

October 2018

Keep until  
Taala given  
revised info  
Amie's  
Copies

### STAGING A PERFORMANCE WITH STAGE NORTH

A series of roles and responsibilities of key positions in *Staging a Performance* have been compiled from various sources to improve the effectiveness of Stage North volunteers and the quality of the delivery of performances and events by Stage North.

Positions required to Stage a Performance include the following and may require more, depending upon scope and the focus of the event. More than one position can be filled by one person if the work load is light.

- Director - *Blair*
  - Technical Director
  - Lighting Technician
  - Sound Technician
  - Set Designer
  - Set Construction Foreman
  - Costume Manager
  - Properties Manager
  - MAKEUP
  - Producer - *Steve*
  - Stage Manager
  - Publicity Manager
  - Advertising Manager
  - Box Office Manager
  - House Manager
  - Program Publisher
  - Production Recorder
  - Budget -
  - ACTOR -
  - CREW -
  - Archival -
- Oliver* {  
*Dennis* {  
*ASM* -  
*Independent producer* {

In community theatre, which is very different than professional theatre, the director most often chooses the play. The Director chooses a Producer that he/she can work with since the Director and the Producer must be compatible and agree on the basic goals and desired outcomes of the play. The directing and the producing should not be done by the same person since both of these positions require dedicated time and effort.

#### Organizational Chart:

#### Stage North Board of Directors

#### Production Board Member

Play Director		Play Producer
Stage Manager	Technical Director	Publicity
Costumes	Set	Advertising
Stage Props	Lighting	Promotions/tee shirts
Rehearsal Props	Sound	Box Office
Rehearsal Schedule		Front of House
Rehearsal Space		Programs
Make-Up		Archival Records
Prompt Book		Comp Tickets

## Production Tasks of the PRODUCER

### Preparation:

- Read the script
- Meet with Director to discuss the script and the visual image, and set times for up-date meetings to assure consistency in progress development.
- Identify all required department managers and other volunteers.
- Confirm the contracts have been signed. The rights must be applied for and satisfied and the contract with the venue for the performance dates must be finalized. The Production Chair on the Board of Directors signs all contract after they are drawn up.
- Prepare a Calendar for Department Completion Dates and/or bar-chart for the production.

### Meetings:

- Call the first production meeting with Director present (not on a rehearsal night). All managers and assistants should attend. Hand out task sheets and calendar of deadlines, draft budget etc. This meeting should be done before rehearsals begin.
- Call second production meeting to confirm budgets from all departments. Discuss guidelines on how to purchase, how to borrow/return/thank, how to list names and addresses of those who loaned/helped/supported this particular show for future thank yous.

### Venue:

- Check that the rehearsal venue is ready and available on schedule. The Stage Manager will take care of the venue when rehearsal begins.

### Managing People:

- Introduce crew to cast as soon as possible and make newcomers feel welcome. Emphasis the crew members have an important roles to play and cast/crew must be courteous to everyone at all times. Everyone is a volunteer and eager to do a good job for the show.
- Oversee the progress of each department on a consistent basis.
- Collect all bills and receipts in an organized fashion. Compile appropriate information in a timely manner and submit to Board Director in charge of Production or the Executive Director. They will give all the receipts/bills to the Treasurer for payment.

### Check up on Various Functions:

- Assure that complimentary tickets are distributed according to a plan. Currently done by Exec Director
- Arrange final cast and crew party or have someone arrange it.

- Make sure that the arrange for trucks and volunteers to move set and props from rehearsal space to performance venue (NPCC) and back to space (after final performance) has been done.
- Return all props promptly with a letter of thank you from Stage North. Exec Director will help with the thank you letters.
- Call a post production meeting for debriefing, final bills, rehearsal space clean up.
- Present final report and financial statement to the Production Board Director within one month of the end of run. \_\_\_\_\_END

**YOUR ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME:**

*This information has been compiled by Stage North from a number of sources. It is meant as a guideline for Producer and particularly useful for those who are new at the position. Please feel free to add new bullets or discuss the ones above by emailing or phoning the Executive Director of Stage North who will bring any changes and issues to the attention of the Board of Directors.*



**STAGE NORTH THEATRE SOCIETY**

**Contact:** Sue Popesku Executive Director 1-250-785-6214 [spopesku@shaw.ca](mailto:spopesku@shaw.ca)  
**Rehearsal Space:** 9916 97 Avenue **email:** [stagenorth@stagenorth.ca](mailto:stagenorth@stagenorth.ca) **www:** [www.stagenorth.ca](http://www.stagenorth.ca)  
**Mailing Address:** Box 33, 9420 93 Avenue, Fort St. John, BC V1J 6W7

## **Production Tasks of the STAGE MANAGER**

*The Stage Manager reports to the Director and the Producer of the show. The Stage Manager is responsible for the efficient operation of the show during rehearsals and performances. He/she is in complete charge of the space for rehearsal and performances to ensure safety, flow of the show, movement of the cast and crew off stage. The Stage Manager is a trouble shooter during the rehearsals and a problem solver during the performances.*

### **Preparation:**

- Read the script
- Provide script and props list to Property Manager
- Inform committees on borrowing procedures for props and furniture and how to fill out source sheet info. Nothing is borrowed without Stage Manager's knowledge.
- Attend all production meetings and rehearsals.
- Fine tune the budget for production meetings.

### **Rehearsals:**

- Prepare rehearsal schedule with Director
- Keep rehearsal space clean and ready for rehearsals by checking set before rehearsals and performances for loose materials, clear passages, unsafe conditions.
- Remind cast and crew of rehearsal and performance expectations:  
Be on time; Know your lines; keep space clean; be courteous and supportive of fellow actors/get to know and respect crew/ follow director/ make suggestions when and where appropriate.
- Mark out rehearsal outline on floor and set up place for furniture and props.
- ½ way through rehearsal schedule have a casual event like a BBQ/potluck/Happy Hour—this eases tensions and lets actors get to know one another a bit better.

### **Prompt Book**

- Manage the prompt book at all rehearsals. Record all entrances/exit/sound/lighting cues. Have 2 rehearsal books—one for changes/replacing and another for final rewrite for actual show.
- Trace scene movements of actors with difference coloured pens 1,2,3,4 on lines in script/stage drawing. Actors should walk their blocking to reinforce movement. Every script should have every line numbered before handing out so actors can follow directions and locate quickly.
- Make actors do exact lines (alternative is to have Assistant SM do lines at rehearsals). Have stickies to record for actors the pg # and Line #. Make actors bring their scripts to all rehearsal for marking.

### **Managing Others**

- Ensure all tech people know play requirements and arrange special effects early.

- Oversee and control budgets of committees
- Set up a clear communication system with tech crew for all cues, etc.
- Familiarize self with all safety requirements: fire exits, phone #'s for emergency, who to report to immediately.
- Assure that all cast and crew have paid their Stage North membership

#### **FOR THE PERFORMANCES:**

*Note that the Director is done after the move into the theatre and will take notes from the audience until the run begins. The Stage Manager should be running tech and take care of the actors once in the theatre.*

- Set time for theatre tour of all cast when first in theatre. Include green room tidiness (large casts stay until called), responsibilities (noise level and hanging own costumes), emergency procedures, safety procedures, nobody backstage once house is open.
- Put chart on door for everyone to check off when they arrive and reminder to CHECK YOUR PROPS.
- Call actors 1 hour before curtain and 10 minute intervals before curtain.
- Check 30 minutes before curtain that all actors, tech, backstage personnel have arrived.
- Have all tech check equipment no later than 20 minutes to curtain.
- Check all "beginners" (first to appear) are on stage 2 minutes before curtain.
- Monitor all entrances and cue technicians.
- Ensure all curtain times and intermission times are strictly adhered to.
- Enforce backstage discipline: no noise, no bleeding light, no smoking, no alcohol.
- Communicate to "Front of house" through lighting booth.
- Call from backstage unless you have a Assistance Stage Manager on each side. If so, you can call from the booth.
- Stage gets mopped 1 hour before every show.
- Have a pre-show check list in writing.
- Encourage sense of process and protocol to create the stage magic. Do not break the proscenium, take of costume and makeup before coming out to audience/lobby.

#### **YOUR ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME:**

*This information has been compiled by Stage North from a number of sources. It is meant as a guideline for Stage Managers and particularly useful for those who are new at the position. Please feel free to add new bullets or discuss the ones above..*



#### **STAGE NORTH THEATRE SOCIETY**

**Rehearsal Space:** 11520 East Bypass Road

**email:** [stagenorth@stagenorth.ca](mailto:stagenorth@stagenorth.ca) **www:** [www.stagenorth.ca](http://www.stagenorth.ca)

**Mailing Address:** Box 33, Fort St. John, BC V1J 0K9

## Production Tasks of the Costume Committee

### Preparation

- Read the script and discuss with the director the costume requirements for the show.
- List each cast member citing the costume changes in specific points in the play.
- Prepare sketches (samples of materials, photographs, etc. are helpful) and lists of costumes for each cast member and get approval from Producer, Director, and Choreographer (when appropriate).
- Ask for a time schedule for costumes to be completed.
- Check with the Stage North Costume bank as to what is available in ready-made items or materials.
- During early rehearsal, some cast members may require "stand in" costumes. Some publicity photos may require costumes or "stand in" costumes. See publicity schedule.
- Difficult shoes (high heels, dance shoes, and specialty shoes) must be identified early and used in rehearsals so the actors can get used to them. You need to tell the actors this because the director sometimes does not think of it.

### Financial

- Prepare and/or follow budget requirements and get producer's approval for large purchases.
- Understand how and where to order materials and method of reimbursements for expenses.
- Collect all costume related bills and invoices and submit to producer in an organized manner.

### Construction

- Measure cast early in the schedule and at an appropriate time and place. If at a rehearsal, make sure the Director approves of the disruption during rehearsal.
- Prepare costumes with sewing team.
- Arrange for tryouts and make adjustments as required.
- Arrange for a costume parade for the director if he/she would like one.
- Costumes to be ready for the first technical rehearsal or when required by Director in advance of dress rehearsals.
- Add all costume accessories such as coats, shoes, scarves, jewelry, hats.

### During Show

- Have a crew to help with costume
  1. changes during the show
  2. maintenance issues during the show
  3. readiness for next performance

- Schedule a costume person in the Green Room before and during each dress rehearsal and each performance in case of costume problems during the show.
- Clean costumes after the show. Do not allow cast to take costumes home. They often do not get back to Stage North.
- Return all borrowed items in a timely manner.
- Assure Stage North costumes are sorted and hung back into the appropriate sections in the Costume Room.

#### Final Duties

- In an organized manner, give the measurements of the actors to the Producer who will bank them with Stage North. No need to measure repeat performers again and again.
- Report in writing to the Producer any ideas, suggestions or changes you see could take place to make the costume production go smoother for future shows.
- Make sure the costume lenders and any other supporters receive a written thank you (most often written by the Producer)
- Return the costume room key to the Producer.

---

Thank you for all your work with Stage North. Make sure you let the Stage North Board or the Executive Director know if you wish to help with a future show.



#### STAGE NORTH THEATRE SOCIETY

**Contact:** Sue Popesku Executive Director 1-250-785-6214 [spopesku@shaw.ca](mailto:spopesku@shaw.ca)

**Rehearsal Space:** 9916 97 Avenue **email:** [stagenorth@stagenorth.ca](mailto:stagenorth@stagenorth.ca) **www:** [www.stagenorth.ca](http://www.stagenorth.ca)

**Mailing Address:** Box 33, 9420 93 Avenue, Fort St. John, BC V1J 6W7

## Production Tasks of the Publicity Manager

Many definitions have been interchangeable with the words relating to publicity and promotions. One entertaining analogy reads like this:

If the circus is coming to town and you paint a sign saying "Circus Coming to the Fairground Saturday", that's **Advertising**. If you put a sign on the back of an elephant and walk him into town, that's **Promotion**. If the elephant walks through the mayor's flower bed, that's **Publicity**. If you can get the mayor to laugh about it, that's **Public Relations**. If you planned the elephant's walk, that's **Marketing**. And, if you can get the press to publish the story on page one, that's **Media Relations**.

An even more colourful account reads:

- You see a handsome guy at a party. You go up to him and say, "I'm fantastic in bed". That's **Direct Marketing**.
- You're at a party with a bunch of friends and see a handsome guy. One of your friends goes up to him and pointing at you says, "She's fantastic in bed." That's **Advertising**.
- You see a handsome guy at a party. You go up to him and get his telephone number. The next day you call and say, "Hi, I'm fantastic in bed." That's **Telemarketing**.
- You're at a party and see a handsome guy. You get up and straighten your dress. You walk up to him and pour him a drink. You say, " May I?" and reach up to straighten his tie. "By the way, I'm fantastic in bed." That's **Public Relations**.
- You're at a party and see a handsome guy. He walks up to you and says, "I hear you're fantastic in bed." That's **Brand Recognition**.
- You're at a party and see a handsome guy. You talk him into going home with your friend. That's **Sales Rep**.
- Your friend can't satisfy him so he calls you. That's **Tech Support**

---

For the purposes of simplifying the focus of publicity and promotions with Stage North, the following relationships have been identified.

Publicity is getting the word out about the up and coming events

Advertising is paying or arranging for designed ads in radio, newspaper, or magazines.

Media is all radio, TV, newspaper, printed communications (Coffee Talk, facebook, Blogging, twitter), video

Marketing is branding your product or organization in general terms, not specific to events or performances.

Promotions is editorial content, word of mouth, press releases, extended events before, during or after the performances.

Direct Marketing is selling your product directly to the ticket buyer or consumer.

Target Marketing is identifying a specific age group, audience interest, consumer niche for which all advertising and promotion is designed and executed.



### ***The importance of a Publicity Manager***

*In Community Theatre, the Publicity Manager is the most important person in the organization if you want an audience for your performances and events. Consistency in delivery and continuity of style are keys to positively impacting the community to expand your audience numbers.*

### **TASKS OF A PUBLICITY MANAGER**

- Read the script
- Meet with the Director on what kind of image he wants to project for the play.
- Develop a visual image with the Director that can be repeatedly and easily duplicated for a variety of advertising and promotional tools such as posters, programs, ads, flyers.

**NOTE:** Get professional artist/designer help if at all possible

- Prepare budget in time for the second production meeting where the budget is confirmed
  - Meet with other volunteers who are promoting Stage North to assure a compatible and consistent message to the public.
  - Keep in touch with the local media and get names, email and phones numbers deadline dates, methods of communications.
  - Attend all production meetings and some rehearsals to keep fully informed of the show and any changes.
  - All ads and posters should include what, where, when, who but do not crowd with too much information or design.
  - Be very careful to spell all names correctly and use proper punctuation.
  - Always get a second, maybe third, person to proof read your material.
  - Arrange for early photos or video of rehearsals for media and provide creative backgrounds visual and audio appropriate to the show.
  - Get prices with taxes for all paid or complimentary ads for proper budget records
  - Set up a Publicity schedule complete with media visits to rehearsal, radio talk show dates and who will attend, special appearances, etc. Give a copy to Producer and Director.
  - Get the proper credits and other thank yous to the program committee.
  - Thank those who helped spread the word and, particularly, thank the media giving them the next dates of any events of Stage North.
-

## PUBLICITY PLANNING

***We are limited only by our imagination. If the idea is new, fresh and well thought out, it will work to some degree. A risk is worth more than a pound of regret that you did not try new approach.***

Not as effective in getting the audience in as in the past:

“Spray and Pray”---get lots of flyers and posters out

Paid Ads- more and larger paid ads in the newspaper

Conventional advertising

Most effective:

Personal contact—one to one—cast and crew talking about the show

Postcard size hand outs with title large and all pertinent info on card

Facebook, blogging and twitter

6 touchpoints make the magic happen: a touchpoint is when a potential ticket buyer comes in contact with you or your marketing. On average, a potential client must see 6-8 touchpoints before they will consider buying.

Word of Mouth is the #1 form of advertising/promotion/publicity, etc.

Suggestions:

- Do cross-promotion: get college students in; high school students involved; one night to an entire staff of one company with friends/guests, encourage class/group attendance
- Make publicity personal: who are the individuals in the cast/crew?
- People are interested in “behind the scenes”
- Create a media kit: the event/about the organization(backgrounder)/bios/press release/photos/cover page/director’s notes
- Create added value to the event or performance. Have something in the lobby, provide a draw to get the names and emails of audience members, have a pre-view at the mall, in the classrooms, have cake and coffee to meet the players after the show

### PLAN THE WORK AND WORK THE PLAN

*Make a schedule of where and when publicity and advertising will happen for each show.*

1. Start with opening night and work backwards.
2. Check with all media on their deadlines and how they wish to receive the information.
3. What can they provide as public service? (All media have a mandate from the CRTC to provide a certain amount of free advertising for charitable and community events.)
4. Set deadline dates for press releases, articles, photos, and other. Find out if the media wishes for you or their own reporters to write the articles.

5. Book as many different people from the cast and crew into talking on the airways as you can. The more voices and names that are made public, the more the general population becomes interested.
6. Personally get in touch with other forms of "getting the word out" like Coffee Talk, Arts Council, FSJ NOW, Energetic City, Taylor Times. Call them and find out how they will receive your information and what they will do with it or how you can get it posted.
7. Posters are good but do not put up too early, nor too late. Between 3-4 weeks in advance is as early as you want posters up in town. However, if they are not up by two weeks in advance, do not waste your money by trying to get them up quickly. Try to get posters to other communities too. Get permission to hang the posters or they will be ripped down and you have wasted both your time and money.
8. For paid ads (also complimentary ads which normally would have been paid) 2 weeks in advance is appropriate. Watch the deadline for Northeast NEWS since they require work one week before it appears on the street and they want to know it is coming. The daily newspapers will respond much quicker. The Northerner will do a full page spread of articles and photos when you buy an ad.
9. Get on the digital signs at the Recreation Centre, airport, NLC if you can.
10. Word of mouth is so very important. Get the cast and crew talking about the show and where to get tickets as soon as you can get them to start spreading the word. This means giving them a short paragraph to say or a card to hand out or a ticket order form to fill out and bring you the money and order. You then get the tickets at the NPCC and give them back to the cast member to give to their buyer. Many people have no time to stop in to buy tickets at the end of a busy day but once they have bought them they will not let the performance slip by even though they are "too busy" or "too tired" or the weather is not "just right".
11. Get unusual appearances of colourful cast characters, if possible, at the Mall, special events, large meetings but make sure they have handouts to give the pertinent information about the show. No use sending out messengers without the message.
12. Make sure you let the Stage North Board and Executive Director know about any changes in cast and other things that could make for an interesting story or lend to a bigger marketing picture which would help "spread the word" on your show.
13. Use your creativity and take some risks in promoting your show. Make sure that the Stage North Board is aware of any "way off the chart ideas" before you implement them just in case they see some issues with the idea or wish to combine it with something else already happening to make a larger impact.

*A show worth Producing is a show worth Promoting. Publicity prepares the people for a Promising show and as audience members, they may repeat their Performance by attending the next show.*