

CATCHING DREAMS: Finding The Right Fit For Your Mitt

With Jamie-Sue Seal, Smokin' Sleddog Records © 2017 Smokin' Sleddog Records

What do I know for sure about my venue?

1. What do I know for sure about my audience? (describe them)
2. Is there a second or third target audience in your area, if so, describe;
3. What do you present that always works? What have you presented that never works?
4. What are your challenges?
5. What do you want to do at your venue that you haven't done or been able to do yet? (this is the dream catcher portion of the program)

Personality Plus!

Who Am I? (said the Venue) - circle three words total in any of the lines;

1. Elegant, Strong, Classic
2. Bold, Adventurous, Edgy
3. Whimsical, Imaginative, Humorous

Do these three things align with your primary demographic?

Secondary Spaces & Split Personalities

Do you have a second or third demographic or one that you'd like to target in your area?

Do you have a second or third space in your venue?

Is there another space in your region, another time slot, calendar event or other ways you could involve your community that you haven't explored?

Story Problems & Solutions

Scenario 1:

William has a 900 seat venue that includes a balcony. The place is updated even though it was built in 1934. His is the only venue within 55 miles this large, but he is located in a fairly small community. He presents 10-12 shows per season. Occasionally, William has a sell out event, but the shows that bring in that many people are at the top of his budget. Most of his shows bring in between 300 and 500 people. So, realistically...he has a 500 seat venue. He has heard about these onstage shows that other performing arts centers have tried. He knows he can get 175 people seated at small tables with room for a portable stage that could accommodate a solo, duo or small trio act. His challenge is that he would like to present some more well known solo acts that have name recognition, but he also really wants to book some lesser known acts that he knows his audience would enjoy if he could just get them through the door. The agent that gave him the idea is pushy, but likable and she has some good ideas. She says he needs to market the series rather than the performers...give it a personality, make the event be the star of the show. Oh yeah...he doesn't have a liquor license.

Name the series:

Give the series a 1-liner bio that sums up the series in one sentence:

Come up with a clever tag line that accompanies the name of the series:

What would the logo look like?

How would you market this series?

Scenario 2:

Lindsay is a newer presenter. She has worked at the venue for four years, starting in the box office and then more recently the director of programming at a 400-seat community arts center. Her season begins in September, but typically attendance doesn't pick up until mid-October. She wants to shake things up a bit. She has decided to try a different kind of event to kick off her season in September by having a progressive dinner type of celebration on a Sunday afternoon with a limited number of tickets available. Lindsay has enlisted the help of a booking agent who seems like she knows it all, but probably doesn't. Nevertheless, the young presenter likes the vibe of her idea. They will begin the event in their 75 capacity black box room with appetizers and drinks, and a short concert. Then they will proceed into the lobby for a sit down main course, followed by dessert on the stage at small tables where they will enjoy a few more songs. Shortly after, coffee will be served and the attendees will get a chance to purchase season or series tickets at a discounted price at this event only.

Name this annual series:

Give the series a 1-liner bio that sums up the series in one sentence:

Come up with a clever tag line that accompanies the name of the series:

What would the logo look like?

How would you market this series?

Scenario 3:

Robert has been the executive director at a 1500 seat performing arts center for the last 15 years. He has a very loyal audience following and his patrons trust his vision. He's also fortunate to have very active board members. Last year he heard about a venue doing something very innovative and a booking agent he knows encouraged him to give it a try, but really...how much can she know? Essentially, he brings in an act for a concert or low tech show that he doesn't advertise at all. The shows are held at non-conventional locations and times, and it is an exclusive event that is only open to season ticket holders or series subscribers. There's going to be one held in the Fall and one in the Spring. The location isn't revealed until the day before and for the first one, it's going to be in an airplane hangar. He's going to start with a concert and he needs a theme for the twice-a-year series, but he needs a hook.

Name the series:

Give the series a 1-liner bio that sums up the series in one sentence:

Come up with a clever tag line that accompanies the name of the series:

What would the logo look like?

How would you market this series?

Out of the Box Event Ideas

Events that Jamie-Sue has helped create or other venues have successfully implemented

- AM Arts - Morning shows at 10 or 11 am. A 45 minute to an hour dance performance or short concert with low tech (no lights, basic sound). Could take place in the lobby of the venue. Low cost to the venue and lower fee for the artist, but frees up both artist and venue for an evening performance. Same kind of thing could take place during weekday lunch hour using a different name.
- 3.14 Dates - Pi Day. Serve pie and have any kind of performance you desire.
- Progressive Performances - signature drinks, appetizers, dinner, desserts, coffee combined with a performance that either takes place at different spaces within your venue, or in different businesses in your community, but either starts or finishes at your venue. This one was for season subscribers and sponsors.
- Secret Shows are produced by a venue out West. These are invitation only performances only available to their season subscribers and take place at unusual locations like a warehouse. The performing artist isn't advertised. The audience doesn't know who it is until the artist is introduced at the event itself. They usually serve appetizers and drinks.
- 295 Series - This is a series that is produced by a 900 seat venue at the Midland Theatre in Ohio. The venue already has an onstage series that seats 125, but needs an in-between space for those acts too small for the main auditorium or too large (either band size, or popularity) for the onstage series. The 295 series was created by taking pipe and drape and stretching it across the theater's main floor about half way back from the stage encompassing 295 seats. The band performs on the main stage.