (10) participated in the survey. Most respondents were older; 12 respondents were over 65 and 10 between the ages of 41-65. Income levels influenced less on attendance at UT as responses to this question were highly varied; however, the highest concentrations of income levels were between \$75,000-\$99,999 (5) and between \$60,000-\$74,999 (4).

The Register-Guard was mentioned as the clearest way to reach those like these respondents--20 said they regularly read this local daily newspaper. The *Eugene Weekly* could be another influential news outlet as about half of the respondents (12) said they read it regularly. KLCC-FM and KWAX-FM were the most frequently listened to radio stations among participants. In considering television advertising, the majority of respondents watched PBS (16) followed by CBS (14), ABC (9), and NBC (7). Questions regarding frequently used media sources were used in order to make informed suggestions to UT regarding potential media outlets for future use in communications and marketing materials.

Focus Group

The primary goal of the focus group data analysis was to identify common themes in attendees' descriptions of their experiences through video and audio cassette analysis, text and content analysis of the transcribed document and pattern seeking between and among the transcription gathered through spreadsheet charts created for these means. The relevant pieces of information were broken into short phrases or sentences that reflect single, specific thoughts. These segments were grouped into categories reflecting the various meanings from the

phenomenon of attending UT mainstage productions. Finally, from these themes, a description of ways in which University Theatre attendees commonly experience a UT event was developed.

Following the guidelines of Leedy and Ormrod (2001), this description, “focuses on common themes in the experience despite diversity in the individuals and settings studied” (p. 154). Though the individuals and their levels of participation and attendance at UT were varied, the data analysis attempted to determine some common themes among the focus group participants. Non-verbal analysis of focus groups participants received minimal observation and reference by the researcher as she was not trained to conduct such analyses and interpretations and did not have time within the scope of this study to learn the procedures for such analyses. These descriptions were later compared and contrasted with the descriptions of other trends found in the literature. Additional analyses and interpretations were developed through inductive reasoning from personal perceptions and understanding. A journal of personal responses, actions, analysis, and interpretations was kept to sort personal from objective analysis. Some demographic and sociographic data regarding this group of participants was outlined above under “Participants”.

Participants in the focus group wanted it known that they greatly enjoy live theatre. One participant stated that, “They’re (UT) outstanding. You won’t find it in any other theatre in town, and there’s a lot of them,” and another that, “We really appreciate this theatre, and we like it so much, we want others to be here and for UT to be the best it can be.” Themes developed through the data analysis of the focus group documentation included (a) involvement, (b) education, (c) atmosphere, (d) diversity, (e) excellence, (f) social, (g) promotional, and (h) ticketing. These categories were discussed below:

Involvement.

Participants in the focus group noted that they enjoy feeling that they are part of theatre experiences. Participants mentioned that theatre provides entertainment, a means of escape or relaxation, and an opportunity to learn. Feedback as a form of participation arose in the conversation frequently. Participants remarked that they talk to ushers and any actors available after the show because they want to offer feedback and to interact with students. Some participants indicated that they enjoy reading actors, designers, and directors biography briefs and tracking their development at UT. Many of the participants indicated that they would appreciate additional opportunities to interact with actors, designers, and directors through informative discussions or social events. Participants said they appreciated mail surveys, web-based surveys, or surveys in the playbills in order to provide personal feedback about the shows and UT in general.

Education.

Focus group participants expressed their enjoyment of and expectation to be challenged in content and presentation style of shows at UT, particularly as it exists in an educationally based setting. They suggested that subjects presented in shows at UT are cutting edge. They stated that attending shows at UT, asks them to “go with an open mind because you never know what to expect”. They also felt that theatre in this setting allows for broader issues and topics to be presented and discussed in an open environment.

In their experiences as audience members, participants stated that they read program notes and lobby displays of information related to the history, time period, style, director’s vision, and other notes regarding they show. The participants in this group enjoyed being informed audience members. Many of them read the previews, press releases, and reviews in the newspapers in order to have an idea of what they would experience before attending each

production. They suggested that they would like to learn more about each production before they arrive. Suggestions for receiving this type of information included more specific and clear notes in the programs and lobby displays, more pre-opening and second-week of opening information in the newspapers, as well as informational interactions or discussions with members of the casts and production teams. They also requested additional opportunities to provide feedback regarding shows and UT in general.

Participants appreciated the opportunities UT provides for students to learn the skills and trade of theatre in this educational environment. They felt that students learn best in this type of theatre environment that offers diversity of shows and styles. As part of this learning environment, they suggested building partnerships with local high schools and community groups such as Learning in Retirement to recruit and support more UT attendees and participants. Some participants requested a greater emphasis on playwrighting as it is the foundation of Western theatre.

Atmosphere.

Some positive factors affecting the atmosphere of UT that focus group members observed were that, “There’s not a bad seat in the house,” that the acoustics are good, and that it is a good place to go in inclement weather. Also mentioned were that the small size of the theatre space helped them feel involved in the action, that having three stages to perform on offered variety for the actors and audience, and that the MadDuckling Theatre was for children. Often mentioned was the presence of young people and lots of energy on stage and throughout the audience; this was highly appreciated in creating a positive atmosphere during the shows and around the theatre space.

Some negative factors affecting the atmosphere of UT observed by members of the focus groups were that many shows are not inviting for children except the summer theatre, that there

is not enough parking or seating for handicapped individuals, and that encountering the smoke filled air directly outside the front doors of the theatre was not appreciated. Of great concern was that 11th Avenue from the parking lot was very dangerous to cross. Often noted was that the Robinson Theatre was frequently very cold and attendees needed to bring additional clothing to maintain warmth throughout the productions. Equally noticed was that the small size of the lobby did not encourage mingling, could even be claustrophobic, and that lines at the bathroom could be very long. In addition, it was commented that the 24-hour reserved spaces in the parking lot are an annoyance to those seeking to park closer to the theatre and that signs designating seating inside the theatre could be clearer.

Diversity.

Focus group participants applauded the diversity of the types of productions, casting choices, and audience members at UT. They appreciated UT's situational ability to offer shows that other theatres are unable to offer due to financial concerns. They also commented on the timelessness and universality of issues and topics addressed in productions chosen.

Excellence.

Participants in the focus group frequently commented on the talented people who perform, design, and direct productions at UT. They relished the excellence of production design, the aesthetics considered and presented, the outstanding staging, the acting, and the production elements as a whole. They appreciated live performance and student performers as professionals-in-training; they felt that other local theatres have more amateurs working on productions than UT. They stated that, "technology can't do it all," and that they expected experimenting to occur because of the type of theatre generally offered at UT. Participants stated a desire to see more excellent talent involved from the schools and departments of marketing, journalism, management and business, art, graphic design, and others in order to improve the

marketing, publications, and public relations of UT. They also expressed a desire for more focus on playwrighting than they have seen occur at UT to date.

Social.

Many of the focus group members expressed enjoyment of the social aspects they experienced at UT and other theatres. Many participants stated that they attended with friends or family members; however, what they saw with one friend was different than what they attended with another friend. If family members were visiting, they were less likely to use their tickets. Focus group participants enjoyed discussing the shows with one another and expressed a desire to be able to discuss the show with others in the audience or with cast and crew members. Some also suggested special opening or closing night parties so the casts and audiences could mingle. Many felt that the lobby size deterred impromptu discussions from occurring. One participant said that he enjoys “getting a feel for the audience” before and after the show. Another focus group participant observed that UT has an audience cheering section at the end of the show and that no other local theatre has support in the same way.

All participants liked the idea of UT reaching outside the UO community and into the Eugene/Springfield community. One participant commented that she thought that attending UT was a special privilege and that others were not invited. Group members expressed that to truly accomplish any type of community development outside the UO community, UT would need to develop a citizen board, a “friends of the theatre group”, a foundation within the department, or a community advisory board. Without this type of participation, they did not feel UT would be successful in increasing attendance, support, or visibility. To support this group, they offered the idea of memberships in addition to and separate from subscriptions. They also felt these types of groups would allow others attending UT to get to know one another. The group

expressed an especial desire to see more students and young people involved in the audience and community work and suggested potentially partnering students with community groups.

An additional comment on social aspects of UT was that offering refreshments regularly and consistently promoted not only sales, but people gathering and socializing before, during, and after the show. A suggestion to offer prepaid refreshments was made. In this way, refreshments served at intermissions could be selected and paid for prior to the start of the show.

Promotional materials.

Consensus in the group stated that UT marketing and promotional tools were not as effective as they could be. Participants said they heard from UT either not at all or only once each season; they felt this was not enough communication from UT. Many in the group stated that they prefer hearing from theatre companies throughout the season in direct mail or email groups for reminders about upcoming productions, for updates on awards and other accomplishments within the company, and for fundraising requests. They would like to see promotion of the entire UT program and not just upcoming productions. Participants also indicated interest in more pre-show and second week promotional materials as well as counter reviews explaining what the show was about and its present and historical contexts. Additionally, promotion of second season offerings was seen as highly needed. Consideration of a newsletter to share information was discussed. The group desired UT build excitement for its program and events like the sports teams at UO have done.

Advertising materials were particularly noted to be confusing, unclear, and at times, difficult to read. It was stated that the advertising was (a) “bland and vanilla,” (b) “cheaply done,” (c) “less-than-mediocre,” and that (d) “always using black and white is not exciting.” Offers to improve the advertising included (a) additions of color, (b) standardized, recognizable advertising, that was consistent and identifiable as being UT’s, or (c) sharper and flashier ads.

Pulling all the elements of UT together to increase familiarity upon a viewer's first sight was mentioned. The group also recommended greater use and prominence of (a) the UT website, (b) email interest groups, (c) television advertisements and promotions, (d) television, newspaper, web-based, and other calendar listings, (e) mailing lists from other organizations, (f) promotional packages and partnerships with other organizations, and (g) special events, parties, and discussion groups. Flyers and posters were less effective than other means of notice for this group.

Also particularly referenced was lack of program content and difficulty following the information in the programs. It was advised that programs could be planned for better flow of materials and that information included should be more factual and less editorial.

Ticketing.

Overall, focus group participants perceived UT's ticket pricing to be excellent, especially for the quality of shows that audience members receive. Some said the prices were too low while others felt the prices were appropriate because they allow people from a variety of income levels to attend. Though stated to be better this year, focus group members found that the box office personnel do not know enough about the productions or UT procedures to assist as well as they might if they had more information. Season tickets holders in the group expressed a desire to receive their season tickets within a week or two after sending in their requests for renewals; they stated they were currently receiving tickets up to two months after the initial request. They would like to hear about subscriptions in May or June and then have a follow-up request in August or September in order to receive their tickets in October. Subscribers would also appreciate reminders about productions throughout the season. Subscribers appreciated the ease of exchanging tickets and seats. They would like to see Second Season and Pocket Theatre opportunities included in their subscription offers. They also suggested that complementary

tickets to fill the house would increase attendance levels which would, in turn, assist in bringing in more audiences for UT.

Description of UT experience.

Typical UT audience members decided at some point ahead of the performance to attend the show. Usually, they either read the newspaper previews, saw advertisements, or heard about the show from someone else. Upon arrival at the theatre, they purchased their tickets unless they brought them from home. During the half hour the house opened before the show starts, some visited the restrooms, others viewed the lobby displays, and others mingled or watched the audience entering. As they entered the theatre, attendees received a program and found their seats. Some read the program, some watched the rest of the audience, some visited with other people in the audience, while others looked at the set to get a “feel for the show” that they would see. As the show began, attendees noticed the lighting, the actors, the costumes, and other design elements. They then became more involved in the show and noticed audience reactions. At intermission, some attendees visited the restrooms, others partook of refreshments, and others continued to watch the audience, read the program information, or viewed the lobby display. Following the end of the show, some attendees revisited the lobby displays, some commented to the staff or actors about the show, and most began discussing the show with other members of their party. Generally, this discussion continued at home or at a social event following the show. Some took the program home and reviewed it there for further information and discussion.

SYNTHESIS OF FOCUS GROUP, PHONE SURVEY, AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The data streams (literature, focus group, and phone survey) were analyzed and interpreted separately and together. These streams were integrated to reach the project outcomes. Analyses of focus group and phone survey data had emergent issues and qualities but was most developed when compared to the trends in the field described in the literature review. One outcome of the analyses provided a general description of focus group attendees' experiences at UT through the filter of national trends. The combined data was analyzed through pattern seeking, text and content analysis, and the relationship of the frequency of topics and themes among each of the three data streams.

Research

As noted in the analysis of the literature, research was a key component in creating audience development strategies. UT began audience research through the implementation of an audience survey last season and continued through this combined literature review, phone survey, and focus group study (J. Gilg, 2001). Past data was collected through brief surveys, but little was done with the findings (Goldyn, 1996). Further research methods could be developed to gather information on the psychographic, sociographic, demographic, and other data of those attending UT (Peithman and Offen, 1998, McCarthy and Jinnett, 2001, Goldyn, 1996). Researchers suggested that special attention should be paid to targeted groups such as alumni, community partners, student groups, and subscribers in addition to competing theatre companies and other arts and not-for-profit organizations and potential partners (McCarthy et al, 2001, Goldyn, 1996). Such research tools and collected data would assist UT in monitoring and modifying any marketing goals and strategies developed out of this study. Thompson (1997) stated,

Developing a marketing model is a positive step in identifying the real customer of educational theatre programs and their wants, needs, and desires. Research can provide a backbone for developing a productive marketing model. The research gathered can enable programs to make value-driven decisions and to distinguish themselves from the competition. (p. 7)

Communications

Audience Development Strategies

“Institutions seeing the biggest gains are those that are making service to their communities as important as promoting artistic quality” (McCarthy et al., 2001, p. 1). This statement from the literature was reiterated in the focus group discussion. Focus group members expressed that in order for UT to have greater impact in the community, it would need to find ways of incorporating and involving community members in their events and provide benefits to those attending. In particular, they offered the idea of a “Friends of the Theatre” group to support the efforts of UT. Another suggestion by focus group members was to increase communications with audience members, especially season subscribers, to assist in making people feel welcome and noticed. These suggestions could be effective means of deepening the involvement of current participants (McCarthy et al., 2001, p. 3). Hancock (Sept. 1999) emphasized this point, summarizing that effective strategies seek to incorporate the importance of the audience (p. 17). Focus group members stated that production quality should maintain the high level of quality UT offers.

The phone survey data suggested that most alumni of UT were not currently attending UT productions. Communications strategies with these and other potential attendees would need to focus on influencing and changing attitudes toward UT uncovered in the research component (McCarthy et al., 2001, p. 3). Or possibly, these potential attendees, who appeared to be

predisposed to arts participation, would need focused assistance in overcoming practical barriers such as supplemental costs, time, location, or transportation in order to attend (McCarthy et al., 2001, p. 3). Special promotions mentioned in the literature (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997, Peithman and Offen, 1998) or by focus group participants could be considered to encourage others to attend. Specific personalized communications through technological and traditional methods could be focused on this group as well (B. Jones, May 22, 2002, Keck, 1996).

Social

McCarthy et al. (2001) speculated that those attending performing arts events were those interested in the social dimension of participation, seek public recognition or prestige, and enjoy associations with like-minded people (p. 24). Additionally noted was that women attended more often than men and younger people preferred hands-on activities (McCarthy et al., 2001, Harris, 1996). Providing social experiences for attendees was suggested by focus group participants. Ideas offered by the group included pre-show or post-show gatherings, opening or closing night parties, or discussions about the shows with other attendees and the casts and production crews.

A study conducted by Scudder and Associates (1997), showed that 37% of the Eugene/Springfield zip code area population ate out 2-3x per week, and 28% ate out one or fewer times per week. Those mostly likely to eat out six or more times per week were students; service, retail, or restaurant employees; those with incomes over \$70,000; and singles living with others. Those less likely to eat out were those with incomes between \$10,000-\$14,999, and those who are married, retired, or female. This information suggested some of the types of individuals UT could seek in advertising at local restaurants or when partnering with local dining establishments for pre-show or post-show social activities.

An additional social aspect to UT productions was found in the concept of group sales. Sales of this type were considered effective means of targeting specific audience segments and providing social opportunities at South Coast Repertory Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, Jomandi Productions, and California Repertory Theatre (Duncan, 1996, Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997).

Promotions

Focused efforts on the diversity and excellence of programming would assist in the promotion of UT events. Focus group members and the literature emphasized that quality and variety of productions were key elements in their decisions to attend productions (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund-Readers Digest, 1997).

Communications worked best when flowing between and from both parties (Thompson, 1997). Participants in the focus group stated that they prefer ample information regarding productions to be included either in programs or in pre-production messages received either through the postal service or the press. They expressed a desire for more opportunities to learn about the historical, social, political, and other contexts of the productions. They stated that newspaper previews, reviews, and press releases are not enough; educational discussion groups, mini-symposiums, and other such events would increase their knowledge, experience, and appreciation of the productions offered at UT. This group asked for advertising imagery that was more eye-catching, more direct, and more clearly provided an idea of the show content or experience. Focus group participants also requested a wide variety of opportunities to provide feedback regarding productions and experiences at UT.

Phone survey, focus group, and literature data showed that word-of-mouth, current and emerging technology, and media outlets were the primary methods for audiences to receive information about events and organizations (Goldyn, 1996, Peithman and Offen, 1998, Lila

Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). Focus group participants stated that they would like to be directly involved in direct mail or web based surveys and to receive individualized invitations to attend or otherwise participate in UT events. Related strategies and practices considered are permission marketing and one-to-one marketing using two way communications methods via internet, email, direct mail, or other means (Thompson, 1997, B. Jones, May 22, 2002).

Literature stated that the best methods to reach target audiences needed to be researched by each group, and then communications strategies developed around the knowledge of the group and its tastes (Kotler and Fox, 1995, Thompson, 1997, McCarthy and Jinnett, 2001). These strategies required the development of integrated databases which could be created with other programs with which UT is connected through the University.

Other tools suggested for effective implementation included increased direct mailings, standardized advertisements and playbills, increased information in playbills, reductions in complementary ticket vouchers, increased benefits for subscribers, and increased press releases throughout the season such as were successfully implemented at the University of Oklahoma (Keck, 1996). Focus group members reiterated Keck's ideas, saying they would benefit from and appreciate increased in direct mailings and other communications from UT. Group members suggested standardized advertising and playbills along with increased amounts of historical and contextual information provided in the playbills. Focus group members felt an increase in complementary tickets would assist in improving sales by spreading word-of-mouth information about the shows and providing good will to the local community.

Current Scene

Attendance Trends

As earlier noted, studies showed that audience attendance at theatre events has declined nationally (Harris, 1996, Libbon, 2001, Wise, 1998). Attendance at UT declined during the last

few seasons (J. Gilg, Sept. 2001). Consumer leisure patterns and consumer leisure spending habits changed rapidly in the U.S. during the past few years. Recent studies suggested that consumers preferred greater flexibility in their consumption patterns and choice in time, place, and style of consumption (McCarthy et.al, 2001, pp. 27-28, 33, Jackson and Burton, 1998). Home-based leisure increased in importance (Libbon, 2001, Jackson and Burton, 1998).

Studies showed that those most likely to attend performing arts events were educated individuals or those exposed to arts and abstract thought early in life (McCarthy et al., 2001, p. 23; Harris, 1996). This was reflected in the number of UT alumni and other university graduates in the phone survey. However, audiences have aged and families in the United States have fewer children. Study projections suggested a smaller educated population for the twenty-first century (McCarthy et.al., 2001, p. 109, Thompson, 1996, p. 4). These studies raised questions such as (a) UT is housed in the midst of a highly educated community at the University of Oregon. Why then, this drop in attendance? (b) Has an increase in age or a decrease in the number of those educated in the arts within local area occurred? (c) How can UT reach out to the other needs and desires of the educated groups in the local area? (d) How can UT reform or present their communications materials to attract more of this premiere audience? These questions would be addressed through additional research and strategic planning conducted by UT.

Future National Scene

Organizational Size and Influence

Predictors of the future of theatre in the United States highlighted small, prolific, volunteer-based organizations and conservative, dominant, very large organizations as more viable for growth and sustainability than midrange size theatres in the years to come (McCarthy et al, 2001). Markets and financial support were expected to increasingly segment, so that to remain healthy, organizations must choose between staying small or becoming large to maintain

longevity and stability (McCarthy et al., 2001). This same study stated that there will be an increasing significance to universities as developers of young talent, production quality, value, and diversity as mid-size theatres must choose to “go large” or “stay small” (McCarthy et al, 2001). Focus group members cited their belief that the diversity of shows, opportunities, and styles of learning offered in a university theatre setting were beneficial and of prime importance to student learning and development.

Partnerships

Current researchers in the literature of performing arts organizational trends predicted an increase of partnering and hybridization among organizations in the corporate, not-for-profit, and volunteer sectors (McCarthy, et. al., 2001, Hancock et al., Sept. 1999, McCarthy, 1999).

Focus group members suggested building partnerships with high schools and community groups like Learning in Retirement in order to complement the university learning environment for theatre arts. Other suggestions included internal partnerships among other university programs and theatre groups. Group members expressed the thought that community, educational, and internal partnerships would assist UT in recruiting, increasing attendance, and building support for the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS, SPECULATIONS, AND SUMMARY

Following the analysis of the combined themes found within the partial literature review component, the phone survey, and the focus group, a summary and recommendations were built, primarily upon the work of Goldyn (1996), McCarthy (2001) and Duncan (1996). Also used to create recommendations were marketing strategy suggestions outlined in a number of other resources, including Keck (1996), Langley (1990), Melillo and Lavender (1995), Thompson (1997) and marketing literature on electronic databases, retention, individual relationship, and permission marketing tactics (B. Jones, May 22, 2002). These various marketing strategies were utilized to generate a list of recommendations for designing future marketing plans at UT.

Recommendations and Speculations

The objective of these recommendations and speculations was to offer suggestions to assist UT in developing a marketing and communications plan. A brief overview of the recommendations showed that UT should first identify its overall mission, goals, and objectives. After identifying these key elements, it was then recommended that UT develop specific marketing and communications goals, objectives, and strategies to meet its overall mission within the market in which it exists. Other points of identification recommended for UT to develop were its (a) market position, (b) potential target markets, (c) competition and potential partners, (d) attendees stated and inferred benefits and constraints in attending, and (e) attendees perceptions of the program. The key recommendation category developed shows the significance of relationship and community building to increase attendance, participation, and loyalty. Target markets and partnerships were noted as elements of importance to building these relationships. This key category was supported by the other categories of recommendation: (a) image and message building, and (b) visibility and awareness. The recommendations encouraged further and continued research, evaluation, revision, and re-implementation of strategies.

Relationship and Community Building

There is an ever growing need to market theatre arts programs to maintain positive relations with various constituents. The application of new approaches that provide understanding of the various internal and external audiences associated with the theatre arts program can assure continued positive relationships with those audiences. Focus on customer satisfaction is essential throughout the development of a marketing model. Understanding, respecting, and valuing the customer's needs becomes most important to the educational theatre program. (Thompson, 1997, p. 8)

Personal contacts and exposure in the community have been crucial in building audience attendance, loyalty, and future participation. Indiana Repertory Theatre (IRT), Goodman Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival (ASF), and others like them discovered that face-to-face communication and the implementation of new technological tools were absolutely essential to meeting or surpassing their audience participation goals (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest, 1997, B. Jones, May 22, 2002).

Though the not-for-profit sector has expanded and diversified its marketing tools and strategies, those of university theatre have been less certain. Much of this uncertainty arose from lack of data from this sector (McCarthy et al., 2001). Keck (1996) further noted,

Many university theatres marketing campaigns consist of repeating the same methods of promoting all shows. The same advertising schedule, format, and publication gets used. As a result, a singular audience demographic evolves instead of expanding its diversity [or breadth]...the task is creating a marketing strategy that attracts an audience for each genre of theatre as well as a crossover among genres...the audience exists for every type of show, the challenge for a marketing and public relations director is to determine who that audience is and what is the best way of communicating with them. (pp. 3-4)

Could this scenario be applicable to UT? Research and evaluation would need to be conducted to confirm any claims to this statement. If further study would prove Keck's case, UT could consider other viable options and opportunities for marketing itself. In either case, Keck offered a challenge to theatre arts programs to determine who they are serving, who they want to be serving, and the most effective strategies to reach those groups. Relationship and community building through target markets and partnerships were proven strategies (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997, McCarthy and Jinnett, 2001) that UT could utilize to its advantage in the local marketplace.

Target Markets

Segmented markets were predicted in the theatre of the future (McCarthy et al., 2001). In this light, Thompson (1997) asserted that,

Colleges and universities no longer can be everything for everybody...if they are going to survive and continue to be productive institutions of value to the individual and society...today's marketing challenges are those of pinpoint personalized niche marketing....being aware and knowledgeable about its target markets enable the theatre arts department to better define its promotional mix and its marketing channels. (pp. 92, 102)

Identifying and understanding specified target markets for individual program offerings within UT would allow it to develop a strong following in particular market segments, increase the knowledge of each market segment's needs and behaviors, and better utilize production, distribution, and promotional outlets (Kotler and Fox, 1995, p. 227). UT could identify specific types of people who would be interested in each production, gather contact names and information available, and encourage them to attend. For example, UT recently presented Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Due to this show's high literary value, local literary clubs, reading groups, bookstores, university and high school English and Comparative Literature

programs and related interest clubs could all serve as target audiences for this show. Further target groups could be found in local film buffs found at cinema and video outlets or media and film educational groups who would be interested in watching the original script to the famous 1966 film with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. Also to consider targeting for this production would be local counseling, mediation, and psychology centers and educational programs. The dysfunctional and volatile husband-wife relationships explored in the show could provide excellent fodder for members of these groups to discuss and potentially bring to their professional work.

Groups to cultivate relationships with UT not merely on a show-by-show basis could include those of UO administration, faculty, staff, and students; local businesses and business groups; media outlets; local civic groups; local government; and local theatres and arts organizations. Specific UO groups to cultivate could comprise ASUO Senate Officers, the UO President's Office staff, the Cultural Forum staff, the Arts and Administration Student Forum, Oregon Daily Emerald personnel, sorority and fraternity members, an inter-departmental performance interest group, and others. UT could additionally invite faculty and staff from one department or school per performance date for an evening of theatre together. Local groups to develop relationships with could involve (a) Rotary, Lions, Elks, Kiwanis, or other civic clubs, (b) religious groups, particularly those like Emmanuel Lutheran, the Newman Center, or the Koinonia Center which are campus centered, (c) businesses such as Eye Beam, Nobody's Baby, LaFollette Gallery and Framing or others with whom UT has already established business ties.

UT's box office has been linked to the Eugene Hult Center for the Performing Arts Box Office and the UO/EMU Ticket Office. According to D. Kau (May 29, 2002), one tool UT has not utilized but has at its disposal, is the ability of these offices to track and select individuals and specific target markets by reviewing past sales records. Discussing tracking options with the

box office managers would be crucial to generating targeted lists for each production. UT could also generate, maintain, and utilize databases of their own to track individual attendee and group sales patterns and interests. Initial ways this list could begin are (a) through mailing list registry forms in the lobby at every production, (b) through special give-away registries, or (c) through updates and registry forms on UT's website (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997, B. Jones, May 22, 2002). Space on the forms could be provided for anyone who registers to mark whether or not that wish to receive future contact from UT. Another space could ask if each patron's contact information may be shared with other local theatres (B. Jones, May 22, 2002). Information in these databases could then be integrated into one for additional referrals and tracking methods.

UT could also consider targeted telemarketing campaigns with individual patrons. Such campaigns could be developed in conjunction with UO offices already created for these techniques. A combination of the above methods would increase UT's abilities in one-to-one marketing methods and increase permission marketing opportunities as was done at IRT and ASF (B. Jones, May 22, 2002, Lila Wallace, 1997).

Thompson (1997) suggested that the survival and excellence of educational theatre depends upon identifying primary and secondary target markets and developing communications strategies for each group (p. 9). Some of these groups at UT were discussed below.

Subscribers.

Subscriptions have provided a financial cushion to organizations and have provided subscribers with exposure to new or less known works. However, audiences throughout the U.S. have refused pre-formatted subscription series that did not provide flexibility for payment plans or show selections (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). UT focus group participants rated the flex pass opportunities at UT to be outstanding and easily negotiated. UT could consider

offering optional subscription packages such as occur at ASF, Goodman Theatre, or Portland Center Stage. Optional packages could include (a) three shows instead of four, (b) a combination of UT's second season and mainstage season selections, or (c) subscriptions tied to other UO or local community programs (Lila Wallace, 1997). Promotion of these optional packages would be needed to increase participants awareness of the possibilities. Additionally, exploration of payment options could boost subscription sales. Examples of types of payment plans included: (a) the Theatre Alliance in Atlanta whose attendees pay a fixed amount per month rather than all subscription money at one time and (b) Baltimore's Center Stage half-price season subscriptions for children or students. The latter example also addressed the concern of reaching younger audiences, mentioned in both the literature and the focus group data.

Single ticket purchases.

Single ticket purchasers generally have required the most amount of time, money, and effort to bring through the doors of a theatre (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997, McCarthy et al., 2001). Some groups, such as Jomandi in Atlanta, GA, discovered through patron surveys that many patrons received most of their news and advertising through television and radio ads. Jomandi shifted its advertising schedules and media outlets to reflect these patrons primary sources of information (Lila Wallace, 1997). Others, like the Los Angeles based Mark Taper Forum (MTF), offered special community-wide events throughout the season to increase the general population's knowledge of and participation in MTF (Lila Wallace, 1997). Special discounted offers such as "two-for-the-price-of-one" continued to be effective for companies (Duncan, 1996, Lila Wallace, 1997). Some unique offerings included ASF discounts to single tickets purchasers holding accounts at a specific bank and highly discounted preview tickets at Jomandi for listeners of one specific radio station (Lila Wallace, 1997). UT could explore ways in which it might apply these or other suggestions for building single ticket sales.

Group sales.

Group sales proved an effective means of audience development across the country. Jomandi, Repertorio Espanol in New York, and the South Coast Repertory Theatre were just a few examples of where group sales were effective (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997, Duncan, 1996). UT could consider what types of groups to invite to each production or to the season of shows. Groups could be specified on a show-by-show basis. Generally, UO and local community groups could be targeted for relationship building and repeated group attendance. Possibilities for consideration could include school groups or classes, sororities and fraternities, literary groups, design groups, history clubs, business groups such as banks or insurance companies, or community groups such as Rotary or Lions Clubs and church groups. UT could build relationships within UO and with the Chamber of Commerce and the Convention and Visitor's Association to provide meeting, lecture, conference, or special event space through rental of their theatre spaces as well as group sales to visitors.

Themed nights could also be considered. Focus group members and data from McCarthy et al. (2001) stated that attendees enjoy social interactions while attending events. Group sales through themed nights could be marketed as social events. Themed nights occurred at Crossroads Theatre in New Brunswick, NJ including "ministers nights" for local pastors and other church workers (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). One example for UT, supported by suggestions within the focus group, could be group tickets for a "friends night out" or "family night out," especially targeted for subscribers, or for community groups expressing a focus on family relationships. Other themes could relate to class topics at the Learning in Retirement program, the UO Continuing Education Program, or university, community college, or high school classes and programs. Specifically targeted groups for each show could also participate in themed nights. For a production of *Macbeth*, UT could theme nights around the subjects of (a)

mysticism and spirituality, (b) movement and fight choreography, (c) medieval history, (d) Shakespeare and the English Renaissance, (e) folklore, or (f) politics, particularly sexual politics. Groups of martial arts instructors, writers, historians, feminists, politicians and political activists, mystics and spiritualists, or others could be invited to attend these special events.

Alumni.

Alumni in this study required special attention. In general, alumni were considered key stakeholders and supporters of UT. However, phone survey data revealed that many UT alumni were not currently attending or otherwise supporting UT. UT could develop focused, well-considered research and communications tools in order to increase information flow with this group. Once information was collected, UT could define and implement strategies to meet the needs and desires of this group and that also fit within UT's mission and goals. Ideas suggested for single ticket holders, group sales, and subscribers could also work as strategies targeted specifically to UT alumni.

The lack of current contact information for UT alumni in the phone survey portion of this project suggested that a database of UT alumni could be developed and regularly updated. Regular one-to-one contact with alumni would assist in developing this database (B. Jones, May 22, 2002, D. Kau, April 17, 2002). Focus group members reiterated these sources, specifying regular direct mailings, telephone calls, email letters, newsletters, and e-groups discussing UT news, awards, and other information as ideal ways of creating the one-to-one contact needed.

Another possibility to consider could be creating and maintaining a special Theatre Arts Alumni Association. Providing opportunities for social interactions could play a significant role in building relationships with alumni. This group could serve as a social organizer for alumni. Special alumni nights could be included in the "theme nights" discussed above. If sources of monetary or other support were needed to maintain these efforts, the alumni group could work

within the auspices of the UO Alumni Association, the UO Development Office, or the College of Arts and Sciences to which UT belongs.

Volunteers.

Volunteers were absolutely essential to any theatre organizations in the literature reviewed. At UT, many university students volunteered to assist with productions either for class credits or because they had a desire to participate. Supplemental education opportunities and credits could be enhanced and promoted to increase student volunteers. Students from other programs could particularly be encouraged to participate for class credits or to gain professional experiences. Specific programs to target for student volunteers in support of UT marketing efforts could include: (a) graphic design, art, and photography for advertising designs, layout, and other visual promotional materials (b) marketing and sports marketing for marketing ideas, plans, research, and implementation, (c) business for sales, service, and research projections, and (d) arts and administration for any combination of the above.

Student and community "friends of the theatre" groups could be developed as supporters and partners with UT. Please see the recommendations beginning on page 89 under increasing visibility and awareness for further information on this concept. The complementary ticket voucher system UT has in place for volunteers could continue. This system could continue to thank and support volunteers for their efforts. UT gave complementary tickets to only 10% or less of all those attending a given production (J. Gilg, March 18, 2002). Additionally, vouchers would allow flexibility in attendance dates and seating that complementary tickets for a specific day and time did not (D. Kau, May 29, 2002, Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997).

Partnerships

Organizational hybrids between and among not-for-profit, volunteer, and for profit sectors were predicted for the future. McCarthy, et.al. (2001) commented that, "Attention is

being paid to collaboration and the transfer of ideas, functions, and resources--including artists--across sectors” (p. 15). McCarthy et al. noted that these collaborations were essential to supporting small theatres, such as those in the Eugene/Springfield area. Partnerships among theatres have recently been necessary for theatres to grow together rather than some dissolving while others gain increased influence and strength (McCarthy et al.). Through affiliations, companies have supported each other by sharing marketing, management, production, or artistic personnel and strategies, media outlets, rehearsal or performance spaces, and office or production equipment, tools, costumes or other technical resources. Together, companies hold events or special promotions they would otherwise be unable to offer (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). A vibrant and diverse theatre community has existed in the Eugene/Springfield area. However, some local theatres were recently financially unstable or, like UT, experienced declines in attendance. Still, UT and others have much to offer in terms of technical capacity, facilities, management, and personnel. Six of the local theatres joined together to form the Eugene Theatre Alliance (ETA). This group formed to discuss issues each theatre may experience on managerial or artistic levels and to offer a one-time combined discount ticket promotion for local audiences. UT should consider, plan, and build deeper partnerships within ETA and with other organizations in its field.

However, UT could not only consider the development of partnerships within its own field. Rather, additional sets of collaborators within the University and sets external to the University would be essential to UT’s future success in audience development on campus and in the surrounding cities. Each internal partner could provide links to other external partner opportunities and likewise, external partners could provide other internal partnership opportunities. In this way the variety of internal and external partners would be linked together in a larger whole, forming broader connections for UT and its partners. These shared

relationships would bridge gaps in information links to the public, offer diverse promotional strategies, develop new target audiences, or suggest other partnerships to consider. Through the development of such relationships, each partner would benefit from more meaningful, accessible, and effective communication with its audiences. In its best form, this communication flow would create dynamic two way informative educational processes with audiences while building significant connections among the partners. Crossovers in partnerships could add strength to UT's marketing strategies and provide stronger connections between the University and city communities. Potential partnership building ideas were broken down into categories and discussed below.

Internal partners.

The University of Oregon has been revising communication documents so that a wide public could clearly understand which events are sponsored by programs of the University. The UO has clarified its marketing strategies and tools so that it can, "serve the institution while maintaining its quality and integrity" (Thompson, 1997, p. 4). A new "O" logo was confirmed by the UO President's Office for use on all non-academically oriented documents. Advertising and press releases in media outlets such as local newspapers were carefully scrutinized and standardized for production and recognition. The UO Communications Office has been spearheading this effort for the University. UT could support UO in this effort while gaining greater exposure for its own events and products. By following the standards set in place for logos, press releases, advertisements, and other communications documents, UT could be recognized as reliable and effective by the UO Communications Office and UO as a whole. Through this recognition, UT could expect to receive more frequent notices and support from these associations. First steps to this end would be building strong relationships with the Communications Office staff and understanding the new policies and procedures.

Additionally, as focus group members suggested, relationships could be built with other programs and departments around the university campus. Of particular benefit to both parties would be relationships among students, staff, faculty, and administration in such programs and departments as Arts and Administration, Art, Film and Video Production, Journalism, Marketing and Communications, Business, Graphic Design, UO Athletics, the Cultural Forum, Continuing Education, the Museums of Natural History and Art, the Oregon Daily Emerald, KRVM-FM, English, Romance Languages, Comparative Literature, History, Humanities, and the Career Center. Skills, knowledge, and talents within these programs would offer new resources, ideas, and opportunities for UT's marketing plan. These partnerships could provide interdisciplinary learning, research, production, and exhibition opportunities to students and employees alike, fulfill course requirements, provide exposure for the programs involved, and inspire and develop career goals and skills.

A campus wide "Friends of UT" group composed of faculty, students, and staff could be a significant tool in UT marketing campaigns. These "Friends" could support UT financially, through public speaking and lectures to campus and local community groups, through informed feedback, or through the presentation of special events. These partners would be seen as a central hub of exposure and image building for UT on campus.

Community partners.

Playwright Arthur Miller (1998) challenged theatre groups to see, "Theatre as a civic art rather than a purely commercial exercise" (pp. 38-39). UT's philosophy has supported theatre as a civic art, however, the community UT has served currently fits within a narrow spectrum. UT could develop ways of expanding this spectrum. One way to do this would be to develop community partnerships outside the university setting.

As previously discussed, UT began a community partnership with the Eugene Theatre Alliance (ETA), a consortium of six local theatres. Members of ETA have supported one another by sharing strategies, offering recommendations, and partnering to promote the companies and their productions. ETA could be a source to assist UT in developing their mailing lists and database information. In conjunction with ETA, UT could consider sharing training and other opportunities for students and professionals among the six theatres. Such inter-theatre relationships were explored at theatres in Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Chicago (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997).

Other important partnerships could include church groups, business associations, and youth programs. Lane Arts Council could be utilized as a networking, information, and funding resource for UT to the broader local arts community. Local galleries and exhibition halls could be considered for exhibits of student design work. The Oregon Cultural Trust could also be followed and links made as this government program seeks to assist and build arts within local communities across the state.

Most importantly, a community wide “Friends of UT” group could be developed as was suggested in the focus group session. These “Friends” could then support UT financially, through public speaking and lectures to local community groups, through informed feedback, or through the presentation of special events. These partners would be seen as a central hub of exposure and image building for UT.

Educational partners.

Education was the best indicator of attendance for any audience participant. The higher an education one had, the more likely one was to participate (McCarthy et.al, 2001, Harris, 1996). UT has existed in a market (the UO campus) that easily begs for interested attendees within this demographic makeup. In addition, the Eugene/Springfield area has boasted a

population with 21% college graduates, and 36% who have had some college education (Scudder and Associates, 1997). The area has a rich market for attracting well-educated participants.

Beyond internal partnerships within the university, UT could explore options of partnering with such groups as (a) Lane Community College and its affiliates, (b) local high school programs like Springfield High School who also partners with the New York City based Manhattan Theatre Club, (c) after school programs like KidCity, (d) adult learning programs such as Learning in Retirement, and (e) community or jobs skills training programs such as that offered through Lord Leebrick Theatre. UT could continually stay abreast of Oregon and Oregon University System policies and structures related to the arts, their importance, and potential funding sources or other means of support for partnership building with these types of groups.

Business partners.

Business partners could be developed with UT in order to promote the theatre and its events or to assist in overcoming barriers such as the additional costs of eating out, overnight lodging, transportation, or child care in order to attend UT productions. Those assisting to overcome barriers could include (a) hotels such as Phoenix Inn, Campus Inn, or Best Western, (b) Lane Transit District (LTD) or local shuttle and taxi services, (c) nearby restaurants like Rennie's Landing, Espresso Roma, or McMennamins, (d) UO Child Care Services or other nearby child care centers, and (e) local retailers such as the UO Bookstore, House of Records, or local video outlets who could offer discounts on plays, CD-ROMs, books, videos, DVDs, or journals and magazines related to the season show selections. Promotional materials could be included with these partnerships to offer special discounted packages on meals, transportation, hotel stays, child care, and theatre tickets. Themed marketing could be considered with these businesses for "parents night out" with child care centers, "theatre or bus" with LTD as well as with local restaurants and hotels or for customers of each of the business partners.

Other promotional partners could be found through the media, cinemas, and parks and recreation groups. As suggested by Jomandi Productions, careful selection of media outlets should be made after evaluating season shows and which media outlet would be best for each (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). Themed marketing could be considered to offer special nights to listeners of particular radio stations or specific radio shows, members of specific banks or insurance companies, or viewers of television programs or stations (Lila Wallace, 1997). Parks and Recreation services could be utilized to offer promotions to joggers, walkers, or after school programs (Scudder and Associates, 1997, Goldyn, 1996). Exchanges among UT and business partners could include cash contributions, advertisement space or air time for cross-promotions, blocks of free tickets for viewers or listeners, clients or employees.

Image and Message Building

Marketing enhanced the image and quality of institutions and increased attendance, program development, and social responsibility (Thompson, 1997). As previously mentioned, the UO has been revising communication documents to improve their image, public participation, and social presence. The changes implemented could assist UT in improving its image and social presence as well public participation in its events. UT could develop greater community awareness of its program through the new UO Communications Office policies. Before UT would implement these new policies, however, it would need to define its mission and goals.

Define Mission, Goals, Objectives

Wise (1998) asserted that theatres in the U.S. are at a point in which they must choose to “adapt or die” (p. 49). Through his interview with the Magic Theatre in San Francisco, Wise discovered the need for planning and stabilization in theatre organizations. In order to remain healthy and strong, theatres determined what their mission was and the ways in which they would achieve it (Wise, 1998, p. 49). But as Thompson (1997) noted, goals set must be realistic,

achievable, measurable, and within a given time frame and the resources available. Before a fully developed marketing plan could be created for UT, the program's overall mission, goals, and objectives must be developed (McDaniel and Thorn, 1990). Following this development, specific marketing goals and objectives would be set. UT would set these goals and objectives by asking itself: (a) does the program want to diversify, deepen, or broaden its audience (McCarthy, et.al., 2001), (b) how would UT like to define itself in relationship to competition within the market? (c) what are the image and messages UT wants to send the community? (d) how can UT stimulate demand and increase the accessibility of productions without foregoing quality or depleting resources? (Thompson, 1997, McCarthy, et.al., 2001, Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997).

Define Messages

Messages, in text and imagery, have assisted in defining theatre organizations (Colbert, 2001). Focus groups members stated that messages received through UT advertising and press were unclear. Colbert noted that message statements should begin as part of the development of the new mission and goals statements and would continue each time a season is selected or changes or crisis points occur. Colbert (2001) continued that messages should be clear, concise, and accessible to a wide audience or to specifically targeted groups. UT would define what messages it wants to send about the department, the faculty and staff, students, and specific events before relaying information. Messages would be clarified by asking (a) what are the ideas, themes, appeal, and image UT wants to create? (b) what are UT's achievements, specialties, benefits, or rewards that help it in meeting its objectives? and (c) how can these be clearly communicated in the information UT relays? Such questions would need to be answered specifically and plainly by UT. When needed, messages should provide specific information about location, dates, and times (Goldyn, 1996).

Professional and educational training ground.

McCarthy (2001) predicted that polarization of artistic incomes would increase while the number of both larger and mid-sized arts organizations would decrease. In such a climate, “Young artists will have fewer opportunities to gain experience in their field...innovation is likely to be discouraged” (p. 8). Should this trend continue, UT and other university theatre programs would have an opportunity to take over the role that mid-sized theatres held in training artists:

The university sector may play a critical role in making sure that new artistic voices are heard. Because universities, particularly in their research and training (as opposed to their presenter) roles, are much less sensitive to the demands of the market, they will be better able to foster innovation and creativity. (McCarthy et.al., 2001, p. 113)

However, as Thompson (1997) indicated, “Educational theatre programs throughout the U.S. compete with each other for a share of a decreasing number of potential students while also striving to prove their worth to their various publics” (p. 7). Focus group members asked what types of opportunities UT offers for interested participants on campus and in the community to learn. Questions UT could consider in answering: (a) what types of “customers” does it serve? (b) how can UT join with other UO programs to support training beyond performance and technical skills? (c) in what ways can UT provide an educational training ground for students in other programs such as arts and administration, journalism, marketing, film, business, and art? (d) what are the resources and outlets at UT’s disposal for training? (d) are the classroom and the stage the only training grounds? and (e) how would public speaking engagements, community workshops or seminars, discussion groups, “education weeks,” stage tours, or other activities relate to the mission and goals of UT should they be implemented? Articulating and relating clear messages about its role in the broad training ground of theatre artist and management development programs, would define UT’s place in the educational and professional life of young

artists as well as the benefits this training provides to the local and national community. Primary customers for UT to consider would be not only those individuals and groups who may purchase tickets, but potential, current, and past students, faculty, and staff at the UO. As Thompson stated, “Each program must determine who the real customer is and learn how to satisfy their wants, needs, and concerns. Developing a marketing model is a positive step in identifying the real customer of educational theatre programs” (p. 7).

Quality.

Focus group members mentioned that UT’s production quality is very high and part of the reason they attend productions. This is reiterated by Jomandi’s research that people were attracted to their productions because of their consistent quality (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). Promotional materials such as advertisements and web sites served as information sources and image building tools (Lila Wallace, 1997). Focus groups members suggested that UT advertisement and web site quality and awareness were lacking. Image building through advertisements and web design could be further groomed through partnerships mentioned earlier with the UO Communications Office and other departments who can design inexpensive high-quality materials and provide longer term consistency of quality. The top-notch art directors and designers from these areas could develop attention getting ads, subscription brochures, or other promotional materials (Lila Wallace, 1997)

Visibility and Awareness

Miller (1998) reminded theatre groups that the “Public is as fickle as it always was and is” (p. 45). In order to meet this fickleness, theatres were urged to familiarize themselves with the communities in which they lived and to let the community know the theatre company (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997, Peithman and Offen, 1997). This two way relationship building would be best developed through (a) word-of-mouth, (b) media and technology, (c)

events, and (d) expanded traditional tools discussed below.

Word of Mouth

Crossroads Theatre member Steve Warnick stated that the company received, “more mileage out of every dollar we spend on developing one-on-one relationships than we did pouring thousands into advertising” (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). As the number one means of knowledge about shows, word-of-mouth strategies and relationships were central to any marketing plan (Goldyn, 1996, Harris, 1996). One strategy the Alabama Shakespeare Festival employed was an educator’s discount for season or single tickets. They believed that educators were important generators for word-of-mouth communications (Lila Wallace, 1997). Other examples included pay-what-you-will nights, discounted previews, and varied seating and show time pricing. One to one communications with local institutional, press, churches, businesses, and civic leaders were also essential to word-of-mouth support for these companies (Lila Wallace, 1997). Goldyn (1996) further suggested personal invitations to students and student groups so that they feel they are important and have a sense of ownership in UT. Goldyn continued with the suggestion that current student audiences and theatre arts degree seeking students be utilized through campus and city preview presentations or other creative methods to spread the news of productions via word-of-mouth. Focus group members also suggested pre-opening “Education Weeks” to assist potential audience members in understanding the shows as well as increasing awareness of their existence. UT could explore these and other potential avenues for increasing information flow and feedback opportunities.

Additional visibility and word-of-mouth strategies could occur through the development of a plan for posters and flyers to be posted in site-specific locations, focused where target audiences spend their time and money. Goldyn’s (1996) study suggested an increase UT’s visibility with such publicity targeted at movie theaters, sporting events, or classroom spaces.

Also, targeted reminders through direct mail, email letters, email groups, and personal verbal invitations would assist in spreading the word. As preferred activities in the Eugene/Springfield zip code area include movies, dining out, television, sports, jogging, walking and biking (Scudder and Associates, 1997), it would be useful to place notices, flyers, or posters in locations where these activities occur such as walking or biking trails, at movie theatres, at restaurants, fitness centers, or at local sporting events or during radio or television news casts of sporting events.

Media and Technology

Data on phone survey participants' media habits were collected in order to develop suggestions for media outlets for UT. Most participants (26) regularly read Eugene's daily paper, *The Register-Guard* while 18 participants regularly read the *Eugene Weekly*. These two sources were ideal for reaching others, like the phone survey participants, who were generally older, retired, and likely to subscribe to newspapers. Other local and national papers were mentioned, but none in significant numbers. Participants noted that KLCC-FM and KWAX-FM were the stations they listened to most often. UT has established relationships with these stations and should continue deepening these relationships through purchasing radio advertisements, sponsoring radio time or days on these public stations, increased public service announcements, and increased interview slots with directors, designers, or cast members. In considering television advertising, UT could consider PBS as it was the most frequently mentioned station watched while CBS, ABC, and cable news channels followed closely. As with public radio, UT could consider sponsoring air time on public television and purchasing television advertisements. Advertisements could be created with the assistance of the Journalism School, Media Services, or other such media related services or programs on campus.

Technology was another element highly influencing and affecting theatre arts today in both practical and aesthetic ways (Tanaka, Sept. 1999). Beyond the uses of technology in

production elements, Yudkin (1995) promoted online marketing as providing a large geographic reach, putting people directly in touch with decision makers, saving money and time compared to face-to-face contact, achieving greater word-of-mouth potential, contacting prospects otherwise potentially missed, and creating an efficient tool for feedback (pp. 5-7). Customized segmented e-mail lists generated from integrated databases would be an important asset for UT to consider. An integrated database would include past data on customers as well as data gathered from web forms, e-mail responses, surveys, and similar collection methods (B. Jones, May 22, 2002). UT would not have to develop this database on its own. As previously discussed, the databases of the Hult Center and the UO/EMU box offices to which UT has been linked would assist in generating these types of data lists. UT could consider what role technology such as these can play in implementing a marketing plan.

Events

Discussion groups based around productions could be implemented to increase the educational base of the audience and the visibility of students, faculty, and staff at UT. Such groups could occur live on-site, in restaurants, bookstores, or other local locations. Topics could include shows currently in production, achievements and awards within the program, directions the program is headed, offerings to groups, incoming students, or other target markets. Discussions could also occur in real time or in virtual time via the internet or e-groups (McCarthy, et.al., 2001, Lila Wallace, 1997). Other methods could include pre-show or post-show discussions, seminars, or workshops based around show topics and themes.

Expanding Traditional Tools

Finally, traditional methods, such as those successfully implemented at the University of Oklahoma, could be more highly utilized within UT to assist in local visibility. Such tactics could include increased press releases; quarterly newsletters or e-newsletters; calendar listings in

newspapers, on radio stations or through the UO; design exhibitions. and booths at local events or conferences announcing awards, presentations, courses, and shows (Keck, 1996).

Research

As earlier noted, research provided grounding for developing effective marketing plans (Goldyn, 1996, Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997, Harris, 1996, McCarthy, 2001). Research assisted in making solid, value-driven decisions for goals, objectives, and strategies to be employed in a plan (Thompson, 1997). However, there was little data available from university theatre programs on audience trends or marketing plan effectiveness (McCarthy, et.al., 2001, Thompson, 1997).

Market Research

“We need to know our market, our potential markets, and our image within our diverse and demanding publics” (Johnson, qtd. in Thompson, 1997, p. 8). A theatre group could position itself without knowing where it has been, its current market, and where it is going:

Without proven data gathering and evaluating procedures, a program’s perceptions and assumptions regarding its potential consumers remain unfounded and based on nothing more than speculation. Speculative information cannot develop a productive marketing strategy. A marketing plan will provide a theatre arts program with an analysis, strategy, and evaluation methodology that will enhance the program’s decision making ability.

(Thompson, 1997, p. 89)

Data regarding attendees’ sociographic, psychographic, geographic, prior experiences with theatre, means of information gathering, leisure choices, spending habits, accessibility, risks, motivations, income, education, and behaviors could be collected for each target group as well as the overall makeup of UT’s audience base. Additional data to be collected would include information on media outlets, competition, potential partners, contacts with people in influential roles within the

university and city, and resources and costs to implement any given plan. This research would allow for informed, effective decision-making in order to develop engagement strategies at UT.

Staffing Structures

In increasing audience research and implementation of marketing strategies, UT could consider alternatives to their current marketing staff structure. Keck (1996) stated:

Schools that had someone in that function [position of audience development or marketing] seemed to have greater control and success of their marketing strategy. These programs were able to track the success rate of their advertising and determine the most effective way to reach their audience. The programs without someone in this position seemed to operate on more traditional methods. While some of these methods have proven successful, the programs were more likely to be unable to determine the effectiveness in their marketing campaigns. (p. 38)

UT currently has one staff position to focus on development and marketing issues. Other options to be explored could include additional part-time or full-time staff in related capacities, current faculty and staff assuming responsibility for one aspect of marketing, or a marketing or audience development advisory committee (Thompson, 1997, Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). In another example, Jomandi's "Friends of Jomandi," a volunteer steering group of 30, oversaw 300 general volunteers to help with marketing, fundraising, and producing special events. Additionally, "Friends" talked to groups and organizations to help sell tickets. Denise Herd, a Jomandi staff member said that the "Friends" group, "Opened doors and made appointments for me that I couldn't have on my own" (Lila Wallace, 1997).

Implementation and Evaluation

Implemented marketing strategies would need to be tested, monitored, assessed, evaluated, revised, and re-implemented. Audience response could be actively solicited through

verbal communications with key staff members or through a "hotline" for voice mail message response services (Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Fund, 1997). Backup plans would be created to counterbalance any unexpected or undesired consequences of strategies employed.

Should the number of mid-size theatres in the U.S. continue to decline, then the university sector:

May increasingly serve the same basic research role in the arts that has traditionally played in the natural sciences. According to the natural sciences model, universities, supported by subsidies from the public and private sectors, perform the basic research that is later supported directly by the private sector after the applicability of the basic concepts has been demonstrated and a market established. (McCarthy et.al, 2001, p. 113).

Should this prediction prove true, UT would want to continue exploring, implementing, and evaluating its marketing goals and objectives in relationship to the program mission and the University as a whole.

Summary

Thompson (1997) quoted Lovelock and Rothschild: "The issue is not, should marketing be used in managing institutions of higher education, but how can it best be employed?" (p. 4). UT made a commitment to developing a new marketing plan, indicating a desire to determine and develop effective marketing objectives and strategies. Initial research through this partial literature, phone survey, and focus group study was conducted with recommendations and speculations developed to assist this process. Recommendations for a marketing plan at UT focused on strategies of relationship and community building supported by research, image and message building, and visibility and awareness.

It should be recognized that a strategic marketing plan cannot serve as a quick, one-time

solution to a theatre arts program's goals and objectives. Any strategies implemented in a marketing plan would require time, persistence, dedication and passion. The marketing plan would serve as a living, breathing document that grows, shifts, and changes as the organization and its audience grow, shift, and change. The marketing plan would pursue the quality and values of the department and be informed by what the audience finds effective and successful. Though conflicts in audience and organizational needs and desires could exist, an effective marketing plan would allow for identification of attendees current needs and requests in combination with the organization's resources and abilities to meet current and anticipate and future needs of those attending.

Most importantly, a marketing plan would develop out of the alignment of UT's core values, mission, and purpose, key challenges, participation building goals, knowledge of the populations being served, and knowledge of the internal and external resources available. This alignment would ground UT's formulation of specific marketing goals, strategies, and tools for audience development. For long term audience development to be established, UT would need to develop specific two way communication strategies, forming relationships with target audiences, desired partners, and other key stakeholders. Building from these relationships, UT would continue creating and implementing marketing strategies of participation-building, information-gathering, feedback and self-evaluation for successful audience development.

ASSUMPTIONS

The role of the researcher in shaping and influencing the research in this study was acknowledged. The researcher filled the role of critic, information gatherer, and participant in the events of the University Theatre (UT). Additionally, the researcher relied on texts and experts in the field.

As per Greenbaum (1993), it was assumed that in focus groups methodology, The dynamics of the group process will result in the generation of more useful information on a cost-efficient basis...essentially, this process occurs for three reasons: 1) most people feel more comfortable talking about almost any subject when they involved in a discussion as part of a group...as a result, the focus group technique provides a better opportunity to obtain in-depth information from respondents than might other research methods, 2) the interaction among the members of a group will result in the participants' being more talkative due to the stimulation generation by the feelings of the group, and 3) the groups dynamics provide insights into how peer pressure plays a role in the degree of overall acceptance of a concept, product, or idea being presented...the peer phenomenon could be an important positive or negative factor in assessing the viability or marketability of the concept. (p. 18-19)

This study assumed that the UT is like other theatres, particularly other university theatres, nationally. The downward trend in attendance is a national phenomenon, and UT is not different than the larger market. Hence, the partial literature review examining current audience attendance trends and ways to meet the problem provided definitive value to this study.

Additionally, this study recognized that many theatres, including UT, seek to expand their audiences' knowledge as well as develop a larger audience base for the theatre group. It was assumed that an audience grows through the, "greater dispersal of the artistic message each

performance brings and provides more funds for the theatre, leading to further dispersal of the artistic message” (Goldyn, 1996).

This study assumed that UT audience members desired to participate by sharing their experiences when attending productions at UT and that each view offered is valid in its perception. Multiple perspectives of participants were sought. Information from a selected portion of participants was desired. The study also assumed that UT will use the data to implement recommendations from the data analysis and it will improve the quality of experiences for audience and potential audience members at UT.

This study assumed that the sample of participants was representative of the populations surveyed, that responses of participants reflected their honest opinions, and that individuals interviewed and surveyed possessed distinctive opinions on the qualities of UT and marketing methods to communicate UT’s message.

DEFINITIONS

Arena Theatre

Also known as Villard 104. A flexible black box theatre designed for a wide variety of staging and seating options. The space is also used as a classroom workspace. UT's Second Season productions occur here (modified from Goldyn, 1996)

Audience

"The individuals or households exposed to a message" (Crispell, 1993).

Attendees

For the purposes of this study, the term attendees refers to anyone who attends theatre events at the University Theatre, or one who acquires and makes use of the service or product provided the educational theatre program.

Behavior Segmentation

"Behavioral segmentation provides information about benefits sought, user status, loyalty, readiness stage, and attitude toward the program and/or institution" (Thompson, 1997, p. 38).

Community

An interacting population of various kinds of individuals in a common location (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1987, p.267).

Demographics

Also known as demography, a social science concerned with the size, distribution, structure, and change of populations (Crispell, 1993) that seeks to ask what is know in clear, precise answers "based on external factors of age, race, etc." (Goldyn, 1996).

External Audience

“Comprising the university theatre program’s external audience, potential or actual, are the government, accrediting organizations, competitors, the local community, the media, current consumers’ (students’) parents, potential consumers, foundations, donors, and alumni” (Thompson, 1997, pp. 36-37)

Focus Groups

From Templeton (1994): “The best general definition I have been able to think of begins with the motivation which prompts ‘doing some groups’ in the first place: an advertiser, advertising agency, or a political entity...feels that he/she/it needs help in selling a product, a service, or him/her/or itself...a focus group, in essence is a small, temporary community, formed for the purpose of the collaborative enterprise of discovery. The assembly is based on some interest shared by the panel members, and the effort is reinforced because panelists are paid for the work. ‘Grouping’ fosters the kind of interaction that penetrates impression management and uncovers more basic motivations, even when the group is unaware of impression management or of the need to penetrate it” (p. 3-4).

Internal Audience

“The internal audience, whether potential or actual, consists of the university’s faculty and staff, deans, vice-presidents, president, administrators, board of regents, and current consumers (students)” (Thompson, 1997, p. 36).

Market

“The people who have an actual or potential want or need in the product or services being offered by the educational theatre program and have the ability to obtain it” (Thompson, 1997, p. 37).

Market Position

“How the program’s various internal and external audience perceive the program in relation to other programs and institutions” (Thompson, 1997, p. 37).

Market Positioning Strategy

“Developing a positioning strategy consists of the following steps: (1) assessing the institutions’s current position in the relevant market, (2) selecting the desired position, (3) planning a strategy to achieve the desired position, and (4) implementing the strategy” (Kotler and Fox, 1995, p. 178).

Market Profile

“The analysis made of the information developed from market segmentation. This information will allow the educational theatre program to determine what information is most appropriate to the project at hand thus identifying the market segment opportunities confronting the program” (Thompson, 1997, p. 38).

Market Segmentation

“The process of dividing consumers with common needs, wants, and desires for a product into distinct subsets to serve them in the most appropriate manner. Market segments are defined geographically, demographically, psychographically, and behavioristically. Geographic segmentation develops information about country, region, state, county, city, and density of all the above” (Thompson, 1997, p. 38).

Marketing

“Marketing is the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets to achieve institutional objectives. Marketing involves designing the institution’s offerings to meet the

target markets' needs and desires, and using effective pricing, communication, and distribution to inform, motivate, and service these markets (Kotler and Fox, 1995, p. 6)

Participants

For the purposes of the analysis of this study, the term participants refers to members of the focus groups.

Phenomenological

“A study that attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of a particular situation, i.e....what is it like to experience such-and-such?” (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001 p. 153)

Psychographics

“Lifestyle and attitude research and data” (Crispell, 1993) that expresses “target markets’ or sample populations’ values...belief systems” (Goldyn, 1996).

Qualitative

“Qualitative approaches...focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings...and involve studying those phenomena in all their complexity” (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001 p. 147).

Robinson Theatre

Formerly known as the Main Stage Theatre, the Robinson Theatre is the largest and generally most well-known of the active UT theatre spaces. It is a proscenium style theatre where all main stage season productions occur (modified from Goldyn, 1996).

Target Market

“Those consumers who possess wants, needs, and desires that will best be met by the product being offered. The target market is identified and grouped by certain sociodemographic or psychodemographic characteristics” (modified from Thompson, 1997).

Theatre Arts Department

The department within the University of Oregon College of Arts and Sciences that teaches students in the design, planning, implementation, and presentation of theatrical works.

University Theatre (UT)

The collective of two active theatre spaces on the University of Oregon Campus, housed in Villard Hall, also home of the Theatre Arts Department and the Pocket Playhouse. The active UT theatre spaces are the Robinson Theatre and the Arena Theatre. The UT seasons generally run from October to June (modified from Goldyn, 1996 and Gilg, 2001).

College and University Theatre Arts Programs

“College theatre productions are usually organized under the sponsorship of a theatre department...productions offer a mix of faculty and student participation....the academic institution itself is the producer, because it provides the facilities, the utilities, the faculty and staff that service the production....due to its position within a large institution, a theatre department may lack the independence required to exercise artistic integrity or it may find itself bogged down in red tape....from the audience point of view campus theatre usually provides a chance to see plays not usually performed elsewhere and at low ticket prices. From the faculty point of view, it provides employment opportunities that are not readily available elsewhere. From the student viewpoint, however, the benefits are less focused....nothing will have a stronger impact on the future of the performing arts than how they are treated--or ignored--by our educational institutions” (Langley, 1990, pp. 15-17)

LIMITATIONS

Limitations included a focus on university and college theatre studies whenever possible as most comparable to the situation of UT. Other limitations were the inability to study all current and potential audiences at UT, and an attempt to not reproduce work done by others.

Literature was limited to the time span of January, 1992 to March 20, 2002 in the United States only unless specific articles or studies were significant historically or directly influenced the work of UT. Databases and search terms used automatically limited the study. Databases searched included: Orbis, UO Dissertations, WorldCat, ArticleFirst, Dissertation Abstracts, Arts and Humanities, Current Events, Economics, Education, Journalism and Communications, Recreation and Tourism, Social Sciences, Theatre, and Statistical Information. Search terms included: focus groups, consumer panels, consumer complaints, consumer loyalty, motivation research (marketing), consumer behavior research, consumer behavior US econometric models, consumer behavior forecasting, consumer behavior case studies, consumer behavior statistics, consumer behavior examinations and questions, consumer behavior Oregon, consumer behavior periodicals, consumer behavior statistics periodicals, marketing research, Eugene/Springfield market profile, business administration marketing, recreation, theater education, theatre finance, theatre marketing, theatre management, university theater, college theater, theatre audience, consumer panels, consumer choices, consumer motivation, motivation research, business administration marketing, theatre education marketing, and future theatre.

The focus group was limited in its ability to gather data that may be broadly generalized to participants in a larger reach than that particular group. However, this type of methodology assisted in gathering rich, detailed information in a limited research timeframe (one quarter terms) about portions of a particular subset of attendees that UT desires to target for future audience development (Templeton, 1994, Leedy and Ormrod, 2001, Krueger, 1994, Greenbaum, 1993).

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APPENDIX A

Recruitment Device for Selecting University Theatre Focus Group Participants

Focus Group # _____ Date/Time of Focus Group: _____
 Person Contacted: _____ Code # of Person _____
 Address: _____ Date Contacted: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____ Time Contacted: _____
 Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Hello, my name is Julie Voelker-Morris. I am conducting research for my master's project as a master's candidate in the University of Oregon Arts and Administration Program. I am also the Publicity and Development Assistant at the University Theatre. For the purposes of this project, I am recruiting a group of _____ for a discussion of their satisfaction with their experiences when attending productions at the University Theatre. You were selected as a potential participant in this study because of your past association with the University Theatre (UT). Your contact information was received through the UO/Erb Memorial Union Ticket Office or the UO Alumni Office records. Every effort was made to determine that the names of those requesting no contact from the University were removed before the list was received by the researcher. Only a small number of slots are available for the discussion groups and a few specific qualities of participants need to be met.

May I ask you some questions? _____yes _____no
 [If "yes," continue with the survey questions below. If no, skip to section, 'upon decline.']

Survey Questions

Please note that any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified specifically with you will remain confidential and anonymous with no name attached. If you feel uncomfortable responding to any of the questions, please let me know, and I will skip it and go on to the next question.

1. We are seeking individuals who have attended UT only once to, at most, three times per season during the past two to three seasons. Do you fit this category?

_____yes _____no

If no, skip to final script text on last page.

If yes:

1.13. How often have you attended the University Theatre during the past year?

_____ 0x	_____ 5-6x
_____ 1 - 2x	_____ 7-8x
_____ 3-4x	_____ 9+

2. Do you have connections beyond the University Theatre to the University of Oregon?

(If yes) Why type?

_____ Alumni _____ Faculty
 _____ Staff _____ Family Member
 _____ Student _____ Other

If alumni:

2.1 Are you a graduate of the UO Theatre Arts Department?

_____yes _____no

If no, when recruiting for Alumni group, skip to final script on last page.

If yes, continue:

2.2 Did you participate heavily in shows during your time at UT?

_____yes _____no

3. Do you live in the Eugene/Springfield zip code area? If no, skip to final script text on last page.

If yes:

In which zip code area do you live?

_____ 97401 _____ 97408
 _____ 97402 _____ 97440
 _____ 97403 _____ 97477
 _____ 97404 _____ 97478
 _____ 97405

4. How often have you attended theatre events (other than those at UT) in Eugene and/or Springfield, Oregon during the past year?

_____ 0x _____ 16-20x
 _____ 1 - 5x _____ 21-25x
 _____ 6-10x _____ 26-30x
 _____ 11-15x _____ 31+

5. Please rank the following in order of those types of theatre you most frequently attend:

_____ musicals _____ comedies
 _____ farces _____ dramas
 _____ social issues/social change _____ melodrama
 _____ other (List other: _____)

6. What is your gender?

_____ Female _____ Male

7. Which of the following groups includes your age? (Read these)

_____ under 18	_____ 36 - 40	_____ 61-65
_____ 18-21	_____ 41-45	_____ 66-70
_____ 22-25	_____ 46 - 50	_____ 71-75
_____ 26 - 30	_____ 51- 55	_____ over 75
_____ 31-35	_____ 56- 60	_____ no response

8. Do you subscribe to or regularly read:

The Register-Guard	_____ yes	_____ no
The Eugene Weekly	_____ yes	_____ no
Oregon Daily Emerald	_____ yes	_____ no
The Oregonian	_____ yes	_____ no
Another paper	List other papers _____	

9. Do you regularly listen to:

KLCC	_____ yes	_____ no
KWAX	_____ yes	_____ no
KDUK	_____ yes	_____ no
KRVM	_____ yes	_____ no
Other	List other stations _____	

10. Do you regularly watch:

ABC	_____ yes	_____ no
NBC	_____ yes	_____ no
CBS	_____ yes	_____ no
PBS	_____ yes	_____ no
FOX	_____ yes	_____ no
Other	List other stations _____	

11. Which of the following groups includes your total family income before taxes?

_____ under 20,000	_____ 50,000-59,999
_____ 20,000-29,999	_____ 60,000-74,999
_____ 30,000-34,999	_____ 75,000-99,999
_____ 34,000-39,999	_____ 100,000-199,999
_____ 40,000-49,999	_____ 200,000+
_____ no response	

When survey questions have been answered, state the following:

On [Day & Date] at [Time] focus groups will be conducted at [Location]. You are invited to participate. The meeting will last 2-to-2 1/2 hours, and it will be necessary for you to stay for at least the full 2 hours. The focus group discussion will be recorded audio-visually for the research purposes of transcription, review, and data analysis only. These recordings will not be used for promotional purposes by UT. Subject identities will be kept confidential and anonymous through coding procedures. A light snack will be provided during the session. For your participation, you will be given a certificate for two complementary tickets to a UT production during this spring term. Will you join us? _____yes _____no

Upon acceptance:

Thank you for participating in this phone survey. I will be sending you an information letter outlining the details, date, and time of the focus group session as well as directions to the site. This letter will be sent to you within the week. May I please confirm your mailing address? (See top of first page). If you have questions, please contact Julie Voelker-Morris at 346-2078 or jvoelker@darkwing.uoregon.edu.

Upon decline:

Thank you for your time. If you have questions, please contact Julie Voelker-Morris at 346-2078 or jvoelker@darkwing.uoregon.edu.

If individual does not meet need in questions 1 or 2, state the following:

Thank you for participating in this phone survey. At this time, you do not qualify for the categories we have mentioned. However, should an opening become available, could we contact you to fill that space?
_____yes _____no _____no response

Thank you for your time. If you have questions, please contact Julie Voelker-Morris at 346-2078 or jvoelker@darkwing.uoregon.edu.

APPENDIX B

Profile of Focus Group and Phone Survey Participants

Combined Non-Alumni Phone Survey Data

May I ask you some questions?

31 yes

14 no

Additional Information from "No" Responders:

"I have not been able to attend because of a broken hip and I have been giving away my tickets;"

"I have not attended at all this year;"

"My partner recently passed away and I have not been attending much;"

"I'm traveling on a theatre tour right now;"

"You (UT) experiment a lot within reason;"

"It always falls together;"

"The set was really well done & the acting was great too for *The Adding Machine*;"

"Keep up the good mix of traditional and experimental work;"

"You can see from every seat, especially if you're short"

"I don't want to participate in this survey, but I will tell you that I didn't enjoy *Angels*, *Matchmaker* was ok, and I didn't go to *Adding Machine*."

1. We are seeking individuals who have attended UT only once to, at most, three times per season during the past two to three seasons. Do you fit this category?

23 yes

8 no

Additional information from "Nos" here:

"Maybe acoustics? I had trouble hearing through I was fairly close to the stage;"

"What date is this group happening? I don't think I can go but you can call me again."

If yes,

1.13. How often have you attended the University Theatre during the past year?

0 0x

8 1 - 2x

15 3-4x

0 5-6x

0 7-8x

0 9+

2. Do you have connections beyond the University Theatre to the University of Oregon?

(If yes) Why type?

4 Alumni

If alumni: 2.1 Are you a graduate of the UO Theatre Arts Department?

0 yes 4 no

- 4 Faculty
- 2 Staff
- 7 Family Member
- 0 Student
- 2 Other
- 4 No

3. Do you live in the Eugene/Springfield zip code area? If no, skip to final script text on last page.

If yes: In which zip code area do you live?

- 5 97401
- 1 97402
- 2 97403
- 0 97404
- 11 97405
- 0 97408
- 0 97440
- 3 97477
- 1 97478

4. How often have you attended theatre events (other than those at UT) in Eugene and/or Springfield, Oregon during the past year?

- 3 0x
- 7 1 - 5x
- 5 6-10x
- 3 11-15x
- 2 16-20x
- 2 21-25x
- 0 26-30x
- 0 31+
- 1 no response

5. Please rank the following in order of those types of theatre you most frequently attend:

- 6, 3, 2, 1, 6, 1, 2, 4, 2, 4, 3,1 musicals
- 1, 2, 1, 3, 3,1,2,3,2,2,2, comedies
- 6, 4, 5, 2, 3, 3,5, 4, 4 farces
- 1, 1, 5, 1, 1, 2, 2,3,1,1,1,2,1,3 dramas
- 2, 6, 1, 1,3,3,5,5,6 social issues/social change
- 6, 2, 2, 4,4,5,6,6,6,6 melodrama
- 1, 1, 1,1,1,1,1,1 other: choose company, then subscribe to season, but I just dropped
ACE; whatever is being offered; all of them; LLTC when it opened was engrossing, cutting-edge, now some are
good but it's lost a lot since it lost Randy & Richard)

6. What is your gender?

13 Female
 10 Male

7. Which of the following groups includes your age?

0 under 18
 0 18-21
 0 22-25
 0 26 - 30
 1 31-35
 0 36 - 40
 2 41-45
 1 46 - 50
 1 51- 55
 4 56- 60
 2 61-65
 8 66-70
 3 71-75
 1 over 75
 0 no response

8. Do you subscribe to or regularly read:

Register-Guard	Eugene Weekly	Oregon Daily Emerald
20 yes	12 yes	6 yes
2 no	5 no	14 no
1 sometimes	6 sometimes	5 sometimes

Oregonian

5(1 Sunday only)yes

15 no
 3 sometimes

Other: The Torch; Washington Post Weekly; LA Times; NY Times(2); LCC paper; newsletters; NY Times Online; NY Times Sunday

9. Do you regularly listen to:

KLCC 17 (1 a.m. only)	KWAX	KDUK	KRVM
yes 5	14 yes	yes 19	4 yes
no 1	9 no	no 3	19 no
sometimes 0	sometimes 1	sometimes 1	0 sometimes

Other: 88.1; 102.3; 91.9; 580 AM; KTPW

10. Do you regularly watch:

ABC		NBC	
9 (1 news only)	yes	7 (1 news only)	yes
6	no	5	no
3	sometimes	5	sometimes

CBS		PBS		FOX	
14(1 news only)	yes	16	yes	5	yes
5	no	3	no	5	no
4	sometimes	2	sometimes	3	sometimes

Other: Encore; Discovery(5); Cable News(2); History(3); Travel(2); Food; ESPN(4); sporadic sports; NO TV

11. Which of the following groups includes your total family income before taxes?

0	under 20,000
2	20,000-29,999
1	30,000-34,999
2	35,000-39,999
2	40,000-49,999
2	50,000-59,999
4	60,000-74,999
5	75,000-99,999
2	100,000-199,999
1	200,000+
3	no response

Will you join us?

12	yes
11	no

Reasons unable to join: Out of town, has another meeting at that time, available but uncertain about participating, has evening classes, will be at Indian drumming

Additional comments: Failure to have temperature and air control, etc. can make it uncomfortable in the theatre which makes it hard to concentrate; We really enjoy the staging; Thanks for the very pleasant interview. You did a nice job; Join us at Indian drumming at LCC. We're also trying to create a native language program if you're interested; I would like to see the information when the study is done

If individual does not meet need in questions 1 or 2, state the following: Thank you for participating in this phone survey. At this time, you do not qualify for the categories we have mentioned. However, should an opening become available, could we contact you to fill that space?

8	yes
1	no

Combined Alumni Phone Survey Data

May I ask you some questions?

21 yes

5 no

Additional Information from "No" Responders:

"I'm a really busy person and am not interested in helping anyone else right now."

"I'm not a UT alum. My contact information keeps getting mixed up with another person."

"I have not attended even once in the last 3-4 years."

"I haven't attended for at least 10 years."

"I work nights so am not able to attend or participate right now."

1. We are seeking individuals who have attended UT only once to, at most, three times per season during the past two to three seasons. Do you fit this category?

8 yes

13 no

Additional information from "Nos" here:

"I work nights."

"I haven't been to any shows at UT in the last few years."

"I've been gone from UT for 20 years and haven't gone back."

"I haven't attended because I have little ones."

"I no longer live in the area but just have my cell phone number there."

"I attended once in 2000-01."

"I'm too busy with the WRT board."

"I think I may have attended a show 3 years ago."

"I haven't gone to UT for at least 10 years."

"I haven't been back to UT since probably 1986 or '87."

"I have not been to UT for years. I have kids."

"Can you get me some free tickets so I can see them?"

"I've been working."

"I have shows the same nights."

"No, I'm moving actually right now as we're talking & my cell phone is still in the Eugene area"

If yes:

1.13. How often have you attended the University Theatre during the past year?

0 0x

7 1 - 2x

0 3-4x

1 5-6x

0 7-8x

0 9+

2. Do you have connections beyond the University Theatre to the University of Oregon?

(If yes) Why type?

8 Alumni

If alumni: 2.1 Are you a graduate of the UO Theatre Arts Department?

8 yes

0 no

If yes, continue: 2.2 Did you participate heavily in shows during your time at UT?

8 yes

0 no

0 Faculty

4 (1 former) Staff

0 Family Member

0 Student

1 Other: Unknown

0 No

3. Do you live in the Eugene/Springfield zip code area? If no, skip to final script text on last page.

If yes: In which zip code area do you live?

0 97401

3 97402

0 97403

0 97404

4 97405

0 97408

0 97440

0 97477

0 97478

4. How often have you attended theatre events (other than those at UT) in Eugene and/or Springfield, Oregon during the past year?

0 0x

4 1 - 5x

3 6-10x

0 11-15x

0 16-20x

0 21-25x

0 26-30x

0 31+

0 no response

5. Please rank the following in order of those types of theatre you most frequently attend:

- 2, 1, 4, 4 musicals
- 1, 4, 2, 3 comedies
- 2, 5 farces
- 5, 1, 2 dramas
- 3, 3, 1, 1 social issues/social change
- 6, 6, 6, 6 melodrama
- 1, 1 other: mysteries; because I have to go to whatever is playing

6. What is your gender?

- 5 Female
- 2 Male

7. Which of the following groups includes your age?

- 0 under 18
- 0 18-21
- 0 22-25
- 0 26 - 30
- 0 31-35
- 1 36 - 40
- 1 41-45
- 2 46 - 50
- 1 51- 55
- 1 56- 60
- 0 61-65
- 1 66-70
- 0 71-75
- 0 over 75
- 0 no response

8. Do you subscribe to or regularly read:

Register-Guard		Eugene Weekly		Oregon Daily Emerald	
5 (1 Sunday only)	yes	6	yes	3	yes
2	no	1	no	4	no
0	sometimes	0	sometimes	0	sometimes

Oregonian

- 1 yes
- 6 no
- 0 sometimes

Other: NY Times; NY Times Sunday; Foreign papers online

9. Do you regularly listen to:

KLCC		KWAX		KDUK		KRVM	
4 (1 a.m. only)	yes	6	yes	6	yes	2	yes
3	no	1	no	1	no	5	no
0	sometimes	0	sometimes	0	sometimes	0	sometimes

Other: KPNW, talk shows, 580 AM, 102.?, 97.9, the Q, 95.3 Smooth Jazz

10. Do you regularly watch:

ABC		NBC		CBS		PBS	
3	yes	2	yes	2	yes	3	yes
3	no	2	yes	4	no	4	no
1	sometimes	1	sometimes	1	sometimes	0	sometimes

FOX

2	yes
4	no
1	sometimes

Other: HBO, ESPN, BBC America(2), A&E, NO TV, Not home much, CNN

11. Which of the following groups includes your total family income before taxes?

0	under 20,000
1	20,000-29,999
2	30,000-34,999
1	35,000-39,999
0	40,000-49,999
1	50,000-59,999
0	60,000-74,999
0	75,000-99,999
1	100,000-199,999
0	200,000+
1	no response

Will you join us?

2	yes
5	no

Reasons unable to join: out of town, teaches nights, other commitments those nights, after 7:00 is difficult for me, I'm working on a show right now

If individual does not meet need in questions 1 or 2, state the following:

Thank you for participating in this phone survey. At this time, you do not qualify for the categories we have mentioned. However, should an opening become available, could we contact you to fill that space?

10	yes	1	no	8	no response
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APPENDIX C

Sample Consent Form and Data for Focus Group Participants

March 8, 2002

Dear _____,

You are invited to participate in a research project on the interests of University Theatre (UT) audience members. The study will be conducted by Julie Voelker-Morris, a master's degree candidate in the Arts and Administration Program at the University of Oregon. This project is designed to utilize focus groups in gathering information for the University Theatre regarding some of their audience members from the Eugene/Springfield area who attend UT productions at least one to two times per year. In addition, published materials regarding trends in marketing theatre arts will be reviewed. This information will be used to develop recommendations for a new marketing and communications plan at UT. The goal of this research is to determine some factors that affect audience choice about whether or not to attend UT productions. Particular attention will be paid to the issue of attendance decision-making factors.

You were selected as a participant in this study because of your past association with the University Theatre. An additional factor was that you live in the Eugene/Springfield area.

a. Method of Data Collection

Participants will be involved in one focus group discussion of approximately two to two-and-one-half hours with other UT audience members from the Eugene/Springfield area. The focus group will be held in a room in Villard Hall (to be announced) on the University of Oregon campus. A light snack will be provided during the session. Throughout the session, you may feel free to stand or sit as needed so that you are comfortable. For participating in this study, you will receive a gift certificate for a complimentary pair of tickets to an upcoming University Theatre production. Participants may withdraw participation from the study at any time.

The focus group discussion will be audio and/or video taped for research purposes only. These audio and/or videotapes will not be used beyond the needs of this study. Only the researcher and her masters project advisors will view the tapes, for research purposes only. These recordings will not be used for promotional purposes by UT but only by the researcher to transcribe and review the discussion. An audio-visual consent form is enclosed below. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study that can be identified specifically with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Subject identities will be kept confidential through coding procedures. A report profiling the salient points of the focus group session will be shared with the University Theatre along with recommendations for a marketing and communications plan. All comments within the report will be anonymous. The audio-visual record will be destroyed upon completion of the report.

b. Purpose of the Project

The specific focus of this study examines what factors influence audience members to attend University Theatre productions and how to address those factors in the future. By utilizing focus group discussions and literary resources, data is collected into a report of this group's interests related to national marketing trends and includes the following types of information: (1) communications, informational, and creative materials such as posters, brochures, press releases, and advertisements, (2) accessibility and availability issues, and (3) perceived value provided by UT productions. The information is analyzed using content analysis as a way to identify common themes of problems and solutions to the marketing and communications materials of UT. Results will be presented in a focus

group report style with recommendations intended for use by the UT to improve their marketing and communications materials.

c. Voluntary Participation

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the researcher, the University Theatre, or the University of Oregon. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact Julie Voelker-Morris at (541) 346-2078 or jvoelker@darkwing.uoregon.edu. You may contact Joseph Gilg, University Theatre Director of Development and Publicity at 346-4190 or jgilg@oregon.uoregon.edu. You may also feel free to contact the Master’s Project Advisor, Dr. Beverly Jones at 346-1453 or bjones@darkwing.uoregon.edu. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Office of Human Subjects Compliance, University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97403, (541) 346-2510. You have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Your signature indicates that:

- 1. You have read and understand the information provided above.
- 2. That you willingly agree to participate.
- 3. That you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty.
- 4. That you have received a copy of this form.
- 5. That you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Audio/Videotape Release

Your signature indicates that:

- 1. You have received an adequate description of the purpose and procedures for audio and/or videotaping sessions during the course of the proposed research study.
- 2. You give your consent to be audio and/or videotaped during participation in the study.
- 3. You give consent for the audio and/or videotapes to be reviewed by the researcher.
- 4. You understand that all information will be kept confidential and will be reported in an anonymous fashion, and that the audio and/or videotapes will be erased following completion of the study.
- 5. You further understand that you may withdraw your consent at any time.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D

Discussion Guide [Modified from Templeton (1994, 235-240) and Krueger (1994, 54-68)]

- **Welcome and Introduction**

1. Introduction of moderator
2. Introduction of participants: Describe your favorite theatre experience or one thing you like most about theatre. (This is a round robin response)
3. Explanation of discussion protocol
4. Overview of topic

Opening Question

1. Narrowing the topic from above, what is the meaning and importance of theatre to you in general? (sensual delight? fuel for living? fuel for thought? entertainment? challenge? fuel to be moved/experience emotion/ act upon something? adventure?)

Focus Reveal

1. We're going to narrow the focus of this session a little more to UT. You've all had experience with the theatre here, but you didn't wake up one day knowing about UT. How did you get acquainted? (Probes: Did you learn about it when you moved here? Or did you initiate a subscription or come to a show? If you did, why did you?)

Experience

1. Imagine you are at a recent UT event. What generally happens sequentially from the time you walk in the door to the time you exit? (Probes: Is there anything else/more? Could you give an example? Would you explain that further?)
2. In contrast to the events you just described, what do you never--or rarely--do at UT events that you might do at other theatres? (Probes: Do you have a snack during intermission? Look at lobby displays? Stay in your seat rather than go outside or into the lobby? Other examples?)

Accessibility

1. Is UT accessible to you? How/In what ways? (Probes: How do you travel to the UT? Do you have difficulty getting to the location? Do you have difficulty parking? Do you have difficulty obtaining tickets? Would you give an example of what you mean?)

Attendance Decisions

1. The last time you had to decide whether to attend UT or not, could you say what things influenced you--in either direction? If you did attend, what were the alternate choices you would have made? Why did you choose to attend that time? (Probes: available time? each accessibility to location? available money? ease in obtaining tickets? wanted to see this show? always attend? knew someone in the show or going to the show?)
2. If you did not attend, could you review your thinking pro or con? What was the

competition? What did you choose? How did you make that choice? (Probes: lack of time? not enough information about the performance? difficulty getting to the performance location? difficulty finding parking? costs of eating out/babysitter for the even time? lack of information on the performance? difficulty obtaining tickets? concerns about going out at night or being on campus?)

3. What might have changed your decision (to attend or not to attend)?
4. In general do you choose UT shows on a show-by-show choice basis or just go to whatever is playing?
5. Do you decide upon the shows you will attend when you receive information about what's playing? when you hear about the actors or director or designers? based on other things? (Probes: Would you explain that further?)
6. How much are you willing to spend on a single show or a subscription? What factors determine your choice? (Probes: the show(s) being offered? availability of money? ease/difficulty in obtaining tickets?)

Attitude

1. Do you like the way the UT productions are presented? What in particular do you (dis)like about them? (Probe: Aesthetics, location, direction, acting, design)
2. How do you feel about the quality of the presentations UT produces? (Probes: amateur, professional, educational, Would you give an example? Please describe what you mean. What experiences have you had that make you feel that way?)
3. However you feel about UT, what is the very best thing about it?
4. However you feel about UT, what is the very worst thing about it?
5. If someone who had never been to UT before and asked you to say what to expect, what would you say? (Probe: General and specific responses. How would you describe UT if it were a person? What experiences that you have had here would you describe to that person?)

Value

1. Figuring value for dollar, where does UT rank, in terms of other theatres you attend? (Probe: What does the term value mean to you in this instance entertainment/enjoyment, utilitarian reasons? Please describe further what you mean. What experiences have you had that make you feel that way?)
2. In the theatrical areas that you know most about is UT up-to-date? accurate? provocative? (Probe: Would you give an example of what you mean? Would you describe further what you mean?)
3. What ideas from UT have you ever used in your own work or life? (Probe: Would you give an example of what you mean? Would you describe further what you mean?)

Communications/Information

1. How often during the year do you hear from UT? Is this adequate or would you like to hear from them more or less often? (Probe: How often? When?)

2. How instrumental has direct solicitation from UT been in getting you to subscribe or renew? (Probes: In what ways? Can you provide an example? What about flyers and posters?)
3. Did any of you attend/subscribe purely on the basis of correspondence from UT? Can you say what about the communications led you to choose UT rather than a 'similar' theatre? Or is it unique? (Probes: Would you explain further? Would you provide an example of what you mean? What experiences have you had that make you feel that way?)
4. Is all the communications between you and UT one-way: them to you? Or do you express your approval or criticism? Have you ever asked for particular shows or events? For any other reasons?

Creative Materials Exposure and Perceived Effectiveness

1. Did any of you find communications (direct mailings, ads, posters...) from UT lacking, or even a turn off? (Probes: Can you provide examples?)
2. Here are samples of alternate formats of ads and posters (i.e Season Brochure; Posters & ads from Angels in Am. Matchmaker, Reckless, Dancing at Lughnasa; Radio PSAs). What is good or bad about each selling-statement or rough copy or illustration shown? (Probes: Please describe what you mean? Would you please say more on that?)
3. What alternative suggestions for creative materials would you offer? (Probes: TV? Radio ads? Email interest groups? Others? Ads or posters at other venues? Can you provide examples?)

Participants' Questions

Wrap-up Questions

1. If you had the faculty and staff in your home or office, what improvements would you suggest?
2. Of everything discussed this evening, what is most important to you that UT should know?
3. If you were to talk to someone at home tonight or at work tomorrow about the experience you had this afternoon/ evening, what would you tell that person?
4. What final thoughts do you have?

APPENDIX E

Transcription of Focus Group Discussion

Informed consent, based on explicit descriptions of risks, minimized the risks for participants. A copy of the consent form in Appendix C was mailed to each subject for review along with an informational letter outlining the details of the focus group session. Consent forms were provided at the beginning of each focus group session for participants to sign. Participants were free to withdraw their consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Participants met in a group setting where confidentiality was lost to other participants. Participants were made aware that if they had comments they were uncomfortable sharing with the group, they could share these with the researcher on an individual basis. On the researcher's part, all information gathered within the focus group settings was coded and remained anonymous and confidential. Audiotapes and videotapes of the focus group session were destroyed following completion of this study. Only the researcher viewed the tapes for data analysis and interpretation. The transcriber viewed the tapes in order to transcribe and record the discussion. Information such as quotations, summaries, or demographic data from specific subjects was coded or referred to anonymously in the final report, transcription, and paper. The larger body of UT or other interested groups did not review the tapes. Access to the focus group report with anonymously noted discussion and marketing recommendations is only available through the UT Publicity and Development Office. UT confirmed that they will not use the study materials in promotional materials and all recorded data will remain anonymous and confidential.

The transcript was as follows:

Moderator: Just a reminder that this is for my masters work. I haven't conducted a focus group before. I'd ask you to please help me out. I have observed and assisted in putting focus groups together before, but I have not conducted one myself. So I'm trying it out here, and I would ask you to just feel free to express yourselves in the most honest way that you would like to this evening about your relationship with the University theatre. Because that's what were going to talk about. So--I would ask first that we go around and everyone introduce

yourselves. If you just want to say your first names, that's fine. And please state either what your favorite thing is about attending theatre, or what one of your favorite experiences at any theatre is. So does anyone want to start?

Person 1: I'm XXX, and what I like about the theatre is I love to be entertained.

P2: I'm XXX, and I'm sitting here trying to think of something wise to say. It's just a medium that if its good, you feel a part of it.

P3: My name is XXX, and like P1 I like to get lost in theatre and get into another world.

P4: I'm XXX, and I'm pleased to be able to observe the fact that Eugene has so many theatres that we can go to. We see a different play about once a week. Its nice to have that entertainment.

P5: I'm XXX, and I'm enjoying attending University Theatre. This is my first year attending University Theatre at the U of O theatre.

P6: My name is XXX, and I'm sorry to change the subject, but my most memorable experience attending theatre was with my cousin and wife in Manchester, England. It was a performance of *Uncle Vanya* and it had Albert Finney and Glenda Jackson. It was the guy from *Rumpole of the Bailey* [Leo Kern]. It was at Theatre in the Round and it was formerly the Manchester Stock Exchange. I remember I cried after that play because it was so good. I don't mind seeing *Uncle Vanya* over and over again either. That's one thing I've learned over the years is I don't mind seeing the same play a couple years apart.

P7: I'm XXX, and theatre to me is a way of escaping into a make-believe world. It's also a part of education and relaxation.

P8: My name is XXX and the thing I like is the challenge of trying to face myself in that other person's role. Pretend I'm somebody else for a while for that time.

P9: I'm XXX. I like theatre because it seems to me that it impresses so deeply. You're on the cutting edge of society a lot of time.

P10: I'm XXX. I'm a little bit inexperienced. On the other hand I think there's something timeless about seeing something that was written years and years ago, or even in the Middle Ages, that it's timely for today. And I think it's just a universal human thing.

P11: I'm XXX and I like theatre because of the talented people doing things that I wish I could do. Seeing the difference of different ways people play the roles even within a play, the variety of stage presentations and their ability, if it'll go over. I like to be entertained. I like imagination and creativity in lights and sound and presentation. I also like, as someone else mentioned, to have some challenging thoughts, social issues or whatever.

Moderator: I guess I'm curious because I know that you've all had experience with the University Theatre, but I'm wondering how you got acquainted with the University Theatre in the first place. So, you know, did you get contact information from them, or did you seek them out, whatever that made you go in the first place.

P3: We had a friend, oh, 25 years ago that was getting a doctorate in theatre and had tickets and invited us to go. And it was without a doubt the most boring thing we ever went to. It was *Waiting for Godot* and we thought it was very dreadful. In fact we were the only two people left in the theatre after the intermission, plus our hosts, our friend and his wife. The four of us were the only ones left. He was there for lighting and I forget what-all and so he explained and that was very, very interesting. But I cannot say the play itself was. It's just not one of my favorites.

Moderator: So what brought you back?

P3: The sets, other things. That's how we got introduced to the Robinson Theatre. Then we through the years have met a lot of people that have been getting an advanced degree in theatre or art of some sort, and we just have kept going. But out of all the experiences that was by far the worst.

Moderator: How about anyone else?

P10: I had gotten the Broadway series tickets as a birthday present for my daughter who was doing some drama in high school and I thought it would be really fun to do together. We did that for a year, and then when the renewal came I found that I wasn't in a financial place to be able to do that. But I enjoyed going to the plays and musicals so much with her. I wasn't quite sure what I was going to do, but it was like right around the time for Eugene Celebration. I picked up a flyer and I thought we'd still continue to have that experience. It was less expensive. That was like three years ago, and I just continued to come because I enjoyed that so much.

P7: We've been in Eugene for forty years, and for a while the University Theatre was the only theatre in town. And so we got started then, and kept coming.

P6: When I graduated from Oregon in the middle sixties, and when I was taking graduate work at Washington in Seattle, I think the Blitz Brewery had a contest why you would like to go to the Seattle Rep. So my wife, being a better writer than I was, she wrote twenty-five words or less, and next thing, we got season passes to go

to the Seattle Rep, and that kind of kicked, kind of jump-started us. And so I've always thought that you're in college, and you don't have any money, just to get some complimentary tickets to go kind of gets you going. And then having specific seats for specific days kind of puts you into a routine. That you're going on a certain Friday and also, there's going to be five plays, and some of them you're going to like, and some you're not going to like. It's like a smorgasbord every season. So that was our starting point. So I always think of what the beginning point is. Before, we'd never really gone to theatre or thought about it too much, but that was definitely the start. And Seattle Rep was a very good company.

Moderator: Anybody else?

P5: My daughter recommended *Angels in America* because she'd seen Part One. And so we got tickets and decided when I was on the phone with the lady making reservations to go ahead and get the seasons because it sounded really good. We haven't regretted it.

P2: When we moved to Eugene, we came from an area that had university theatre and just naturally fell into it here. I attended in the fifties, when I went to school here, and I think I probably attended because it was one of the things I could afford. Very enjoyable.

P4: Even the high school has good plays. I visit one of those every once in a while.

P3: We take our grandchildren to the, what is it? [Mad Duckling] Yes.

Moderator: I'd like you to imagine that you're at a recent University Theatre event, whichever one you've been to most recently. Whatever that is, picture that in your mind. And then I would ask you to describe, generally, what happens sequentially, from the time you walk in the door until the time that you exit. What do you do, from that moment when you walk through the door, and you see the show, and then you leave.

P6: Is it a theatre performance, or any event?

Moderator: It can be any event, but ideally a performance.

P9: Well, generally you look at the set to have a clue as to what kind of a play and what's going on. And then very soon the lighting starts, and that gives you an additional clue. And then the actors come on, and pretty soon there's the play.

Moderator: And what happens before you even enter the space to see the set?

P3: When we go we mingle out in the foyer for a while. Then start down the aisle-- we've had the same seats for a long time and spot friends that we know that we might socialize with and then sit down and then look at the stage, and drink in what the set implies. Their sets, to me, are always excellent, fantastic. I don't think any theatre well, the Very Little Theatre does a good job too, but the University's sets are, I think, just superlative, relating to whatever the play is. And then get involved in it.

Moderator: What happens when you leave?

P3: Well, depending on who we're with, we'll talk about it. And then if were going to stop for coffee or something, then we get involved in a discussion about the play. I always take my program home with me so I can digest it and say who was who. I like to read it afterward. And who came from where. But usually we all discuss it and then we go home.

P6: Usually we come in, first thing I always do starting back home is that I actually have the tickets. Then when I come, the first job I do is to go to the bathroom. And then usually on the outside they have a display of the costuming and the scripts. So I'll gaze at that for a while. And then after getting my program, I like the dramaturgy notes or the director's notes. If it's on the play I like to read them. And then follow on and look at the background of the principals. I admit I don't pay any attention to lighting or scenic design. My wife pays a lot of attention to the costumes, and how the costuming is done. And then when it's over, depending on how long it is, I'll go to the bathroom again. We don't generally socialize with anybody. We do tend to bring people. We had a practice for several years where we'd buy four season tickets and bring people with us if we had company, or people in town. Now we tend to do the same thing, but just buy the extra tickets.

Moderator: When you know they're coming.

P6: Right.

P7: We usually start out with reading the preview that'll be in the paper. And then we get our tickets, or have standing tickets, or arrangements. And then when we come in to the atmosphere in the lobby, the displays that have changed, displays that are related to the play, we take a look at those. Then we find our seating, and look around to see if we know anybody, go over the program, and again make contact with the audience and what they're doing. And when the curtain goes up, of course the first thing is the set, and the lighting, and then as the actors come on stage, the costumes. In Act I we get acquainted with the play. Act II, we get involved with the play. In Act III we get through the conclusion. And then at the end, after the applause, we kind of judge the reaction of the audience. And then when we leave, when we're again in the lobby, we might want to read the displays, like the set display or the costumes.

Moderator: Now that you've seen it.

P7: And also to make some kind of comment to one of the staff, one of the young people that are staffing, so that they'll know it was a good thing and we enjoyed it. And then we kind of have an after-action discussion, what we thought of it, what we enjoyed, what we thought could be improved, or when we'd like to do it again.

Moderator: Anyone else?

P1: I agreed with all of the things that she said, but I'd like to add at this point. We are always amazed at, we think that it must be the friends of the actors, because there are so much cheering and such yelling. And we always notice that. And this is the theatre that I see that more than anyplace else.

Moderator: Do you do anything at intermissions, when we have intermissions? Do most of you stay in your seats, or go to the bathroom, or....?

P10: There's always a long line.

P3: We read the review both in the *Eugene Weekly* and in the *Guard*, and sometimes that's good. It depends on who the reviewer is. Of course some of them you take with a grain of salt. But anyway, I always read the reviews. They're usually, you know, from opening night, so they're usually out before we go to see it. Because we don't go on opening night. I don't like to go on any opening night. I'd rather they work out the little kinks before I got there.

P10: I have tickets for the last night of the play, and so I always read the reviews ahead of time and figure out if I know anybody involved in the production. And I always bring extra clothes, because I'm always afraid I'm going to get cold in the winter. And so I have my jacket behind me, and an extra jacket or sweater or something on top.

P3: That's true, because of the I think they're still cement floors its cold! The theatre can be very cold, especially if your feet are on the cement floor. You're right, it can be very cold.

P8: In addition to all I've heard, I have one other thought. I like to, in some non-scientific way, get a feel for the audience, some kind of cross-section, picture, what's the diversity factor here? What's the age distribution? What possible levels of education might be there? You get different impressions depending on what theatre you're in. Sometimes the production attracts a certain level, or a certain group or audience. It's amazing what a variety in the audience cross-sections appreciate the play.

Moderator: Anyone else like to speak to anything?

P2: I do all the things that....????? The thing that I like is, I think the program is really important. I had a criticism of this theatre in their programs.

Moderator: What would you say about that?

P2: I like a little bit more detail on the play. A little bit more background I don't want to have a minute description of the play, but I would like to have a little bit of a background on the play. A little bit of the history of the play, a little bit of the history of the writer of the play. Something like that. And if it is a really confusing play, maybe a little bit of a guide. And I noticed this last program, I can't even think of the name of the play, [*The Adding Machine*] was very lacking. But I think that would have been very helpful in that play, if you had some history of the play itself.

Moderator: Anyone else want to speak to that, to that program?

P7: Well, I certainly agree with him. Knowing that the play was written in 1930, or something very early would have helped me.

P3: Was George Orwell's written after that? It must have been. Because it seemed to be a precursor to that.

Moderator: Sort of in contrast a little bit to the things you just described, are there things that you never or rarely do at the University Theatre that you would do at another theatre? Whether that be here in town or somewhere else. Is there anything that you'd never do at the University Theatre that you'd do at another theatre? Whether that's get a snack at intermission, or go out and socialize in the lobby, or whatever that is. And maybe its nothing.

P2: Well, at the Very Little Theatre, I really enjoy going out between sessions, and usually do so. But this seems so claustrophobic that I don't do that.

P3: Same in the Cottage Theatre in Cottage Grove. They have a nice intermission.

P7: I think some type of liquid or refreshment and/or food bar adds. But then we have to take into consideration that its a university theatre, its a school theatre. Its not a public theatre.

P4: One of the things I notice, that not all the theatres do it, at the end of the play the actors will come down and talk. And I don't think I saw that at the University Theatre.

P7: And that's good in a university setting, because you get to have a one-on-one with the kids.

P3: But again, as this gentleman said, where would you do it? In the lobby would be sort of claustrophobic.

P7: They can walk down off the stage, and come right down into the audience.

P3: That's true. Or, at the Cottage Theatre, they often stay on stage and you go up.

P7: Which is fun, because the audience can interact with the scenery, and costuming and such. I don't know, what

do they do about dress rehearsal? Do they have dress rehearsal attendance, or is it limited to students?

Moderator: Sometimes its limited to students. Usually its pretty closed, but that's a good idea. It may be possible to have people there at that time.

P7: A certain amount. You know, drawing or something.

P6: Well, I've seen food of all kinds and intermission of all kinds. I'd say Lord Leebrick Theatre, they have just a small frontal area, and they do a little bit. They generally do it with what I would call hat-check service, which kind of comes through a kind of a counter. And of course in Britain they have bars. And to speed up the halftime people drink, and you actually have a number. And you prepay for your drink. You go get your drink, and it's all very civilized. But the liquor would probably be a problem over here.

P7: Well, just to have a coffee or tea bar, or of cold drink. But then, too, if you have some kind of a snack, it could be a fund-raiser, you know, for either the theatre itself or one of the sororities, or one of the outreach groups on campus.

P1: Don't they have a snack bar here?

Moderator: Sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. And when they do it's for the Pocket Playhouse.

That's a student-run theatre here within the department. Sometimes they offer refreshments and sometimes they don't.

P6: But then you generally don't see it all the time, you don't pay attention to when it's there.

P7: And sometimes if you can have coffee at the intermission, it peeps you up so that you can follow the script, if you're having a little problem.

P3: It also increases your lines at the bathroom, though, too.

P9: Back to the thought about interacting with the actors, at Portland Center Stage one of the things they do is to ask if anyone wants to stay and ask the actors anything. About 2/3 of the people leave, but about a third of the people move forward. It's an opportunity to ask the actors things.

P3: Do they ask it after the performance, or before, or when do they ask?

P9: After the performance. If anyone would like to ask questions of the director, or any of the people involved.

And those people come out on stage, and the other people move forward so that its more like a conversation.

P7: Sometimes, too, at the last performance there's kind of a cast party that the audience can participate in and you can interact that way.

P3: Yeah, especially at a university theatre the actors would be, I think it would be good for their moral if somebody...????They don't realize...????

Moderator: Anyone else?

P8: I've been to some dinner theatres that were more professional. In a sense it was almost repertory. It had a standing cast. And they involved the cast in the dinner. They served, and they did eye contact and all sorts of things with the audience. And you're kind of attracted did she serve our dessert? And then they frequently say, "Come up and meet us." It's an intentional mixing.

Moderator: I'm wondering about accessibility issues for anyone. We could address this in a number of ways. But think of this as physical access, as opportunities that are available. Sort of what were talking about, visiting with the actors or that sort of thing. Or, parking issues? Getting to this location, having to negotiate a babysitter, or whatever it may be. Those kinds of things.

P7: Nursery care would be great. Why don't you have some kind of temporary handicap parking? In the circle there's only one handicap spot. If you could, on theatre night, have some temporary handicap parking, that might be an added attraction. And also in the seating arrangements, to have a little better handicap access. The seats sometimes, people that have leg problems, etc., there's only one side that you can stick your legs out.

Moderator: You mean the aisle? I'm just trying to clarify.

P7: Where there's a space between the seating, the last row and the first row, so you have that space. That's also good wheelchair access. But it needs to have a little bit of signage or meeting the public with a visual so they are aware without asking.

P5: I'm a little bit worried about people trying to cross the street from the parking to and from the theatre. I've seen lots of people running, and we happen to attend on the last Saturday night of each run, and it seems with the Saturday crowd there's a lot of traffic there. And you have to walk quite a ways to get to a crosswalk. So if they could put a crosswalk that was handier that would be nice. I know it isn't easy to get done.

P6: Just a comment on parking. I don't know if they've changed the signs, but there's a lot of signs that are Reserved Parking, or that used to say "Reserved at all times." And I know that the department doesn't need access at all times to it. It should say whether its Saturday or Sunday off, or 8 to 6.

P7: If they're going to commercialize the theatre, then you have to meet your public. And when you see, "You can't park".

P6: I realize the parking in that lot is probably for faculty in this department, mostly, is it?

- Moderator:** Actually it's for a lot of different buildings and departments.
- P6:** Well, I think it needs to be rationalized as to what the actual hours are needed. And if there is one or two spaces that are reserved at all times, there probably shouldn't be more than three total.
- P3:** If you park there, in your mind's eye you're pretty sure nobody's going to come, but you're sitting at the theatre thinking, "Oh, are they going to tow it?"
- P9:** I find to go by all those empty spaces looking for a parking space really annoying, personally.
- Moderator:** So if you can't find a space in that lot, where do you park?
- P3:** I think mostly everybody, well, other than Saturdays I don't know. But we never had a problem.
- P9:** We park on the street, on Kincaid.
- P2:** I've noticed a lot of improvement. We had trouble making phone arrangements for our tickets. Especially last year. This year we haven't had so much trouble. But we would be referred to the Student Union, and the Student Union wouldn't have a clue why we were sent there.
- P1:** That was bad for several years. You'd call until two weeks because you hadn't received your tickets yet, and nobody knew where they were.
- Moderator:** Anything else related to the box office?
- P6:** On a positive comment, we've always switched a day or sometime or had a schedule change, and it's never been a problem. But you have to come here during the day to do it, and I think that's fair enough. That's always been accommodating.
- P9:** That's an unusual feature, too, being able to move your tickets and change schedules.
- P6:** That's a real positive about this. Generally there's going to be someone to offer being bumped to another night.
- Moderator:** Anyone else, box office or ticketing?
- P11:** Do you ever enjoy a full house?
- Moderator:** Occasionally, it happens. It really depends on the show and how much the community has gotten the word about it and wants to come.
- P11:** How do you get the word out to the community? What are the resources that you use?
- Moderator:** The ones that are primarily used are the Weekly, and the Guard, and signs around campus, posters in the community, advertisements. And some radio interviews, and some public service announcements, those kinds of things. But they're on limited radio stations.
- P11:** What about TV?
- Moderator:** The only listing I think that we have is the University calendar, and that's the only one.
- P6:** Well, there is one of the TV stations that covers the arts in Eugene, I forget the name of the person. [Ted Kraus]....?????
- Moderator:** But that's not always on.
- P11:** Do you go to any schools?
- Moderator:** Not usually, no.
- P2:** What kind of a break do you give the students on their tickets?
- Moderator:** They pay five dollars. And that's because the Associated Students of the University of Oregon provide a discount. I mean, they put in money so the students can have that rate.
- P2:** I see a lot of students, but I'm surprised I don't see more students. You know, really.
- Moderator:** The last time you had to decide whether or not to attend a University Theatre production, could you say what things influenced you in either direction, whether to attend or not attend?
- P11:** Weather. Rain, snow, whatever. Weather.
- P3:** Especially in January or February.
- P6:** I would certainly say it's the play. I don't do Shakespeare any more, and I don't like Bertholt Brecht that much. I don't want to see *Waiting for Godot*, it doesn't catch it for me. I think it's the play. But the weather, no. It would be the play.
- Moderator:** Is that true for others of you, the play?
- P2:** If I have a season ticket, I'm going!
- P3:** With the season tickets, were often exposed to things we never would. And it's broadened our perspective.
- Moderator:** XXX, you said that....
- P11:** It's the play.
- Moderator:** Anything particular about the play that you look forward to? Is it information that you read in the paper?
- P11:** No, I usually know something about it.
- Moderator:** Your personal knowledge, okay.
- P10:** I was going to say, I bought two tickets, and I often will ask a different person to go with me. And so,

trying to figure out in my mind who might like what's coming up. Sometimes that influences whether I give both tickets to someone else, or find someone to go with me.

P6: We know somebody who loves Shakespeare.

Moderator: We were talking about what influenced your decisions to attend or not attend a University Theatre show, whichever was the last you attended. And if you had an alternate choice at that time, what was your choice of what else you could be doing at that time. And why did you pick to go to the theatre instead?

P9: Well, I think having season tickets makes a difference.

Moderator: Some people choose not to though.

P2: Well, we did that. At the Very Little Theatre chose not to go. And it turned out to be rather disastrous that we didn't go.

P3: Well, if we have the family coming to town, and that's when they're going to be here, we usually give our tickets away then. We don't let them go to waste. Of course you can spend hours on the phone, and nobody can go at that time.

Moderator: Is there a show during this season...???? have you not attended a show during this season at all?

P10: I didn't go to *The Adding Machine*. I work for Birth to Three and our Spring Fling fundraiser was the same night, and I spaced out the night I had tickets for. And it was kind of too late to find someone.

Moderator: Do you decide on your perceptions of the show from the information you receive through the reviews that you read, or do you just go in and see whatever you're going to find out?

P9: I think I judge a little by reviews. Of course I think most of the people who review local things, they're pretty positive reviews. You seldom see caustic things.

P3: XXXX sometimes does. Sometimes caustic. But she gave a very good review to *The Adding Machine*, so I thought it must be tremendous then.

P6: I only read the review if I'm undecided. I mean I don't, I guess I don't want the review to prejudice me if I'm going. And I often will go back and read the review after I enjoy it. I guess I enjoy having my own judgment verified. Or if I find something puzzling, did the reviewer find it puzzling also, or enlighten me as to what was going on. So, and I take my clue from the headline. If the headline is really positive, and I'm undecided, then I know I'm going. But if I'm undecided and the headline is negative, well then I'll say, "Oh, Ill give it a chance." And then I'll read the review and see if I agree with the judgment and the criteria used by the reviewer. I tend to be a contrary thinker, so if there is a bad review or if they don't think it's a particularly strong performance, I kind of get into the mode of saying, "That's just their point of view." And Ill go. Much more comes back to, if you're more or less making a decision as to whether to go or not go. Depending on the play. Certain ones I would go no matter how bad the performance was. So critics have their role, and I think it's fair to have a comment, but I think it's, I've often gone back and said to myself, "Did they see the same play I did? I don't know where the hell they got that opinion." So I think it's a very great trap to implicitly trust anything reviewers say about, particularly University theatre.

P7: I think it's interesting, University theatre, to track the actors. One year to the next, to watch their development and the things they excel in. And also set designers, and costumes, anybody that's involved in the production.

Moderator: How much are you willing to spend on a single show or a subscription? Let's talk about a single show first. I'm not just talking about the University Theatre either. How much would you pay to go to one show? You've decided you want to go to this show, how much would you pay? Any production.

P2: Whatever my wife will pay.

P11: You said any production. I just have to divide that down. The criteria for going to a small cast play would be quite a bit different than a large cast play. And I would say, "Yes, I could see that." And if I knew there's some really production value, like an extremely elaborate set, or the costumes or something like that, I would really pay to see that. But I like George Bernard Shaw, but how much can you do with that? And that would be sort of the standard; I'd sort of expect the standard price. But then again, I feel I may be a little bit atypical because I think I know a little about most of the plays I'm interested in, most of them, not all of them but most of them. And so your question about, what about other people saying whether this is interesting or not: "Let me see the price."

P8: I think the atmosphere, Broadway is one area, and Eugene is another. I found myself answering the question - it surprised me. Eugene I found a limit. Bill Cosby was forty-two dollars, and I said "No." Broadway, it was *The Secret Garden*, and it was sixty-five dollars, and we said yes. I don't know if that helped answer the question. It depends on, you know, if its at the Actors Cabaret, if its more than \$15, I'm not going to go.

P11: I think you brought up a good point. And that is, I would pay more to go to the Hult than I would University Theatre. I know that's not really fair, but sometimes the productions there....????

P6: Well, my wife refuses to go to the Hult any more after about eight bad acoustic experiences. She would definitely not go to the Hult. I would say that what the price that we pay - for our tickets are so low that I

always feel that I should add extra money just to go to the theatre fund. So I think the tickets are probably half what I would expect to pay. In other words, what are they, six or seven dollars or something like that?

- Moderator:** Actually it depends on how you subscribe. If you're a general subscriber, then twelve. If you're a faculty member, senior, staff member, or non-U of O student, its nine dollars. And then there are a variety of group rates.
- P6:** I think the prices in general are low. But once again, I think, I wouldn't go to the Hult anyway. But it would have to be such a loud performance that I could hear properly.
- P3:** There are definitely dead spots in there. And once you know the theatre, the Hult, for instance, you really have to know the spots. There are certain spots I don't care what the price is, I won't sit there, because I happen to know it's a dead spot. You really do. Because there are many, many good seats there. In our case, if we decide to go, the seats are very important. Where I'm going to sit. And I will pay more. If it's something we really want to see, I will pay more if its, if they go a, b, and c, and a is such and such, and b is so and so, and c....???? And we really want to see it, I will not sit in c, I will pay for a. This gentleman here, I agree with him as to price, because we went to see at the Cottage Theatre, to see *Fiddler on the Roof*. And we have Sunday matinee tickets, season tickets. And for that it was fifteen dollars, and for that I thought it was way out of line. But, we paid it because we wanted to see it. We usually don't feel things are out of line over there, but I felt that was. It was excellent. And the other thing I disagreed with we had three young children with us, and it was the same price. It was fourteen for the young children. And I thought that was too much.
- P2:** You know, this might sound silly, but the way I figure out whether I want to pay it or not is I always double it. If the ticket is thirty dollars, it doesn't sound like too much. If its sixty dollars, then you think twice, and that's what it turns out - its two people. That's how I determine how much. Like a Broadway play, you figure a hundred dollars per ticket.
- P3:** Well, last time we were there it was ninety dollars it was eighty-nine a ticket.
- P7:** I would go by if its something I really wanted to see, I would go by the reviews, and I would buy the seat that I wanted to sit in.
- P10:** I agree with that, what you just said, and also, I think to myself, "Well, gosh, its convenient that its here. I don't have to fly to New York." And so I'd be willing to pay more for the experience.
- P3:** Well, I feel like, if I really want to go to it, I don't want to sit up in the fifth balcony and just get a birds-eye view down. I will have a seat that's the best that I can get.
- Moderator:** Would you do that, also, for a show that you're not sure that you want to go to. You've decided that you want to go but you're not certain about it?
- P3:** Yes, I would. I would.
- Moderator:** What about the rest of you?
- P11:** I would sort of do the opposite, if you don't mind. Sort of wishy-washy about it, I'd say, "I'm not going to pay the good seats!" And sit way up.
- P3:** To me it's a waste of time to go to something and not get the most out of it. If I've made up my mind I'm going to go, I'll pay more for a good seat.
- P7:** I concur with that.
- Moderator:** And what about, rather than the single-ticket purchase, what about subscription purchase? How much are you willing to spend on that? Especially because that's usually a one-time payable among of a lot more not necessarily than a Broadway production by itself, but....????
- P6:** I think the prices are low. I'm a senior, so I'm getting a discount price. And whenever I'm paying the same as it is to go to a movie at the mall, I think theatre is quite a bit better bargain than that. So I consider it low.
- P7:** One thing that we have to keep in consideration is that a large part of your non-student body audience are made up of senior citizens. And you have to stay within the senior income. And in the Northwest that isn't all that much.
- P2:** I would think that the University, if it had the choice, would like to have a full house. It would be nice to make a little money off the play, but I think its more important for the actors to have someone watching the play. So its kind of a little bit different.
- P3:** Would you rather have them paper the house? In other words, the people, they'll get faculty will often get free tickets to fill the house.
- P2:** I would rather people be able to see the show, see their reaction.
- P10:** I appreciate that, if the tickets are low enough that it is accessible. It would be nice to, even if it was like the last few days before the performance, to be able to offer free tickets to people who would not otherwise be able to afford to go.
- P6:** If you don't have a full house, you might as well sell the space.
- P3:** What is the, how do you work it here? I know at the Hult they go to the SHO members first to give things

away. How do you do it here if you want to paper the house?

- Moderator:** Generally they don't do it. The faculty and the graduate students are automatically given complimentary tickets throughout the whole season. That's part of being in the roles that they have in the program. Some complimentary tickets are given away on the radio. But at the most we have about 100 comp tickets at a show. And that's for the entire run of the show, not just one night.
- P6:** I think if you were giving tickets away, or have some kind of fund that will allow you to give tickets away, or have attend the play, I would like a preference to the kids who are in the drama programs at South, and Churchill, and Springfield. That's where your cadre, that's where your future playgoers are. In my own experience, it was a set of freebies that got me going. So I think if there was some way of funding that kind of effort, like people who cancel and turn in their tickets, well, have a way of pulling those tickets out. Have a method of not reselling them you already have the money for the tickets. Have a roster that will go to the director or the coordinator of those places, get a dozen or so people who would be interested if the tickets were available.
- P7:** One of the ways of going through that they have used at the Hult is going to the managers of the homeless shelter, or one of the other support programs in the city, and making the tickets available there.
- P3:** One thing I've noticed they're doing nice this year, they're having at the high schools as this gentleman said, they're having students from Churchill reviewing plays that are going on at Sheldon. That's a good idea. But these two, the schools do have a large drama department.
- Moderator:** Well, let's shift focus just a little bit here: do you like the way the University Theatre productions are presented? And I think we've touched on this a little bit, but now we'll focus in on it.
- P6:** By present do you mean stage? I think they're outstanding.
- P9:** If you're looking to increase your audience, I think you sort of need to beat your chest a little more. I don't think the quality of the productions come through in most of the material I've seen.
- P7:** I'd rather see something on television.
- P3:** Is it Channel 11 that is mostly public access? Do they do that kind of thing? Because cost-wise, I don't know if there's a cost for that.
- P6:** Well, I think it's a community service.
- P3:** Yeah. So they could be on there. Sometimes Eleven is very good to watch.
- P9:** In the program, you said you were in Theatre Management. Is promotion part of what you're learning or working on? Is there a group of people who focuses on getting additional marketing?
- Moderator:** There are students who are learning some of those skills. But there's not a full-time person focused on that within the theatre department itself.
- P9:** In terms of a faculty member.
- Moderator:** Or a full-time student. I'm one.
- P11:** I think the ads in the newspaper are the weakest. But on the other hand, I don't know what the ads really draw or not. I wish I could think of the name of the play, because the ad really upset me. The ad was a house, and I just thought, "This doesn't say what this play is about." Who would go to a play that you saw the outline of a house? Its in the past year or two. It was a University Theatre play. It's not this current school year but the year before. Just in general, I thought they just don't have snap, they just don't have the aura of the play. Because I think a lot of people know about a play, but to get people to pique their curiosity or something....????
- P3:** Is there money set aside, or a pot you can get some money out?
- Moderator:** Some. There is a budget for it, but it is minimal. Which is why I think they haven't gone to a lot of television advertising.
- P10:** That might be a project for, like, graphic design students.
- P3:** I'm sure offices, oftentimes in beauty shops and offices they'll have a placard saying what's going on somewhere.
- P9:** Yeah, the Bach Festival they don't get paid for people to display those posters. They just go in and say, "Would you be willing to display this?" And they do.
- P6:** The Bach Festival posters are almost collectors items.
- P3:** Oh, they are. Even the programs are.
- P7:** That's one thing, I know down at Rawlins they had a strong art department too, they did work cooperatively with the theatre arts department. And design posters that became collectors....????
- P11:** What kind of contact with the Register-Guard. Do they give you any breaks at all?
- Moderator:** They're probably one of our best resources. However you feel about the University Theatre, no matter what that is for each of you, what do you dislike most about it?
- P7:** It's cold.

P5: Sometimes when you want to get out for some fresh air, you have to go around the gauntlet of the smokers for the fresh air.

P7: Having the smoking area off-center would be good.

P2: For the record, I dislike the programs too.

P7: But then those programs are produced at minimum expense.

P9: Well, if its content....????

P2: But you've got to put a program out.

P9: Well, I'm trying to get a handle on what kind of development you want for your project. Obviously the University Theatre is here to teach actors and directors and all that. But how much emphasis is there on marketing? It seems to me that that's one of the major things for any arts organization. How to market, how to get people to come to whatever you're doing. That's one of the major components for any art school.

P3: The U of O on the bachelors level is known for their marketing programs and their business programs. There's no way of getting some of the business.....????

Moderator: There just hasn't been a fully established link, I think.

P6: The Warsaw sports marketing program is very strong. So theatre there's not much of a link from theatre to sports marketing same type of practical product.

P3: That sounds like it would be a good strong link. You have the marketing right down the hall.

P4: Both sides can learn.

P3: About disliking, I keep going back to this gentleman here, about the claustrophobic lobby. I can't wait to get out of the lobby! I just want to get out as fast as I can and I don't want to spend any time there. Which is really kind of sad.

P7: They have some great displays up.

P3: Oh, I do see those. But it's so packed tight with people. There's not much room to move around, and it's claustrophobic as he said. To me, anyway. Even coming in. And just to get out I want to get out of there as fast as I can.

Moderator: What about the other end? What do you like most about the University Theatre?

P9: The quality of the productions

P10: I like the diversity of the plays chosen too. You get a really wide variety.

P1: Diversity of the audience.

P2: And the sets. Oh, I love the sets.

Moderator: Anyone else? If someone who had never been to the University Theatre before came to you and asked what to expect going to a production, what would you tell them?

P3: They're outstanding. You won't find it in any other theatre in town, and there's a lot of them. But the sets, and the choice of material.

P9: And there's something about the vitality of the actors and actresses. I remember I think it was *Midsummer Nights Dream*, they did it here and then we saw it in Ashland, and I liked this production better! Because there was something about the exuberance of the actors that went with that play particularly. So the vitality of the actors and actresses.

P1: I enjoy the people - the young people. Because it's the one theatre in town where there's always a lot of young people, and that's what I like.

P7: In the audience, you mean?

P2: If they had never been here before, I think I would tell them that they should find out a little about the play they're going to. Because....????

P6: They're not going to find it on the program.

P3: Go with an open mind. Because you could hit Eve Ensler....???? That was outstanding.

P2: It was, but if you weren't prepared for that....????

P3: For *The Vagina Monologues*. That was packed last year. That was a fundraiser.

Moderator: Anyone else, what you liked most?

P6: I kind of like the size of the theatre itself. Apart from the acoustics at the Hult, I don't like large theatres anyway. All the best stuff I've seen on Broadway or in London is always small.

P9: What's the particular size of the new theatre?

Moderator: Well, that's going to be a black box to replace the current one that's in that classroom space. So it'll be around a hundred. They're still working on the whole....???? So anything else you'd tell someone who's never been to the University Theatre?

P3: Well, don't miss it! Because I really think they owe it to themselves to go there.

P7: And go with an open mind, because it is different. Theatre is not always what you'd expect.

P1: It's all young people that are acting, and that's what's neat. [Not always] Well, a few older ones.

P2: Well, you might want to give them pretty specific directions on how to get there and where to park. Because it isn't easy for someone who's not been here before.

P6: The gates that you enter in there, I think they're the most beautiful gates. And they're not in very good condition. But I think they're premier Arts and Crafts or Art Deco wrought ironwork, and they really should be spruced up, cleaned up, and made as an entrance for the whole sweep coming in. I guess they used to be the main entrance to the University, and that's kind of like a side door now. But take a good look at those. They're really I don't think there are any in Eugene that are as nice.

P3: Well, maybe on our write-in ballots, we should write something about the money that would be voted in on the bond issues would go there.

Moderator: What advantages do you see to this educational setting for theatre?

P6: For theatre just in general? Well, I think its the, they're not going to learn drama in the same way they'll never get it with an electronic game or a movie to the same extent that you would get it in live theatre. It just won't happen. I've noticed that I'm at a very very good play, because you have to pay attention, if it's very very good, at the end of it I'm exhausted, I'm tired. There's very few movies that I get tired at. It's just a different kind of an experience. And technology can't, it will never be obsolete.

P11: I think part of its strength is also part of its weakness, and that is that they're presenting plays that you might not ordinarily see. Like, for instance, *The Adding Machine*, I doubt if that's being produced very widely at this time. And there was one by a woman a couple of years ago, she was sort of having a revival around the country, and they were looking for women playwrights who were producing plays. So it cuts both ways. But I expect from the University to have some experimental type, and I don't just mean avant-garde. I mean some plays that are not really really popular, or maybe a little bit of a downer or something like that. So we sort of presume, at least I do, that there's some subsidy here because it is a learning environment. Where (VLT or Leebrick) don't have to have that as part of their mission. And so they have to be much more careful about the bottom line. I mean, not that the University Theatre isn't aware of the bottom line, but it plays a different role.

P7: You have the advantage of having both types of theatre, Theatre in the Round and also the main theatre, and also childrens theatre. So it has a diversity of presentation. It also, I think, the diversity of the casting of the students we'll be exposed to all different nationalities, all different types. It's good for the students, and its good for the audience to have the experience. Because sometimes it's the only place that the audience will have it.

P11: This isn't really on topic, but I'm reminded of it now. And that is the Arena Theatre, I think that they've had some excellent productions, and I've always felt that that should have been somehow incorporated into the overall season. It's sort of shunted off to one side.

P7: Some people don't even know about it.

P11: They've just had some good plays and some good productions. And usually the place will be filled, so maybe they don't feel that they have to do anything more, because of the space. I've never gone to one in which there were many vacant seats, frankly. But on the other hand I wish that it had been given more prominence with the main Robinson Theatre.

P3: Do they have season tickets to the Arena Theatre?

P11: No. It's offset, it's sort of to the side. And then it gets more confusing because you see the advertising for the Pocket Theatre. And what does the outside public think? Oh, the Pocket Theatre? Oh, it must be small, etc etc.

P3: I don't know where the Pocket Theatre is.

P11: Well, it's just a pocket. It's in this building. And the Arena is also in this building. You know where the Arena is, it's just about four or five doors down from that. While I haven't gone to anything recently, but when we first came to town, there was, *School for Scandal* was in there. And that was very, very, very very well done. It's sort of a fun place. But now the productions are at usually five and eight o'clock, it seems to me they're at sort of strange times or something.

Moderator: In The Pocket, they're at five.

P3: Where do you read about that?

P11: Well, the newspaper sometimes, sometimes it's in the Register-Guard.

P2: Do you have a mailing list that we could get on, to get into the Pocket Theatre?

Moderator: I don't know that we do. That's the student-run theatre, and I don't know if they have a mailing list or not, but I can find out.

P3: So it would be mainly in the paper that you would find....????.

P11: I'm not really conscious about where I find out.

Moderator: They're usually in the Oregon Daily Emerald, which is the campus paper, and that's kind of the target.

P3: Well, I know, but unless you live around here, I don't have access to it.

P4: Is there any connection with the three theatres?

Moderator: There is, and that's that they're all somewhat under the auspices of the theatre department. And related to that. And that the students work in each space in some capacity during their two, three, or four years.

P3: Would it be very prohibitively expensive to, when we receive the new theatre season tickets, to put a flier in saying what's going on in the Arena and the Pocket?

P6: Do they know that far in advance what they're going to be doing?

Moderator: I know they do for the Arena, but I don't know if they do for the Pocket. They usually decide each term.

P5: I think they could add something to the programs.

P7: That could be added to the programs, sure.

P3: That would be a good way of doing it.

Moderator: We touched a little bit on the disadvantage of educational theatre. Is there anything else you could say is a disadvantage?

P6: The perception is the same perception people would have of high school productions, that they're just amateurs. If I want to see a real play, I'm going to have to go to legitimate theatre, or go to Broadway, or somewhere. They have this misapprehension....???? They have a general misapprehension of how much talent is out there, and there's a tremendous amount of talent out there.

P3: Well, I never really thought of it that way. Because to me, that may be a misconception, that a lot of the actors are in the theatre program or are getting a degree in theatre. And so therefore they'd be more inclined to that. I'm sure that's not always true, but....????

P7: Then again, some of the older people who participate have a theatre background.

P3: To me, they'd be far more in the professional line than a lot of other theatres would be.

P6: Back to the question, the disadvantage of it being a University theatre? I think one of the disadvantages that comes in is that you may have encompassed may be that you're drawing the number of actors and actresses from a pool that's the University actually is a larger pool. Some people might be interested that are economics majors. You never know. They could have great talent. They do have open auditions? Its University Life? Well then forget about it.

Moderator: Any other thoughts? Where would you rank the University Theatre in comparison to other theatres in town? Of those that you've been to?

P3: Well if you take everything into consideration, the sets and lighting and all that, well then I'd rank them near the top. Yeah, I would.

P7: I think the others are trying to....???? they don't have as broad a range, and they deal more with amateurs. University is amateur too, but it's at a different level. Not to negate our small theatres, because we have some excellent talent.

Moderator: What about in comparison to productions at the Hult Center?

P3: You can hear better.

P7: The seats are more comfortable.

P10: There's also no bad seats, because you can see from anywhere.

P7: Even at the Soring Theatre, it's uncomfortable.

P11: I guess I'm sort of curious on what your subconscious says about the theatre. I talked to a couple of people and said I was going to be in this focus group on University Theatre. And this one person said, I didn't like the University Theatre, just didn't like it. And I went to the Soring to *Steel Magnolias*, and I'd been to the Soring, and I thought, "I just don't like this theatre." I don't know exactly why.

P3: Have you sat in the tiers? The tiers are very good.

P11: It wasn't the seating; it was just the feel of the theatre. They all have such a different feel to them. I don't know if that really influences people or not. But I thought it was interesting that I mentioned to somebody that I was going to be in this focus group, they said, "I've gone to the plays but I just don't like the theatre."

P7: I think it's cold.

P3: The Cottage Theatre is cold. It's a beautiful theatre.

P2: Is there a reason why that theatre is so cold?

Moderator: Yeah, there is actually. It's because they run the heater before the show. But if they would run it during the show, you couldn't hear anything. Because of the way that it's set up. And hopefully part of the new building fund will also support some remodeling of the current building and assist with that.

P2: I think its really chilly because so many people say that. And in wintertime its very cold.

P3: There are parts of the Hult that are freezing. If you're in there the wings are on the side, and if you're sitting in there, boy, I always bring something to put on. Its really cold there.

Moderator: In the theatrical areas that you know most about, for each one of you individually, whatever

theatrical areas you know most, design, acting, the theme, whatever it is, would you say that University Theatre is up to date and working within that particular area of knowledge and skill?

P8: My impression of the acting, stage setting, the direction, costuming, is very very high. To me the most important feature of a theatre is the writer. I'm not aware of any writer sponsorship, education, or curriculum for the theatre in this university. Am I wrong?

Moderator: There's one class that's offered, and there's a competition with a regional festival.

P8: Do that class results in any way show up in the....?????

Moderator: Yes. Last year and this year a new program was started in the Arena Theatre, its called New Voices, and two student works are chosen.

P6: So once again it depends on what part of the theatre you're talking about here.

P7: We haven't seen any publicity. Publicity is the big thing. The public would like to be informed so that they can participate. If they're not informed they cant participate. And you don't make money.

P3: Do they want to make money? I know its educational.

Moderator: At least kind of break even.

P9: Well, you say you don't have a full house very often. So a little more marketing would be good. I think that a lot of university students have won awards at regional....???? We were in Washington DC and there were University of Oregon students playing at the Kennedy Center. I like to see a little more of that somehow or another, that information out, maybe as part of a program on posters or wherever. Everything. Every part of the University talks about "We're the third best in the world.â But you don't see much effort on the part of the theatre department. To show what honors they have. And just to make that known to the public.

P2: Other than fund-raising, do you have any participation for Friends of the Theatre or something? Is there a group?

Moderator: There is no specific group.

P2: Is there an attempt to get an outside group going?

Moderator: Not that I'm aware of, but that doesn't mean that there isn't one. Not that I'm aware of.

P7: Are the benefactors solicited?

Moderator: That's primarily voluntary.

P4: Is there an actor who's gone way on up from the University?

P3: If you watch MASH a lot, there's one of them in there.

Moderator: In the theatrical areas that you know most about, is the University Theatre up to date?

P6: I would say in their marketing, because they're a not-for-profit and a non-commercial theatre, they don't have a citizen board, and a Friends of the Theatre board, and that's the area where I would say....???? Certainly not the writing, or the technical aspects. And I think you have to have a little bit of a marketing approach to the Pleasure Pit too. A mix of the reaches, and a mix of experimental. Because I always look in terms of, am I seeing my personal favorites?

P7: The University is pretty self-contained. Does it want to reach out to the community?

Moderator: Yes.

P7: Then they really have to work on their publicity and their public relations.

P8: We have a good football team.

P2: I was thinking of the football team. They need the same excitement to the general public. I think the plays are really great here, but I don't think they're outstanding. I don't have the excitement to stand out on the street corner and say, "Hey, let's" And you build that. You build it within and you build it from the community. And if there's no community support, you're not going to have that.

P7: If they had something similar to the Ashland Experience, where you had a three-day series of plays, or something that would attract the community's attention. And interaction with the school theatres, where the kids would have an opportunity to come and participate with the University students. We don't do plays in the afternoon so maybe that wouldn't be that difficult.

Moderator: For one play each season, we offer two matinees for high school students.

P7: But I mean where the high school students would actually have parts with the University students. So you have that interaction. As you have the senior citizens come in.

P3: Lets follow through on XXXX idea, to give tickets to the different high schools that would be involved.

Moderator: My next question is how often during the year do you hear from University Theatre?

P6: I only hear once. I get contacted for season ticket renewal. There may be one other, but that's about it.

P11: I'm going to say never. I hope I'm not insulted, or I missed something. When the talk over here was about friends and things like that, I get flyers from other people, and newsletters, and I get other things, and I don't have any other season tickets so I don't know. And yet at the same time, to really make this pay off you'd have to reach people who weren't already season holders, because they've already paid their money. But

again, if you had friends and their lists....????

Moderator: Do you feel that only hearing once, for those of you that do hear once, is adequate? [No]

P3: Usually the last play of the season there's something in the brochure, in the program, that tells you what the next season is going to be. And then you don't hear a thing until your season ticket time.

P9: So in some years they've had a little form in the back of the program so you can sign up.

P2: I think they should have a mailing list. And then that mailing list not only to the Robinson Theatre, but to the two that you're talking about. And, send it quarterly.

P11: I think in this age of Photoshop and all these other crappy programs that making good brochures can be done fairly quickly. I shouldn't say quickly because its always longer than you think, but its certainly easier than it used to be.

P6: How many people have e-mail here?

P2: And that's another way to go about it. Mailing is expensive, but I think its essential.

Moderator: Any other suggestions you have for contact? Your types of contact, or maybe how often, someone suggested three times a year....????

P6: I get something from the College of Liberal Arts, I forget what its called, about three times a year. I don't remember hearing anything about the theatre in it, but that doesn't mean there hasn't been something in it.

P7: One of the things with learning in retirement to do some work, publicity work with them, whether they could do play reviews for the season....???? It's not necessarily just the University season.

P3: A speaker could come from the University Theatre. They're always happy to have them.

Moderator: Can you think of times it would be appropriate or that you would most specifically like to be contacted, or to hear from the University Theatre? You were saying that you hear, like, before the season starts, in August or something? Is that an appropriate time? Would it be better to get that earlier?

P3: Well, I think that's good to whet your appetite in the last program, to tell you what's coming up next year. But it should be reinforced before the season starts, really, as to probably early September just before school starts.

P10: It seems like I hear from the Willamette Repertory Theatre, "Would you like to make a donation" letter a couple times. I think I bought tickets there maybe two years ago, for something, and I'm still on their list.

P2: Lord Leebrick has a very good mailing list.

P7: Is there a board for the theatre made up of University....????

Moderator: I don't think there is one specifically. There's a general advisory board, but there's not like an overseeing body.

P7: Sometimes it's good to have somebody in the community sit on a board.

Moderator: So how instrumental would you say that direct mail has been for you in being a subscriber or ticket holder?

P3: Well, its very important.

P8: It's very important I get my letter. And my wife says, "Make sure you fill out those...???"

P3: Those of us that go get together and say "I got my letter today." "Oh, I didn't get mine." Anyway, anxious for the season to start.

P8: Otherwise it would just disappear off the radar altogether.

P2: However, when you send your money in and you don't hear from them for quite a while, then its a problem.

Moderator: What's that time gap?

P10: Several months.

P2: They must get a lot of calls.

P7: The website information....????

Moderator: Yeah, we have a website, but that's not publicized too much.

P7: That could be put on the program, if you want to use it for publicity.

P2: That would be a great way of finding out about a lot of small plays.

Moderator: What about flyers and posters? Are they instrumental in getting your attention?

P7: One of the things would be the McDonald marquee, to put something up there.

P6: From ourselves, either an e-mail or going to the website or getting a mailing is the way.

Moderator: Say were getting ready for a show and its going to open in a couple of weeks and were going to send you a reminder, if you're on our list. Would you prefer to receive an e-mail reminder, like you're on an e-group about it, or a postcard?

P6: Well, which is cheaper, if you could segregate?

Moderator: Cheaper would probably be e-mail.

P6: Send a postcard to those that don't have e-mail.

P10: Just on the renewal form, you could add your e-mail address.

- Moderator:** Are most of the communications between you and the University Theatre in general, do you feel like they're one-way? Or are they two-way streets? One way could be that they're just sending you that direct mailing. Or maybe you're contacting them more than they're contacting you. Do you ever express your opinions, whether approval or criticism, to University Theatre? You said that you tried to contact someone after the show, but I wonder if anyone ever writes, or calls, or if anyone else ever talks to anyone after the show.
- P6:** I think there was a canvassing a couple of years ago. I seem to remember vaguely some kind of questionnaire, but I can't recall if it was, it was a one-time event. But I would say that any theatre group that I ever subscribed to, we lived in Washington for quite a while, you'd get a mailing from them. They'd ask, what did you think of plays one two three four, did you want more of this or more of that? They were always questioning the audience, getting feedback. And that was all the groups up there. They were always, it was usually mail, it was usually a questionnaire. And usually it was a ranking of productions. And if you wanted to put on five plays, which ones would you like to see?
- P3:** The Hult has done that. They'll be in the programs, to rank the different...???? It seems to me that they did in the University one time.
- P6:** I seem to remember faintly that there was something like that a couple of years ago. It's just that they were doing it all the time, every second year or so.
- Moderator:** Do any of you find that communications particularly, the advertising, flyers, posters, those kinds of things that you see, the brochures that come out to remind you about your renewal, are they lacking? We know about the programs.
- P9:** All the advertising is pretty bland.
- Moderator:** Does it not catch your eye, or what? How would you expand that when you say bland?
- P9:** Cheap. Well, not very innovative.
- P6:** Vanilla.
- Moderator:** Any other thoughts? Could you express maybe how its lacking? It sounds like its mediocre.
- P3:** Well it is mediocre.
- P2:** Its usually black and white, and its usually very cheaply done, frankly. I can understand why, but it is. And its not exciting at all.
- P11:** Yet at the same time there are other places in town that are doing black and white too.
- Moderator:** Can you think of an example of an ad that does stand out to you? Like you were talking about another theatre. There are other examples we could talk about with the University Theatre, possibly.
- P3:** Well, I don't think any of them are so great.
- P2:** The opera, for example, which I didn't get it until finding the third opera or something, they had a theme going that was very simple. I would keep looking at it. It would get my interest, what's going on here? At least I thought about it, the poster anyway.
- P7:** Lord Leebrick has probably the most innovative, I think.
- P11:** They always have the same sort of frame, and all that. I don't think the University Theatre does. That might help, to give it something quick, some sort of frame that says its the same, consistent. That might help.
- P2:** The Nike O
- P11:** The Swoosh Theatre.
- Moderator:** I don't have a lot of these, but a few, but there's some samples of pieces that have been developed. I just wondered if you could talk about those that do appeal to you more than others. And if they appeal to you, why? And you might have to pass them around a little bit, and see what's there.
- P8:** What have you done with these? Do they get mailed out?
- Moderator:** They primarily get mailed out on campus to specific target groups.
- P9:** But if you have season tickets, you don't get them.
- Moderator:** I think in the past they have done that, but I don't think they have in the last few seasons. Sue had suggested that this one is very eye-catching and interesting. How do the rest of you feel about that? Any others?
- P9:** This one is not legible.
- P7:** I'd like to see more color. Just the black and white is kind of the clown is a good eye catcher, but a black and white clown doesn't say much to you. Color is expensive.
- P10:** This one seems like it should be in black and white because its sort of like a sketch. So that might be one way to use black and white.
- Moderator:** Any other thoughts about any of those?
- P2:** Well, this one here, I don't know, it just seems so I didn't get that feeling from the play. [*The Adding Machine*] It says absolutely nothing to me.

P9: It looks chaotic. I wouldn't think I'd want to go see it, looking at that.

P3: Where would something like that have been mailed to you?

Moderator: Primarily on campus.

P2: And that might appeal to them on campus.

P7: The theatre department wants to attract off-campus business. Well then they'd better get with the program.

P3: This is what's playing right now in the Arena Theatre.

Moderator: Are there others? You said that the Adding Machine didn't really say what it was about. And the others, do you really know what they're about?

P9: The letters on here, you can't read them.

P11: I think it's just interesting that my wife buys season tickets to the BLT. And for every play they send out something about the play. And yet we have season tickets, so we were probably going to go. But they must have a mailing list, I mean they must send that out to other people. And just like this gentleman was saying over here, knowing something about the play sort of primes your enthusiasm for it. A little paragraph or two, something like that. Just like some of this doesn't come across. It should be pretty factual. Some of the program notes are sort of editorial things, like "This is an important play that's really upset a lot of social issues, etc etc." But it hasn't really said what the issues are.

P3: Well, for the Very Little Theatre, I don't get any material except for the tickets themselves, then it has a good review of the play with the ticket. Then you have to rip it off. They have such a funny way of doing things. Your tickets are attached, and then you have to tear that off, and then you have to mail that in, and then you have to mail your tickets in....???? Its a very complicated process. And then you have to tell them whether you're going to pick them up down there, or put them in a self-addressed stamped envelope. I'll go that route rather than stand in line at the box office and wait til they find me in the box. Because they have volunteers that are way up in years and it takes forever to find them. I do it for several people besides myself. They have no idea what's involved.

Moderator: So at this point were going to start wrapping up a little bit. So I would say, if you had faculty or staff members here at this time, what improvements would you suggest to them?

P3: Bigger budget.

P9: Marketing, as one lady said. Which includes programs.

P11: And this has been said time and time again, but if they're really serious about doing something out in the community, they're going to have to have Friends, and letters, and stuff like that. It just won't happen.

P7: Community relations.

P2: They need an outside group.

P6: And they need to market the entirety of the department. And I don't mean just for people that can draw an audience and support. But also to market the department as a department. As a place that you would send a grandchild, or a son or a daughter, to take theatre. Or to take a course of study. Or even go to the U of O. But they need to pull all the elements together, not just the University Theatre. So when they market, every instrument should market everything they do. Whether it's the academics, the scholarships, the scholarship support, the different theatre groups, and their timetable of presentation. Everything should be, rather than firing a shot of everything, should have all that information.

P9: Well, I talked earlier about the recognition that students have, several people in the faculty have been recognized as being outstanding. And that somehow or other needs to go over that whole marketing package.

P2: I know you're trying to wrap up, but can you tell us why you chose the University of Oregon to do your Masters? Because that would be interesting, especially in this conversation.

Moderator: I chose this program, and I'm in the Arts and Administration program, not in the Theatre Arts department. I work here part-time. I chose the program because I wanted one that was very broadly based in its ideology and open. Though my background is in theatre, I didn't want to just focus on theatre specifically because I want to be able to do a lot of things within the arts in general. And if I stay in theatre, fine, because I like it. If I don't, that's fine too. I guess I felt that this program would be challenging and embracing at the same time. So, kind of push me forward, but guide me through that.

P2: And you knew about this program from?

Moderator: Doing research, because I was looking specifically for an arts administration program.

P2: Where'd you do your undergraduate research?

Moderator: In Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Actually I moved here from Kansas.

P1: How did you find out about it then?

Moderator: Internet, mostly, because that's where I started my searching. And then Petersons guides and that sort of thing... Of everything that we've discussed this evening, what would be the most important to you that the University Theatre should know?

P6: Outreach.

P2: Well, as a community we really appreciate the theatre.

P9: The underlying thing is, we think it's so good that we want more people to come.

P7: We'd like it to be the best that it can be.

P3: Up to right now, I think, I always felt that the group didn't want outsiders that much. That I felt very privileged, I guess it is, to be involved in it. Because I didn't think your purpose was to go out into the community. At least that's the way I felt about it. So I'm glad....???? Is this a new move?

Moderator: No, I just think its recognition that that hasn't happened, really. Other thoughts?

P10: I think that the work the theatre does in general and in this study is really important. It's really important for all of us out in the community. I'm not sure what to do about getting as excited about theatre as football, but I think its a broader issue. I would just say that I appreciate the theatre being here, doing what you do.

Moderator: And if you're going to go home tonight, or maybe at work tomorrow, and talk to someone about what you did this evening, what would you tell them?

P3: Well, how exciting this was. I thoroughly enjoyed this evening, and knowing that they're reaching out into the community. Which as I said before, I didn't think they really cared to reach out into the community.

P10: You need to send out with the renewals for the season tickets, brochures. And I'm sure we could all give them out to other people.

Moderator: Other thoughts? Anything else that you would like to say, or questions that you have?

P2: We all have a positive feeling toward the theatre.

P3: I think she screened us.

Moderator: I thank you all so much for your time and your thoughts and sharing them this evening. I feel like I have some great recommendations that I'll be able to come up with. If you would have anything else that you'd like to add, or you have any other questions, you have my phone number.