ONTARIO**PRESENTS**

ONTARIO PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTING NETWORK
192 Spadina Ave, Suite 305, Toronto, ON M5T 2C2

USER MANUAL for

"From Seed to Season: How to Grow as a New Young Audience Presenter"

A TOOLKIT

By Joanne Churchill
Joanne Churchill Arts Consulting
2023

How to Use this Toolkit

"From Seed to Season" aims to support new and emerging presenters achieve their vision of connecting artists with children and youth in their community by sharing various benchmarks necessary for developing a young audience presenting series or organization.

The document is meant to be a useful **toolkit** or **resource library** that offers meaningful information and practical resources for young audience presenters. Digital links are embedded throughout the document to direct readers to additional information. Look for the following ICONS to access

 infographics, PDF reports, webinars, videos, websites, and appendices.

This USER MANUAL highlights key elements of each chapter so presenters can easily navigate throughout the document and then access information that is pertinent to their specific level of experience and need.

Presenters are NOT expected to do everything in this document as listed. Instead, presenters are encouraged to explore the elements that are appropriate to their organization's capacity, and the needs of their audience and community.

Chapter One: Seeding

About this Chapter

The basis of this chapter is to provide a basic understanding of the role of the presenter, how a presenter works within the presenter ecology, and the value of presenting for young audiences not only for children and youth but also for the community.

Key Takeaways

1. Understanding the role of a presenter and how a presenting season unfolds. Page 02.
2. Understanding how presenting for young audience contributes to a child's cultural development, local business, health and well-being, and the building of future audiences. Page 04.
3. Understanding the intrinsic and extrinsic impact that arts and culture have on children and youth and the importance of sharing that information. Page 05.

Sample Resources

Webpages offering statistics supporting how arts and culture makes communities better.

Research reports illustrating how the performing arts extends interpersonal skills, inspires innovation and fosters hope in children.

Videos exploring the ecology of presenting and its societal benefits.

Chapter Two: Sprouting

About this Chapter

This chapter explores the foundational work that needs to be carried out before the programming, ticketing, and marketing decisions are even considered.

Key Takeaways

1. Understanding the qualities and skill sets necessary for thoughtful and meaningful leadership. Page 07.
2. Understanding and reflecting on why a presenter wants to embark on the presenting journey and what values they want to integrate into their programming and the presenting series. Page 10.
3. Understanding the value of knowing one's own community and learning how to communicate to its various components. Page 12.

Sample Resources

Webpages discussing the value and benefits of having racialized individuals in leadership positions.

Documents listing leadership competencies for cultural organizations.

Videos exploring how to focus personal and organization values into actions.

Chapter Three: Growing

About this Chapter

This chapter highlights how meaningful planning is integral to the presenting journey.

Key Takeaways

1. Understanding the importance of planning with equity, diversity, and inclusion at the forefront of the presenting journey. Page 17.
2. Understanding the need for planning using a mindset of consensus building. Page 21.
3. Understanding how to inject a presenter's values, vision, and mission into a larger plan. Page 23.

Sample Resources

Documents discussing the value and benefits of having racialized individuals in leadership positions.

Websites offering a curated collection of resources that act as a starting point on the issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Webinar exploring how to visualize and write a purpose, vision, and mission statement for a cultural organization.

Chapter Four: Budding

About this Chapter

This very large chapter offers presenters 9 sample strategies for building a presenting series or organization and how these strategies could be included in a presenter's own action plan.

Key Takeaways

1. **Strategy 1: The Team**

   i) Building a supportive team by understanding the value of volunteering, engaging & retaining volunteers, defining volunteer roles & responsibilities, developing leadership self-care practices, & joining a collaborative association. Page 28.

   ii) Sample Resources

    Documents listing the various volunteer roles, their associated tasks and the skills needed to accomplish those tasks for a cultural organization.

2. **Strategy 2: The Money**

   i) Budgeting and securing financial sustainability by understanding the importance of financial planning, learning the elements of a budget, establishing multiple revenue sources. Page 32.

   ii) Sample Resources

    Webinars offering information on budgeting, cash flow, revenues and more.

3. **Strategy 3: The Child**

   i) Building audiences for now and the future by using various types of research to understand the needs and wants of a community, listening to the research results and incorporating that information into decision-making. Page 37.

   ii) Sample Resources

   Infographic illustrating the steps to building audiences.

4. **Strategy 4: The Venue**

   i) Securing venue and production/technical elements by acknowledging traditional and non-traditional venue options, creating a venue inventory, understanding the impact of a relaxed performance policy, understanding the basic sound, lighting elements and technical rider requirements. Page 40.

   ii) Sample Resources

   Websites listing technical terms to help presenters understand the basics of sound and lighting theatre production.

5. **Strategy 5: The Talent**

   i) Programming and curatorial decision-making by appreciating the uniqueness of young audience programming, connecting with artists/companies, documenting and evaluating performances, contracting and negotiating fees. Page 44.

   ii) Sample Resources

   Webinar offering information on the fundamentals of programming.

6. **Strategy 6: The Sell**

   i) Making ticketing decisions by understanding the various types of tickets that could be sold, exploring the various mechanisms used to sell hard-copy and digital tickets, evaluating the cost structure of tickets, and deciding on when to start selling tickets. Page 49.

   ii) Sample Resources

   Websites offering information about online sales providers, inventory management, and types of ticket selling platforms.

7. **Strategy 7: The Story**

   i) Determining marketing decisions by implementing a marketing plan and strategy at the outset, using storytelling to connect with audiences, implementing appropriate tactics to connect with audiences and community. Page 52.

   ii) Sample Resources

   Website offering various training modules that teach key marketing concepts, strategies, and planning.

8. **Strategy 8: The FOH**

   i) Implementing Front of House elements by understanding the full audience experience from accessibility, safety procedures, announcements, acknowledgements, protocols concerning late seating, babes in arms, and cell phones etc... Page 54.

   ii) Sample Resources

   Website offering information on making theatre spaces more accessible.

9. **Strategy 9: The Connection**

i) Communicating and liaising with artists, agents, and managers by creating a performer's package to be shared by all parties.

ii) Sample Resources

Appendices offering sample action items to help presenters share information with artists, agents, and managers.

Putting it All Together

This last section encourages presenters to take from the sample strategies what is meaningful to their series, organization, audience, and communities and start to brainstorm their own strategies and action plans.

Sample Resources

Worksheets on how to create a strong project plan for cultural organizations.

Chapter Five: Flowering

About this Chapter

This chapter explores the non-performance aspects of presenting and building a sustainable future for the series or organization.

Key Takeaways

1. Understanding the unique factors and benefits of both community engagement and audience engagement. Page 65.
2. Establishing a plan to document an organization's process, roles, responsibilities, and tasks. Page 68.
3. Implementing opportunities to evaluate both successes and challenges. Page 71.

Sample Resources

Documents exploring how to plan and design community engagement opportunities.

Websites offering articles that explore the various methodologies of measuring a project, its impact, and deliverables.

Websites that offer training modules and tip sheets for principles and practices for engagement with strong partnerships.

📎 Sample Appendix