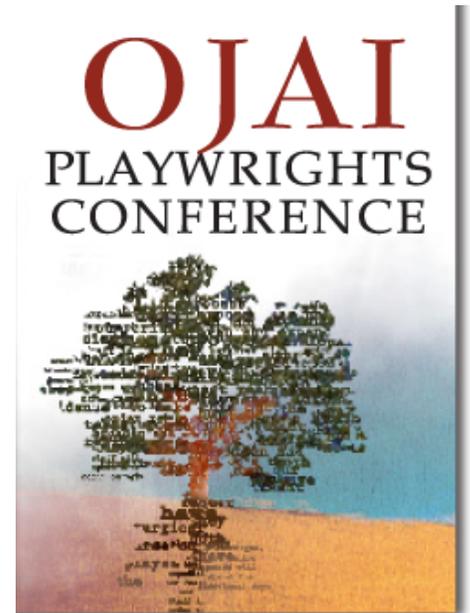


Ojai Playwrights Conference Marketing Director Search Writing Sample: Peggy Ryan



1. In looking at Ojai Playwright Conference's digital footprint, what are we doing right, and what should we be doing that we aren't already?

I was impressed with the social media efforts of OPC 2015. Facebook posting honored the heart of OPC - the playwrights - introducing Facebook users to them personally, and tracking their progress throughout the conference. OPC participants, patrons, and partners were tagged whenever possible. Hashtag use was divided between two primary hashtags on Twitter, and there was a clear effort to unite all of us by communicating the primary hashtag at the beginning of the conference (although I wish I had listened better!). Digital content sharing was spread out well across the conference and after the conference, maintaining engagement post-conference and also at times connecting users with OPC's website and Twitter. But my favorite aspect of OPC's digital marketing efforts is the off-season Facebook content. The updates about playwright alumni and plays that found their beginnings at OPC are a win-win for us all by reinforcing the significance of the work at OPC, sustaining our support of the playwrights and their work, and offering OPC Facebook followers the content they are interested in.

Enlarging Ojai Playwright Conference's digital footprint is a matter of building on its existing foundation strategically by increasing content, sponsoring content, and adding channels in order to more effectively reach the many segments and potential segments of the OPC audience locally, nationally, and internationally. Facebook's power is great, but it controls messaging and limits the reach of content unless connections are made through tagging and event

invitations, and content is dynamic enough to widen the scope of the given reach. Short video content such as a snippet of a reading can be effectively shared and sponsored across channels like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and increase momentum for promoting upcoming events or build awareness for the OPC brand through an interview between Robert and a playwright, for instance. RSVPs to Facebook event invitations are shared with event attendee's networks, reinforcing the need to create and leverage event invitations as a crucial part of a healthy social media marketing effort. And perhaps most importantly, an investment of as little as \$10 per week in Facebook advertising can bring OPC's content to as many as an additional 1,000 Facebook users each week, hand-picked according to the most appropriate demographic for each post or marketing objective.

As powerful as Facebook is, it is critical to make use of other digital channels in order to successfully reach all of OPC's potential stakeholders and audiences including actors and press who often dominate channels such as Twitter and Instagram. While existing use of OPC's Twitter account is well-done, this channel can be expanded through previously referenced techniques of more regular posting, hash-tagging/tagging of posts, and most importantly, a bit of bragging about OPC's accomplishments and those its many talented alumni, saturating it with content to get OPC the attention it deserves from press and other potential stakeholders. Twitter is also a fabulous gateway to other digital channels that can be leveraged to broaden the existing reach of OPC's digital footprint during the conference such as Periscope, another channel that would serve to reinforce PR tactics. Best content from Twitter and Facebook can be positioned on a newly created Instagram account and hash tagged appropriately to begin to build a presence for OPC on Instagram.

3. One challenge that we face is getting Ojai residents to attend our larger events in town. Share one creative idea about how to get locals excited and buying tickets.

I hope to remain ever optimistic that I will one day find that creative solution to all of our audience development problems, and no great show will ever have to worry about filling a house again. In the meantime, what I have to offer is a bit less on the creative side and involves slightly more pragmatism combined with experience, passion, and hope. In many cases, audience development is just a matter of consistent marketing repeated over many years. Current efforts at building this audience could manifest in a good regular turnout in five year's time. In order to ensure this outcome, I would work toward raising local attendance by increasing frequency of impressions of our marketing messaging through a targeted digital marketing campaign, check-presenters at local restaurants, posters and flyers, grassroots outreach to local stakeholders, and a PR campaign to local media and press. Formalizing partnerships with local restaurants and hotels can be a critical aspect of a comprehensive marketing approach, which would involve sharing discounts for these partners to the OPC network in exchange for marketing support in town through these local establishments.

Some of the manpower for connecting locally could come by way of adding a marketing component to the Youth Workshop and/or intern program where the marketing director teaches a self-marketing workshop to the students that they then execute by carrying out marketing tactics for their performances established during the workshop. While these students already have a lot on their plate during OPC, self-marketing is a critical skill for artist survival and is not found enough within artist education programs. The high school students are one of OPC's best connections to the local community, other than through OPC's board, and could be an important asset for connecting to the local community.

In addition to merely expanding visibility of marketing messaging, I believe the community of Ojai needs to see OPC's ties to their community in order to understand what OPC has to offer them. Special appearances by Robert, members of the board, and/or playwrights at local clubs, business associations, or cultural destinations would offer a message to the locals that OPC is locally invested and over time, that investment would be reciprocated.

Thanks to you those of you who are participating in the marketing director search. I appreciate your time reading through all of this, and your consideration! Please let me know if there's anything else I can provide to assist in your search process. -- Peggy