

MARKETING MANAGERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2004, 10.30 – 4pm
GENERAL SCOTT ROOM, ROYAL ALBERT HALL



Chaired by Anthony Brown *Head of Marketing, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra*

R E P O R T

Anthony Brown welcomed delegates to the meeting and outlined the breakout sessions.

Press

- Working effectively with Press Consultants
- The difficulty of getting national press coverage outside of London
- The lack of space for arts coverage in the media unless celebrities were involved.
- Ways to get preview pieces rather than just reviews.
- The lack of knowledge at local papers can inhibit critics attending concerts and the added difficulty of a local arts editor not having any interest in music.

Print and Publications

- The affect of websites on print.
- Can you overcome the difficulties of online subscription booking? The BBC Proms currently do this via email.
- The challenges in effectively marketing a new piece of music because you have never heard it.
- Does the experience live up to the expectations the marketing has raised?
- The route (or not) from pops to standard concert and getting first timers to return. Anthony Brown *BSO* commented that 'music is lifetime learning and you can't rush people along the route to a standard concert'.
- The need to produce programmes that were audience centred and not just geared towards those with knowledge.
- The effect of limited resources on mailing effectiveness and the amount of 'profile' print you can produce to support the brochure. Karen Cardy *LSO* commented that focus group research showed that they expect information to get above the line.

***Listen Up!* a pre Festival update on all that is going on over the next 6 weeks**

Adam Powell *ABO* gave an overview of *Listen Up!* projects, including *Musicians on Call* and thanked members for effectively branding the Festival and requested they take away the posters available at the meeting. He also outlined the role Macbeth Media will play at a national level and requested members to follow up on their own local press contacts and keep *ABO* informed of coverage. BBC Radio 3 would be broadcasting 6 concerts a week and also 14 20-minute programmes over the course of the Festival. Lenny Henry had recorded trails for the Festival which were being broadcast on BBC Radios 2, 3 and 4. Six branding kits will also be allocated to concerts throughout the Festival and members are requested to make use of them. Mario Pettruci, the Radio 3 Poet in Residence would also be visiting events and writing poetry on *Listen Up!* The Fanfare and the promotional film were available to download from the website. Evaluation questionnaires had been sent out and would be collected from orchestras at the end of the Festival.

ABO Website

Becky West announced that the *ABO*'s new website would be launched shortly. It will have a directory page for each individual full member with a click through to your website and automatic email function. Members are asked to provide materials for this if they haven't already and contact Becky with any updates

in the future. Information for all ABO Events will be on the website and each Manager Group will have a dedicated page with meeting information and reports as well as a forum to continue discussion between meetings. To view members only information you will need to log in.

ABO Events

Adam Powell ABO outlined the themes for the **2005 Annual Conference**: the orchestral family, concert presentation and from a marketing perspective, rewarding subscribers and press/pr from the USA. The concert companion (an interactive programme information device) will be trialled at the CBSO concert and following on from this, ABO will embark on some research on what is already happening with concert presentation with three audience development agencies. Questionnaires will be sent out to find out what you are doing and ABO members will be challenged to introduce one new piece of presentation in the 2005/06 season. The meeting made the following points:

- Information is needed on what audiences actually want and audience and non-audience research needs to be fed into the process.
- Orchestra's 'looking grumpy' is often a big issue in the mailbag but convincing musicians of this is not always easy. It will be important to have the musicians onside.
- The importance of venues, which have other performing groups that are very different and could provide a broad base for the research.

The ABO has two **symposia** during *Listen Up!*, *New Music: A Concordant Approach* and *Music & Wellbeing*. There is also a new event launched this autumn called **First Brief** on 1 December 2004. The series will be short briefing evenings on topics that cut across the specialist manager groups the first of which will focus on the Disability Discrimination Act 2004 with a guest speaker from the Disability Rights Commission.

Involving Artist Managers in effective PR and marketing – how can we help each other?

Anthony Brown welcomed representatives from IAMA, Askonas Holt, IMG Artists and Ingpen and Williams to the meeting. Christian Thompson *IMG Artists* began by drawing attention to their new website, which should have all the editable material marketers would need available to download. He requested feedback on the service and those at the meeting to alert him if anything was missing. It was noted that this would be a very useful service.

Biographies were one of the key items discussed. Orchestras requested that these were shorter, more audience focused and did not use lists but rather focused on the more personal side of their artistry. It was pointed out that biographies are often quite boring to read, they need to be made more interesting for the customer and commissioning a biography from a journalist / writer could make a big difference to the quality of material. The issue of resources at an agency was raised and the difficulties of tailoring biographies in three or four different languages and lengths, as well as issues surrounding inclusion of more personal material. It was also pointed out that biographies were used to sell artists to orchestras in the first instance. It was suggested that deadlines for marketing material were agreed as part of the contract and perhaps making any articles on the artist easily available could help. The agents requested that those present produce some guidelines on audience focused biographies.

With press coverage and education activities, again agent's resources were an issue and this work needed to be flagged up in advance. Some orchestras send questionnaires for the artist and using this at an early stage can mean there is less resistance to these 'extras' from the artists. The pros and cons of encouraging artists' to talk were also discussed, including the issue of language, suitability and whether artists needed to be given any training for this. The agents requested that this was arranged in advance to ensure the artist was comfortable and could prepare something. David Sigall *Ingpen and Williams* noted that an increasing number of artists regard education work as part of their responsibility and many artists like to feel involved with the community they are visiting. Orchestras commented that they assumed an extra fee would be needed for education work, so they often did not ask as the budget was too tight. David Sigall also emphasised the importance of dialogue between agent and orchestra in building up an artist's skills and that the artist's character may differ with different orchestras.

The meeting commented that it is difficult to sell an artist if the photographs provided were not of good enough quality and uninteresting. Agents needed to be aware that the press often do not use the standard classical artist photos but an excellent photo can be used more widely, sell more tickets and increase an artist's profile. However, for the national press to use a photograph they do not take at interview it has to be excellent quality, with all rights cleared with the photographer and a resolution of 350 dpi. There have been instances when orchestras have had to pay for a photograph because the agent had not cleared all the rights and the existing material could not be used. It must be remembered that orchestras were part of the entertainment industry and classical music is often viewed as 'behind' in the way it presents artists to the public. If the materials provided were not good enough then they were not used in the marketing and the artist loses out on profile. The meeting agreed that excellent photographs were an essential part of the concert marketing mix in terms of the profile they can generate.

The meeting then discussed how engaged artists were with audiences and whether they were interested in audience feedback. The Proms message boards were cited as an example of how audiences are more interested in expressing their views on performances.

Action: Marketing departments to send ABO their thoughts on what makes a good biography, as well as any examples of good materials. ABO will then produce some guidelines or recommendations on marketing materials for agents. Melanie Crompton *IAMA* agreed to circulate this to IAMA members.

Increasing Cultural Participation - Rod Birtles

Rod Birtles asked the meeting what audience development meant to those present:

- Developing people's taste
- New audiences
- Developing existing audiences and broadening their experiences
- Breaking down barriers to attendance to excluded communities

Emily Smith *LPO* commented that audience development does not use traditional marketing tools, more those from education.

In the USA the term 'increasing cultural participation' is defined as any kind of interaction with culture that broadens, diversifies or deepens a person's experience. Research had been done and material produced to help organisation's implement strategies (www.wallacefoundation.com was a useful resource for this). Using a structure helped join up thinking between different departments, such as the CEO, Board and Marketing with varied levels of interest. The meeting then broke up to discuss their experiences and Jan Ford *EOB* commented that a holistic approach means the organisation as a whole can be more successful. Rod Birtles rounded off the discussion stating that marketing was in essence a tool of audience development.

AOB

Classical Live: Adam Powell informed the meeting about this event in March. They were hoping the orchestras would exhibit but it is too expensive. ABO will have a global stand and also run a couple of events and members can access the event through ABO. Some members reported numerous mailings about this and commented that the target market and what the event was for were not particularly clear. Kate Finch *BBC Symphony* commented that the Barbican had done a trade forum in the past and it was unsuccessful in attracting a broader audience.

Date of Next Meeting: 27 April 2004