

# **Successful Relationship Development:**

Building a Positive Relationship between a Performing Arts Center and  
Its Internal and External Communities

by

**Wei-Ping Wang**

A Master's Project

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Successful Relationship Development

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Dewey', written over a horizontal line.

**Dr. Patricia Dewey**

**Arts and Administration Program**

**University of Oregon**

Date: June 9, 2008

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## Wei-Ping Wang

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animism730902@gmail.com

### **EDUCATION**

#### **Master of Science in Arts Management**

University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, USA (June 2008)

- *Concentration Area: Performing Arts Management*
- *Certificate in Nonprofit Management*

#### **Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing**

National Chung Hsing University, Taichung, Taiwan (June 2006)

- *GPA: 3.89 / 4.0*
- *Rank #1 in class for academic performance for 6 semesters*
- *2003 & 2005 scholarship for outstanding academic performance*

### **EXPERIENCES**

#### **Production Administration Intern, Seattle Opera, Seattle, WA, 2007**

- Prepare contracts for recruiting designers and update Production Information Sheet and various calendars
- Prepare and update production expense budget in Excel format
- Assist production supervisor and stage management department at tech rehearsals and formal performances
- Research costume rental companies and designers information for future opera productions
- Use Tessitura (a constituency management software) to input volunteer hours and renewal board member information
- Reorganize music inventory and use Filemaker to update inventory information

#### **Marketing Practicum, Oregon Mozart Players, Eugene, OR, 2007**

- Research and design questionnaire for exploring potential audience
- Use InDesign to assist with preparing marketing materials, including posters and newsletter template
- Research possible fundraising event formats for future fundraising endeavors

#### **Leader of Financial Section, Marketing Department Students' Association, National Chung Hsing University, 2004~2005**

- Balance and allocate the \$5,000 budget for multiple activities which are used to make a solid relationship among the students in the Marketing Department
- Monitor the usage of budget for multiple activities and approve the application of additional

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expenses

- Archive financial documents for multiple activities

**Vice Leader of Financial Section**, Marketing Department Students' Association,  
*National Chung Hsing University*, 2003~2004

- Collaborate with the leader of financial section to make decisions about allocating financial resources
- Facilitate the communication between financial section and the other sections

**Member of Sales Section**, Marketing Week, *National Chung Hsing University*, May 2004

- Prepare, sell and promote products to the faculty and students on the campus
- Cooperate with the product providers who come from outside campus
- Reconcile accounting for selling at the end of each day

**Member of Public Relations Section**, Marketing Week, *National Chung Hsing University*,  
May 2003

- Present and communicate Marketing Week Proposal to sponsorship

## **CERTIFICATION**

The Associate Board of the Royal Schools of Music - Grade 5 Flute (Aug/'98)

The Associate Board of the Royal Schools of Music - Grade 4 Flute (Jul/'97)

## **ABSTRACT**

Over the past few years, performing arts centers have come to be regarded as having an important role in improving a community. But how can a performing arts center operate effectively and efficiently, playing this expected role? In this research project, I explore the relationship development processes of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts with its resident companies and the general public community. In addition, I locate literature related to the key themes included in relationship development. Through analyzing literature from previous studies and collected information from the case study site, I present the findings to answer my sub-research questions and I summarize unexpected findings from the case study. At the end, I provide recommendations to future leaders of performing arts centers for building positive relationships with resident companies and the general public community.

## **KEYWORDS**

Arts marketing, partnerships, community engagement, performing arts center, relationship development, communication

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## 1.01 Statement of the Problem

As a catalyst for helping local economy flourish and building identity, performing arts centers (PACs) have become a popular strategy for many cities (Rich, Polin, & Marcus, 2003; Strom, 1999). According to Reiss (1998), in recent decades, there has been an arts building boom and “virtually every city of size claimed the need for a center of its own” (p. 28). There is an abundance of recent literature describing the construction of performing arts centers while presenting the concept of urban revitalization or renewal (D’Ambrosio, 2005; Rosenberg, 2005). This literature recommends PACs as one of the best solutions for city development; however, most of publications on PAC related topics emphasize the positive results that a successful PAC can create but rarely provide a deep insight to how a successful PAC evolves.

In addition, the growing number of PACs reflects that arts and culture are becoming a valuable part of community life (Rosewall, 2006, p. 213). A sustainable PAC should be regarded as a community center rather than a performance hall (Daniels, 1990; Rich et al., 2003). Existing literature raises the key role that a successful PAC should play in a community, but still has not examined the process of how a PAC becomes part of its community. Other than construction costs, sustaining the community’s interest is one of a PAC’s main challenges. Will the community continually support an arts venue after opening night (Daniels, 1990, p. 10)? Determining in advance how to sustain a relationship with the community might be one key element of a successful PAC. Because PACs do not always have good strategies or have successful outcomes, facilitating a healthy operating system might depend on whether the leadership can build a positive relationship with a PAC’s surrounding communities.

## **1.02 Purpose of the Project**

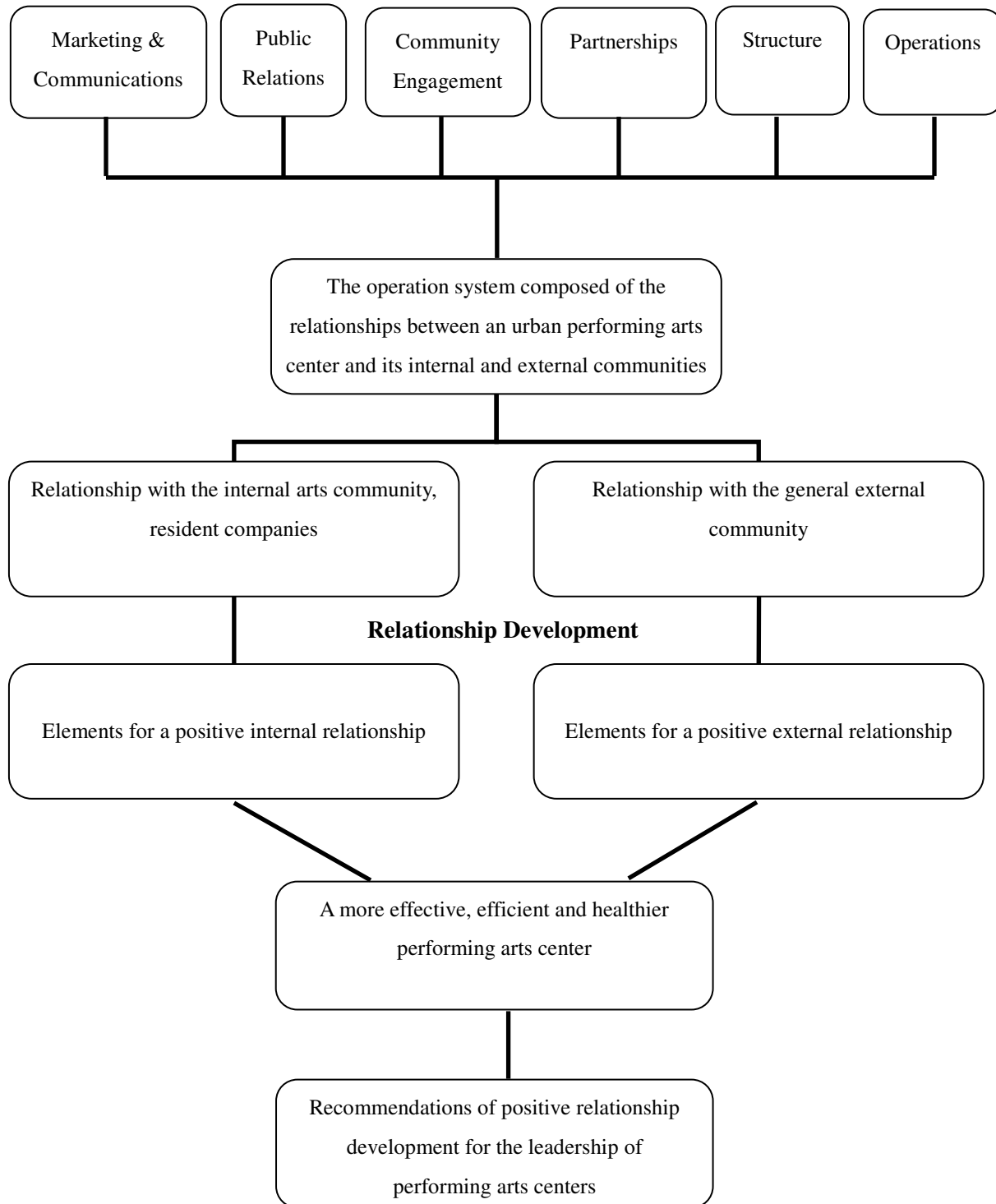
Using the case of Portland Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA), the purpose of this project was to raise awareness among the executive leadership of PACs with regard to their proactive roles in relationship cultivation. The study sought to use the deep insight generated from PCPA's relationship development as a reference for the future PACs' leadership and to provide emerging arts leaders with recommendations which can contribute to the construction of positive relationships between a performing arts center and its surrounding communities.

## **1.03 Conceptual Framework**

Before looking into community interactions with PCPA, a clear understanding of the relationship development context of performing arts organizations was needed. Referring to Figure 1.1, the study first understood the issues pertaining to relationship development of performing arts organizations. As shown in the conceptual framework, the issues for initial understanding were marketing and communications, public relations, community engagement, partnerships, structure and operation. The six issues all supported the relationship between a PAC and its internal and external communities. In this study, the internal community refers to resident companies and the external community is the general public.

The surrounding relationships, both external and internal, were explored separately. After understanding these relationships, the study focused on "relationship development," analyzing the important elements for a positive relationship. In the conceptual framework, both internal and external elements finally contributed to a more effective, efficient, and healthier PAC. At the end of the study, recommendations were articulated for the leadership of performing arts centers.

**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework Schematic**



#### **1.04 Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to understand the positive relationships with internal and external communities involved in managing a PAC, to find the elements of a sustainable PAC, and to provide managers of PACs with recommendations to enhance their professional relationships.

#### **1.05 Methodological Paradigm**

Neuman (2006) presents three approaches to social research: positivist, interpretive and critical social science (chap. 4). Based on the research process which I implemented, I positioned myself in the interpretive methodological paradigm. Interpretive researchers approach a study through understanding meaningful social actions (Neuman, 2006, p. 87). In this research, I pursued an understanding of the social actions within the context of a PAC primarily through interviewing the senior management of PACs.

#### **1.06 Research Questions**

The main question supporting the purpose of this study, which explored the contexts in which PACs operate was, “How does an urban PAC build positive relationships with its internal and external communities?” This main question was divided into two parts. The first part was “How does a PAC interact with the community?” including supportive sub-questions:

- What kinds of strategies do PACs have for community engagement;
- What does the executive leadership of a PAC consider to be the role of these centers in the community;
- What is the role of the executive leadership in developing relationships with the external

community;

- What are the obstacles to relationship development with the external community; and
- How important is relationship development to the external community of a PAC?

The second part was “How does a PAC interact with its resident companies?” The supportive sub-questions for interaction with the internal community included:

- How do PACs communicate with their resident companies;
- What is the role of resident companies in a PAC; and
- What are the obstacles to relationship building for PACs with the internal community?

The two parts were researched separately, but both supported the main idea of this study. The final question was: Does a PAC need to develop strategies to build relationships with its internal and external communities?

### **1.07 Definitions**

#### ***Arts Marketing***

Marketing is creating an optimum situation for satisfying both companies and consumers (Colbert, 2001, p.8). Colbert discusses arts marketing and cultural marketing together and defines arts and cultural marketing as reaching “those market segments likely to be interested in the product while adjusting the product to the commercial variables - price, place and promotion - to put the product in contact with a sufficient number of consumers and to reach the objectives consistent with the mission of the cultural enterprise” (p. 15). In this study, marketing was regarded as one typical kind of communication tool common to both internal and external communities.

### ***Community Engagement***

According to Tindana, Singh, Tracy, Upshur, Daar, Singer, and et al. (2007), community engagement is a process of collaborating with “relevant partners who share common goals and interests.” This collaborative relationship includes “mutual respect and active, inclusive participation; power sharing and equity; mutual benefit or finding the ‘win-win’ possibility” (p. 1452). In this study, community engagement meant that the leadership of a PAC pursues a win-win situation to benefit their resident companies, general community and themselves.

### ***Performing Arts Center***

A PAC is a venue which provides performance space for a variety of performing arts, including dance, theater, and music. This study focused particularly on those urban PACs with resident companies.

### ***Relationship Development***

Relationship development in the business world is the process by which buyers trust a sales organization and are willing to “maintain and/or increase their level of interdependence and interaction with the sales organization” (Williams, 1998, p. 272). In the PAC world, relationship development is the process whereby a PAC works to build enough trust with its internal and external communities that the resident companies will want to continue to perform in it and that general audiences will want to continue to attend performances which it holds.

### ***Communication***

Communication is how people “relate to their social world, to others, and to themselves” (Arneson, 2007, p. 8). In this study, communication is defined as the way a PAC connects with its social context, including resident companies and audience community.



### **1.08 Delimitations**

PACs may serve small audiences as well as large urban audiences with thousands of people. Types of PACs vary from those that do not house resident companies producing performances or developing programs completely by themselves to some that only exist as facilities providing spaces to resident and non-resident companies. Thus, this study focused on urban PACs which have resident companies. In addition, this study adopted case study as a research approach and the Portland Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA) was the explored case. Participating interviewees, including the executive director, event service manager, volunteer coordinator, operations manager, and public relations coordinator, were chosen from the administrative leadership of PCPA.

### **1.09 Limitations**

Purposive case selection increased the difficulties in generalizing the findings through the PCPA case. Each PAC may have a different definition of resident companies; thus, the findings cannot be generalized to every urban PAC and the final recommendation might not be applicable to all PACs.

### **1.10 Benefits of the Study**

The objective of this study was to raise the awareness of the leadership of PACs in the United States to take the relationships surrounding his or her PAC into consideration and further develop a healthier social context for PACs, sustaining these performance venues to serve the public and provide performing spaces to performing arts groups.

Personally, this study helped me better understand the context in which PACs operate. The

entire research process also helped me learn better relationship management skills. The experience gained throughout this study will contribute to helping me reach my career goal, which is to serve in a performing arts organization in Taiwan. Moreover, based on my personal experience and background, I think PACs provide a valuable social context to explore. Particularly, in my country, Taiwan, the number of performing arts organizations has increased and several performing arts venues have recently been planned for construction. I hope this study will provide current and future leadership a different perspective on managing strategies by using a case from the United States.

### **1.11 Structure of the Study**

The remainder of this project is divided into four chapters. First, I present the research methodology of this project and describe how I chose the research inquiry, and collected and analyzed documents and information. Next, in Chapter 3, literature related to relationship development was categorized into several themes to lead readers through progressively building a focused picture of the internal and external relationships surrounding a PAC. Chapter 4 first presents PACs' background and relationship development related information based on the websites of five PACs. Comparing information from these five PACs provided an overall understanding of PACs that were of a similar size to PCPA. Then PCPA interviewees' statements are categorized into various themes based on the initial six areas from the conceptual framework. The case study gave this project a deeper insight into a PAC's relationship development process. In the last chapter, this project provides its main findings, answers its research sub-questions, and also provides unexpected findings discovered through exploring PCPA's case. Based on all lessons learned from this case study, this study finally presents recommendations to future arts

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administration leaders and offers possible avenues for future research.

## **Chapter 2: Research Design**

## **2.01 Research Approach**

As one strategy of inquiry, case studies are valuable for researchers who “aim to provide practitioners with tools” (Gummesson, 2000, p. 87). The purpose of the research question “How does an urban PAC build positive relationships with its internal and external communities?” was to describe the social setting of PACs, understand how the relationships work, and then provide the future leadership of PACs with examples of positive relationship development. “Case study strategy focuses on answering how and why in a meaningful context” (Strand, 2006, p.1). The end goal was to improve the relationship development skills of PACs. Duke and Mallette (2004) state that researchers can utilize case studies to generate improvements for the environments which are investigated under studies (p. 22). Case studies were the major strategy of inquiry for the question, which focused on “relationship development.”

## **2.02 Strategy of Inquiry**

The research question attempted to understand the operating system, which is composed of internal and external relationships within the context of a PAC. Case studies help researchers generate a holistic viewpoint for a single or relatively small entity, phenomenon, or social unit (Duke & Mallette, 2004; Gummesson, 2000; Merriam, 2002; Zach, 2006). Because the main idea of this research question was relationship development, the researcher had to have a general understanding of a PAC environment, and subsequently must look into the individual relationships within that environment. How does the leadership of a PAC integrate it into the whole operating system? Hamel, Dufour and Fortin (1993), Mullen (2005) and Neuman (2006) all agree that case studies are used to examine and understand how separate parts of a social ecosystem are configured. In fact, a case study of a PAC can examine very complicated social

contexts and their interactions; the PAC operating system involves leadership, strategies, the community, resident companies, etc.

Case studies help the researcher “move from a state of engagement, to deeper understanding, to informed activism-intelligent action” (Mullen, 2005, p. 43). PCPA’s case provided the researcher with deeper insight into a PAC’s operating system through the different perspectives of interviewees. Understanding these perspectives indicated the important elements of building relationships with the internal and external communities. Case studies stimulate researchers to view a social unit with different perspectives (Mullen, 2005; Neuman, 2006).

Taking case studies as their research strategy, Strand (2006) and Zach (2006) both emphasize building a theoretical model in their purpose statements. This emphasis suggests that the end goal of a case study’s strategy is inference. Merriam (2002) asserts that relationships among an entity are “less commonly regarded as a case; the relationships are generalities rather than specifics” (p. 178). This study’s research question arose from the motivation to improve the relationships around a PAC, facilitating more effective leadership. “Case studies help researchers connect the micro level to macro level structure” (Neuman, 2006, p. 41). This study’s final research question looked forward to generating possible recommendations for the future arts administration leaders based on PCPA’s relationship development experiences; although the findings of PCPA’s case might not match other PACs’ situations, it might still be beneficial for other PACs’ and future PACs’ leaders to take PCPA’s lessons into consideration. In particular, PCPA might have creative strategies or similar problems to other PACs. As an initial attempt, the outcomes of this research question can encourage other researchers to further explore relationship development issues for other PACs. Young (2004) examines a theatre piece performed at the Oily Cart, finding out the interactions among all participants. She starts her

question from a “how” perspective: how to design and conduct arts events for the under-two age group. She then uses a guidance question to look for needed information in collecting data. Finally, she raises strategies and key features which also providing valuable lessons for other organizations that want to reach a younger audience. Based on a similar path used in Young’s case study research, the strategies and key elements for developing positive relationships with the community for a PAC were feasible. However, researchers also need to ensure that the generalization is not limited or bound only to similar social units. Young, Burwell, and Pickup (2003) and Zach (2006) present “confident generalizations” to emphasize the adjustable outcomes of their case study research.

Case studies are advantageous for researchers, readers and practitioners. The primary audience for the research question was the future arts administration leadership of PACs. Case studies strategy constructs a complete and vivid picture of a social system for the audience (Zach, 2006, p. 2). A vivid case study of PCPA could help the managers of PACs and other readers clearly understand their operating context. According to Merriam (2002), the narrative description of a case study is helpful for reader’s learning. Furthermore, “it is the reader not the researcher, who determines what can apply to his or her context” (p. 179). According to the theme “interference” in the previous paragraph, readers’ clear understanding facilitates the effective learning and applying process. With a clear understanding, arts administration leaders can apply all the findings and recommendations that this study presents to their PAC’s situation. Case studies can be a catalyst for advancing the researcher’s purposes.

The strategy of exploring a single case helped the researcher’s interpretive and critical methodological position in understanding the interactions between PCPA and its internal and external communities. The researcher must be able to explain a profound theoretical model in

simple language, which is accessible to readers or arts administration practitioners. During the data collection process, the researcher needed skillful interview techniques, including designing questions, asking questions and taking notes efficiently and effectively. The researcher's knowledge of organizing and analyzing collected information was required and served as a key element in this study.

### **2.03 Selection of Site and Participants**

This study employed purposive case selection focusing on urban PACs. Moreover, because this study looked into the relationship with the internal community, the selected PAC case needed to have resident companies. Due to limited budgets and time, the selected site for conducting this study was Portland Center for the Performing Arts, located 100 miles north. Targeted participants were major administrative staff members of PCPA who have experience in dealing with internal and external relationship issues around the performance center. These individuals' professional titles were Executive Director, Operations Manager, Event Services Manager, Event Services Assistant Manager, Sales and Booking Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, and Public Relations Coordinator. The primary method of choosing these participants was based on their positions and duties. This study focused on interviewing staff who have greater opportunities to either communicate with the external and internal community, or to initiate strategies or programs to develop relationships with the two communities. These interviews were conducted in February 2008 and data were analyzed in March and April. These participants were recruited by a recruitment letter attached as Appendix B.



## **2.04 Data Collection Instruments**

Data collection methods included literature review, website-based information collection, document collection and semi-structured interviews. Referring to the data collection schematic Appendix A, the collecting process began with locating literature related to relationship development. This literature was drawn primarily from the International Journal of Arts Management and electronic databases, including Academic Search Premier and Business Source Premier, provided by the library of the University of Oregon. The search key words used to locate the literature from these databases include “marketing,” “organization cooperation,” “communication,” “performing arts center,” “customer relations and arts,” and “outreach and arts.” Other sources include published theses and reports from foundations.

To support the general understanding of PAC relationship development gained from the literature review, a case study was done to create deeper insight. Document collection and personal interviews with staff members were conducted at PCPA in February 2008. The length of each interview was 45 to 60 minutes. In addition to being interviewees, the administrative staff of PCPA was asked to help the researcher collect existing PCPA documents. These documents included a strategic plan, a volunteer newsletter, a survey of the volunteer program, a customer service survey result, and a service assessment report. Data were analyzed in March and April along with website-based research on five PACs’ websites to build a clear understanding of current PAC environment.

Data collection instruments included a sheet for document collection and analysis, (Appendix F), interview forms (Appendix D) for taking interview notes, and analysis with open-ended questions (Appendix E). Appendix B is a recruitment letter which was sent to invite participants via mail. A consent form, (Appendix C), was signed by participants before the

researcher conducted interviews to make sure that participants understood the purpose of the research and were willing to participate in this study.

In-depth collection of data entailed interviewing the administrative staff of PCPA. The researcher took notes through the interviewing process while also recording the content with a digital recorder. All coding notes and recorded content were securely stored by researcher, and kept as a management skill reference, to help the researcher develop the skill of managing a performing arts organization or a PAC.

### **2.05 Coding and Analysis Procedure**

All collected data were coded and analyzed for the identification of patterns. The researcher looked for evidence from interview notes based on the six initial related areas shown on Figure 1.1. This analysis method was used on all interview summaries and transcripts.

### **2.06 Strategy for Validating Findings**

The techniques employed to establish the credibility of this study included data triangulation and member validation. The researcher collected data through different methods, including interviews, documents, existing literature and website-based information, and looked for patterns among diverse data. Before finishing this research, the researcher sent pertinent sections of the study to interviewees who had expressed their wish to review their statements included in the final document prior to publication of findings.

## **Chapter 3: Literature Review**

### **3.01 Introduction**

At this time in the performing arts academic field there is not sufficient literature related to managing PACs for my exploration of the performing arts center's context. Thus, in the literature review, I expanded the range to include more literature related to general business management and other performing arts organizations management. To understand the relationships with both resident companies and with the general community, the literature review first began from a general marketing concept, which I regarded as a core idea in the relationship building process between a PAC and its external and internal communities. Next, the literature chosen explored the partnerships and collaboration to further explore the internal relationship. After exploring collaboration, I looked at the internal relationship close. I then turned to understanding performing arts organizations' external relationships. Finally, I briefly explored the leadership's role in building both internal and external relationships. Through exploring existing scholarship in this way, I expected that my literature review would compose a clear picture of relationships surrounding a PAC.

### **3.02 Marketing and Relationships**

In recent decades the concept of marketing, which was usually applied to for-profit businesses, emerged in the nonprofit arts sector. An increased focus on marketing was expected to facilitate communication between arts organizations and their audiences. Researchers have indicated that various marketing ideas, such as marketing plans and the "marketing mix," are now used extensively by arts organizations and have become part of the management system (Bussell & Forbes, 2006; Conway & Whitelock, 2004). To use "marketing is to link the organization with its market" (Colbert, 2003, p. 30). As a connection tool and communication

medium, marketing creates a bridge from organizations to their customers, creates dialogues between the two parties, and helps them exchange value to satisfy both of them (Colbert, 2003; Conway & Whitelock, 2004; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Radbourne, 2002; Sato, 2005).

Although marketing seems like the perfect tool to help arts organizations deliver an effective message to consumers, a “for-profit” marketing concept and strategy does not fit into the arts context well. Marketing continues to evolve in order to adjust to the context of the arts field. Colbert (2003) contends that the feature used to distinguish arts marketing from traditional marketing is that arts organizations look for audiences who would like to purchase their product rather than design a product based on consumers’ preferences (p. 31). Moreover, since marketing has involved in the arts field, it has gradually rooted to the arts organizational culture. Many studies have discovered a fundamental change in arts marketing. Rentschler (1998; 2002) clarifies the whole evolving time period of arts marketing as the “foundation period” and the “professionalization period.” Based on this perspective, marketing has changed from a functional tool into a business philosophy and management strategy (Boorsma, 2006; Rentschler, Radbourne, Carr, & Rickard, 2002). Marketing is not only related to marketing arts products or limited to a marketing department. For instance, arts organizations can capitalize on the marketing idea of marketing their mission to volunteers, donors, employees and other constituencies. In summary, in the arts field, arts programs can be marketed as more than products, and targets which receive marketing messages should be more than just audience members. Marketing can be broadly applied to different aspects of an arts organization.

Through the evolution of marketing, one of the primary ideas of traditional marketing, market segmentation, continues to be emphasized in the arts field. Bussell and Forbes (2006) and Weinstein (2002) illustrate that market segmentation is required for marketing professionals to

develop appropriate strategies for each customer group. Bussell and Forbes (2006; 2007) take the volunteers and friends of an arts organization as two individual segments and develop different strategies to begin and retain long-term relationships with them. In the arts field, organizations have to find suitable customers who are attracted to their exhibits or performances. These organizations investigate the characteristics of the market and categorize customers at the beginning of the analysis process to clearly understand who the “right” customer is. “The relationship between an arts organization and an audience member begins when the prospective audience member or patron is identified in a new segment to be targeted as part of the marketing mix strategy” (Rentschler et al., 2002, p.122). In traditional marketing based on transactional philosophy, segmentation is a way to indicate the relationship with customers. However, marketing philosophy has been changing, and researchers assert that relationship marketing should now replace transactional marketing (Collin-Lachaud & Duyck, 2002; Johnson & Garbarino, 2001; Rentschler et al., 2002).

Relationship marketing increasingly appears in relevant scholarship in the arts administration field. “Relationship marketing first appeared in 1980 in North American research” (Radbourne, 2002, p. 58). Relationship marketing emphasizes that organizations should build and maintain a sustainable relationship with stakeholders based on communication, cooperation, commitment, respect, and trust (Brierly, 1994; Bussell & Forbes, 2006; Johnson & Garbarino, 2001; Swanson & Davis, 2006). These basic elements indicate that these authors believe there should be some criteria of and tips for building a good relationship. This study explored these beliefs in the PAC context. The original concepts of relationship marketing for performing arts organizations focus on “increased competition and reduced profits,” which make arts organizations believe that a strong and continuous relationship with the audience will be a good

way to sustain an organization (Swanson & Davis, 2006, p. 125). Relationship marketing emphasizes a long-term, sustainable, and continuous relationship with constituencies, which implies that the healthier the relationship, the more sustainable the organization. This concept supports this study's assertion that a positive relationship affects a PAC's sustainability. Relationship marketing emphasizes people's interactions the idea of networking on which organizations can capitalize. However, while creating relationships is beneficial, only a well-maintained relationship can create value in networking. A performing arts organization is like a complicated networking system composed of relationships among different parties. Theaters which only concentrate on the customer and ignore other stakeholders are less successful (Conway & Whitelock, 2004, p. 325). Thus, in the arts field, relationship marketing goes beyond making relationships only with customers. Other relationships surrounding a performing arts organization also affect an organization's sustainability. Bussell and Forbes (2006; 2007) illustrate that there are many constituencies around an organization and relationship marketing should consider more than simple customer relations, expanding the field of marketing.

### **3.03 Partnership or Collaboration**

In addition to the external relationships with customers, this study explored the features and benefits of internal relationships between a PAC and its resident companies. There is a partnership between resident companies and a PAC. A performing arts organization should "maintain an ongoing relationship" with a venue as a kind of partnership (Preece, 2005, p. 23). Therefore, in this section, literature related to such partnerships will be explored. "Collaboration and partnership are words that have become almost iconic during the past fifteen years"

(Fineberg, 1994). The basic concept here is that a relatively long-term partnership or collaboration should be developed to mutually benefit the parties which are involved in it (Burton & Greher, 2007; Lynch, 2002; Scheff & Kotler, 1996b).

According to Lynch (2002), Preece (2005), Ropo and Sauer (2003), Scheff and Kotler (1996b), and Tremblay (2004), potential goals of partnership or collaboration include two aspects. First, to facilitate organizational effectiveness, organizations can achieve their mission with limited resources through capitalizing on partner organizations' resource advantages. In addition, partners provide different perspectives providing opportunities to make more effective decisions. Second, to build the audience, partnerships create a synergistic image for organizations involved to reach more members in the community. Because another partner's consumers are also attracted, one organization can combine its organizational image with its partner's image.

Before choosing partnerships as a strategy, organizations have to understand that one aspect of creating a partnership can be time consuming. Contrasting with the effective outcome that partnerships provide, time is one of the primary resources that every entity in this relationship has to invest much during the process of building a partnership. Fineberg (1994) agrees that two or more partners who are involved in a partnership must equally "conceive, develop and evaluate" the collaboration over a period of time. The effective results from partnerships take time to reach; however, once organizations achieve positive results, the benefits will persist for an extended time and bring them valuable advantages (Fineberg, 1994; Scheff & Kotler, 1996b).

"Because of the nature of collaboration, problems are likely to be encountered as participants negotiate their respective places within the partnership" (Burton & Greher, 2007, p. 15). Many researchers offer their ideas for required elements for a successful partnership. The elements include shared value and vision, commitment and trust, open communication, and equal



positions. Shared values ensure that participants pursuing a goal are heading in the same direction; this is the base of a successful partnership. When organizations involved in a partnership agree on the priority of the management issues and recognize that the partnership should benefit all participants, then they create shared values. A successful relationship needs each organization to value its partners' success and regard that success as its own. Shared values also help enhance organization members' recognition of a partnership. For example, if an innovative organization develops a partnership with a more traditional customer-oriented arts organization, they need to find the balance point between innovative and traditional values. This will allow both organizations to agree on the goals that the partnership pursues. Ropo and Sauer (2003) and Sicca (2000) all utilize a music organization as an example to describe the sharing value philosophy included in collaboration. To build shared values, participants first have to learn their partners' visions. One organization has to be sensitive to its partner organization's business culture and then appropriately integrate both of the organizations together (McNicholas, 2004; Scheff & Kotler, 1996b). Ropo and Sauer (2003) note that partnerships include "a sense of community" because of the shared values among the stakeholders (p. 54). This idea particularly supports this study's definition of resident companies as an "internal community." The elements, commitment and trust, should be discussed with open communication because several researchers believe that trust is the key to allowing partners to be willing to openly communicate to each other (Burton & Greher, 2007; Scheff & Kotler, 1996b). Open communication includes presenting one's own perspectives and listening to others' perspectives. McNicholas (2004) indicates that compatibility is an important factor for successful partnerships (p. 63). Compatibility describes the balancing point which needs to be found and negotiated between partnership participants. Finally, participants in the same partnership should possess equal

positions in the relationship. “They have the same opportunities to contribute ideas and same rights to be informed of everything in the partnership” (Fineberg, 1994). Before forming a partnership, companies only have to care about their self-interest. However, once two or more organizations operate as one integrated entity involved in fundraising, production, marketing, and public relations, they optimize working together by maximizing each other’s interests without eroding partners’ rights and roles.

### **3.04 Performing Arts Organizations and the Internal Community**

In a partnership, each organization’s role needs to be defined before the partners begin working together and building the collaborative relationship. Assassi (2007) capitalizes on commercial terminology to describe the relationship between artistic companies and the venues in which they choose to perform; she defines these companies as “suppliers” and venues as “retailers” (p. 51). This is the basic relationship between the two parties - venues help performing arts companies distribute their products to the public. However, the value of creativity in art products should not be ignored. Arts products include artistic merit. Preece (2005) argues that there are “three dimensions of performing arts organizations and the first one is artistic merit” (p. 24). In artistic companies’ perspectives, artistic merit might be communicated through their mission. Venues provide a suitable environment for artists to express their creativity (Mancarelli & Pulh, 2006; Thompson, 2001); therefore, the role of a performing venue is to support their mission and survival by providing resources that artistic companies lack. Further, performing venues which exist as spaces for gathering artists are sustained by artistic companies (Ropo & Sauer, 2003, p. 70). To illustrate this relationship, Ropo and Sauer provide the example of Sydney Opera House’s (SOH) Chief Executive, Michael Lynch, to describe the importance of

resident companies' inclusion in SOH's operating system. Artistic companies and their cooperative performing venues are interdependent but in the sources that this study located, most of the literature still emphasizes the benefit that performing arts companies can receive from venues more than the benefit that venues can receive from them.

Performing arts venues provide visibility and tangibility to its resident companies. Except for theatre companies, most performing arts companies do not possess their own performing facilities. Véronique Cova (2004) asserts that, because performing arts organizations offer intangible products, they should “make the supply of their services as tangible as possible” (as cited in Mancarelli & Pulh, 2006, p. 26). The problem is that there is no visible identity for them. Performing venues provide the companies with a space to hold “intimate events, such as talks,” to connect with the community (Boyle, 2003, p. 16). When people think of one artistic organization, they can easily visualize one with a tangible performing venue; as a landmark, the venue can strengthen the organization's image in people's mind during its dark weeks. Bussell and Forbes (2006) indicate that resident companies, which provide the community with more opportunities to interact with performers than touring companies, can expect a stronger connection with community members (p. 47-48). Therefore, venues provide the space to their resident companies to cultivate a long-term relationship with the local community. Nevertheless, one potential drawback of the strong interaction between a performing arts company and its audience community based at a performing arts venue might be that the audience is confused with the ownership of the venue; the audience might ignore or misunderstand the unique identity of the performing venue.

Resident companies in a performing arts venue are a key factor affecting the venue's identity and image. Assassi (2007) presents that the programming process of a performing arts

venue is affected by whether the product “meets the expectations of customers and corresponds to the positioning of the distributor” (p. 51). The leadership of a venue selects the appropriate artistic companies to support its own image or develop the image that the venue expects. For example, SOH possesses four resident companies which are essential to its image and the Chief Executive admits that the four companies strengthen the image of SOH, providing it a clear position (Ropo & Sauer, 2003, p. 70). The performances of resident companies are the primary attraction for most of the audience; therefore, resident companies can be a primary factor in how the audience judges a venue. An organization’s internal workings build “organizational identity, which is generally taken to be a collective, commonly-shared understanding of the organization’s distinctive values and characteristics” (Stuart Albert & David A. Whetten; Mary Jo Hatch & Majken Schultz, as cited in Boyle, 2003, p. 9). Most performing arts venues, with the exception of some theaters, do not have any performances produced by themselves. A well-built organizational identity can attract the general public and other organizations that have the potential to perform in the building in the future. This concept can be described this way: as the internal community, resident companies affect a PAC’s identity. Without the resident companies, a PAC is nothing special - only a space. Resident companies bring additional value to make a PAC’s identity clear and further differentiate a PAC’s identity. For instance, if a PAC’s resident companies are enthusiastic about educational programs, the identity of the building might be seen as more educational and family-oriented. An identity can indicate a performing arts building’s position in the performing arts venue market.

### **3.05 Performing Arts Organizations and the External Community**

Part of a venue’s identity can also be the role of a PAC that its external community members

perceive. Performing arts organizations' primary role in a community is to make contributions to facilitate building the general community. Milner (2002) suggests that "creative expression is a powerful means of building healthy and resilient communities" (p. 12). As a source of creative expression, performing arts organizations can be used as "an indicator to measure community richness" (Castaneda & Rowe, 2006, p. 12). Such richness indicates the basic function of performing arts organizations, which is to make diverse arts and cultures available to the community. In addition to this basic function, these organizations have the social power to gather community members. Performing arts organizations bring people together to interact with other community members; arts venues are social centers (Mancarelli & Pulh, 2006; Milner, 2002; Thompson, 2001). When people have opportunities to interact with a group of community members, "a sense of belonging to the community and a commitment to working together for a better future" appear (Milner, 2002, p. 11-12). Arts participation provides the audience community with "belongingness" and arts participation enhances the solidarity among community members, strengthening a community.

In the performing arts field, the consumers have to be "involve[d] in the production process rather than simply being presented with a finished product" (Sicca, 2000, p. 151). The special characteristic of arts consumption confers the audience with a co-production role. In other words, consumers complete a performance and give an artistic organization a reason to exist (Boorsma, 2006; Conway & Whitelock, 2004; Rentschler, 2002; Sato, 2005). Boorsma (2006) capitalizes on *co-producer* and Sicca (2000) uses *prosumer* to describe how important the audience is in an artistic experience. Co-production describes the basic relationship between arts organizations and the audience; applying this idea to the study, the external community is the source to enrich a PAC with a clear position to provide arts-related activities. The John S. and James L. Knight

Foundation (2003) reports that if a high-quality hall does not reach its community, the venue “means little or nothing” (p. 3). Boyle (2003), Hobday (2002), and Rentschler et al. (2002) emphasize the importance of the relationship with the external community, arguing that performing arts organizations and venues cannot survive or flourish without local support. Because the community influences the survival of performing arts organizations, in much of the literature the methods used to connect with the community appear to address the relationship with the external community.

Finley, Gralen and Fichtner (2006) assert that community engagement is a very important concept for making the relationship between an organization and its community closer (p. 11). The basic value of engaging with external community members is to create ownership of the organization (Boyle, 2003; Bussell & Forbes, 2006; Colbert, 2003; Ravanias, 2007). Ownership means that the community members regard themselves as part of the organization and the organization wants to integrate the community into its operating system. Ownership allows external community members to easily agree with the organization to which they think they belong. However, a sense of ownership is not that easy to achieve and needs to be cultivated through receiving feedback from the community, realizing their needs, and appropriately adjusting the organization’s offerings to their needs. The organization should have a deeper conversation with its community members, listening to their needs and ideas (Cutts & Drozd, 1995; Finley et al., 2006; Pesner, 2006). The organization also needs more opportunities to interact with the community members and let them better understand the organization’s mission, value and services. Positive interactions with community members will further facilitate their understanding of what the role of the organization is in the community.

According to many academic sources, programming is the most direct way to reflect the

community's voice and to provide the community a sense of belonging and connection with the organization. Bretz (2002), McDonald and Harrison (2002), and Tremblay (2004) agree that the community is an important element that affects an organization's programming strategy. In the literature, programming tends to focus on those educational and community programs rather than programs on the main stage. Developing associations beyond the market transaction may help the organization to establish stronger relationship with customers (Swanson & Davis, 2006, p. 136). Cardinal and Lapierre (2003) and Finley et al. (2006) present case studies of two music organizations, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic, to describe how educational and outreach programs can root organizations in their community. Preece (2005) even directly defines outreach as "a support activity to build bridges with the communities where arts organizations perform or reside" (p. 23). Developing affiliated programs rather than main stage programs provides organizations with an unrestricted development, because the main stage programs are highly related to artistic value and arts organizations usually avoid designing performances which only meet the audience's taste. Through affiliated programs, such as outreach and educational programs, organizations can explore their community's needs and develop programs that meet their needs. Appropriate community-oriented programming allows community members to recognize organizations as part of their lives.

### **3.06 Leadership and Relationships**

No matter whether the relationship is with the external or internal community, it is managed by the leadership of performing arts organizations. Many scholars indicate the important role of leadership in communicating with the external community. A manager's creativity decides whether an organization can have a long-term and strong relationship with its external

community (Rentschler, 2001, p. 19) or not. According to the concept, a manager's characteristics may affect an organization's relationship development. To communicate with the community, marketing leaders have a key role. Marketing leadership should be a marketing tool to speak to the public on behalf of the organization. Castañer (1997) and Colbert (2003) both assert that managers should provide the face for an organization in the external community. To deliver an effective message to the external community, the leadership also has to be sensitive to the organization's surrounding environment. Bussell and Forbes (2006), Rentschler (1998) and Scheff and Kotler (1996a) emphasize that a leadership which is aware of the environment continuously supports an effective strategy to communicate with the evolving external community.

Although most of the literature explored only recognizes leadership's role in communicating with the external public, the importance of leadership in managing internal relationships should not be ignored. Ropo and Sauer (2003) assert that a partnership cannot be formed without leadership skills and a leadership should "evolve as the partnership developed" (p. 51-52). In different levels of partnership, leadership plays different roles; the organization's leadership should possess the ability to accommodate differing partnership situations.

Leadership is a critical factor and some scholars who have explored existing arts leadership have one common concern, which is that in many arts organizations, the leadership has a strong arts background but is weak in management training (Fox, 1979; McDonald & Harrison, 2002). McDonald and Harrison (2002) further describe that it might be "a barrier to adopt appropriate marketing practices" with this kind of leadership (p. 115). In summary, the communication ability of the leadership in the arts field is considered as a positive influence on relationship development with both the internal and external communities. In view of the importance, this



study's interviewees were composed of the administrative leaders of the departments in the PCPA which have frequent contact with the internal and external communities. The leadership of other PACs is the main audience of this study. Through the leadership's understanding of the relationship issue, a healthy PAC environment can be expected.

### **3.07 Conclusions**

Through the literature review, the meanings linked to relationship development under the five sections were explored. Relationship marketing's emergence advances the traditional transactional marketing concept and clarifies that marketing applies not only to the relationship with one's audience, but also to other stakeholders. A shared set of values among collaboration members is a key element for a good partnership. Performing arts organizations and the internal community mutually benefit each other, having an interdependent relationship. On the other hand, with the external community, organizations expect to build a sense of ownership to engage the community. Lastly, leadership is the most practical element required in managing relationships with both external and internal communities. Although the literature supports the importance of relationship development in the performing arts field, most of the literature still focuses on general performing arts organizations, which have their own productions, rather than PACs. Therefore, more research on the PAC context is needed to aid the leadership in sustaining a healthy PAC environment. To meet this need, this study explored a specific PAC—PCPA—as a case study to understand the relationship development idea under a major PAC in the United States.

## **Chapter 4: Case Study**

#### **4.01 Introduction**

To deeply understand how a PAC develops relationships with its internal and external communities, I chose the Portland Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA) as the case study site. Six interviews were conducted with seven of PCPA's staff members, including the Executive Director, Event Services Manager, Event Services Assistant Manager, Operations Manager, Sales and Booking Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, and Public Relations Coordinator; internal documents were also provided. By asking a list of questions, listed in Appendix E, I received information from various perspectives. The information was categorized based on the initial six areas of the conceptual framework and nine themes were pointed out. This chapter begins with an introduction of PCPA's background. I then explore five PACs located in cities of a similar size to Portland to get a general understanding of their situations. Next, I classify the content of all six interviews into nine themes: the importance of internal communication, internal communication methods, the definition of internal relationship, financial situation and efficient operation, the importance of external communication, organizational structure and the perception of external community, external communication methods, the importance of leadership and volunteers in external communications, and the definition of external community. This chapter concludes with a summary of the nine themes' main points and a comparison between PCPA and the five PACs.

#### **4.02 Portland Center for the Performing Arts Overview**

Located in Portland, Oregon, PCPA is a public complex composed of three buildings: the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall, the Keller Auditorium, and the Antoinette Hatfield Hall, which includes Newmark Theatre, Dolores Winningstad Theatre, and Brunish Hall. PCPA's mission is to "provide superior, responsibly managed performance spaces that foster an environment in

which diverse performing arts, events and audiences may flourish” (Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission, n.d., p. 30). PCPA currently has seven main resident companies: Portland Opera, Oregon Symphony Orchestra, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Portland Youth Philharmonic, Oregon Children’s Theatre, Tears of Joy Puppet Theatre, and Broadway in Portland, which provide more than 900 various performances each year with other commercial and nonprofit organizations, attracting over one million audience members.

Under the management of the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC), which is a public venue management agency, PCPA is led by the current Executive Director, Robyn Williams and supported by main administrative offices including executive, booking and sales, event services, volunteer, operations, and public relations. There are about 20 administrative staff members and 700 volunteers in this organization. PCPA does not present any of its own performances and only focuses on managing its facilities. As noted on the PCPA website (<http://www.pcpa.com>), PCPA is recognized as one of the top ten PACs in the nation.

#### **4.03 Performing Arts Center Industry Overview**

Before exploring more information collected at PCPA, I chose five additional PACs that are located in similar sized cities to Portland. These five PACs are: the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center (Charlotte, NC), CAPA Columbus (Columbus, OH), Omaha Performing Arts (Omaha, NE), Ordway Center for the Performing Arts (St. Paul, MN), and Tulsa Performing Arts Center (Tulsa, OK). All these PACs are composed of more than one building and have theaters of various sizes. Through website-based research, a basic comparison chart is presented as follows:

**Figure 4.1: Comparison of Five PACs**

	<b>Blumenthal Performing Arts Center</b>	<b>CAPA Columbus</b>	<b>Omaha Performing Arts</b>	<b>Ordway Center for the Performing Arts</b>	<b>Tulsa Performing Arts Center</b>
<b>Type</b>	Nonprofit	Nonprofit	Nonprofit	Nonprofit	City
<b>Number of resident companies</b>	10	11	3	3	14
<b>Information distribution</b>	Email Club	eCAPA	Ticket Omaha	Encore Newsletter	Ticket & Show News
<b>Public tour</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not sure
<b>Produces its own performances or develop its own programs</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Departments related to external relationship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Relations and Media</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programming and Education</li> <li>• Marketing and Communication</li> <li>• Patron Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and External Relations</li> <li>• Education and Community Engagement</li> <li>• Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing</li> </ul>
<b>Educational and/or community programs</b>	Education Institute provides both educational and community programs	Educational programs focus on students	Educational programs focus on students, practitioners, and professionals	Educational programs focus on students and teachers	Center's annual SummerStage festival

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All the PACs use a similar on-line email registration system to deliver their message to potential patrons. Except for Tulsa Performing Arts Center, these PACs all provide tours to the public. Thus, e-mail communication and public tours are two common tools used to deliver these PACs' message to the public. Because these PACs have at least one department related to communicating with the external community, external communication professionals might be considered as a basic function to PACs. The major distinction among them is that four out of the five selected PACs are nonprofit organizations. Two categories listed above, which are "present its performances" and "educational or community programs," show that there seems to be a consistency among the four nonprofit PACs. The four nonprofit PACs all present their own performances, which mean that they 1) produce their shows or 2) program a season composed of inviting organizations' performances. As a department of the City of Tulsa, the Tulsa Performing Arts Center does not present any performances. This lack of programming authority might further affect designing other special programs. The Tulsa Performing Arts Center is also the only facility that does not provide various educational and community programs. This PAC needs to collaborate with other arts organizations when it plans a program because it lacks the ability to control arts productions. This PAC might need a longer managing process with more considerations of potential obstacles in collaboration, which can affect the number of the PAC's formal educational and community programs. Therefore, being nonprofit or public might impact on whether a PAC has the ability to develop educational and community programs to build a relationship with the public.

The basic information above primarily reflects the communication between the five PACs and their external communities. Next, analyzing the organizations' mission statements might provide insight into understanding these PACs' views of their internal and external relationships.

Four of the five performing arts show mission statements on their websites. Their mission statements are as follows:

**Figure 4.2: Comparison of Mission Statements**

<b>Blumenthal Performing Arts Center</b>	To present the best in the performing arts and in partnership with others, share and employ the arts as a major catalyst to strengthen education, build community cohesiveness and advance economic growth.
<b>CAPA Columbus</b>	CAPA brings the world to our stages, enriches lives and creates community through its mission to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present and produce artistic programming of the highest quality to serve and educate diverse audiences and feature renowned artists of all cultures</li> <li>• Operate and maintain world-class performance venues</li> <li>• Strengthen our arts communities by providing facilities for resident companies and through partnership and collaboration, support those organizations</li> <li>• Bolster the economies of the downtown communities we serve.</li> </ul>
<b>Omaha Performing Arts</b>	To provide this region with the highest level of performing arts events - and to create an impact that remains long after each audience member has left the venue.
<b>Ordway Center for the Performing Arts</b>	Ordway Center is a catalyst for the artistic vitality of our community by hosting, presenting, and creating performing arts and educational programs that engage artists and enrich diverse audiences.

The Omaha Performing Arts is the only one which neither includes the idea of resident companies nor clearly describes the long-term impact on each audience. Three of the PACs directly or indirectly indicate the role of resident companies in their PAC operating systems. Blumenthal Performing Arts Center and CAPA both regard their resident companies as partners in a way that is similar to this research's concept in that the internal relationship is a partnership. CAPA and Ordway Center for the Performing Arts both indicate the support that they provide to the resident companies and artists; however, these mission statements still focus more on the external community. According to the above statements, in addition to providing high quality

performing arts events, other important characteristics of a PAC in its external community includes providing high quality performing arts events, facilitating education, encouraging diversity, community unity, and supporting a flourishing economy.

This Web-site based research provides a general understanding of the five PACs located in similar sized cities to Portland. However, most of the evidence related to internal communication cannot be realized through this type of general research. In addition, the details of a PAC's interaction with its internal and external communities cannot be fully gleaned from its website. Therefore, an in-depth exploration of a PAC is necessary to provide a more informative PAC context. Next, I will present the nine themes from the interviews that I conducted with PCPA's staff members. The nine themes will give a better understanding of how the external and internal relationship variables affect and compose PCPA's operating system.

### **4.04 The Importance of Internal Communication**

The value of internal communication is critical in the pursuit of a mutual understanding between PCPA and its resident companies. For the resident companies, they need to understand what PCPA does for them and what PCPA's challenges are. Five out of seven interviewees mentioned that resident companies complain about rental fees. The Executive Director, Robyn Williams, said, "Some of them [the resident companies] will be more understanding of the situation than others. They understand I have finances; I understand there are certain things they need but I cannot do. The more that I can teach them what I do, the more they can understand the situation." In fact, because PCPA is a public facility, it has no control over reducing rental fees; thus, reducing rental fees, the best improvement expected by the resident companies, is impossible for PCPA to implement. How does PCPA improve resident companies' satisfaction



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without lowering user fees? Williams used the words “teach” and “educate” to illustrate that a better understanding of the limitations inherent in management of a performing arts facility can reduce complaints by the resident companies.

PCPA’s commitment to delivering clear messages to improve resident companies’ satisfaction of the internal relationship reflects that at PCPA, relationship marketing is applied to a wider range of constituencies. Williams capitalized on the act of telling resident companies that PCPA pays for those trained ushers to explain how the rental fees are used. Because of her explanation, the rental fees look more reasonable. For PCPA, the Sales and Booking Manager, Judy Siemssen, said one of the characteristics of a good internal relationship is “to understand their programming in order to help them better as they use our facility.” This helps PCPA not only to provide better service to the resident companies but also to predict future show loads and thus maximize PCPA’s usage. Siemssen further explained that once PCPA can understand resident companies’ situations when they meet challenges, there will be more possibilities to negotiate issues, such as late rental fee payments.

PCPA’s Volunteer Coordinator, Margie Humphreys, raised the issue of free tickets for volunteers – an issue which definitely requires mutual understanding. Because PCPA does not possess any tickets, Humphreys has to negotiate for free tickets for volunteers. She considered the issue in resident companies’ perspectives first: each ticket represents potential revenue; thus, resident companies, especially those which do not have a strong financial situation, cannot afford to provide free tickets for volunteers. However, she also questioned whether resident companies understand that volunteers help them either directly or indirectly and the companies should appreciate them even though they are also PCPA’s volunteers. Mutual understanding in this regard helps both sides to be more considerate of each other and diminish complaints.

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Humphreys said that those resident companies which have a better long-term relationship with PCPA are more willing to provide tickets to volunteers. This willingness is built on an understanding of PCPA volunteers' contributions. As Siemssen stated, "being in each other's mindset" can facilitate better communication.

It is very important for a PAC to have a good relationship with its resident companies. Humphreys and the Public Relations Coordinator, Alicia Crawford, agree that if the resident companies are not satisfied with the internal relationship, they may not continue to be PCPA's resident companies and might perform in other places. Humphreys said, "Several years ago, the Opera, Symphony, Ballet and the Portland Center Stage decided that they want to have their own venues because they were not happy with the rental rates and some of the other things that we have." Although in Portland there seems to be no other suitable performing spaces for those major resident companies, the Event Service Manager, Joe Durr, said, "Portland Center Stage has the ability to raise money separate from PCPA in order to have their own building," which should remind PCPA of the risk of losing resident companies. Resident companies define the identity of a PAC. As Williams and Durr asserted, the resident companies are the reason that PCPA exists. Williams said, "Without them, our mission will go away and we have to change our mission, because they are why we exist." Because resident companies complete PCPA's mission, PCPA needs to have a good internal marketing relationship with its companies to ensure they are happy being PCPA's resident companies.

### **4.05 Internal Communication Methods**

Basically, the internal communication happens in a very organized and structured way. Each director takes care of his or her counterpart in the resident companies, and in the same manner

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departments communicate with each other. Through organized communication, as Durr said, PCPA “makes sure everybody is talking the same language.” This kind of communication reflects the structure among all the entities. The advantage of the communication between counterparts is that people will not be confused when they need to contact someone in the other organization; the communication process is efficient. However, it is easy for people to think only of their counterpart and forget to consider the importance of good communication through the whole operating system. For instance, Williams said that she has started sending two to three email each year to update the resident companies with PCPA’s information as a new communication method. My following question, “Will the heads of the resident companies distribute the message to every department?” inspired her to say, “We should probably send the email to each department’s counterpart. Then there will be an understanding across the board.” Her realization shows that structured communication might restrict people’s view point to their own department and counterpart and cause her to ignore information sharing with other departments.

The common communication media are phone calls, email, and meetings. The frequency of using the media is based on each position’s role and each department’s function. Williams particularly capitalizes on email to educate the resident companies. For example, she sends email to each resident company at the end of every year, describing PCPA’s accomplishments on behalf of the resident companies. Because she is the head of PCPA, most major educational messages are from her office. The Operations Manager, Don Scorby, addresses problems related to loading and the stage; thus, phone calls are more efficient for him. For the Sales and Booking Department, venue booking is the connected point that starts the relationship between PCPA and its resident companies. Therefore, to strengthen this main connection, this department has been

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instituting a meeting with resident companies for seven years to discuss the usage of PCPA. In addition to meetings, another communication method recognized by all interviewees is the customer service survey. Interviewees all consider the survey as a regular method to receive feedback from the resident companies. This on-line survey is sent to all companies which perform in PCPA after their events. The resident companies can rate PCPA's service, department by department, and provide comments to each department.

Durr and the Event Services Assistant Manager, Michele Doumitt, said that PCPA capitalizes on the customer service survey and personal relationship to receive feedback from the resident companies. Relationship building requires frequent in-person interactions. The personal interactions are not only built between directors and departments but also among front-line staff members. Humphreys and Scorby both raised the importance of daily work in building a relationship with the resident companies. In PCPA, it is more flexible for staff members to build a personal relationship with staff members from the resident companies; Siemssen and Williams both raised informal personal meeting examples, such as going out for a luncheon, a drink, and drop in, when they describe how they communicate with their counterparts. Siemssen says that some kinds of feedback are from "informal personal conversation."

The key point of a personal relationship is not the way that people connect, but the frequency of their connections. The Sales and Booking Department tries to catch every opportunity to understand and interact with the resident companies. Siemssen stated, "By getting to know them [the resident companies] on a personal level, we go to their PR events and receptions," which help PCPA staff members "have more interactions with them [the resident companies] in different environments." This implementation of increasing interactions definitely helps PCPA explore their resident companies in more different and natural ways. These

observations help PCPA to understand the resident companies' organizational culture easily; the understanding facilitates the process of collaboration between PCPA and its resident companies.

#### **4.06 The Definition of Internal Relationship**

As one internal communication tool, the customer service survey directly indicates that resident companies' basic position in the internal relationship is as clients. Doumitt and Durr are the interviewees who believe that a client relationship is only a surface relationship that ends with the transactions. However, almost all of the other interviewees stated or hinted that the relationship between PCPA and its resident companies is not so much a client relationship but a partnership. Williams argued, "The best relationship between a performing arts center and resident companies will be a partnership." After I questioned whether the relationship is more than a client one, she even asserted, "It [the internal relationship] really needs to be a partnership to be successful." According to Scorby, Siemssen, and Williams' opinions, the characteristics of a good partnership are trust, an open and honest attitude, and excellent communication. An ideal partnership happens only when all these traits and entities, which are involved in the partnership, adjust to each other. PCPA and the resident companies aim to consider each other's interests and are willing to create an optimal environment for all of them.

Crawford described the internal relationship as "a definite partnership. We [PCPA and the resident companies] both have the same goal in regards to arts and performing arts in Portland. We have to work together to achieve our goals." Common goals, which are also stated by Scorby, reflect that there is shared value in PCPA's internal relationship. Based on this shared value, PCPA and the resident companies understand that their partnership should benefit all the partners. Crawford and Scorby both capitalized on the idea of interdependence to emphasize that there

should be either a win-win or nothing situation in the internal relationship. Scorby said, “If resident companies are healthy, PCPA is healthy.” PCPA is the biggest and best equipped performing arts facility in Portland; if PCPA fails, it would be difficult for the resident companies to find a new place to encompass all of them. On the other hand, these resident companies are locally-recognized arts organizations; without one of them, PCPA loses one fabulous art form that attracts an audience. Within Portland’s performing arts context, working as a partnership ensures PCPA’s and its resident companies’ self-sustainability.

### **4.07 Internal Relationship, Financial Situation and Efficient Operation**

To reach a sustainable financial situation for PCPA and its resident companies, the internal relationship is a contradiction. Resident companies have a priority to utilize at least 50% of PCPA’s spaces and receive a significant discount on rental fees. Doumitt, Durr, Siemssen, and Williams all pointed out the key to sustaining the whole PCPA operation system with the resident companies is to attract sufficient commercial or other non-resident companies to subsidize the financial situation in order to provide more affordable rental fees to the resident companies. Williams cited a sentence from Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities*, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” For the resident companies, non-resident companies allow them to pay less money for PCPA’s spaces without worrying about an unaffordable rental fee. The non-resident companies indirectly support resident companies’ finances. However, as Williams further described, “There is always a juggle [from the resident companies]: Oh, you never let us move.” The more often non-resident companies perform at PCPA, the fewer spaces and dates can be used by the resident companies. As time goes by, resident companies start planning to expand their programs but there is not enough room in the schedule for them to develop more

performances. Thus, non-resident companies can limit resident companies' program development. Williams said, "As a result, because my finances are in line with my mission, it causes conflict between us and the resident companies." The conflict is a paradox. PCPA cannot completely support the resident companies because it needs more money to support the resident companies. Thus, the non-resident companies help it to achieve its mission while causing it move away from its mission because it cannot provide complete freedom of development to the resident companies.

After arguing the balance between non-resident companies and resident companies, Williams said, "There will be more tension if everybody's finances are not good." She elaborated on the idea from both PCPA' and resident companies' perspectives. If the resident companies do not have a good financial situation, they will become picky about each dollar that they spend. If PCPA has bad finance, instead of friendly negotiation with the resident companies, staff members will react by rejecting resident companies' requests to have more performance dates. She continued to say that if PCPA and the resident companies have all the money they need, then this tension will not exist. If the tension is an obstacle to the internal relationship, there is no doubt that a good financial situation facilitates a good relationship. In fact, this kind of situation rarely happens so the tension is difficult to disappear. Therefore, considering how to diminish the tension caused by money is a more practical way to adjust to the PCPA operating system.

To reduce this tension, the solution goes back to a good internal relationship. The internal relationship seems be affected by the difficulty of sustaining PCPA; however, under this kind of system, there is an even stronger need for PCPA to build a good internal relationship with its resident companies. Williams raised another great example where the internal relationship definitely affects the efficiency of the operating system. If one non-resident company needs more

days for its performances, PCPA has to negotiate with the other resident companies about the show schedule. She stated, “If you don’t have a good relationship with them [resident companies], the companies will say go away and we don’t care anything about you.” The sustainable PCPA operating system might then break down because PCPA would not have sufficient financial support from other non-resident companies. Siemssen and Williams both argued that in a good internal relationship, resident companies’ trust facilitates the efficiency of the operating system and supports the working of it.

### **4.08 The Importance of External Communication**

For PCPA’s staff members, the value of external communication is to let the public recognize that PCPA is an important part of the Portland community. In other words, external communication can facilitate PCPA’s community engagement process. Williams, Doumitt, and Durr all consider that being part of the external community is one characteristic of a good relationship. Williams stated, “The characteristics will be that we are recognized as part of the community, that we are recognized as an arts partner, and that we are recognized as the experts at managing an arts facility.” According to her point of view, PCPA’s defined role in the community is the primary message that PCPA delivers through the external communication. Through understanding the roles, the external community members will understand why they should regard PCPA as a necessary part. Williams’ statement primarily clarifies PCPA’s roles as a partner and an expert in arts administration.

The roles focus on engaging groups of community members, such as schools and other performing art organizations that PCPA does not serve. Other performing art organizations are also composed of community members; thus, although they do not perform at PCPA, they should



still recognize it as playing an important part for the performing arts context of the Portland community. For instance, PCPA is able to provide management ideas to other small arts venues to help them operate more efficiently. Partnering with schools is common in the arts world to engage the educational context of the community. PCPA has partnered with an elementary school for several years, helping students to perform their operas in a more professional way. This professional experience could have a long-term influence on their interests in the arts. Williams raised the two examples to describe why engaging groups of community members supports a good relationship.

In addition to the roles for groups of community members, according to Doumitt, Durr, and Humphreys, PCPA's other roles include gathering community members, enriching Portland's cultural component, creating a flourishing economy, and reducing crime rates. Through communicating with the public and groups about all the roles that PCPA plays in the community, Williams expects the external community will be more supportive when PCPA encounters challenges, especially financial challenges.

### **4.09 Organizational Structure and the Perception of External Community**

All over the United States, there is a wide range of structures in PACs. Some PACs program their own performances; some only act as a facility for others' performances. Some PACs only have one building, some possess several buildings. Scorby and Williams both stated that PCPA is an umbrella organization, which indicates the first problem included in its external communication. Many community members do not realize that PCPA is a complex, not just one building. Siemssen and Williams raised the common misconception that many people assume the Antoinette Hatfield Hall is all of PCPA because the box office, lobby, and administrative offices

are all located in this building. Scorby said that he had watched a television program present information on PCPA's coming event. In presenting the information, the media associated the Arlene Schnitzer Concert hall's name with the Antoinette Hatfield Hall's address. The media also presented an incorrect perception of this umbrella organization. The incorrect perception might affect the general public's consuming experience when they go to the wrong building. An audience member's every experience composes the relationship between PCPA and its external community; thus, an unclear perception could negatively affect this external relationship.

Another incorrect perception is related to understanding which organization owns these performance halls and which organization presents the performances. The perception issue was mentioned by all interviewees. Williams said that the one of the obstacles of developing strong external relationships is "PCPA's identity is meshed with its resident companies." One situation is that people think PCPA presents all the performances. In another situation, people think that the resident companies own the building. Toward this "meshed identity", all interviewees have slightly differing attitudes. Humphreys and Scorby argued that the blended identity affects PCPA in a negative way. Scorby even used the term "identity crisis" to emphasize that the identity issue is a big problem. Nevertheless, Doumitt, Durr, Siemssen, and Williams all were not sure whether the issue is that important for PCPA.

As Doumitt and Durr stated, "They [people] might not specifically know who we are. It's a good thing; it's a bad thing. It's good because we are not the stars. They buy tickets for performing arts groups not for PCPA." PCPA plays more of a supporting part and it expects that performing arts groups can sell tickets well not only because they are partners but also because of its reputation, which can attract more potential performers, and which might be enhanced in the performing arts field. They further asked, "Why does PCPA want to be known?" They argued

that being well-known can increase the number of people to choose PCPA's building as the venue in which they want to perform. Instead of believing there might be a way to create a clear identity for PCPA without distracting the public's attention from the 'real stars,' (performing groups), they choose to not focus on developing a clear identity for PCPA.

Although Siemssen and Williams were also unsure about the importance for the public to clearly understand the role of PCPA, they mentioned some disadvantages to an unclear identity. Williams still looked at the identity issue from a funding-oriented perspective; she considered that a "meshed identity" could affect PCPA's funding. For instance, the community members might consider there is no need to donate to PCPA because they had already donated to the resident companies, such as Oregon Symphony or Portland Opera. Siemssen said that when audience members are not satisfied with the performances, they will blame PCPA if they think it presents those shows. Therefore, PCPA's reputation and image is highly affected by this meshed identity. PCPA's complicated operating structure, involving various buildings and various performing entities, facilitates the public's misunderstanding of what PCPA is; the misunderstanding potentially has negatively impacts on building an external relationship.

### **4.10 External Communication Methods**

Expecting the public to have a better understanding of PCPA, this PAC implements various programs and events to deliver messages that strengthen PCPA's roles in the community. As Williams said, "We try to be more accessible." She points out the core value of PCPA's external communications: to encourage more people to come to the buildings and have more opportunities to appreciate arts. External communication activities can be divided into those collaborating with performing arts groups and those providing by PCPA sponsored activities.

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As a “performing arts” center, PCPA definitely needs performing arts resources to support its existence. Having no performing arts resources forces this PAC to collaborate with resident companies or other performing groups to implement its external relationship development programs. The two primary programs that interviewees mentioned are Music on Main Street and summer camps. In the summer, PCPA does free concerts on Main Street to make music more available to the public while telling the community members what PCPA can offer to them. Siemssen noted, “The strategy is that a lot of people that work in downtown still don’t have the motivation to buy tickets or cannot afford tickets.” Summer camps are the events used to tell people that PCPA supports arts education. PCPA provides free spaces to the resident companies for holding their summer camps for children. Compared with Music on Main Street, summer camps might not be able to deliver the message that PCPA is an educational supporter, because resident companies are the real program providers. It is particularly difficult for the public to recognize that PCPA’s free spaces make resident companies’ summer camps possible. Although summer camps might not be able to provide PCPA with a recognized arts education facilitator position, at least these events bring more potential audience members into PCPA and enhance its visibility.

In addition to the two current main programs, Humphreys and Siemssen both mentioned the “Brown Bag” program as one of the community engagement strategies. Brown Bag consists of free short concerts held in PCPA’s lobby and planned to start again next year. Humphreys stated that for those PACs which have their own shows, the main purpose of free short concerts might be to facilitate ticket sales. However, because PCPA does not have its own shows, the revival program is just for the community and helps community members who cannot afford buying tickets to enjoy arts resources. Although the Brown Bag program is primarily designed for

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people who cannot afford tickets, it still can serve as a preview for other community members. Therefore, the program might also enhance ticket sales and the resident companies' visibility. There is no doubt that PCPA can improve its public availability through this free-to-the-public event. Because of these benefits, Brown Bag appears to be another effective communication strategy to implement to the benefit of both external and internal communities and PCPA itself.

Another type of external communication is supported by all the resources that PCPA possesses. Current communication methods include a lobby open to the public, public tours, newsletters, and the Speakers' Bureau. Similar to the five PACs introduced earlier, PCPA uses newsletters to let people be familiar with PCPA's information and public tours to let them be familiar with PCPA's facilities. Williams mentioned the only constraint of public tours is that because of security concerns, public tours only show the front-of-house. This constraint limits the possibility for the public to understand backstage operations, which might help to distinguish the differences between PCPA and its resident companies. Williams is proud of PCPA's comfortable lobby, especially because Wi-Fi was added recently. She described, "I think it is natural for people to get together. Even with their computers, they can hang out here [in PCPA's lobby]." If PCPA's lobby becomes a public gathering place, like a public park, PCPA can successfully engage the community on another level.

One communication event that does not happen in PCPA's buildings is their Speakers' Bureau. As Humphreys described, "We bring the Speakers' Bureau to outside areas and talk about our building; what we are, what we do." PCPA's Speakers' Bureau uses a PowerPoint Presentation and PCPA's volunteers are the key element that keeps the presentation being seen by more and more people. As shown in the newsletter for volunteers that I collected, Humphreys continuously tries to attract more volunteers to help "spread the word." Further, the newsletter

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asks, “We need your help in identifying prospective groups and organizations that might want to include us in their program.” Volunteers not only operate the PowerPoint presentation but also become the best resources for PCPA to approach various organizations to promote itself.

After I asked, “How do you choose the organizations to which you want to give the PowerPoint presentation?” Humphreys said, “We have to be asked.” Although it sounded like that the Speakers’ Bureau is not an active communication method, volunteers implement an active role on behalf of PCPA. PCPA does not directly choose the organizations, but in fact, volunteers help PCPA to target the potential audiences for the presentation. Volunteers spread the word about this presentation; once organizations are interested in the presentation, they can contact PCPA. Through their networking, volunteers find the right market, helping the Speakers’ Bureau be more efficient. PCPA’s Speakers’ Bureau shows that in addition to all the communication methods, volunteers are a great resource for PCPA to do marketing and external communication. This great human resource will be discussed more later.

PCPA is still planning to develop more communication methods. As Williams noted, “We just put together our first very beginning annual report.” This annual report might be able to be downloaded from PCPA’s Web site in the future. Of the five PACs that I researched earlier, CAPA provides an annual report, including CAPA’s basic information, downtown impact, and financial results, to the Columbus community. If PCPA’s annual report provides those sections just as CAPA does, the public will be able to better understand PCPA through an annual report. Williams further mentioned that PCPA is planning to use the power of YouTube to enhance its visibility. Moreover, the Public Relations Coordinator is also planning on creating a PCPA Blog. From all of the developing tools, the on-line trend is influencing PCPA’s communication methods.

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All the communication methods above focus on messages that flow from PCPA to the external community. How do messages flow from the external community to PCPA? How does the external community give feedback to PCPA? PCPA expects people to understand it, but how does it understand the community? Summarizing all interviewees' statements, PCPA listens to the community through e-mail, newspaper and blog critics, on-site patron surveys, and a Secret Shopper service. Secret Shopper is a paid service that helps PCPA to evaluate its service performance. The company sends its employees to attend PCPA's performances. After their visit, the company will send PCPA an evaluation report about all the services that the Shopper received. Basically, except for on-site surveys, other methods are not able to observe the components of the audience. Understanding audience members better would allow PCPA to design more effective communication messages and tools. All these methods tend to emphasize customer service and customer satisfaction. Based on all these real and "paid" audience suggestions and complaints, PCPA can get an idea of whether there is a gap between the audience's expectations and PCPA's services. For PCPA, customer satisfaction might mean a stronger external relationship.

### **4.11 The Importance of Leadership and Volunteers in External Communication**

Although all five other PACs presented earlier have at least one department related to external communication, this kind of department just was recently re-established at PCPA. The Public Relations Coordinator stated that she has only worked at PCPA for seven months. As Humphreys said, when the economy is bad, PCPA only has only a small group of staff members, none of whom have time to build a relationship with the community. Humphreys noted, "When you don't have money, marketing and PR are usually the departments that you get rid of." Even

now, the Public Relations Coordinator is still a part-time position. Marketing and PR may not be required professional departments; however, it does not mean their functions cannot exist without these departments. Therefore, Humphreys' statement reflects that the financial situation affects PCPA's ability to do much external communication but it also hints that PCPA might have alternative resources to support external communication professionals. What might be the affordable alternatives, when a PAC cannot afford a department or even a staff member related to external communication?

Scorby asserted that in order to communicate with the external community, the Executive Director will go out to talk with community leaders, and volunteers play PCPA's "ambassadors" by approaching other members of the public. In fact, these two human resources are very important for supporting PCPA's marketing, public relations, and community engagement. Humphreys even expanded the external communication responsibilities to all managers. Managers and volunteers can either compensate for insufficient external communication or strengthen existing good communication. All managers serve as the face of PCPA; anything they say can affect PCPA's identity. Moreover, they have more opportunities to talk to other community leaders, who have the ability to affect even more community members.

Humphreys emphasized that volunteers are a great marketing tool and cost-effective way to do external communication. She elaborated that people will embrace volunteers' opinions rather than articles in newspapers. Crawford said, "Our huge group of volunteers is our direct [external] community, which tells us what is working and is not working." Volunteers, who are also community members, have the same weight of importance as that of other community members. In particular, non-volunteers can only observe how beautiful the buildings and how great the services are, but volunteers have more opportunities to understand the operating system and



recognize shortages than other people; thus, if they can still recognize and agree on this organization after their inside observation, it also means PCPA is a truly healthy PAC.

Only when volunteers love PCPA, can the word-of-mouth effect work positively throughout the external community. In other words, marketing PCPA to volunteers successfully is necessary for marketing PCPA to the external community; PCPA should treat its volunteers as customers. Indeed, the Volunteer Coordinator dedicates herself to satisfying volunteers through a monthly newsletter, a yearly volunteer survey, and various formal and informal recognitions. According to the documents that I have collected, PCPA expresses how much it values volunteers' feedback and also provides suggestions to them without hesitation. Community engagement efforts are remarkable with their external relationship, which is composed of PCPA and one group from the external community, volunteers.

### **4.12 The Definition of External Community**

Williams demonstrated, "External communities include: the general public, the business community, the governmental community and the arts community. These are the four communities that I see to engage." Instead of regarding the external community as a whole, she segments the whole community into four sub-communities. This community segmentation can help PCPA develop effective communication methods for each community. However, the segmentation also allows the Executive Director to assign weight to each community. In other words, one community might have priority over another in the external communication process; therefore, some communities' influence might be underestimated. Williams stated, "We spend so much time with our resident companies. I want to do more with our arts group people, business and governmental communities because the business community has money and influence."

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Apparently, Williams emphasizes the communication with other communities more than that with the public community. It seems like that the governmental and business communities are powerful sources of funding; thus, they attract most of William's attention. This is also why Williams was not sure whether it is important for the public to understand the difference between PCPA and its resident companies.

Although PCPA uses different communication tools for the other three communities, the main goals are still to let the communities understand PCPA and to develop PCPA's identity. Williams said that PCPA is going to launch a "Spotlight Tour" for the business community. This tour has the same idea as public tours, but the events are by invitation only and offer a more detailed tour. In fact, PCPA's communications with the business, arts, and even public communities are all used to win the governmental community's recognition. By helping the members of the arts community to manage their organizations well, the government can understand that PCPA can be an arts expert in the community. By communicating with the business community which has the money to donate to politician campaigns, PCPA can make sure that it will not lack for funding because the community has influence on policy. By communicating with the public, PCPA expects that public members might be able to speak for it when there is a crisis. "PCPA provides a public service to the community that is worthy of support" (Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission, 2006, p. 28). Support is the reward that PCPA looks for from the three communities. Because PCPA is a public facility, community members' opinions are critical for the government to evaluate this PAC. The government has the primary power to make a big impact on PCPA's operating system. Developing a back-up of opinions composed of the business, arts, and public communities might consolidate PCPA's positive position in the evaluation process of government.

#### 4.13 Conclusions

The nine themes showed a deeper understanding of the elements that might influence and support PCPA's internal and external relationships. In its internal relationships, PCPA is pursuing a mutual understanding with the resident companies through various communication methods. Although PCPA's seven staff members define the internal relationship in two different ways, a client relationship and a partnership, working as a partnership seems to be more beneficial than just treating resident companies as clients. Partnership facilitates the sustainability of PCPA and its resident companies because in the Portland community, they are required to make each other's mission happen. PCPA needs performing groups to perform in its buildings; resident companies need a high-quality space to perform. In addition, PCPA's financial situation and efficient operation are two key concepts that tie in with its internal relationships. To sustain PCPA, non-resident companies' support is necessary for providing the resident companies a discount on rental fees and continuing the internal relationship. However, non-resident companies interfere with the relationship because they stand in resident companies' way when developing programs. While non-resident companies interfere with the internal relationship, their performances in PCPA are facilitated by resident companies' trust based on a positive internal relationship. This internal relationship becomes very paradoxical.

On the other hand, through diverse methods, PCPA's external communication seeks to clarify the community's understanding of the organization. PCPA not only supports arts and culture but also makes the whole community stronger through supporting the community's economic and social aspects. However, this PAC's umbrella structure influences its ability to develop an effective external communication and induces a "meshed identity." Although some staff members are not sure whether a meshed identity really matters to the public, challenges

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associated with having an unclear identity are evident. Moreover, its leadership and volunteers are valuable human resources that strengthen external communications for PCPA, especially because of its limited number of paid staff members dedicated to external communication. The Executive Director, who plays the role of setting the tone for PCPA, segments PCPA's external community into four sub-communities: the general public community, business community, governmental community and arts community. Her external community segmentation helps one to understand the complicated interaction system surrounding PCPA and gives this study a broader view of defining the external community.

After gathering all the detailed information on PCPA's case, this study revisited the general understanding raised from the five PACs, Blumenthal Performing Arts Center, CAPA Columbus, Omaha Performing Arts, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, and Tulsa Performing Arts Center. PCPA has a very similar external communication situation to that of the five other PACs. On-line message distribution is common among all these PACs. As an organization with several buildings, public tours are a good method for a PAC to connect to the external community and be more accessible to the community members even they might not come to attend the performances in the PAC. PCPA and the five other PACs all have various levels of external communication departments. Three of the PACs, the Blumenthal PAC, Omaha Performing Arts, and Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, have more developed external communication departments. PCPA only has one staff member who is responsible for external communication. With various professionals and departments, three of the PACs place their emphasis on external relationship development. However, having fewer staff members or departments related to external communication does not mean one PAC does not emphasize the importance of the external community. Through PCPA's case, finances play a manipulated role in developing a

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department and professionals related to external relationship in a PAC. Therefore, the diversity and number of departments related to external communication might not be a reliable indicator of the importance of external communication for one PAC.

Among PCPA and the five PACs, only PCPA and the Tulsa Performing Arts Center are housed in public buildings. Utilizing public buildings limits education or community program development because the two PACs have to depend on other performing groups to present performances for revenue. For example, PCPA's Music on Main Street and summer camps depend on resident companies to provide performances. Therefore, they do not have full freedom to develop the diverse performing arts programs they want because they need to negotiate with performing art groups before developing programs. It also means that they need more effort and time to co-develop programs to reach the community. Otherwise, a public PAC can only develop education or community programs that simply require it to provide spaces, backstage professionals, or equipment. Providing students with performing spaces and equipment to do their opera is the best example from PCPA.

Except Tulsa Performing Arts Center, the other four PACs have their mission statements on their websites. Summarized from these four mission statements, the functions and roles that they expect to play in their external communities include: providing high quality performing arts events, facilitating education, encouraging diversity, community unity, and supporting a flourishing economy. Even though PCPA's mission statement does not specify every role that it expects to play in the Portland community, the information that interviewees provided complement its mission statement. Through exploring PCPA, its expected roles matches the four other PACs' roles of facilitating education, diversity, community unity, and a flourishing local economy.

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After reviewing all the information and comparing it with my original ideas of relationship development with the internal and external communities, in the next chapter I present the main findings from the case study and recommendations for the future arts administration leadership.

## **Chapter 5: Findings and Conclusions**

### **5.01 Restatement of the Problem and Purpose**

Many cities consider building a performing arts center (PAC) as a strategy to make the local economy flourish and develop a clear city identity; the number of PACs continues to rise.

Although it seems that a PAC can have many positive impacts on a community, only a well-operated and sustainable PAC can play the beneficial role that people expect. As Williams noted, “Our whole business is about relationships.” A PAC is composed of various relationships and sustainable relationships can support a sustainable PAC. Therefore, relationship development might facilitate a healthy PAC.

This study divided the relationships surrounding a PAC into internal and external relationships and explored the two relationships separately. A PAC is supported by the resident companies’ willingness to present performances and the audience’s willingness to attend performances. This study hoped to understand how to build positive internal and external relationships to facilitate a sustainable PAC.

Through exploring the case of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA), the purpose of this study was to understand the relationships involved in managing a PAC, to find the elements of a sustainable PAC, which has a positive relationship with its internal and external communities, and to provide managers of PACs with a good reference to enhance their internal and external professional relationships.

### **5.02 Revisiting Research Questions**

Under the main question “How does an urban PAC build positive relationships with its internal and external communities?” questions were divided into two parts. The first part was “How does a PAC interact with the external community?” including supportive sub-questions:



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- What kinds of strategies do PACs have for community engagement;
- What does the executive leadership of a PAC consider to be the role of these centers in the community;
- What is the role of the executive leadership in developing relationships with the external community;
- What are the obstacles to relationship development with the external community; and
- How important is relationship development to the external community of a PAC?

The second part was “How does a PAC interact with its resident companies?” The supportive sub-questions for interaction with the internal community included:

- How do PACs communicate with their resident companies;
- What is the role of resident companies in a PAC; and
- What are the obstacles to relationship building for PACs with the internal community?

After the two parts, the final question was: Does a PAC need to develop strategies to build relationships with its internal and external communities? With reference to the case study, answers to these sub-questions are organized in the following nine sections.

### ***Community engagement strategies***

The main goal of community engagement is to facilitate a better understanding of what PCPA does and what its role is in the Portland community. Once the public is able to easily understand PCPA’s characteristics and roles in the Portland area, like one individual community member, PCPA truly integrates itself into the external community. Therefore, PCPA’s community engagement strategy focuses on delivering messages effectively specifying PCPA’s community role. This strategy is implemented through many external communication activities, which can be divided into those collaborating with performing arts groups and those provided by PCPA

itself.

Collaborating with performing arts groups, PCPA currently provides Music on Main Street and summer camps and will provide Brown Bag next year. On the other hand, PCPA itself provides a lobby open to the public, public tours, newsletters, and the Speakers' Bureau. It is also developing the first annual report, YouTube messages, and a PCPA Blog. Instead of progressively improving its current communication methods, PCPA develops a broad range of communication methods to make messages available to more people. Through creating more opportunities to interact with the public, PCPA hopes that the public might be able to understand it gradually.

Community engagement is more than developing various programs and events in which the community participates. According to the definition in chapter 1, community engagement requires "mutual respect and active participation." Community engagement requires mutual communication; thus, receiving messages from the public is necessary. Originally, this study expected to discover how a PAC engages its community through mutual communication, and it found PCPA seems to initiate most of the actions of community engagement. In fact, methods used to listen to the external community might be even more important, especially since the messages that PCPA receives from the public might be minority opinions. PCPA receives messages from the external community through email, newspapers and blog critics, on-site patron surveys, and the Secret Shopper program. From Secret Shopper, I recognized that this PAC tries to do its best to conjecture about the public's opinions.

### ***The role of a PAC in its external community***

The roles of PCPA in its community can be summarized as an arts partner, a facility management expert, a gathering place for community members, enriching Portland's cultural

components, creating a flourishing economy, and reducing crime rates. As an arts partner, it can partner with schools or other performing arts organizations to facilitate arts education. As an expert on facility management, it helps other venues operate more efficiently. Earlier, in the literature review, I recognized that a performing arts organization makes contributions to facilitate developing the community, which primarily means the general public. However, based on Williams' explanation, the community also includes the arts community. This breaking down into sub-communities diversifies a PAC's roles in a community. Understanding specific roles in each small group of community members might be very helpful for a PAC to design more customized ways to communicate effectively with target each group.

### ***The role of the executive leadership in external relationship***

As the Executive Director, Williams sets the tone for PCPA, giving other staff members direction on how to develop external relationships. Therefore, Williams can avoid over-managing communications with the external community while keeping the communication by staff members consistent and not to deviate from a standard message. Particularly, Williams divides the external community into four sub-communities: the general public, the business community, the governmental community and the arts community and tends to emphasize the business and governmental communities more. If staff members have a different priority and focus on the general public, PCPA's efforts at developing external relationships will be dispersed and not consistent. The whole relationship development process might become inefficient and ineffective. Williams gives a direction to PCPA's external relationship development. When staff members all have the same expectation, synergy might be generated and strengthen the external relationship development process.

In addition, all directors and managers are the face of PCPA and should act as marketing

and PR persons at all times. Their marketing and PR roles are particularly significant when the financial situation is tough. When PCPA cannot afford a professional marketing or PR staff, directors become the primary message deliverers to facilitate communication with the external community. Whether PACs have sufficient or insufficient marketing professionals, directors are always one of the best resources to support the marketing or PR function. Moreover, managers usually have more opportunities to talk to other community leaders who have the ability to affect more community members. Therefore, the spread of any message can be very effective.

### ***The obstacles of external relationship development***

PCPA's main obstacle is its unclear identity. An unclear identity creates two incorrect external perceptions. First, people think that PCPA is a building rather than a complex. The audience might have an unhappy consuming experience caused by going to the wrong location or building. Any unhappy experiences might endanger the external relationship. Second, audience members may think that one of the resident companies owns PCPA's performance halls or that PCPA actually produces the performances in it. Because of this unclear understanding of its ownership, the audience might attribute a happy experience to resident companies' efforts; because of a poor production, the audience might attribute the bad experience to PCPA. In other words, PCPA's efforts at building a good relationship might be wasted or its external relationships might be damaged by others' bad performances.

Before exploring PCPA's case, I regarded the unclear identity as a very serious problem. Surprisingly, four out of seven interviewees were not sure whether it is important to let people know which organization owns the buildings and which produces the performances. The "meshed identity" is an obstacle which may not be serious enough to have a strong impact on PCPA. According to the four interviewees, there may be solutions but it is not necessary to

address them. However, having an opposite opinion, Scorby asserted that “meshed identity” is an “identity crisis” while thinking there are no solutions for this situation. Therefore, this obstacle might be very important but cannot be addressed.

### ***The importance of developing external relationships***

Generally, it is very important to build the external relationships. Furthermore, Williams divides the external community into four sub-communities. It seems that these sub-communities can be prioritized. In fact, she does emphasize the business and governmental communities more than the public and arts communities because of the former communities’ greater power to influence funding. She does not mean it is not important to build a relationship with the public and arts communities. Her priority is based on an internal comparative scale in the big external community; public and arts communities just weigh lighter against developing external relationships.

The original definition of the external community does not consider the potential segments included in the external community. Once leadership takes community segments into consideration, each segment can provide different levels of support, which affects PCPA’s emphasis on building a relationship with each segment. Through building good relationships a PAC expects to gain the ability to maintain enough resources. Resources are the key that makes a PAC sustainable. Therefore, it is an efficient and practical way to divide the external community into four and then allocate appropriate efforts to build a relationship. Before asking how important building an external relationship is, exploring why building an external relationship is important will be helpful in deciding which groups have a significant influence on a PAC’s sustainability.

***The methods of internal communication***

The value of internal communication is the pursuit of a mutual understanding between PCPA and its resident companies. PCPA's internal communication is very organized. Each staff member is responsible for communicating with his or her counterpart. PCPA's structured communication methods include scheduled meetings, regular email, and the customer service survey. Based on the need of different positions and departments, these formal communication methods carry over into PCPA's communication with resident companies. However, informal personal conversation has also been regarded as a very important internal communication method within the organized communication background. PCPA's informal methods include a luncheon, a drink, and drop in.

According to PCPA's methods, good internal communication does not emphasize the importance of which creative methods people use to connect to their counterpart but rather how frequently they contact. Even basic methods can show a PAC's sincerity about communication. The key points are to show the resident companies that PCPA always cares about their feelings and provide opportunities for them to understand PCPA.

***The role of the internal community***

Resident companies are the reason that PCPA exists. Particularly, as a public facility, PCPA does not present its own performances; thus, resident companies help PCPA reach its mission. Resident companies define PCPA's identity. Rather than just being an ordinary facility, resident companies allow PCPA to be a "performing arts" space. Resident companies bring people into the facility so PCPA can be known by more community members. Resident companies are PCPA's partners. They provide arts resources to support PCPA.

In particular, PCPA's "meshed identity" issue might not be able to be resolved in a short

time period. If the external community cannot really separate the resident companies from a PCPA's identity, anything that the resident companies do can affect its image. Therefore, the resident companies' also indirectly affect PCPA's external relationship with the public. As partners, resident companies should facilitate PCPA's external relationship development.

### ***The obstacles of internal relationship development***

In fact, the internal community provides one contradiction in internal relationship development. Because of the existence resident companies, PCPA needs to attract other non-resident companies to compensate for the resident company discount use of the spaces. Thus, resident companies might not be able to have full freedom in developing their programs because they need to share spaces with other non-resident companies. If the resident companies do not understand the situation enough, they might blame PCPA. To sustain PCPA and its resident companies' operations, non-resident companies' financial resources are necessary to keep the internal relationship going. With non-resident companies' support, PCPA has enough money to provide resident companies with a discount, and resident companies can afford renting PCPA's spaces. A paradoxical situation exists because the non-resident companies are both a supporter and detractor; non-resident companies financially facilitate the health of the internal relationship while negative affecting the relationship through competing for PCPA's spaces with the resident companies. PCPA's and the resident companies' financial situations paradoxically cause an obstacle to building internal relationships. When resident companies do not have enough money, staff members will become worried about every dollar they spend. They might complain more about PCPA's service. When PCPA has difficulty with finances its staff members will become tougher when resident companies need to negotiate with them.

The second obstacle is time. Because people are very busy, they do not really have time to

have frequent communication. Without frequent communication, it is more difficult to build a stronger internal relationship. On 2008 Valentine's Day, PCPA sent a basket full of cookies that were baked by PCPA's chef with a Valentine's card to show its appreciation of all its resident companies. Williams used this example to describe how it is PCPA's leadership's responsibility to think about how to keep frequent connections with the resident companies in different ways, even though people are busy. As she mentioned, "If you don't have time to actually have those one-on-one communications, what else can you do to create the relationship?" The leadership can find other communication ways that are not time-consuming to diminish the impact of this obstacle.

### ***The need of developing strategies to build relationships with internal and external communities***

According to PCPA's interviewees, it is very important to build a relationship with the internal community because resident companies support PCPA's mission. Of course, the external relationship is important. Nevertheless, compared with the internal relationship, the importance of the external relationship is not as highly emphasized by PCPA when the external community is limited to the general public. One thing that needs to be kept in mind is that if the external community encompasses more sub- groups, the importance of the external relationships might be much higher. Although interviewees did not really mention formal strategies for relationship development, all the communication methods that this study found show that various levels of relationship development methods actually exist. Therefore, developing strategies to build relationships is needed but written and formal strategies are not necessary.



### 5.03 Summary of Unexpected Findings

In addition to answering the research questions that I raised to support the purpose of this study, more unexpected findings will be presented in this section. These findings include: 1) the segmentation of external community, 2) volunteers' special identity, 3) flexible internal communication methods, 4) internal and external relationships do not exist separately, and 5) good finance is the main element of supporting relationship development. Because these findings are derived from an in-depth case study exploring the situation of PCPA, these findings are not generalizable to other PACs.

Williams' four segments of the external community are based on the market segmentation idea that I presented in the literature review. The four communities include different kinds of audiences. The arts community is composed of people who watch and learn from PCPA's management performance. The government community is composed of people who watch PCPA's management performance and decide how much funding PCPA can have. The four communities are all audience members; they just have different purposes. This segmentation idea shows that a PAC's external community includes not only those people who appreciate arts in the hall but also those who observe management performance. Apparently, according to PCPA's staff members' statements, those communities which focus on the administration's performance are even more important and powerful. This study simply defined the external community as the general public; nevertheless, in the leadership's perspective, business and government communities might be the main focal groups with which PCPA wants to build a good relationship. Practically, the more resources that a community possesses to affect a PAC's finances, the more important it is that the PAC should build a relationship with the community.

As one important resource for a PAC's relationship development, volunteers play a very

special role in PACs. Because volunteers are also community members, this study regarded volunteers as part of the external community. However, compared with other external community members who are not volunteers, volunteers have more opportunities to observe the inside part of a PAC's operation. Therefore, it is easier for them to understand what PCPA does and to understand its identity clearly than other community members. In another perspective, volunteers should also be considered PCPA insiders. Particularly, PCPA can easily reach this group to talk to it and receive its feedback than reach other community members. This is also the reason that PCPA can develop customized communication methods, such as volunteer newsletters, for this group. Compared with volunteers, other community members make up the majority of the external community and they are difficult to target. This is a big challenge for PCPA to develop a relationship in a more effective way. All PCPA can do is spread its information as broadly as it can. PCPA will have enough opportunities to understand its volunteers; with direct communication to volunteers, its communication and relationship development have a low likelihood of being wasted. The insider characteristics of volunteers allow PCPA's community engagement efforts to have more impact on this external community. As "inside outsiders," volunteers are not easily categorized into external or internal community.

PCPA's internal communication is composed of mostly informal communications and some official communications. Informal communication methods are even more significant in developing internal relationships. This study expected to find a well-established and structured communication system; however, although PCPA clearly defines which staff member should communicate with which counterpart of the resident companies, the defined communication structure also allows PCPA's staff members to build flexible internal communications. Several interviewees confirm that informal communication methods are more effective than established

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formal ones. In addition to informal communication that happens in an office context, this study surprisingly found that some internal relationship development examples happen in a non-office context, such as restaurants and receptions. To develop a deeper internal relationship, a flexible communication system allows a PAC to expand the efforts outside of the official domain. Non-official contexts allow people to talk like friends rather than working partners. A feeling of friendship can strengthen a relationship.

This study discussed and explored internal and external relationships separately. Because PCPA is the connection to link the two communities together, the internal and external relationships actually affect each other. One relationship is another relationship's infrastructure. If PCPA does not have a good relationship with the resident companies, its community or educational programs cannot happen without resident companies' arts resources. Therefore, it will not be able to develop its external relationships. Another example is the free ticket negotiation with resident companies that Humphreys raised. Volunteers who serve in a PAC usually expect to have various free passes to performances. However, without a great internal relationship, volunteers have no opportunity to receive free tickets. As a result, volunteer satisfaction might decrease. On the other hand, the external relationship also affects the internal relationship. If the external community does not like PCPA, community members may not be willing to attend performances in the facilities and the resident companies' tickets cannot sell well. A bad financial situation causes tension in the internal relationship. The whole PAC operation system composed of resident companies, PCPA, and the general public is interrelated. Problems might affect all participants, even though problems actually happen only in one relationship or one group.

Finance is the main factor that manipulates PCPA's relationship development process.

Financial issues can easily cause tension when building internal relationships. Bad finances induce tough attitudes toward any negotiations related to money. To balance revenues and expenses, PCPA needs to attract a sufficient number of non-resident companies to perform in its buildings. This prevents resident companies from developing more programs and potentially endangers the internal relationship. For the external relationship, good finances can support a PAC in developing more external relationship related departments and positions. Moreover, because of finances, PCPA develops a community segmentation strategy and focuses more on those communities which can provide strong monetary resources to PCPA.

### **5.04 Recommendations for Future Arts Administration Leaders**

Through exploring PCPA's case, this research project gained a better understanding of a PAC's relationship development context. According to the collected information, PCPA's case shows several good strategies on which might be capitalized by other PACs and potential common problems which might also exist in other PACs. Based on these strategies and problems, this study presents several recommendations to the future leadership of PACs and expects to facilitate a better PAC administration. The following recommendations are divided into those for external relationships and those for internal relationships.

#### ***For external relationship***

##### **1. Clear messages are more important than broader communication tools**

Although more communication media mean higher information availability, well-designed messages are also very important. Integrating more information about the PAC's role and identity into external messages can facilitate the public's understanding of a PAC. The Tulsa Performing Arts Center website clearly indicates that the PAC is "a Department of the City of Tulsa." In the

“About” section, this website also describes that the PAC does not present events but provides space to other organizations. A website is a common medium but clear information enhances its effect as a communication tool.

### 2. Listen to your external community proactively

Good communication requires messages to flow mutually. Because there are so many community members and usually only a small number of community members provides their opinions, the PAC’s staff needs to actively go to the community to listen to them. Do not wait for community members’ complaints; actively ask what they need. Moreover, developing more active tools to receive feedback and encourage the external community to offer its ideas. PCPA’s on-site survey is a good active tool and it also encourages people to fill the survey by offering a free drink to those who complete it.

### 3. Appropriate segmentation facilitates an effective communication approach

To design effective communication methods and messages, segmenting the external community into several individual groups can be very helpful. Because a PAC functions differently for each group, the group might have a different view of the PAC. The same communication message cannot work for all of them. For example, PCPA provides the Spotlight Tour to the business community and public tours to the general public. Based on a similar tour idea, these two message delivery methods are designed to communicate with different targeted communities. Community segmentation allows the leadership to assign the priority of each sub-community. In particular, the leadership of small PACs needs to allocate resources smartly. However, the leadership should be careful about the group that receives least priority. Least priority does not mean not important at all - do not ignore the one with least priority. Any kind of support can strengthen a PAC’s position in the community.

### 4. The power of volunteers

As “inside outsiders,” the volunteers’ special position should be emphasized. In particular, even though volunteers work for a PAC, they are still regarded by other community members as part of their community. Any ideas that volunteers have are very credible because other community members know that volunteers understand many inside matters. The number of volunteers is several times more than that of a PAC’s full-time employees; thus, messages can be distributed very fast through volunteers. Moreover, networking allows volunteers to have the ability to target the right message receivers, who are more interested in arts.

Volunteers’ special position allow them have a chance to choose the group to which they want to belong. Therefore, when they are satisfied with the PAC, the satisfaction strengthens their ownership of the PAC and they are willing to spread positive words for the organization. Nevertheless, when they are not satisfied with the PAC, they turn to becoming outsiders and their number of complaints about the PAC might increase and spread.

### 5. Build a good combined image with resident companies

The partnership between a PAC and its resident companies make the two parties unable to avoid affecting each other’s external image and relationship development with the external community. The interactions between the audience and PAC and those between the audience and the resident companies do not work separately. One bad interaction can affect the whole experience and the parties involved in it. Therefore, even if the PAC has a clear identity separate from the resident companies, customers will just regard the two parties as a whole system.

Based on the whole system idea, leadership should make sure the combined image of the two parties can be positive and consider developing a good image with the resident companies. The two parties might need to set a standard for providing services to make sure both of them

can maintain a good image which also supports their partner's image. The leadership should understand that a good image for both can create synergy but a bad image can happen if just one of the parties' images goes wrong.

### ***For internal relationship***

#### **1. Always remind resident companies of your presence**

It is necessary to create opportunities to interact with resident companies as often as possible. Many people contact each other only when they need to communicate or only when there is a problem. Nevertheless, contacting resident companies as needed keeps the internal relationship a working partnership; the same as engaging the external community, a PAC should try to naturally be part of resident companies' daily lives. For instance, Siemssen said that she often shows up at different resident companies' occasions. If staff members do not have time to visit in person, the PAC then needs to develop alternative methods to be present in the resident companies' lives. PCPA's Valentine's Day basket is a great example showing how a PAC can capitalize on a special holiday to present itself in partners' lives.

#### **2. Actively tell resident companies what you do for them**

Information transparency can strengthen the trust between a PAC and its resident companies. The stronger the trust and understanding, the fewer the complaints are from resident companies. However, it is not resident companies' responsibility to understand what a PAC does for them; a PAC should actively deliver whatever they want to let its resident companies know. Resident companies might not have enough time to understand what the PAC does for them. Therefore, a PAC needs to develop communication messages that are easily understood and then put them in a position which can easily be seen.

### 3. Front-line staff members are important

In fact, front-line staff members are the people who have the most opportunities to interact with resident companies. The more interactions that people have, the more likely it is that they might have conflicts. Thus, encouraging all staff members to communicate with the resident companies is necessary. A PAC should train its staff members to understand that what good communication does for a PAC and how they should achieve good communication. When a PAC possesses an organized communication structure, the leadership gives other staff members, the front-line members, a direction to follow. The front-line members are required to implement the expected direction. A strong front-line communication is necessary for achieving higher level communication.

### 4. Recognize your resident companies

The leadership of a PAC should always remember that resident companies support its mission and make the facilities exist meaningfully. A PAC should always show recognition to its resident companies and let them know how meaningful they are for a PAC.

## **5.05 Avenues for Future Research**

This study only explored one case, PCPA, which is a public PAC. However, there are many other types of PACs in the United States. For example, four of the five PACs which provided this study with a general understanding are nonprofit organizations and do programming. Different types of organizations might have different relationship development situations. Moreover, this study only interviewed the main leadership of PCPA. The gathered information and perspectives were limited by not involving internal and external communities' perspectives. Through all the interviews, this study also discovered more elements that impact a PAC's relationship



development; these elements, such as segmentation of community and volunteers, need to be taken into consideration in future research. Therefore, there are still many gaps that can be explored. Future research might address following questions:

- What are resident companies' perspectives on developing relationships with a PAC?
- How do general community members look at a PAC in their community?
- How should a PAC segment its internal and external communities into sub-communities?
- What is the role of volunteers in a PAC?
- How does the interaction between internal and external communities affect PAC relationship development?
- Does the type of PAC affect a PAC's relationship development process?
- How do other types of PACs, such as nonprofit PACs and PACs which do programming, develop relationships with their internal and external communities?

### **5.06 Conclusions**

The purpose of this project was to raise awareness among the executive leadership of PACs with regard to their proactive roles in relationship cultivation and to formulate findings and recommendations for emerging leaders of PACs. This study expected to help the PACs' leadership to contribute to the construction of win-win situations between a PAC and its surrounding communities. A PAC possesses arts and administration resources and provides a destination for tourists, an education center for people of all ages, and a gathering place for people who perform and people who appreciate arts. A PAC is a connection to link every individual and every group in the same community together and an attraction to bring more

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individuals and groups to flourish in the community. Because PACs are a key connection, a healthy PAC-oriented relationship system can further strengthen the health of the whole network. Each PAC is built based on various positive expectations; I believe that positive relationships can give a PAC power to achieve those expectations.

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## Successful Relationship Development

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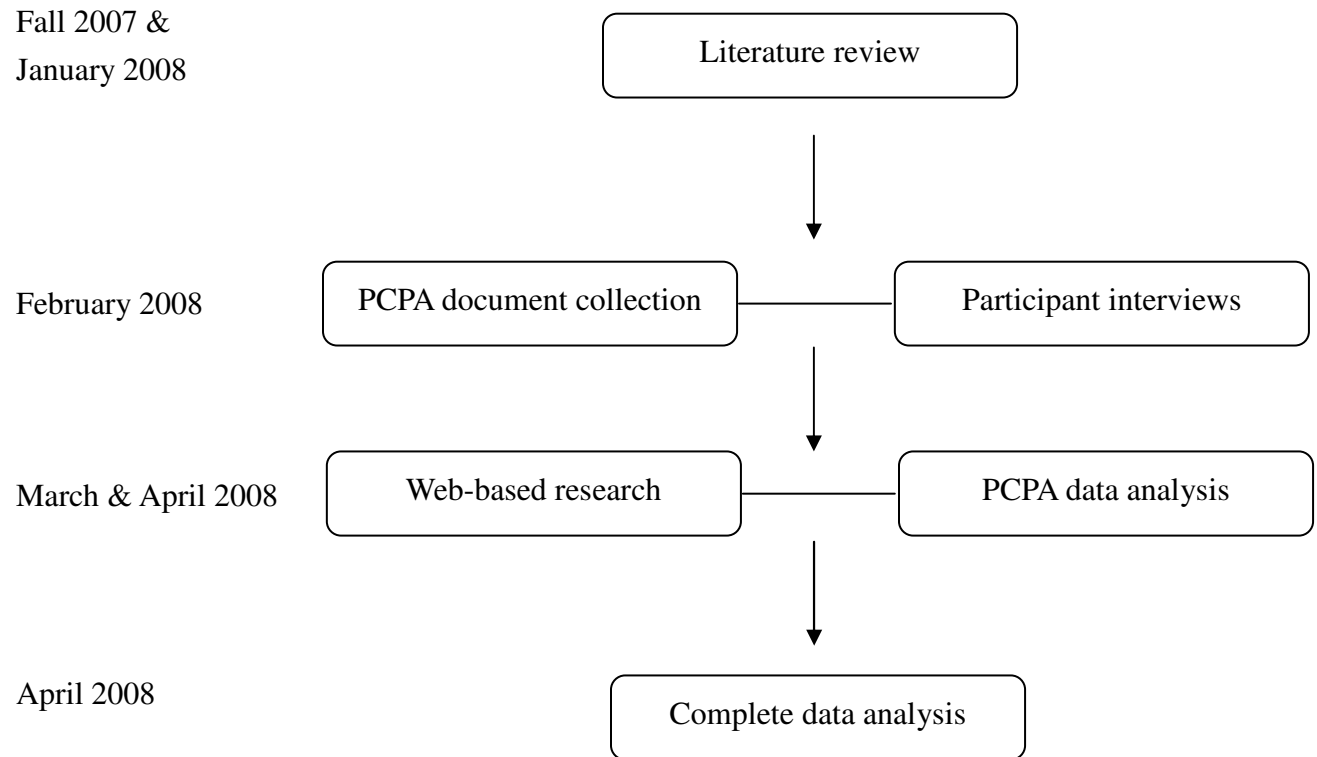
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**Appendix A: Data Collection Schematic**



## Successful Relationship Development

### Appendix B: Recruitment Letter

Date

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Dear <POTENTIAL INTERVIEWEE>:

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Successful relationship development: Building a positive relationship between a performing arts center and its internal and external communities*, conducted by Wei-Ping Wang from the University of Oregon's Arts and Administration Program. The purpose of this study is to understand a performing arts center operation system, clarifying the elements of a performing arts center which has a positive relationship with its community.

In the past few years, one remarkable trend, proliferation of performing arts centers is taking place around the world. Performing arts centers are regarded as having an important role to improve a community. But how can a performing arts center operate effectively and efficiently, playing the expected role? The relationships around a performing arts center needs to be understood through deeper insights. The purpose of this study is to understand those relationships, to find the elements of a performing arts center which has a positive relationship with its community, and to provide managers of performing arts centers with a good reference to enhance their internal and external professional relationships.

You were selected to participate in this study because of your administrative position with Portland Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA) and your experience and role of communicating with resident companies and/or the general audience community. If you decide to take part in this research project, you will be asked to provide relevant organizational materials, participate in an in-person interview, lasting approximately forty-five minutes to one hour, during winter 2008 and be available for follow-up questioning via phone or email as needed. If you wish, interview questions will be provided beforehand for your consideration. Interviews will take place at PCPA, or at a more conveniently located site. Interviews will be scheduled at your convenience. In addition to taking handwritten notes, with your permission, I will use a digital recorder for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked to provide follow-up information through phone calls or email.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (541)514-1523 or [wwang1@uoregon.edu](mailto:wwang1@uoregon.edu), or Dr. Patricia Dewey at (541)346-2050. Any questions regarding your rights as a research participant should be directed to the Office for the Protection of Human Subjects, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, (541) 346-2510.

Thank you in advance for your interest and consideration. I will follow up on this letter within two weeks by email and/or telephone to shortly speak about your potential involvement in this study and to schedule a time for conducting the interview.

Sincerely,

Wei-Ping Wang  
1230 Ferry St. Apt. 13  
Eugene, OR 97401

## Appendix C: Consent Form

### **Successful relationship development: Building a positive relationship between a performing arts center and its internal and external communities**

Wei-Ping Wang, Principal Investigator  
University of Oregon Arts and Administration Program

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Successful relationship development: Building a positive relationship between a performing arts center and its internal and external communities*, conducted by Wei-Ping Wang from the University of Oregon's Arts and Administration Program. The purpose of this study is to understand a performing arts center operation system, clarifying the elements of a performing arts center which has a positive relationship with its community.

In the past few years, one remarkable trend, proliferation of performing arts centers is taking place around the world. Performing arts centers are regarded as having an important role to improve a community. But how can a performing arts center operate effectively and efficiently, playing the expected role? The relationships around a performing arts center needs to be understood through deeper insights. The purpose of this study is to understand those relationships, to find the elements of a performing arts center which has a positive relationship with its community, and to provide managers of performing arts centers with a good reference to enhance their internal and external professional relationships.

You were selected to participate in this study because of your administrative position with Portland Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA) and your experience and role of communicating with resident companies and/or the general audience community. If you decide to take part in this research project, you will be asked to provide relevant organizational materials and participate in an in-person interview, lasting approximately one hour, during winter 2008. If you wish, interview questions will be provided beforehand for your consideration. Interviews will take place at PCPA, or at a more conveniently located site. Interviews will be scheduled at your convenience. In addition to taking handwritten notes, with your permission, I will use a digital recorder for transcription and validation purposes. You may also be asked to provide follow-up information through phone calls or email. There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study, particularly since this phase of research is exploratory in nature.

Your consent to participate in this interview, as indicated below, demonstrates your willingness to have your name used in any resulting documents and publications and to relinquish confidentiality. It may be advisable to obtain permission to participate in this interview to avoid potential social or economic risks related to speaking as a representative of your institution. Your participation is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

I anticipate that the results of this research project will be of value to the performing arts centers management as a whole. However, I cannot guarantee that you personally will receive any benefits from this research.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (541)514-1523 or [wwang1@uoregon.edu](mailto:wwang1@uoregon.edu), or Dr. Patricia Dewey at (541)346-2050. Any questions regarding your rights as a research participant should be directed to the Office for the Protection of Human Subjects, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, (541) 346-2510.

## Successful Relationship Development

Please read and initial each of the following statements to indicate your consent:

- \_\_\_\_\_ I consent to the use of digital recorder and note taking during my interview.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I consent to my identification as a participant in this study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I consent to the potential use of quotations from the interview.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I consent to the use of information I provide regarding the organization with which I am associated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I consent to be available for follow-up questioning via phone or email after the interview.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I wish to have the opportunity to review and possibly revise my comments and the information that I provide prior to these data appearing in the final version of any publications that may result from this study.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty, that you have received a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies. You have been given a copy of this letter to keep.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your interest and participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Wei-Ping Wang  
1230 Ferry St. Apt. 13  
Eugene, OR 97401

**Appendix D: Interview Information Sheet for Data Analysis**

Date  
Location

Interviewee Profile

Name:

Organization:

Position:

Consent: \_\_\_\_\_ Written    \_\_\_\_\_ Audio Recording    \_\_\_\_\_ Quote    \_\_\_\_\_ Members Check  
                  \_\_\_\_\_ Thank You Letter

Interview Context Description:

Keywords	Notes

## **Appendix E: Interview Questions**

### ***Relationship with internal community:***

1. What would you consider to be the characteristics of a good relationship with the Portland Center for the Performing Arts' (PCPA) resident companies?
2. How do you describe the relationship between the PCPA and your resident companies?
3. Are you satisfied with the PCPA's current relationship with its resident companies? Why or why not?
4. What kind of method do you use to get feedback from your resident companies?
5. Do you think a feedback channel between a performing arts center and its resident companies is needed?
6. How do you manage the PCPA's communications with its resident companies?
7. How important do you think it is for a performing arts center to develop strong relationships with its resident companies?
8. What are the obstacles to developing strong relationships with the PCPA's resident companies?
9. How can you address these barriers?

### ***Relationship with external community:***

1. What would you consider to be the characteristics of a good relationship with the PCPA's external community?
2. What do you consider the role of a performing arts center to be in its community?
3. How do you describe the relationship between the PCPA and its general community?
4. What kinds of programs or strategies are used to engage the PCPA's community?
5. What kind of methods do the PCPA use to listen to its community audience?
6. How satisfied are you with the PCPA's relationship with the community?
7. What changes would you like to see in this relationship?
8. What are the obstacles to developing strong relationships with the PCPA's community?
9. How can you address these barriers?

### ***Final Question:***

1. How would you compare the PCPA's relationship management strategies and processes with those of other urban performing arts centers in the United States?

**Appendix F: Data Collection Sheet for Document Analysis**

Date

Location

Document Profile

Title:

Type:

Documented Date:

Reference Citation:

Coding	Notes