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common great

Introductions

Five Questions for Smarter Marketing

1: WHO are we trying to reach?

2: WHAT do we want them to do?

3: HOW will we reach them?

4: HOW WELL is it working?

5: WHAT NEXT?

REGARDLESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL SIZE, EVERY AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT EFFORT CAN BE PLANNED AROUND THE SAME FIVE QUESTIONS.

Scaling to Your Capacity

Your marketing budget doesn't change the fundamental questions you need to answer.
It changes which tactics are realistic and how much you can accomplish.



Small Organization

1 volunteer or a PT marketer

$500 budget per show

A few hours each week



Large Organization

FT marketer or team

$10,000 budget per show

Specialized staff and tools

YOU DON’T NEED TO ADOPT EVERY STRATEGY IN THE TRAINING TO MOVE THE NEEDLE. IDENTIFY THE FEW THAT MAKE THE MOST SENSE FOR YOUR GOALS AND CAPACITY.

Challenges In Reaching New Audiences

Low Visibility



People don't know we exist

Established Audiences



We're reaching the same people repeatedly

Unclear Results



We don't know which efforts are working

Barriers to Entry



Cost, accessibility, unfamilarity, or preceived exclusivity

Limited Capacity



Not enough staff time, budget, or tools

GREAT PROGRAMMING DOESN'T AUTOMATICALLY TRANSLATE INTO VISIBILITY OR PARTICIPATION. IT TAKES WORK.

What You'll Walk Away With

By the end of the training, you'll be able to:

Find your people



Identify and segment audiences

Choose your channels



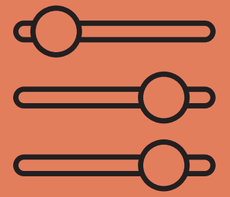
Prioritize effective marketing tactics

Build the Journey



Move people from awareness to participation

Make it Managable



Used right-sized tools and systems

Measure what matters



Track useful KPIs* and evaluate performance

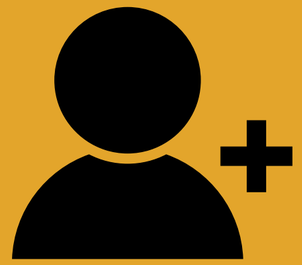
KPI = KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Audience Development

Audience Development Is More Than Attracting New People

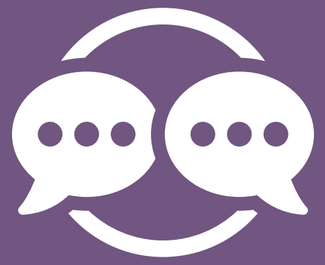
Audience development encompasses the entire relationship between an organization and its community. Reaching someone new is only the beginning.

ACQUIRE



Bring new people into your community

ENGAGE



Create meaningful connections and participation

RETAIN



Give people reasons to return and stay connected

EACH STAGE REQUIRES DIFFERENT MESSAGES, MARKETING STRATEGIES, AND WAYS OF MEASURING SUCCESS.

Start With a Goal, Not a Tactic

A clear goal is the foundation of an effective marketing strategy. It helps determine which audiences to prioritize, which tactics to use, and how to evaluate success.

VAGUE:
We want to reach younger audiences.

SPECIFIC:
Increase first-time ticket purchases among adults ages 25-40 by 20% over the next six months.

Breaking It Down

- **Who:** Adults ages 25–40 who haven't previously purchased tickets.
- **What:** First-time ticket purchases.
- **How much:** A 20% increase over the current baseline.
- **When:** Within six months.

ALWAYS ASK WHETHER YOUR TARGET IS REALISTIC BASED ON YOUR ATTENDANCE HISTORY, BUDGET, AND CAPACITY.

San Francisco Bach Choir

GOAL: Increase overall attendance and revenue generated at the fall concert.

WHO: Interest-aligned arts patrons in the Bay Area

WHAT: First-time and return ticket purchases, revenue

HOW MUCH: 10% increase

WHEN: October 2025 concerts

Outcome for 2025 Fall Concert

Sales: $14,216

58% increase from $8,990 in 2024

Tickets: 582

81% increase from 322 tickets in 2024

TACTICS: EMAIL, ORGANIC SOCIAL, META ADS, COMMUNITY PARTNERS, EVENTS CALENDARS, WORD-OF-MOUTH, ADS WITH ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

Your Plan Should Fit Your Reality

Shared Goal: Attract First-time Attendees

Planning Element	Small Organization	Large Organization
Resources	1 volunteer, $500	Marketing staff, $10,000
Audience	One priority group	Multiple audience segments
Tactics	Partners, email, event listings	SEO, partnerships, digital ads, emails
Measurement	Manual ticket tracking, spreadsheet	Ticketing, CRM, campaign dashboard
Follow-up	One welcome email	Segmented email series

STAFF TIME, VOLUNTEER CAPACITY, EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS, TECHNICAL SKILLS, AND AVAILABLE CONTENT ARE ALL MARKETING RESOURCES.

A Simple Framework for Building Your Plan

1. **Define your goal.** What do you want to accomplish?

2. **Identify your audience.** Who needs to take action?

3. **Access your resources.** What time, money, people, etc. can you commit?

4. **Select your tactics.** How will you reach and engage those people?

5. **Choose your metrics.** How will you know whether it worked?

Knowing Your Audience

Your Audience Isn't One Audience

LOYAL ATTENDEES



Regular ticket buyers and subscribers

CASUAL PARTICIPANTS



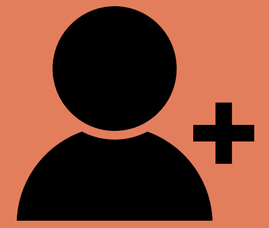
Occasional visitors and past attendees

INTERESTED PROSPECTS



Email subscribers and followers who haven’t attended

NEW AUDIENCES



People who have little to no relationship with you

SAME PRODUCTION, DIFFERENT AUDIENCES, DIFFERENT COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS.

Identifying + Prioritizing New Audiences

Where should we focus?



ASSESS INTEREST AND ACCESS THROUGH EVIDENCE AND COMMUNITY INPUT, NOT ASSUMPTIONS.

Access and Equity

Prospective Audience	Opportunity	Consideration
College students	Potential interest in affordable cultural and social activities	Student discounts, campus partnerships, competing activities
Young professionals	Interested in local experiences and opporunities for connection	Scheduling, ticket prices, accessibility, social motivations
Families with children	Interested in shared activities and educational experiences	Age-appropriate programming, transportation, timing, pricing

What Motivates Someone to Participate?

Effective marketing connects with motivations and helps address barriers.

MOTIVATIONS

What might draw someone in?



Entertainment
Enjoyment
Social connection
Curiosity
Cultural identity
Learning, enrichment
Shared experiences

BARRIERS

What might hold someone back?



Cost
Transportation
Unfamiliarity
Scheduling conflicts
Accessibility
Language
Feeling unwelcomed

DON'T ASSUME DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS TELL YOU WHAT MOTIVATES SOMEONE. AUDIENCE RESEARCH SHOULD VALIDATE OR CHALLENGE YOUR ASSUMPTIONS.

Audience Segmentation in Practice: One Event, Different Messages

First-time audience



“Looking for something different to do this weekend? Experience a night of unforgettable movement, music, and storytelling.”

Newsletter subscriber



“You’ve followed our work. Now experience it live. Join us for an exciting evening featuring three new works. Plan you first visit.”

Returning ticket buyer



“Discover the next chapter in our dance series, featuring bold new choreography from emerging artists. Reserve your seats.”

SEGMENTATION DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN CREATING 15 DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF EVERY EMAIL OR ADVERTISEMENT. START SMALL AND SCALE.

The Audience Engagement Journey

AWARENESS

A prospective patron discovers your organization

INTEREST

The prospective patron seeks out more information

PARTICIPATION

The prospective patron takes action to engage

RETENTION

The patron looks for ways to stay connected

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT ISN'T A SINGLE INTERACTION. IT'S A SERIES OF OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD FAMILIARITY, TRUST, AND ENGAGEMENT OVER TIME.

How Your Story Changes Along the Journey

One organization. Four stages. Different communication goals

STAGE	WHAT YOUR MESSAGE SHOULD DO	EXAMPLE	COMMON TACTICS
Awareness	Spark curiosity	An eye-catching video or photo	Partnerships, Public Relations, Social Discovery, Ads
Interest	Build relevance and confidence	What to expect when you join us	SEO, Website, Video, Email signup
Participation	Make action feel easy and worthwhile	Choose your seats, plan your visit	Event pages, Email, Ticketing, Ads
Retention	Deepen connection and invite return	Explore what's next this season	Follow-ups, Loyalty, Referrals

THE ORGANIZATION'S STORY WON'T FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED. WE'RE CHOOSING WHICH ASPECTS TO EMPHASIZE AT DIFFERENT POINTS.

Tactics to Reach Your Audience

Don't Start With the Channel. Start With the Audience.

The channel is the tool, not the strategy.



Tactic First:

"We should be on TikTok!"



Audience First:

"Where do our prospective patrons discover local events?"

REFLECTION: THINK ABOUT THE CHANNELS YOUR ORGANIZATION USES MOST OFTEN. DID YOU CHOOSE THEM BECAUSE OF YOUR AUDIENCE AND GOALS OR BECAUSE THEY'RE WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS DONE?

Reach New People Without Paying for Ads

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)



Community Partnerships



Referrals and Word of Mouth



Organic Social Media



Earned Media, Event listings



ORGANIC ISN'T NECESSARILY FREE. STAFF TIME IS A MARKETING INVESTMENT. EVALUATE THE EFFORT REQUIRED ALONGSIDE THE POTENTIAL BENEFIT.

SFBC's Tactics

ORGANIC

Mass email
Mail merge emails to segments
Toolkits for choir members
Ticket discounts
Partner promotion
Social Media
Facebook Events
Community calendars
Press release

PAID

Meta ads (Instagram and Facebook)
SF Classical Voice
KQED (NPR)

*UTM.IO for tracking

Paid Acquisition: High Intent vs. Discovery

GOOGLE ADS

Reach people actively searching for something relevant:

Gallary opening
Thursday Art Walk
New artists Seattle
Seattle's top gallary

META

Introduce an experience to people browsing social media:

Teaser video
Behind the scenes content
Ticket discount for new patrons

AUDIENCES CAN BE TARGETED BY GEOGRAPHY, INTERESTS, BEHAVIORS OR BASED ON EXISTING CUSTOMER LISTS. YOU CAN ALSO "RETARGET" EXISTING CUSTOMER LISTS.

Seattle Neighborhood Farmers Markets

GOOGLE ADS
High intent seaches

Goal: Awareness, increase site traffic
Audience: Seattle
Budget: Google Grant, up to 10k/month, six months

-

Impressions: 157,000
Site Traffic: 13,000

META
Lead Gen Forms

Goal: Increase newsletter subscribers
Audience: Lookalike/Interest
Budget: $800, over three months

-

Sign-ups: 990
Cost per lead: $0.81

Make Your Channels Work Together

Campaign goal: Atract first-time attendees to a dance performance

Community Partners:
Introduce the event

Social + ads:
Show the experience

Search/SEO:
Help people find it

Event Landing Page:
A clear, welcoming page with details, accessibility info and ticketing

After Participation:
Thank you email, Feedback, Invitation to Return

A MULTI-CHANNEL CAMPAIGN IS ABOUT COORDINATING DIFFERENT TACTICS SO THEY REINFORCE ONE ANOTHER AND LEAD PEOPLE TOWARD A SHARED GOAL.

The Marketing Investment Decision

Before investing in a tactic, ask:

1. **Audience fit:** Is this likely to reach the people we want?
2. **Goal alignment:** Will this help produce the action we're seeking?
3. **Resource fit:** Can we realistically afford and maintain it?
4. **Measurability:** Can we tell whether it's working?
5. **Learning potential:** Can we test, improve or build on the results?

GOOD MARKETING STRATEGY IS AS MUCH ABOUT DECIDING WHAT NOT TO DO AS DECIDING WHAT TO DO.

But is it working?

Are We Measuring Activity or Impact?

Marketing Activity

12 social media posts
25,000 impressions
1,000 likes
4 email campains
35% open-rate

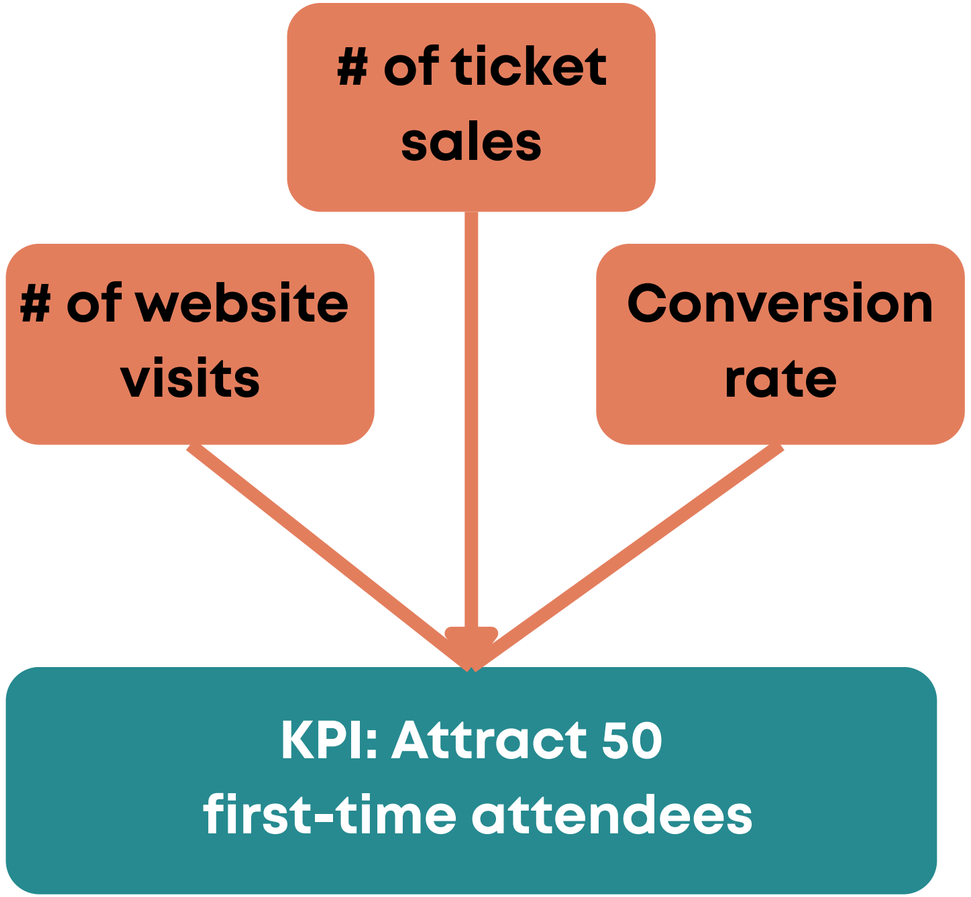
Marketing Outcomes

120 new website visitors
45 new subscribers
30 first-time ticket buyers
10 returning attendees

DON'T MEASURE SOMETHING JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN. MEASURE WHAT MATTERS TO YOUR GOALS AND USE THAT INFORMATION TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS.

Connecting KPIs to the Audience Journey

1. **Awareness** → Reach among non-followers, new website visitors
2. **Interest** → New email subscribers, time on website
3. **Participation** → First-time attendees, ticket sales, conversion rate
4. **Retention** → Repeat attendance, upgrades



THE MOST USEFUL KPIS TELL US WHETHER WE'RE MOVING AUDIENCES TOWARD TAKING ACTION.

Is our messaging working?

Learning from A/B Testing Creative Elements

Test A: Artistic Excellence



“Experience our acclaimed contemporary dance company, featuring some of Seattle’s most celebrated dancers.”

CTR: 1.2% | 6 ticket purchases

Test B: The Experiences



“Looking for a different kind of night out? Discover dance like you’ve never seen before.”

CTR: 2.4% | 15 ticket purchases

IN A/B TESTING, LOOK TO CLICK-THROUGH-RATE, CONVERSATION RATE, AND - IF IT’S A PAID AD - THE COST PER RESULT TO COMPARE PREFORMANCE.

Tracking Marketing Performance

EMAIL TOOL

Subscriber growth and engagement (Open rate, click rate)

SOCIAL MEDIA ORGANIC + PAID

Reach, clicks, and campaign results

WEBSITE

Where visitors come from and what they do

TICKETING SYSTEMS

Purchases, registrations, and attendance.



YOU DON'T NEED A FANCY CRM OR DASHBOARD. YOU NEED A FEW MEANINGFUL MEASUREMENTS AND A HABIT OF USING WHAT YOU LEARN TO MAKE BETTER MARKETING DECISIONS.

Sample Dashboard

Channel	Visits	New Buyers	Conversion Rate	Cost	Cost Per Result
Meta Ads	400	15	3.75%	$300	$20
Email	200	25	12.5%	$0	$0
Organic Search	250	10	4%	$0	$0
Content Creators	125	10	8%	$500	$50
OUTCOME	**925**	**60 Tickets**	**6.5% average**	**$800 total**	**$13.33 average**

A GOOD DASHBOARD HELPS US UNDERSTAND WHAT'S WORKING, IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT, AND MAKE BETTER MARKETING DECISIONS.

The Marketing Investment Decision

What Should We Start, Stop, Continue or Test?

START

A promising tactic that addresses a clear gap

STOP

An activity that consumes resources without sufficient value

CONTINUE

A tactic showing meaningful results

TEST

An idea worth exploring before committing more resources

Sustainability and Systems

You Reached New People. Now What?

A new person discovers your organization

Subscribes to emails, registers for a program, or buys their first ticket

No follow-up plan

Their info stays in a ticketing system or ends up on a spreadsheet. The relationship may end after one interaction

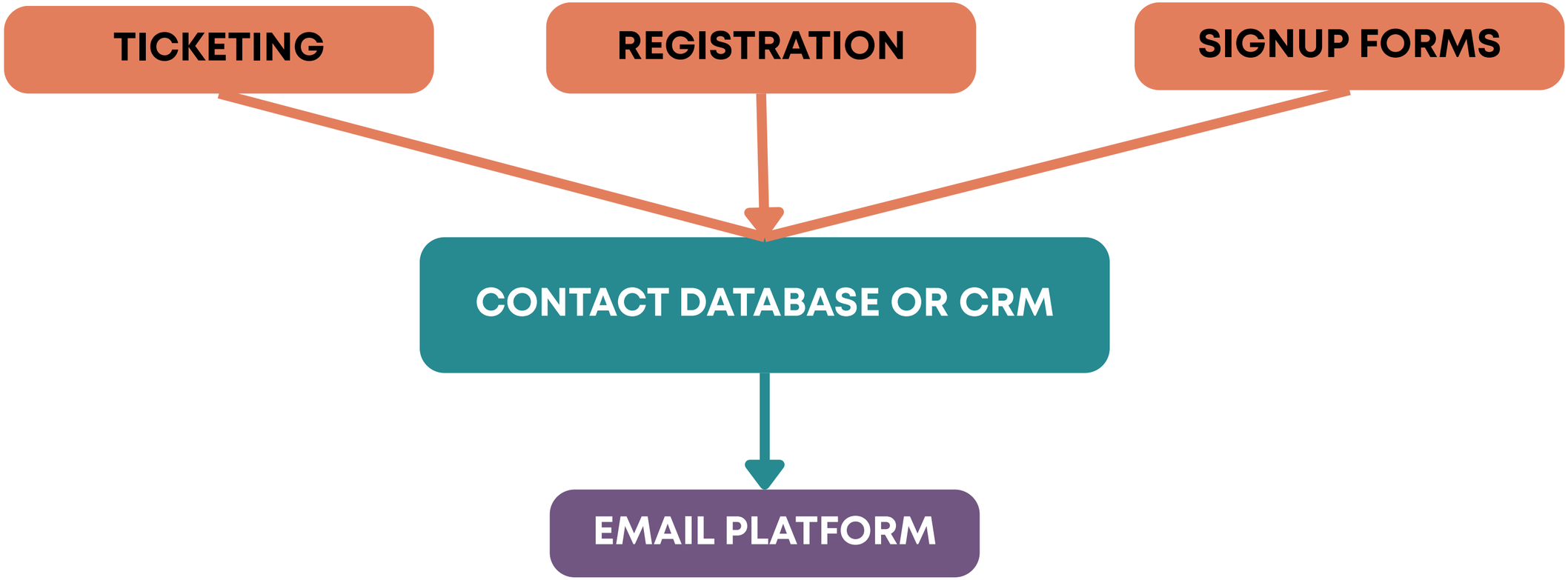
Thoughtful follow-up

Their info is organized and their invited to take the next step. The relationship has an opporunity to grow.

ATTRACTING NEW AUDIENCES IS JUST THE BEGINNING. ORGANIZATIONS NEED A PLAN TO STAY CONNECTED, ENCOURAGE FUTURE PARTICIPATION, AND BUILD LASTING RELATIONSHIPS.

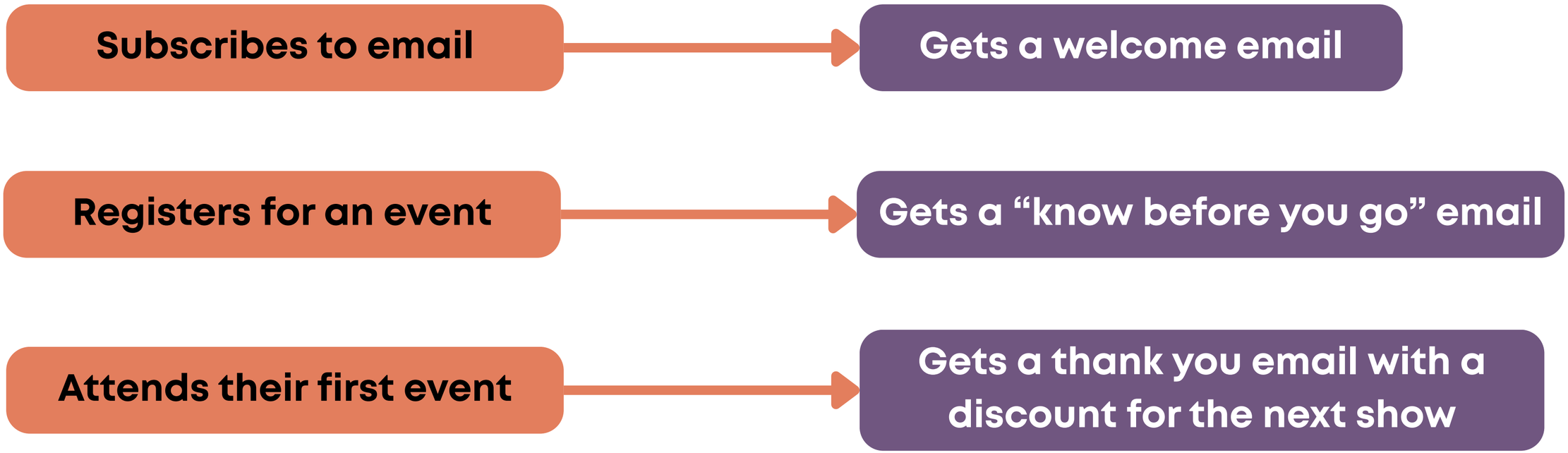
Integrations: Getting Your Tools to Talk

From separate tools to one connected audience ecosystem



CONNECTING THE TOOLS YOU ALREADY USE CAN SAVE TIME, IMPROVE AUDIENCE INFORMATION, AND HELP YOU COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY.

Automations to Build Relationships



GOOD AUTOMATION SUPPORTS RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING. EVEN ONE THOUGHTFUL, AUTOMATED INTERACTION CAN HELP TURN A FIRST-TIME VISITOR INTO A LASTING AUDIENCE MEMBER.

AI as a Supporting Tool

Efficiency, Ethics, and Human Judgment

YOU DEFINE THE QUESTION

“Which marketing channels generated the most ticket sales?”

OPTIONAL AI ASSISTANCE

Organize approved, non-senstive anonymized data; calculate trends; prepare a summary.

YOU REVIEW AND DECIDE

Where visitors come from and what they do

AI IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO EFFECTIVE MARKETING.

Putting It Into Practice

Bringing it back to the Five Questions

1: WHO are we trying to reach?

2: WHAT do we want them to do?

3: HOW will we reach them?

4: HOW WELL is it working?

5: WHAT NEXT?

REGARDLESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL SIZE, EVERY AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT EFFORT CAN BE PLANNED AROUND THE SAME FIVE QUESTIONS.

Two Tools to Help You Put This Into Practice

Audience Acquisition Planning Worksheet

Choose one audience and one goal. Use this page to plan a marketing campaign.

Project: _____

1. WHO are we trying to reach?

Priority audience: _____

What shared interests, motivations, or behaviors connect them?

_____

What do we know about their interests or barriers?

_____

2. WHAT do we want them to do?

Goal: We want _____ people to _____ by _____.

Why will this matter to them, and what is their next step?

_____

3. HOW will we reach them?

Choose 2–3 tactics. Where does this audience look for information or connection?

Consider search, social media, email, paid ads, partnerships, referrals, or earned media.

_____

Resources: What time, people, budget, skills, tools, content, or relationships can we use?

_____

What support or capacity is missing? How will we keep the plan manageable?

_____

Marketing Metrics Glossary

A quick reference for audience acquisition planning. Choose measures that connect to your goal, and compare the same definitions and time periods. Definitions and labels vary by platform.

Social media

Reach Estimated number of unique people or accounts that saw your content.

Impressions / views Times content was displayed or viewed, including repeat exposure. View rules vary by platform and format.

Engagements Interactions such as reactions, comments, shares, saves, and clicks; included actions vary.

Engagement rate Engagements as a percentage of reach, impressions, or followers. Check which denominator your report uses.

Follower growth Change in followers over a period. Net growth = followers gained minus followers lost.

Email

Open rate % of delivered emails recorded as opened. Privacy tools can inflate this measure.

Click rate % of delivered emails with at least one tracked click. Usually counts each recipient once.

Click-to-open rate (CTOR) % of recorded openers who clicked. Inflated open counts can distort this rate.

Bounce rate % of sent emails that could not be delivered. This differs from website bounce rate.

Unsubscribe rate % of delivered emails whose recipients opted out.

Website

Users Distinct visitors identified by analytics. One person may count more than once across devices; GA4 reports often show active users.

Sessions / visits Groups of interactions during a visit. One user can have multiple sessions.

Page views Times pages were viewed, including repeat views of the same page.

Engagement rate (GA4) % of sessions lasting over 10 seconds, including a key event, or including at least two page or screen views.

Key events / conversions Tracked actions important to your goals, such as a registration, purchase, or donation. Tracking must be configured.

Digital ads

Keep the Conversation Going

Office Hours:
Get Your Questions Answered

Early December
Virtual

Slack Q+A

One-on-one Consulting with Common Great

Discounted on-demand sessions
January 2027 onward

Kirsten: $229/hour | Ariel: $279/hour
(Regularly $269 and $329)

THESE OPPORTUNITIES ARE DESIGNED TO HELP YOU TURN TODAY'S IDEAS INTO PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

Thank you