

Blue Sky Music Camp: Integrated Marketing & Communications Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blue Sky Music Camps (Blue Sky) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2007 in Salt Lake City. Blue Sky is a unique, outside-the-box approach providing students an affordable opportunity to experience music and learn from industry professionals. It provides students a creative avenue to apply technical and traditional training in an alternative setting: learning and playing music using listening and innate musical skills.

There are four major competitive summer music experiences: Lyceum Music Festival, Intermountain Suzuki String Institute, BYU Young Musician Summer Festival, and MAT (Music, Art, and Theater) Camp. There are sixteen other youth music organizations running year round that are general competition for Blue Sky. Current strategic distribution is to music educators and parents and to utilize the reach of strategic partnerships.

According to the survey conducted in Feb 2016, the target audience of parents fits in the 35–44 age bracket, skewing 67% female, and an average household income of \$50,000+. They have students between 10–18 years old. 73% of them report that cost is the most important factor in determining which activities their students participate. They rely on social media and music educators to discover opportunities for their students.

Research suggests that the ideal music educator supporting Blue Sky had taught three or more years in an instrumental program (band, guitar, orchestra). These educators are continually looking for opportunities for their students to participate, and the best time to get information to them is mid-April to the end of the school year.

The best strategies for reaching the target audience include testimonials, faculty quotes and endorsements, strategic partnerships, sneak peaks to current year event, and contests surrounding preregistration. The best-integrated marketing and communication vehicles for Blue Sky is electronic communications, social media, public relations, direct mailing (to educators), and industry journals (post 2016 event).

The goal associated with this IMC plan is to re-establish Blue Sky's industry presence and grow market influence to increase long-term viability. In accordance with this goal, I recommend the following three recommendations

- Implement 2016 marketing strategies in print and electronic formats by May 15, 2016.
- Increase awareness of Blue Sky from 14% to 65% by Oct 2016.
- Register forty students by July 2016.

Strategies and tactics to accomplish these objectives are outlined in this document. This plan includes creative briefs specific to each target audience, as well as sample document mockups.

The evaluation of this plan includes following a checklist to ensure the completion of implementing the marketing strategies in a timely manner; conducting an annual follow-up survey; finally, reviewing the registration records, money collected, the cost of running the camp, and cost of implementing this IMC plan.

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SITUATION ANALYSIS

Introduction

Blue Sky Music Camps (Blue Sky) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2007, with the first camp held in Rexburg, ID. The next camp wasn't held until 2009 but for two consecutive years, a camp was held in Rexburg, ID and Salt Lake City, UT. Then from 2011-2014, the camp was only held in Salt Lake City, UT.

The 2014 camp was the first year with the shift in administration from the founder to a new administrator. However, that person moved out of state in the early planning stages, and the 2014 camp came together in a compressed time frame. The 2015 year a partnership was struck with an out-of-state 501(c)(3) non-profit music camp. The participation was less than expected for the Blue Sky courses, and the resulting brand dilution was disappointing. 2016 has brought a change in administration with the goal to strengthen and reestablish the Blue Sky camp and keep it as a stand-alone camp in Utah.

With this history in mind, this analysis will examine future potential of the Blue Sky brand in relation to its current market situation.

Competitive Communications Analysis

Blue Sky has some direct competitors and general competitors. This section will outline with more detail the direct competition and list the general competitors.

Lyceum Music Festival

The Lyceum Music Festival is a six-day summer music camp held at the Zermott Resort in Midway, UT each summer, usually near the end of July. The tuition cost to participate is \$500 per student, and there is an optional food and lodging package listed at \$425. The targeted participant is 14–21 years old, a musician—primarily a string player but the camp does include minimal wind and percussion players to round out the orchestral/symphonic sound. The daily schedule starts at 10 AM and ends at 10 PM each day. With slight variations for the opening and closing days. Participation is limited to ~100 instrument spots. Enrollment eligibility is determined by participation in past Lyceum Festivals, one of the Lyceum Orchestras, All-State Orchestra (with proof), or by invitation. Those wishing to participate outside of these guidelines may audition and be granted admission.

Lyceum Music Festival has a slightly older target market than Blue Sky, but there is overlap. Students interested in studying the classical style of string music as well as alternative styles (bluegrass, folk, rock n' roll, etc.) may have to make choices between more than one summer activity, especially if their financial situation precludes them from participating in multiple summer activities at this price point. This festival will also provide a more competitive learning environment. Blue Sky is more of a mentoring learning environment where students are placed in small groups assigned to one mentor for the week.

Intermountain Suzuki String Institute

The 2016 Intermountain Suzuki String Institute (ISSI) is scheduled for June 20–25 for student activities with earlier teacher training programs running the week before and the last few hours on the 25th. There is a registration fee of \$50, and tuition is based on the book level of the participant. This summer camp is held at Juan Diego Catholic High School in South Jordan, UT. There is not a restriction on the number of participants, and this camp often hosts over 400 participants, including international guests and presenters. The only requisite is that all participants are members of the Suzuki Association a cost of \$25 and that they submit a videotape audition to verify training level. The daily schedule is 9 AM to 5 PM, with a slight variation on the opening and closing days. This covers traditional/classical style violin using the Suzuki method, but also touches on fiddling.

ISSI is Suzuki training based, and this will largely affect those students who have grown up in this training model. Parents are very involved with this training model and often participate in the same conference. Students hoping to branch out from the classical genre and experiment with different genres or styles may be faced with choosing between the two camps if their financial situation precludes them from multiple activities at this price point.

BYU Young Musician Summer Festival

The BYU Young Musician Summer Festival is scheduled for June 12–18, 2016. The targeted age group for participation is 14–18 years old. Located on the Brigham Young University campus, Summer Festival offers instruction in more than 20 instruments, including voice. Musical styles include classical, big band, jazz, blues, etc. Instruction is by School of Music faculty and guest instructors. Instruction is offered at the intermediate and advanced levels (<http://ce.byu.edu/cw/yms/>). Prices and daily schedule are not listed on the website.

This competitor will largely affect students who live in the Utah county area, as BYU is located centrally in Utah county. The target market for this festival is the older age bracket targeted by Blue Sky but is the most likely to participate in summer camps or festivals because public school string education is emphasized starting in the sixth grade. There is not a lot of information listed on the website of this festival, but it is assumed that the festival faculty is also BYU School of Music faculty, which are all highly qualified. Blue Sky may need to emphasize their niche focus on styles alternate to classical training, as well as highlight their faculty to highlight their added value and compete in the Utah county area.

MAT Camp

MAT (Music, Art, Theater) Camp is located in Afton, Wyoming and provides a week-long experience for students of all ages. They offer classes in music, art, and theater. The 2016 camp is scheduled for July 11–16. In 2015, Blue Sky partnered with MAT and held their camp tandemly in Afton, Wyoming. New management felt the partnership diluted the strength of Blue Sky and better served both the organization and the target audiences to separate and hold the camp in Utah again starting with 2016.

MAT camp will more likely affect the target market living in the Northern Utah, Southern Idaho, and Western Wyoming areas. The broader focus is appealing to parents who have more than one child interested in participating in a week-long summer program of this nature and are interested in attending workshops for different mediums. MAT Camp's schedule most closely resembles a conference type atmosphere. They provide a camp curriculum booklet that shows classes, suggested age/skill level, and schedule for each day. Many of their classes are taught throughout the week as a serial, but there is also some offered as a single class taught more than once throughout the week. They also provide "track" schedules for those interested specifically in music, art, or theater.

General Competition

The groups identified as part of the general competition are targeting the same group of students who are musically inclined and play the same instruments. Many of these groups are youth orchestras, often associated with school districts to enhance the string experience students are receiving as part of their public school experience. Some of these listed are community groups that provide audition and more competitive musical experience for junior high and high school aged students. However, most of these groups have ongoing programs that last year round. Blue Sky and the direct competitors listed above are offering a week-long summer camp with an immersion-type experience.

- American Heritage Lyceum Orchestras (five audition-only groups)
- Canyons Youth Symphony
- Canyons Honors Symphony Orchestra
- Davis Youth Symphony
- Gifted Music School
- Gifted Music School Preparatory Department
- Granite Youth Symphony
- Granite Junior Youth Symphony
- Nebo Youth Philharmonic
- Northern Utah Youth Symphony
- Northern Utah Youth Chamber Orchestra
- Ogden Youth Symphony/Weber State University String Project
- Utah Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra
- Utah Youth Symphony Orchestra | Utah Youth Philharmonic
- Young Artist Chamber Players
- Wasatch Mountain Camerata, Youth String Ensemble, and Youth Chamber Orchestra

Current Corporate Image

The current corporate image for Blue Sky is closely tied to the image and reputation of the camp faculty. Primarily associated with founder Aaron Ashton, a renowned violinist in the Intermountain region, most notably for his fiddle chops.

The organization is best known for the high quality of the faculty and the strength of their industry experience and mentoring of students in alternative options for young musicians. The camp is primarily focused on string players, but certainly invites all musicians 11–18 to

participate and is described as for anyone wanting to learn how to be involved in music and play with groups outside of a classical setting.

Blue Sky is still relatively unknown and seems new to music educators. This is largely tied to past administrators having been music educators as well, and marketing strategies have had slower and less consistent implementation. From past participation records, about 100–175 students in Utah and Southeastern Idaho area aware of Blue Sky. Many of those participants are now older and outside the target audience, but would also be prime candidates as brand ambassadors.

Blue Sky maintains that the big draw for participation is Aaron Ashton. Aaron's education background, a foundation in classical training, and vast professional experience lend credibility to the brand. The other faculty are specifically chosen to highlight and compliment this characteristic. Reaching the target market and receiving an endorsement from a music educator is easier with this credibility because music educators are willing to encourage students to participate when they know that proper technique is going to be reinforced while learning new concepts and ideas.

Current Brand Development Strategy

As of fall 2015, Blue Sky is under new administration. The primary goal of the new administration is to develop and strengthen the Blue Sky brand, capitalize on the strength of the faculty and the curriculum.

Aaron Ashton founded Blue Sky in 2011 with the goal to provide young musicians who would like to learn how to play in bands, an opportunity to learn from industry professionals about commercial music. Aaron has played with an incredible list of artists and groups and is highly sought after for his commercial music work, although he often plays in a classical setting as well. Through his career in music, he has developed many relationships with industry professionals of all skills and levels. Part of the experience of Blue Sky is meeting other young musicians and being placed in groups of similar skill levels, and learn to be a band for the week. These groups are mentored by a semi-professional or professional musician during rehearsals and performances. They are given instruction on different aspects of the music industry and business through classes and panel discussions and then provided the opportunity to practice the skills they are learning.

Additional insight into areas of brand development should be gained through market research amongst educators, parents, and students. Much of this research will be gained as part of the market research conducted as part of an IMC plan. However, it is recommended for Blue Sky to be continually looking for feedback by formally conducting market research every few years.

Current Distribution Strategy

There are a two major methods of distribution used by Blue Sky: music educators and contact lists—especially through strategic partnerships.

Music Educators

Music educators are a primary source for access to the student population. String students begin in the public school system in the fourth grade. Band and guitar students begin in the seventh grade. Providing music educators with information about summer music opportunities is a key method of triggering interest among the target population. Music educators know their students well enough to know which students might be interested and often recommend additional involvement of those students and their parents.

Strategic Partnerships

Strategic partnerships are a key to the development and growth of the Blue Sky brand. Often times these partnerships will yield sponsorships or donations for Blue Sky, but there is also the advantage of utilizing the resources, especially contact lists, available through these partnerships.

Snow College

Partnering with Snow College provides an opportunity to be on the campus of a leader in commercial music education in the state of Utah and to utilize their resources. Snow College has a strong string project associated with it; that allows Blue Sky the chance to access their network. This partnership also provides Blue Sky with the on-campus room and board options for their participants. Snow College is located in a small town which provides the sense of safety for parents of participants.

Summerhays Music Center

Summerhays Music Center is the leading retailer for instrumental music in the state of Utah. They have partnered with many rural areas to provide their service and product to more students. They have an unparalleled social media presence and following. Summerhays is known for its support of community events that increase and support music education among music students. This partnership is a significant and key relationship for Blue Sky. The relationship gives Blue Sky access to over 10,000 names through email, and promotion via social media, including access to most of the music educators across Utah.

Legacy Music Alliance

Legacy Music Alliance (LMA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides resources to music educators in Utah. This partnership provides Blue Sky access to LMA's membership base, music educators. LMA continues to grow their membership base and provides information to music educators about upcoming events in the community.

These strategic partnerships provide benefit to both Blue Sky and the partnering organizations. These relationships open additional opportunities for participants and increase the awareness of Blue Sky without diluting the brand.

Current Business to Business Strategy

Blue Sky Music Camps, as a product, is designed to benefit students. Advertising can be to businesses in seeking sponsorships/partnerships or donations especially in targeting similar markets. The end user is truly the students who participate in the camp, concluding that Blue Sky really isn't a business-to-business opportunity.

Through further market research additional insight may be obtained that could shed some light on potential business-to-business marketing, but currently, there is not a strategy in place. There is potential business-to-business as sponsors and donors are sought to support the camp each year. These opportunities will be influenced based on agreements with existing sponsors, donors, and supporters.

Current Public Relations Strategy

Blue Sky currently has a manager and a curriculum planner (the founder) for staff. Additional faculty are contracted for the week of the camp. However, they are not required to be involved in the planning and strategy of Blue Sky. Providing timely communication about responsibilities, expectations, and contracts with a consistent messaging is the best way to keep internal PR running smoothly. Post-camp feedback from faculty could also bring additional insight to the PR strategy going forward.

The state of Blue Sky's public relations again is tied very heavily to the reputation of the founder as a musician and the curriculum model developed for this event. Closely behind the founder's reputation is the reputation of the other participating faculty. Each faculty member is chosen not only for their music expertise and experience but also for the ability to teach and mentor.

The strength of Blue Sky's public relations relies on the quality of the faculty and curriculum, and the value of the strategic partnerships' ability to disseminate information on behalf of the organization. Partnering last year's event with an out-of-state organization, with a strong brand, may have created a minor setback for Blue Sky's PR. Blue Sky was looking for a strong administrator and ended up being swallowed up into an existing camp. While their courses were advertised as Blue Sky Music courses, Blue Sky was not actively marketed in most of Utah. This led to some confusion in the target market about the ongoing nature of the camp. The camp was held in Afton, WY, which is not a central location for much of Blue Sky's current target market. As Blue Sky again establishes the strength and image of their brand and increases the marketing presence additional opportunities may become available for Blue Sky. Market research, especially garnering feedback from past participants and music educators, may provide insight into the complete PR status of Blue Sky.

Current Evaluation

There is not a currently in place a process for overall brand evaluation. The major point of evaluation of success is the number of students participating, the goal for the 2016 year is to register between forty and eighty students, forty students is the break-even point financially.

Going forward, implementing a participant and faculty feedback form or survey would be the minimum recommendation to evaluate the brand performance. Soliciting feedback from strategic partners is also highly recommended to gain increased insight for continued and future partnerships.

Blue Sky is in a unique position that there is brand cache as a result of the founder and faculty reputations. The founding market research is an excellent baseline and guide for additional research prior to the 2016 event. After the event is a great opportunity to establish an evaluation process. Establishing a brand development strategy, capitalizing on strategic partnerships, and creating a brand evaluation process are the obvious next steps after analyzing the current situation. Conducting additional market research will confirm or provide insight to actual next steps.

TARGET MARKET ANALYSIS

Research

Blue Sky has identified three potential target markets. Each is different and requires slightly different messaging. The three target audiences are students ages 11–18, parents, and music educators. Each of these markets is integral to Blue Sky's growth and profitability. All three of the target markets require different research methods.

Students

Students, ages 11–18, are a key audience for Blue Sky as they are the target audience as participants. As participants, it would be important to have their feedback as to what interests them in choosing to attend music camps during the summer.

A good method for getting information from students would be a survey. Unfortunately, with time and consent limitations this research was not conducted. Research from this target audience could be conducted in the future when consent from parents can be obtained and time isn't a constraint.

Music Educators

Many past participants in Blue Sky camps were referrals from their music educators. Music educators are a trusted source for students and parents to find out about gear, private lessons, and music opportunities that support and enhance the classroom experience. Instrumental educators (band, orchestra, and guitar) are the target audience within this market.

The best method to gain feedback and insight from this target audience was through interviews. A few key pieces of information being sought in the research is what motivates a music educator to recommend a summer music experience and when is the optimal time to get camp information to educators. I conducted interviews with about five music educators and found that the answers were similar.

The interviewed music educators teach instrumental music in junior high and high school primarily, but many areas have orchestral teachers who also teach string programs in elementary schools, students usually start in the fifth grade. Most of these programs have forty-five to ninety students participating in them.

Educators are continually looking for quality experiences to recommend students, especially during the summer. Summer music experiences that get the attention of a music educator feature qualified music faculty, experiences that challenge students, and help them maintain their skills and technique. Email and postal mail are the best methods to get camp information to them. The ideal timing to receive information is in mid-to-late April when festivals are over, and they are preparing for summer activities. Most music educators receive information about summer music activities throughout the school year, but most do not have the bandwidth to process and pass along the information until the late spring.

Parents

Parents of music students are a key target market. Most often, this audience pays for their students to participate in the music camps, transports the students to and from the camps, and is a main source for other forms of support for their children as they pursue musical interests.

The best method to reach this market was through a survey. The survey was created using Google Forms and the link was shared through social media over a five-day period of time. The survey had ten questions about music participation and five demographic questions. There were eighty-one respondents.

The results of the survey provide insight into one of the key markets for Blue Sky. The charts below (fig. 1 – 4) illustrate key demographics of this market. The majority of the respondents live along the along the Wasatch Front and in Cache county.

Figure 1

Which age category best represents you? (81 responses)

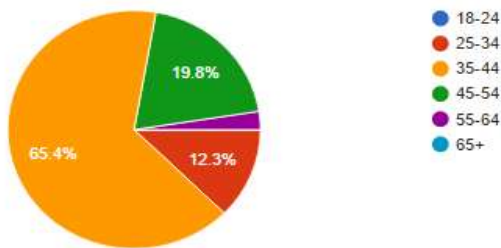


Figure 2

What is your gender? (79 responses)

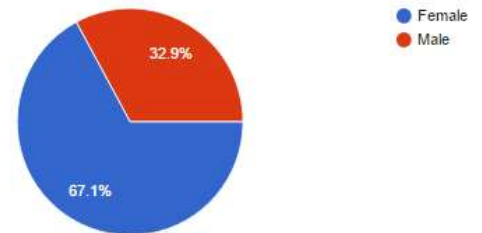


Figure 3

What is your approximate annual income? (80 responses)

Figure 5

During the summer, how does your child maintain his/her skills and techniques?

(79 responses)

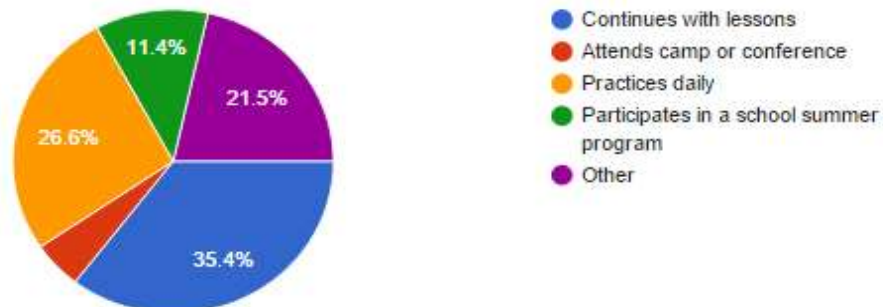


Figure 4

Which age category best represents your student? (80 responses)

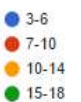


Figure 5 (below) illustrates the different ways students maintain skills and technique during the summer.

Another survey question asked parents the level of student interest in learning to play in a band setting: band setting defined as a small group interested in playing and learning music together. Forty-four percent of the respondents said that their students have a high interest in learning to play in a band setting. When presented with the names of five music camps, including Blue Sky, thirty-one percent or more had heard of each of the camps. In comparison, ninety-six said their students had never participated in any of the summer music experiences.

The figure below (figure 6) illustrates the top three responses parents listed as influencing the decision for students to participate in summer music experiences.

Figure 6

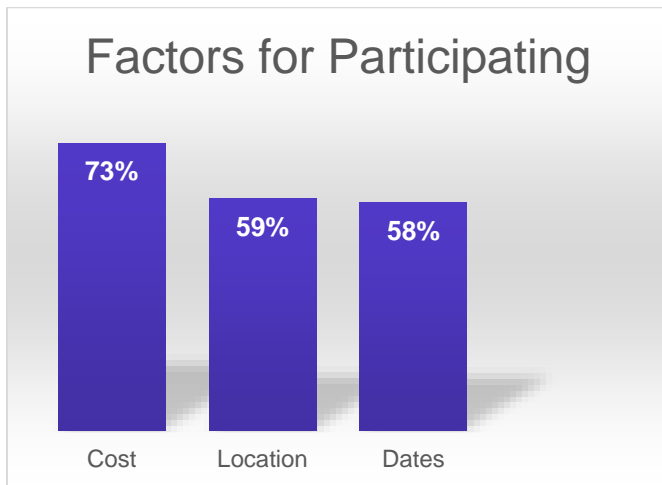
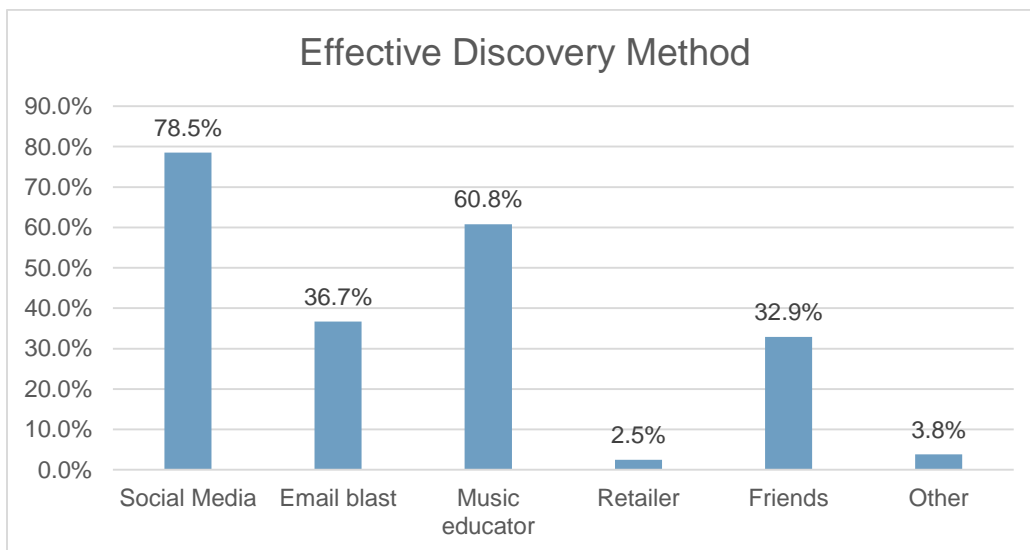


Figure 7 (below) shows the most effective methods for parents to learn about summer music experiences. There is an overwhelming preference for social media, followed by referral from the music educator.

Figure 7



Consumer Profile

The research was conducted for two of the target audiences; therefore, based on the data, I can construct two consumer profiles. One profile for music educators and one for parents, based on the research conducted. Understanding the profile of the target audience is important in crafting a marketing plan.

Music Educators

Mr. Trevor Stevens



Meet Mr. Trevor Stevens. He represents the ideal music educator for Blue Sky Music Camps.

Mr. Stevens has taught orchestra for five years and recently started teaching a guitar class. He enjoys working with the elementary school specialist once a week in the before/after school orchestra program for fifth and sixth graders. He views this as an opportunity to recruit students to participate in his orchestra at the junior high school.

He is passionate about music and desires for his students to gain a life-long love and appreciation of music. In his teaching, he knows that not every student has the same musical taste and interests. He thinks outside the box and consistently provides unique opportunities for his students. He invites clinicians to his classroom to conduct his groups and help his students to think about music in new ways and to take risks and try new things.

After school, Mr. Stevens runs a small private studio of ten students. His lesson times are in high demand, and he frequently has a waiting list. He also substitutes with two or three community orchestral and symphonic groups, when his schedule allows. He enjoys spending time with his wife and four children. They hike, camp, and love the outdoors. They enjoy going to their community library and reading about far off places. Mr. and Mrs. Stevens attend the symphony several times a season, but also enjoy picking up tickets to see pop artists when the tours come to their area.

Mr. Stevens has a busy school schedule throughout the year. He helps to conduct the pit orchestra for the high school musical. His orchestras present four major concerts each school year, but then have several smaller performances to assist with recruitment efforts and to prepare for festivals. He hosts a small solo and ensemble festival for his students to practice their repertoire and solo experiences in front of adjudicators. This festival provides his students with practical experience before their district festival.

He also takes his orchestra on tour each year to provide his students with cultural and musical experiences outside their normal environment. He uses these cultural activities to challenge and stretch his students in their thinking and attitudes. For many of his students, this is the only experience they will have traveling outside their state.

Mr. Stevens watches for summer camps and experiences to share with his students. Due to the intensity of his teaching schedule, he faces the challenge of presenting the information as it comes and the chances that parents and students forget about it, or risk holding on to the information and having the responsibility to remember to share the information with his students. Mr. Stevens prefers to receive this information between mid-April and the end of the school year when the festivals and major performances for the school year have been completed.

Parents

Mrs. Amy Swensen



Meet Mrs. Amy Swensen. She represents the ideal parent consumer for Blue Sky.

She is thirty-seven years old, and mother to three children. She and her husband have an annual household income of \$75,000. Amy is a busy mom. In addition to supporting her children and husband in their schooling and work, she makes sure the children are at their extra-curricular activities. She also runs a part-time business doing floral design for corporate parties.

Amy is proactive in helping her children study and interacts with their teachers frequently. As she meets with each teacher, she seeks feedback and recommendations on activities to reinforce what they are learning in the classroom. Her family is passionate about music and all three children participate in music lessons. While all three children participate in musical activities, each child has chosen which instrument he or she plays and how long they will continue to pursue music.

Currently, the Swensen's middle child, Ben, is a fourteen-year-old violinist in the junior high school orchestra. He has played in a school program since the fifth grade. He is interested in starting a band with his friends, but is unsure of what to do and where to start, but they are already rehearsing in the Swensen's basement. Amy and her husband are supportive and encouraging, and Amy frequently speaks with the other mothers of Ben's band mates.

When Amy is trying to help Ben troubleshoot, buy new gear, or look for opportunities, she goes to her trusty network using social media. #thankyouinadvance She also is comfortable reaching out to the orchestra teacher to get recommendations on experiences she can help provide for him that might be outside the box. Of course, she tries to balance the experience with the household budget and making sure each child has the opportunity to expand his or her horizon. She looks for local activities that provide a great educational experience, but allow her children to try new things, take risks, and find success and joy in passion. When she finds a golden opportunity, she is quick to share the information with her friends and network.

Using Mr. Stevens and Mrs. Swensen as the guide for ideal consumers, Blue Sky Music Camps can tailor messaging that speaks to each of the target audiences in a way that is personal. The consumer profiles were created from the research, interviews with educators and parent surveys. Rhetorical questions can be asked during brainstorming, such as “What would Amy say?” or “How will Mr. Stevens respond?”, that may help to increase the effectiveness of the marketing, as well as potential pivots.

After analyzing research conducted to understand the current marketing situation and strategies and the two largest target audiences, I have constructed a plan based on my recommended goals and objectives for Blue Sky. I have provided strategies and tactics to help successfully implement this plan.

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, & TACTICS

Goal

Re-establish Blue Sky Music Camp’s (Blue Sky) industry presence and grow market influence to increase long-term viability.

Objective #1

Implement 2016 marketing strategies in print and electronic formats by May 15, 2016.

Strategy

Familiarize music educators, parents, and students through consistent messaging for online, electronic, and print mediums that Blue Sky will have a positive impact on students’ musical progression.

Tactics

- Update the website
 - Remove all outdated info
 - 2016 faculty bios
 - Partner logos
 - Update educator and parent resource links
- Update social media profiles
 - Event dates
 - Current contact info
 - Profile and banner pics
- Develop social media schedule
 - Flesh out the basic social media schedule
 - Plan content ideas
- Finalize SWAG
 - T-shirt design and vendor
 - Contest prizes (preregistration incentive contest)
 - Other?

Objective #2

Increase awareness of Blue Sky from 14% to 65% by Oct 2016.

Strategy

Inform parents through music educators and social media that Blue Sky provides students the opportunity to learn music in a band setting with industry professionals.

Tactics

- Mail information kits to music educators between late April and mid-May
 - 11 X 17 poster for program classroom
 - Tri-fold brochure or ½ page postcard
 - Four-up, ¼ page flyer template for educators to copy
 - Letter to the educator
- Save-the-date social media posts and e-mails
 - Current contact e-mail list
 - Share on social media networks
 - 2016 event info
 - Pass along newsletter with opt-in link for people to sign up for updated information
 - Share with strategic partners to e-mail to their contact lists

Objective #3

Register forty students by July 2016.

Strategy

Engage parents to pre-register through the website for the July 2016 event.

Tactics

- Provide registration links to parents via social media
- Supply ¼ page flyers with registration information to local music stores
- Request strategic partners to share social media links with their audiences
- Share social media schedule with strategic partners

Brand Positioning Statement

Blue Sky Music Camps is a unique, outside-the-box approach providing students an affordable opportunity to experience music and learn from industry professionals.

Unique Selling Proposition

Blue Sky Music Camps provides students a creative avenue to apply technical and traditional training in an alternative setting: learning and playing music using listening and innate musical skills.

Creative Strategy

- **Testimonials** from a music educator, parent, and student who benefitted from participating in a past Blue Sky Music Camp. These will serve as content on social media, in e-mails. Invite them to share the post on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat (for students), and Tweet on Twitter. These personal posts and sharing will serve as a human-to-human interaction and word-of-mouth.
- **2016 faculty quotes/endorsements.** Each faculty member is an industry pro, all have Facebook and Instagram accounts (possibly other platforms as well) and are active social media participants. This individual approach is more authentic and will yield better results with the target audience.
- Utilizing **strategic partnerships** will naturally expand the reach and impact of information with potential audiences. For example, Summerhays, a 2016 strategic partner, has an e-mail list of over 10,000 names and a big following on Facebook.
- **Sneak peaks** at guests or industry pros (not on faculty) who will be participating in the 2016 event.
- **Contest.** Running a social media contest offering an incentive to register online, e.g. SWAG, picture opportunity with 2016 faculty, CD, iTunes gift card, instrument accessory, etc. (ask strategic partners to promote contest on their social media too)

IMC Vehicles

- **Electronic communications** – e-mail should be used as the primary electronic communication for the 2016 event, tapping into the current contact list of past participants, but also reaching out to strategic partners to utilize their contact lists and network.
- **Social media** – Blue Sky already has a Facebook account and with a consistent schedule can be a strong tool for reaching the network. I recommend starting a Twitter and Snapchat account at least by the event date to help engage participants.
- **Public Relations** – Writing and sending new releases. Several local newspapers that feature op-eds and stories about the arts, music education, higher education, and community events.
- **Direct Mailing** – Mini-kit for music educators that includes a classroom poster, a tri-fold brochure or ½ page postcard, and a four-up, ¼-page flyer template for teachers to share with their students. This kit will also include an introduction (or reintroduction) letter from Blue Sky's administrator or one of the faculty members. This letter can be a template letter but can be signed by an administrator or a faculty member. (See Table 2 for quantity suggestions and cost estimates.)
- **Industry Journal** – ***for future events*** purchasing advertising space in the Utah Music Educator Association journal is a great method to get brand recognition in front of music educators that could increase awareness and familiarity with Blue Sky. It might be worth writing and submitting an article for the journal as well.

Advertising Schedule

The table below outlines a suggested schedule for advertising and reaching out to the target market for the 2016 event.

Table 1: Advertising Schedule

Activity	Vehicle	Date	
Save-the-date	e-mails	5/3-5/5	
Save-the-date	social media	5/7 or 5/8	
Mini-kit for music educators	direct mail	5/10 or 5/11	
News releases	public relations	6/11, 7/5, post-event	
Social Media Schedule			
One post per week	Unique	Facebook	5/11-6/22
Three posts per week	Unique	Facebook	6/29-7/16
Daily (even multiple times per week)	Unique	Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat	7/11-7/16
One post per week	Unique	Facebook	7/22-8/31
One to two posts per week	Mixed	Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat	Post 8/31

Marketing Budget

The following marketing budget is primarily for the 2016 event, however, there is a suggestion for a 2017 event expense that would need to be considered earlier in the school year, but has already passed and isn't an option for this year's event.

Table 2: Marketing Budget

Mini-kit (music educators)		\$190
50 posters	50.00	
50 brochures	70.00	
50 ¼-page flyer templates	5.00	
postage	65.00	
Social Media		\$170
17 weeks	10.00	
UMEA Journal		~\$1050
Post-2016 event contracted after August		
Total Marketing Budget		\$1,410

CREATIVE BRIEFS AND MOCKUPS

As part of the strategies and tactics outlined in this plan, collateral is needed both digitally and in print. Many creative teams work best with guidelines and an understanding of the audience for which they are designing. A common creative tool is a creative brief. A creative brief summarizes a specific target audience and consumer profile, communication objectives, product features, brand positioning, key consumer benefit, and the creative strategies for that particular audience. All of these summarized sections have been detailed earlier in this plan. Another creative tool are document mockups. These are used to show what the marketing and communication teams envisioned for pieces of collateral. They include font choices, colors, messaging, and placement for the creative team to build on and create a finished product. Both of these documents are based on the research. The next section contains two creative briefs, one for each major target audience and is based on the target market analysis and consumer profiles, and document mockups for three pieces of collateral.

CREATIVE BRIEF: Parent Market

DATE	March 7, 2016
SUBJECT	Blue Sky Music Camps: Creative Brief
AUDIENCE	Parents

Target Audience Profile

- 35-44 age bracket
- Skews female (67%)
- Annual Income: \$50,000+
- Has a student between the ages of 10–18 (63% between 10–14)
- Cost sensitive – 73% list this as the number one factor in deciding to participate
- Rely on social media and music educators to find opportunities for student

Consumer profile



Amy Swensen

Ideal parent for Blue Sky Music Camps

- Age: 37
- \$75,000 annual income
- 3 children
- Entrepreneur; part-time floral business
- Uses social media for advice from other moms, especially finding opportunities for her children
- Will reach out to the orchestra director to confirm participation in the activity for her child

Communication objectives

- **Increase awareness**—Blue Sky’s baseline awareness is 14%, including a goal to increase to 65% among target audience members.
- **Move to Register**—overall communications goal for marketing and advertising is to register 40+ students by July 11. Ads should direct viewers to the website.

Product Features

- **Access to industry professionals**—all staff members are currently active as professional and semi-professional musicians. Students interact with all faculty throughout the camp.
- **Aaron Ashton’s reputation and curriculum**—Aaron is the founder of Blue Sky, and is an internationally renowned violinist and fiddler. Aaron and the administrator work to create all curriculum for the camp.
- **On-campus retreat**—Blue Sky has partnered with Snow College to provide room and board at a reasonable price to participants of the camp. There is a high chaperone to student ratio (1:10) to ensure student safety while providing a retreat/camp type experience,

- **Cultural activities**—Blue Sky has planned activities each night to help the kids get to know each other and music in fun methods, including concerts presented by faculty members.
- **Affordable**—Blue Sky provides an on-campus experience at a reduced price to other camps and workshops.

Product positioning

Blue Sky Music Camps is a unique, outside-the-box approach providing students an affordable opportunity to experience music and learn from industry professionals. Blue Sky provides a relaxed environment designed to get students excited about learning and playing music.

Key Consumer Benefit

Blue Sky Music Camps provides students a creative avenue to apply technical and traditional training in an alternative setting: learning and playing music using listening and innate musical skills.

Creative Strategy

- **Sneak Peak**—a look at an activity or faculty member for the 2016 camp will generate interest and intrigue. Video clips (faculty member playing, concert clip, student groups working together, faculty endorsements) or pictures will be great methods of engaging parents (and students). ***Uses social media, primarily Facebook, for implementation. ***
- **Contest**—offering a SWAG or another type giveaway is a good way to get parents to pay attention. ***Uses social media, primarily Facebook, for implementation. ***
- **Testimonial**—Using feedback quotes from past participants (students, parents, or music educators) will be effective in creating a relatable experience and drive parents to at least investigate Blue Sky Music Camps. ***Uses social media, primarily Facebook, for implementation. ***

CREATIVE BRIEF: Music Educator Market

DATE March 7, 2016
SUBJECT Blue Sky Music Camps: Creative Brief
AUDIENCE Music Educators

Target Audience Profile

- Instrumental music (orchestra, guitar, band)
- Junior high and high school teachers
- Think outside the box
- Look for unique summer experiences for their students
- Best reached with print and digital materials in mid to late April

Consumer profile



Trevor Stevens

Ideal music educator for Blue Sky Music Camps

- Taught for five years
- Recently started guitar class
- Regularly looking for unique experiences for students
- Small private studio
- Plays in community and symphonic groups (as schedule allows)
- Loves classical and pop genres of music
- Provides as many musical experiences as possible during the school year for his students
- Challenges students
- Regularly communicates with parents about potential opportunities (after mid-April)

Communication objectives

- **Move to Recommend**—overall communications goal for marketing and advertising is to register 40+ students by July 11. Materials should motivate educators to recommend the experience to students and parents.

Product Features

- **Access to industry professionals**—all staff members are currently active as professional and semi-professional musicians. Students interact with all faculty throughout the camp.
- **Aaron Ashton's reputation and curriculum**—Aaron is the founder of Blue Sky, and is an internationally renowned violinist and fiddler. Aaron and the administrator work to create all curriculum for the camp.
- **On-campus retreat**—Blue Sky has partnered with Snow College to provide room and board at a reasonable price to participants of the camp. There is a high chaperone to

student ratio (1:10) to ensure student safety while providing a retreat/camp type experience,

- **Cultural activities**—Blue Sky has planned activities each night to help the kids get to know each other and music in fun methods, including concerts presented by faculty members.
- **Affordable**—Blue Sky provides an on-campus experience at a reduced price to other camps and workshops.

Product positioning

Blue Sky Music Camps is a unique, outside-the-box approach providing students an affordable opportunity to experience music and learn from industry professionals. Blue Sky provides a relaxed environment designed to get students excited about learning and playing music.

Key Consumer Benefit

Blue Sky Music Camps provides students a creative avenue to apply technical and traditional training in an alternative setting: learning and playing music using listening and innate musical skills.

Creative Strategy

- **Mini-kit for Educators**—this kit will include everything educators need to provide the information to students and parents. A classroom poster, tri-fold brochure or ½ page postcard, ¼ page flyers, and a letter outlining information about the camp and registration, as well as website information. ***Uses direct mail with follow-up e-mail for implementation. ***
- **Sneak Peak**—a look at an activity or faculty member for the 2016 camp will generate interest and intrigue. Video clips (faculty member playing, concert clip, student groups working together, faculty endorsements) or pictures will be great methods of engaging parents (and students). ***Uses social media, primarily Facebook, for implementation. ***
- **Contest**—offering a SWAG or another type giveaway is a good way to get parents to pay attention. ***Uses social media, primarily Facebook, for implementation. ***
- **Testimonial**—Using feedback quotes from past participants (students, parents, or music educators) will be effective in creating a relatable experience and drive parents to at least investigate Blue Sky Music Camps. ***Uses social media, primarily Facebook, for implementation. ***

DOCUMENT MOCKUPS

DATE March 7, 2016
SUBJECT Document mockups

Document 1

AUDIENCE: Music Educators

- ½ page postcard
- Part of the mini-kit for educators

Additional instructions

- Extend the semi-opaque background behind the text
- Space the text out a bit more
- This is the background image from the website
- Font: Arial Rounded MT Bold
- 5.5 X 8.5
- .25 in bleed



Document 2

AUDIENCE: Music Educators

- ¼ page flyer
- Part of the mini-kit for music educators

Additional instructions

- Grayscale
- Print 4-up on an 8.5 X 11 on paper
 - Sending a single sheet of 4 as part of the mini-kit
- Font: Arial Rounded MT Bold
- Separate the banjo, guitar, violin image from the background
 - Have the image stand out in grayscale
- 5.5 X 4.25
- No bleed

Logo
place holder

Take your music to the next level

Blue Sky Music Camps is back!

July 11-15
Snow College Campus

www.blueskymusiccamps.com

For more information and to
REGISTER today

Sponsor logo
place holder



Document 3

AUDIENCE: Parents, Music Educators, Students

- Social media post—sneak peek or faculty feature
- Video vehicle

Additional instructions

- Request video footage featuring the faculty member or panel guest
- Submit a basic script or questions for faculty member to record answers (can use the voice memo feature on smartphone)
 - Some mention of Blue Sky should be part of the scripting
 - Request the audio file to be submitted via email
- Video interview (short no more than 45 sec) can be used if the faculty member or guest is local do a quick video with a smartphone or easily setup
- Administrative staff will reach out to partners to share the post

Status update: Get to know faculty member [Ryan Tilby]

VIDEO post



EVALUATION AND ETHICS

This section provides suggestions and methods for evaluating each objective of this IMC plan. Evaluating the effectiveness of this plan is important for establishing ROI for Blue Sky, but also managing resources dedicated to implementing this plan. Evaluation provides an opportunity to understand what is working and to change what is not in a timely fashion. Ongoing analysis and evaluation is recommended for continued success of any organization.

Marketing and communication specialists have a responsibility to make sure that all messaging and collateral is presented in an ethical manner. Evaluating the ethics of this plan is important to make sure Blue Sky is represented in the best professional manner possible. My hope is that the questions presented evaluating the ethics of this plan, inspire Blue Sky to evaluate the organizational and performance ethics on an ongoing basis to maintain their professional reputation and credibility.

Evaluation

The goal for this IMC plan is to re-establish Blue Sky Music Camp’s (Blue Sky) industry presence and grow market influence to increase long-term viability. Evaluation is critical to ensure that the objectives and strategies are actually performing in a manner to support and accomplish this goal.

Objective #1

Implement 2016 marketing strategies in print and electronic formats by May 15, 2016.

Evaluation

The best method to measure the completion and performance of this objective is to use a checklist. The tasks as part of this objective are critical to establishing expertise with the market audience, having outdated or inaccurate information on the website can detract from the credibility and expertise of the organization. Below is a checklist for each of the tasks with a general timeline for completion.

Table 1: Objective #1 Evaluation Checklist

	Task	Timeline
	Update the website	April 10–16
	Remove all outdated info	
	Add 2016 faculty bios & pictures	
	Add partner logos	
	Update educator and parent resource links	
	Update social media profiles	April 17–23
	Add event dates	
	Add updated/current contact information	
	Update profile and banner pictures	
	Sign-up for Twitter and Snapchat (in the recommended IMC vehicles)	

Develop social media schedule	April 24–May 7
Flesh out the basic social media schedule (see Table 2)	
Plan content ideas	
Share the social media schedule with partners	
Finalize SWAG	May 8–14
Finalize t-shirt design	
Choose printing vendor	
Finalize and collect contest prizes (preregistration incentive contests)	
Miscellaneous SWAG tasks that have been overlooked	

Table 2: Basic Social Media Schedule

Social Media Schedule			
One post per week	Unique	Facebook	5/11–6/22
Three posts per week	Unique	Facebook	6/29–7/16
Daily (even multiple times per week)	Unique	Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat	7/11–7/16
One post per week	Unique	Facebook	7/22–8/31
One to two posts per week	Mixed	Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat	Post 8/31

Objective #2

Increase awareness of Blue Sky from 14% to 65% by Oct 2016.

Evaluation

Fourteen percent is the baseline measurement established through a survey conducted via social media; Facebook was the vehicle. The responses were collected electronically using Google Forms. The question gauging awareness asked survey participants to click all camp or summer music experiences they had heard of. Using the basic Google analytics included with Google Forms, the answers collected resulted in the baseline measurement.

Based on the target market research and consumer profile, using Facebook is the best method to gauge awareness of new audience. Leveraging strategic partners to help distribute the survey (sharing on Facebook) will increase the efficacy and reach, which will yield more accurate information.

See the Appendix: Social Media Survey for the actual survey that was conducted in Feb 2016. This same survey should be used to conduct the evaluation of Objective #2 performance; the survey will also yield useful research for establishing objectives for the following event year.

The survey should be presented as a music participation survey and conducted using Facebook. The ideal time is in October, far enough past the event but not close enough to the next year's event that social media posting is in a regular posting pattern and not registration-driven content. Post the survey on the Blue Sky's Facebook page or on the page of an administrator and then have it shared by key faculty, partners, and friends. Using this method will yield a larger and organic audience and will help to avoid audience fatigue.

Objective #3

Register forty students by July 2016.

Evaluation

This objective was set based on the calculations provided by the administrative staff that forty students would allow the camp to be self-funded. The easiest method to measure and evaluate performance is to look strictly at the number of students registered for the camp after completion of the camp. A more thorough evaluation is to look at the number of students registered, and the amount of money collected and compare it with the expenses of running the camp as well as the cost of implementing this IMC plan. Measuring in this manner will not only evaluate the completion of the objective; this method creates a more accurate gauge if this objective provided Blue Sky accomplished self-funding or if the numbers need to be adjusted. The best tools used for this evaluation will be the registration report and the profit-loss report. These two reports will allow complete examination of the objective and direct the course for future events.

Ethics

All marketing and communication, internal and external, should be conducted in an ethical and professional manner. For Blue Sky Music Camps, the following guidelines and questions establish a good protocol to follow and examine ethical communications, especially in working with volunteers and for potential growth.

- Do no harm.
 - Is all communication true?
 - Is the product/service represented accurately and fairly?
 - Did any organization or individual receive any harm?
 - Is there potential for unintended consequences?
- Safety and permissions for minors. (Minors are the main participant audience.)
 - Have all precautions and policies been established to protect participants and provide appropriate safety and supervision?
 - What is the age range of participants in the same room?
 - Have policies and procedures been established to deal with potential problems or situations?

- In addition to providing appropriate measures to ensure the safety of the participants, have measures been provided to adequate coverage for the organization?
- What protocol is in place to protect participants and adults (chaperones, staff, and faculty) from one-on-one interaction scenarios?
- How are the safety and permissions policies and protocols being communicated with faculty, staff, and chaperones?
- How are the safety and permissions policies and protocols being communicated with participants and parents/guardians?
- Have all releases, waivers, and/or participation clauses accounted for to obtain and use pictures, videos, and participant likeness?

Using these guidelines and questions will help any member of the Blue Sky team to assess and look at the ethics and professionalism of the communication and behavior, but will also allow evaluation of the ethics of the marketing plan. Does this plan adequately accomplish the goal, while maintaining the highest level of ethics and professionalism? These questions help evaluate those two ideals for this plan and all communication of the organization.

APPENDIX

Social Media Survey

Music Participation Survey

1. Which statement best describes why you and your student participate in a music class or lessons?

Mark only one oval.

- Need art credit
- Didn't want to play sports
- We LOVE music!
- My child chose
- Support mental, social, and emotional development of my child
- Increase scholarship opportunities. College is expensive.

2. What type of instrument does your student play?

If choosing other, please type in a short response.

Mark only one oval.

- Brass
- Woodwind
- Drums/Percussion
- String
- Guitar
- Piano
- Voice
- Other: _____

3. How long has your student played?

Mark only one oval.

- 1 year
- 2-4 years
- 5-7 years
- 7+ years

4. Which age category best represents your student?

Mark only one oval.

- 3-6
- 7-10
- 10-14
- 15-18

5. During the summer, how does your child maintain his/her skills and techniques?

If selecting other, please type in a short response.

Mark only one oval.

- Continues with lessons
- Attends camp or conference
- Practices daily
- Participates in a school summer program
- Other: _____

6. How interested is your student in learning to play in a band setting?

"Band" in this question refers to a small group of musicians learning and writing music together.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not interested	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Already plays in a band

7. How many of the following summer music experiences have you heard of?

Check all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- Intermountain Suzuki String Institute
- Lyceum Music Festival
- BYU Young Musician Summer Festival
- Blue Sky Music Camp
- Benny Golson Jazz Festival (at Snow College)

8. Has you student participated in any of the following summer music experiences?

Check all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- Intermountain Suzuki String Institute
- Lyceum Music Festival
- BYU Young Musician Summer Festival
- Blue Sky Music Camp
- Benny Golson Jazz Festival (at Snow College)
- None

9. Which of the major factors below most influence your decision to participate in a summer music experience?

Check all that apply. If selecting other, please type a short response.

Check all that apply.

- Cost
- Dates
- Location
- Faculty/Staff
- Length of the experience
- On-site room and board
- Carpool options
- Other: _____

10. Which methods are most effective to let you know about summer music opportunities?

Check all that apply. If selecting other, please type a short response.

Check all that apply.

- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, SnapChat)
- Email blasts
- Music educator referral
- Retailer
- Friend
- Other: _____

Demographics

11. What state do you live in?

12. What county do you live in?

13. Which age category best represents you?

Mark only one oval.

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

14. What is your gender?

Mark only one oval.

- Female
- Male

15. What is your approximate annual income?

Mark only one oval.

- Under 20,000
- 20,000 to 34,999
- 35,000 to 44,999
- 50,000 to 74,999
- 75,000 to 99,999
- 100,000+
- Decline