



ADVISORY
BOARD
for the ARTS

Transforming Arts Organizations Worldwide

Marketing Team Structures in the Performing Arts

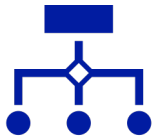
2023

Research Overview

Research Question

How are performing arts organizations structuring their marketing teams in an evolving industry?

Interviews focused on several key topics:



- Current team structure and effectiveness of this organization
- History of changes to marketing org structure



- Focus on marketing strategy: brand awareness vs. ticket sales
- Increasing expenses for marketing, and other challenges



- Impact of increased need for digital capabilities on marketing team structure
- Components of digital for which other teams are responsible



- Managing marketing services for artistic renters and non-produced shows
- Current demand and marketing lift for event rentals

Research Participants



Royal Albert Hall
London, UK



Wolf Trap
Vienna, VA



Symphony Space
New York, NY



National Arts Centre
Ottawa, Ontario, CA



Brooklyn Academy of Music
New York, NY



New Jersey Performing
Arts Center
Newark, NJ



AT&T Performing Arts
Center
Dallas, TX



The Wallis Annenberg Center
for the Performing Arts
Beverly Hills, CA



DENVER CENTER FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS

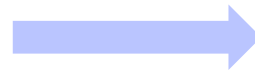
Denver Center for the
Performing Arts
Denver, CO

**Report includes additional profiles from past ABA research on performing arts venue utilization strategies.*

Key Takeaways

Current challenges in arts marketing...

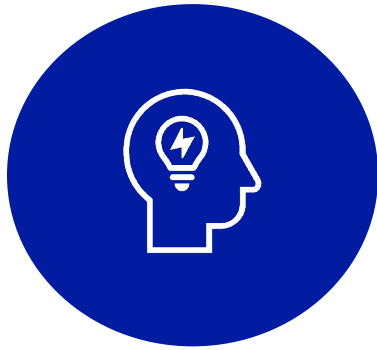
- **Organizations' level of focus on institutional marketing remains dependent on financial constraints:** many marketing leaders expressed a desire to invest more in institutional branding, but the reality of post-pandemic ticket sales require a more show-to-show approach.
- **The need for (and expense of) digital is increasing:** as digital marketing becomes more and more crucial, certain areas require higher time and resource investment — particularly, branded graphics for OTT platforms and video content. These can be costly, especially at volume.
- **Ownership of rental marketing is not always clear:** for both artistic and event rentals, having clearly established internal ownership and requirements for renters is crucial to reduce unforeseen workload and complications for marketing.
- **Arts marketing work often has peaks and valleys, leading to challenging times of high volume:** all organizations experience ebbs and flows of workload throughout the season, which can cause challenges and unpredictability for marketing staff.



...and how they are addressed structurally.

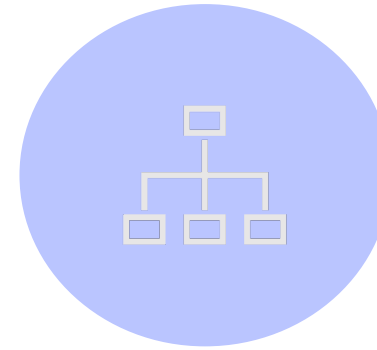
- **Investing in a data insights manager can benefit show-focused marketing while building foundations for institutional brand:** organizations who have dedicated roles to monitoring key data, including brand health metrics like NPS, highlighted their immense value.
- **Organizations are increasingly bringing digital skills in-house:** several marketing leaders shared that they are building up their video expertise, whether via full-time video editor hires or seasonal staff focused on capturing video of performances. Additionally, several organizations have taken the step of bringing graphic design in-house, instead of using external agencies or contractors.
- **Follow internal expertise when determining rental ownership:** some organizations have leadership on the rental team with strong marketing capabilities and industry connections, allowing them to self-manage those efforts. Others take a more centralized approach, incorporating all external functions, rentals included, under a marketing umbrella.
- **Making the most of a lean team:** many arts marketing teams operate with fewer resources than they would like, but in turn this makes them more agile. All leaders reported efforts to reduce their number of direct reports to allow time for more effective strategizing for their teams.

Report Outline



External Marketing Challenges

- Brand Awareness: Current Strategies and Case Studies
- Digital Marketing Impact
- Managing Event Rentals
- Marketing Options for Artistic Rentals



Marketing Team Structures

- Organizational charts
- Key lessons learned from interviews

Ticket Sales vs. Brand Awareness: Current Strategies

Q: To what extent is your marketing more focused 'show by show' versus incorporating more institutional branding?

Show-by-Show



The Wallis' current focus is on ensuring that less-popular shows sell tickets.



Given its wide variety of productions and the reality of working with budget constraints, DCPA chooses to be show-driven in its marketing.



With limited resources and post-pandemic budget constraints, Symphony Space has prioritized ticket sales over institutional branding campaigns, with an understanding that their current audiences are more motivated by the quality of what's on stage than they are in the institutional brand.

Marketing teams taking a show-by-show focus often cited financial constraints as their reason for doing so.

Mixed



Wolf Trap's strategy is two-fold: planned-ahead seasonal campaigns focused on the venue experience, and targeted campaigns for strategic shows during the season.



NJPAC has historically focused on show-by-show marketing but has plans to hire personnel to focus on institutional branding.



BAM prioritizes listening to customers and speaking to them based on their individual interests in particular shows — though institutional branding and messaging is carried throughout both ticket sales and fundraising touchpoints.

Institutional



Royal Albert Hall

RAH uses its history as the centerpiece of its institutional brand.



AT&T PAC has created a "brand health" role.



NAC's status as a crown corporation with government support allows them to focus their branding on their mission and values.

The Bigger Picture: Case Studies on Brand Awareness

For those institutions who are increasing (or maintaining) a focus on institutional branding, the approach can vary widely. Below are two examples we heard on our calls from organizations who are leaning into their brand — and what that means externally and internally.

Royal Albert Hall: History as Selling Factor

While the post-pandemic recovery necessitated some focus to show-by-show marketing, the Royal Albert Hall marketing team is keen to return to a focus on the institution's strong brand awareness.

Archive-related content is an important part of this brand strategy, due to audiences' associations with the famed history of the Hall.

“The actual brand identity of the Royal Albert Hall resides in its history.”

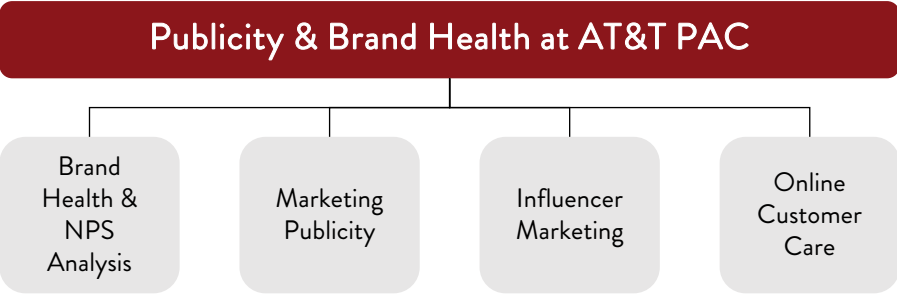


AT&T PAC: Dedicated Brand Health Role

At AT&T Performing Arts Center, the person responsible for Publicity now has a new core focus: brand health. This allows the team not only to generate awareness of the organization, but also to monitor their success in the marketplace through NPS and feedback.

The role works with the Guest Services and Operations teams to make sure that the teams cohesively use the proper feedback mechanisms to gather information about guest issues.

“We now pull together responses quickly instead of always leaning on the box office.”



Digital Marketing Requires Frequent Content

General takeaways from our interviews:

- While print advertising has become more expensive, digital marketing comes with its own time and financial cost, as it calls for **constant content development**. This requires adjustments on various levels, including budget, data analysis tools, and team capabilities.
- When marketing teams are considered full-service departments, they are responsible for the **creation of digital content** too. Instead, when such responsibility is shared among departments, marketing teams typically still manage **how the content gets out** to the public.
- The increased need for over the top (OTT) content for online platforms and social media has caused some marketing teams to **reallocate their resources** to bring graphic design in-house.
- There is strong (and increasing) priority placed on **video content** in the current digital landscape. In this case, organizations adopt two strategies: vertical videos (e.g., Instagram reels, TikTok videos) are created in-house by the social media manager/team; and high-quality recordings are outsourced to external video production teams.

Shifting Marketing Resources Into Digital Can Take Different Shapes

Case Example: Insourcing Strategy, Outsourcing Production



The NAC's digital expertise lies mainly within their **digital marketing strategist**, a role that operates slightly aside from the core team of artistic subject matter marketing experts. The digital marketing strategist's main responsibilities include:

- Building the organization's capacity around new technology and improved coordination of digital strategy
- Managing email strategy and search engine marketing. In the past, each artistic discipline's marketing strategist would take care of search engine marketing, causing competition among themselves

Content production, however, is outsourced to NAC's **agency of record**, which handles the full creative process from strategy to production, and manages all paid advertising campaigns.

Case Example: Content-Driven Strategy and Human Resources



Wolf Trap does not yet have a dedicated digital department, so takes two tactical steps to manage digital marketing as part of its current marketing team structure:

- Along with many of their peer institutions, they have moved away from traditional media coverage to ads on **OTT online streaming platforms** (e.g., Hulu, Spotify) – this requires much more video content, which informs the skills they prioritize bringing onto their team.
- The budget previously directed to media coverage is now used to produce digital video content. As a result, they have been able to hire a **seasonal digital multimedia specialist** who creates short-form vertical video content (e.g., backstage videos).

Three Approaches to Managing Rental Marketing

Most organizations participating in our research have a flexible approach to marketing rental opportunities, shared between the marketing and rental teams; however, two approaches with more clear ownership emerged as well. These depend on the organization's overall approach to revenue streams.



Standardizing Artistic Rental Guidelines Saves Time and Effort

Most participating organizations indicated that they were satisfied with the amount of time required to manage the marketing for incoming artistic rentals. For several, this was due to their having set an expectation that the renting production manage their own marketing. For organizations who do provide marketing support to artistic renters, having a **clear contract and set of guidelines** is crucial to make the process sustainable for a lean team.



Royal Albert Hall's artistic rental contract defines which marketing services will be provided to renting productions. This can include advertisement on the RAH website, email blasts, social media posts, and box office support.

The in-house marketing department then coordinates with the renter's marketing team to receive promotional material and brand toolkit to ensure that they have all materials needed to create collateral support.

Pros to this approach:

- The marketing services that RAH offers are basic and consistent, so the marketing team avoids being overloaded and can work off a set routine.
- There is no need to create anything from scratch – the team works with information and materials provided by the renter.

Cons to this approach:

- Some renters are easier to coordinate with and more communicative than others, so some “chasing” may be necessary to secure the appropriate collateral.
- The materials provided may be different in terms of quality and appearance from the Hall's, so standardization is sometimes needed.



Rental Tip

Remember to define in your contract which of an artist's images and video recordings can be used and how to avoid issues of intellectual property that may arise later.

Prioritize Repeat Bookers To Bring the Most Value

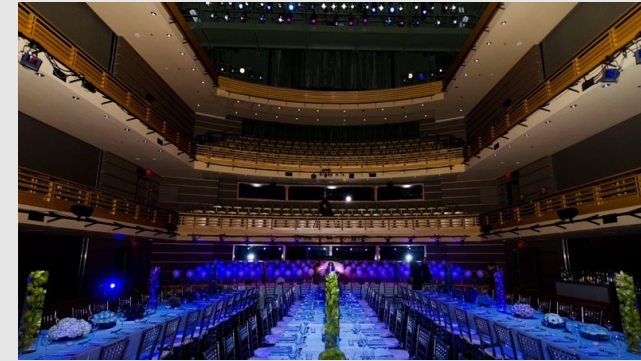
Renters with a high likelihood to return are most effective to ensure long-term revenue generation. These can take two forms:

Repeat Events

The Kimmel Cultural Campus organizes its event bookings to prioritize those that are likely to repeat on an annual basis.

- 45% of bookings are commercial rentals with high likelihood of return, such as graduations and conferences.
- 45% of bookings are performances.
- Only 10% are one-off events, such as weddings, bar mitzvahs, and memorials.

Kimmel Cultural Campus Wedding Open Houses

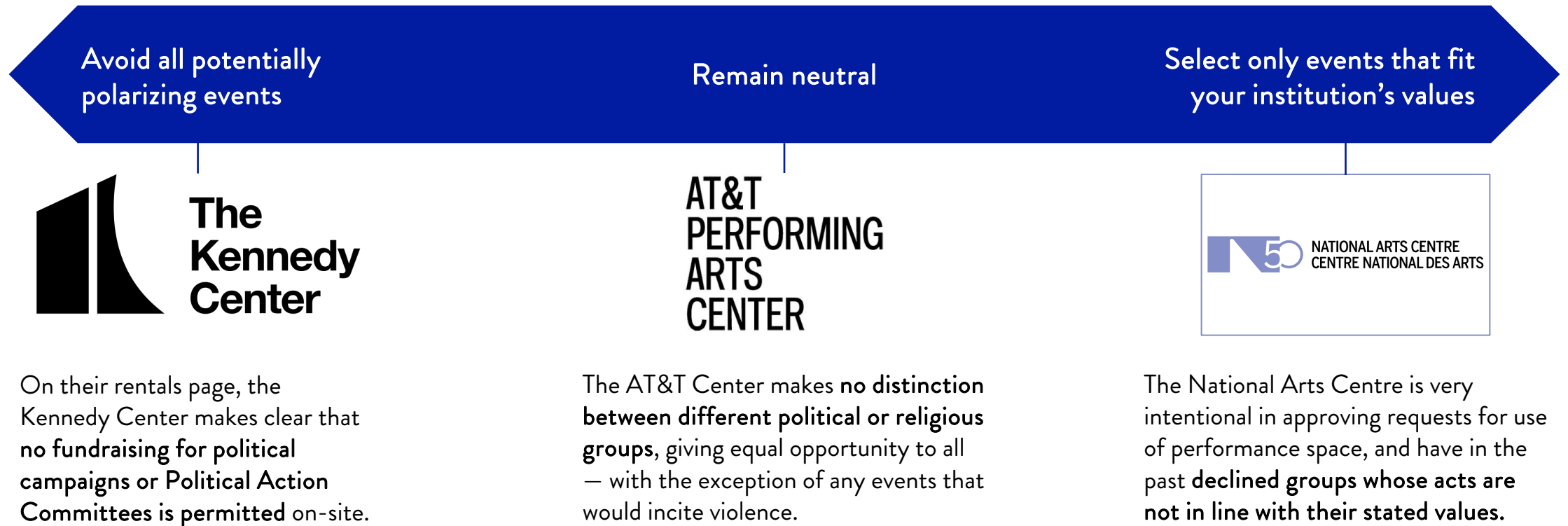


For those 10% of one-off events, the organization has found a creative way to still encourage repeat visits: they host **wedding open houses** for event planners, where they can experience a party at the Center.

As a result, they have built strong relationships with these professionals to ensure that they can have multiple partnerships with each one for the weddings they manage.

Protect Your Brand Values When Choosing Renters

When you host another organization in your space, you are also associating their brand with your own. The organizations with whom we spoke shared a spectrum of approaches to ensuring your guests are not in conflict with your values.



Additional Expertise-Based Services Are Worth Investment

While a compelling base package is key to attract renters, some additional services are valuable enough to merit extra charges.

Theatrical Expertise



The Denver Center offers a digital package that renters can use to enhance their events – particularly in today’s hybrid environment.

Additional services include:

- A fully-produced digital broadcast to unlimited viewers worldwide
- Access to their full suite of modern lighting, sound, and production equipment
- Support from a team of theatrically trained production experts

Technology Services



The Shed offers a variety of customizable technology options for rental events, creating a highly personalized and seamless experience for clients.

These resources include:

- Android tablets running Zkipster event management software
- A “take over” of the in-house Digital Signage System (DSS)
- Customized WiFi networks for specific spaces within the event

Marketing & Promotion



The AT&T Performing Arts Center includes some marketing services in their base rental package, but offers additional resources for a further charge.

Marketing services include:

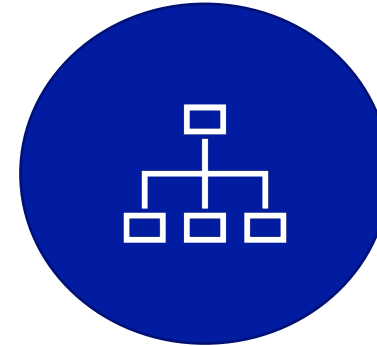
- On-sale week emails (\$1000)
- Social media post (\$100 /post)
- Dedicated web page (\$500)
- On-campus outdoor digital signage (\$250, for 4 weeks prior to event)

Report Outline



External Marketing Challenges

- Brand Awareness: Current Strategies and Case Studies
- Digital Marketing Impact
- Managing Event Rentals
- Marketing Options for Artistic Rentals



Marketing Team Structures

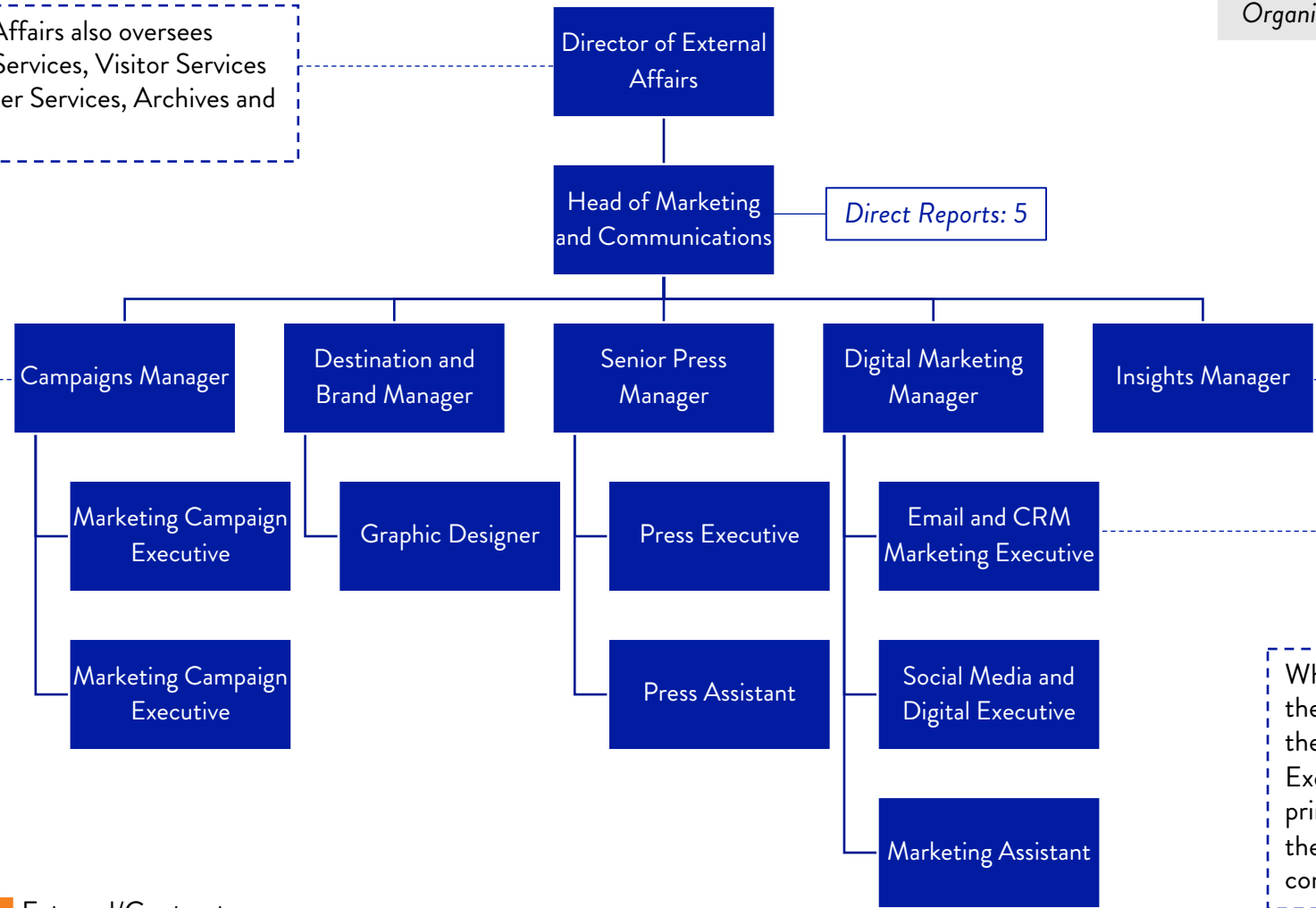
- Organizational charts
- Key lessons learned from interviews



Royal Albert Hall: Marketing Structure

Organization's approx. annual revenue: £4.8m

Director of External Affairs also oversees Ticketing, Customer Services, Visitor Services and Security, Customer Services, Archives and Retail / Merchandise.



The Campaigns team can be small, as they only work on RAH's own promoted events; artistic rentals are handled by the Digital Marketing team.

Part-time role responsible for compiling a weekly summary report of audience feedback and working with IT to manage the Power BI report for deeper audience insights.

While other departments send their own email communications, the Email and CRM Marketing Executive focuses on email as a primary sales driver, ensuring that the organization sends relevant content not seen as spam.

■ Individual ■ Team ■ External/Contractor



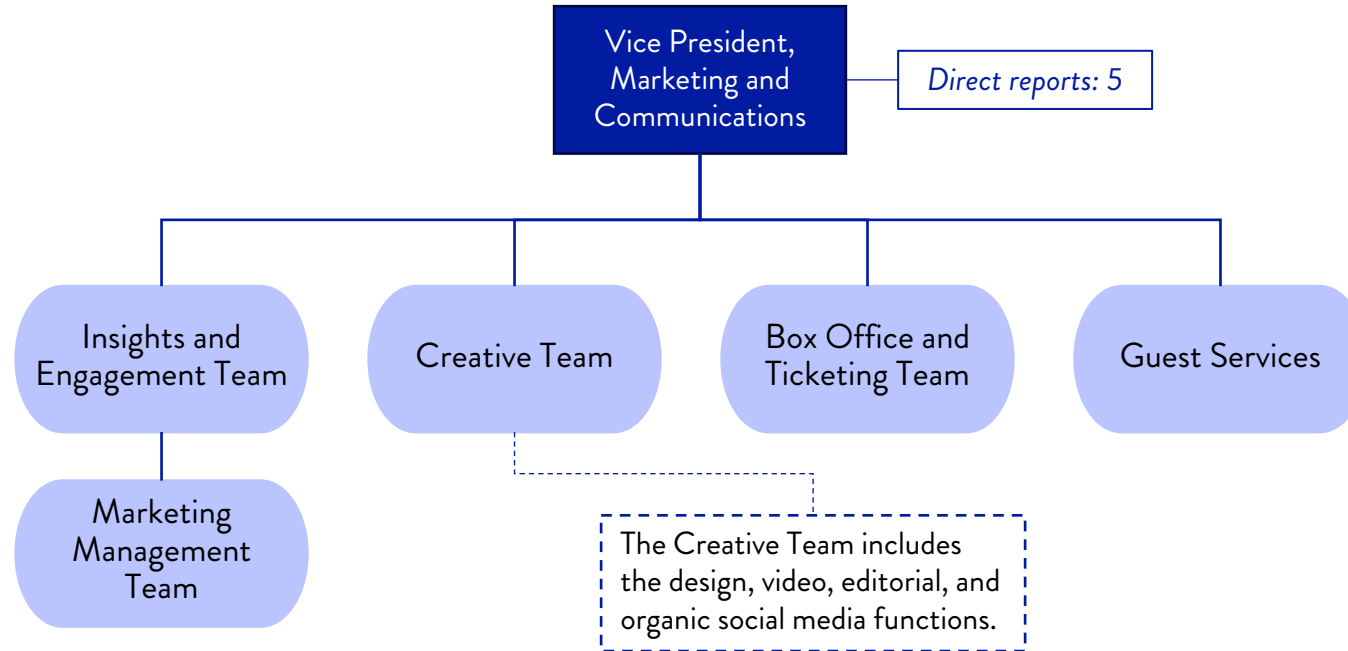
Royal Albert Hall: Key Lessons

- **Removing silos ensures a well-aligned audience experience:** prior to 2022, the Director of External Affairs oversaw only marketing & communications and ticketing. They now have all areas of visitor/customer experience, retail/merchandising, FOH, and security under their purview. This approach ensures that **all aspects of the audience experience are consistent with the Royal Albert Hall brand and values.**
- **Establishing clear ownership leads to effective collaboration:** the current team structure allows for the campaign team to focus on the strategic planning and management of all marketing campaigns, with the digital team supporting specifically through the maintenance of content on digital/social channels. Both teams use content designed by the brand team, which includes graphic design and has responsibility for the Hall's brand image. **This structure allows for manageable workload and clear accountability among the teams,** as well as leaning into the expertise of each group.
- **Investing in data-based insights allows for more informed decision-making:** the presence of a resource dedicated to gathering customer insight and satisfaction data through post-show surveys has been a **valuable support for justifying business decisions** — including proving to artistic renters that their more bespoke marketing requests may not be as well-received by the Hall's audiences. **Even investment in a part-time resource can have significant impact:** the Hall's Insights Manager works 2.5 days per week.
- **Bringing all marketing elements in-house reduces cost and increases control:** in the past ten years, the Hall has brought both their press and graphic design functions in-house (previously, both were almost entirely outsourced). This has given them **control of their message and brand, leading to a much stronger institutional voice.** Moving graphic design in-house has also reduced marketing costs for the team.

BAM: Marketing Structure



Organization's approx. annual revenue: \$47m



■ Individual ■ Team ■ External/Contractor

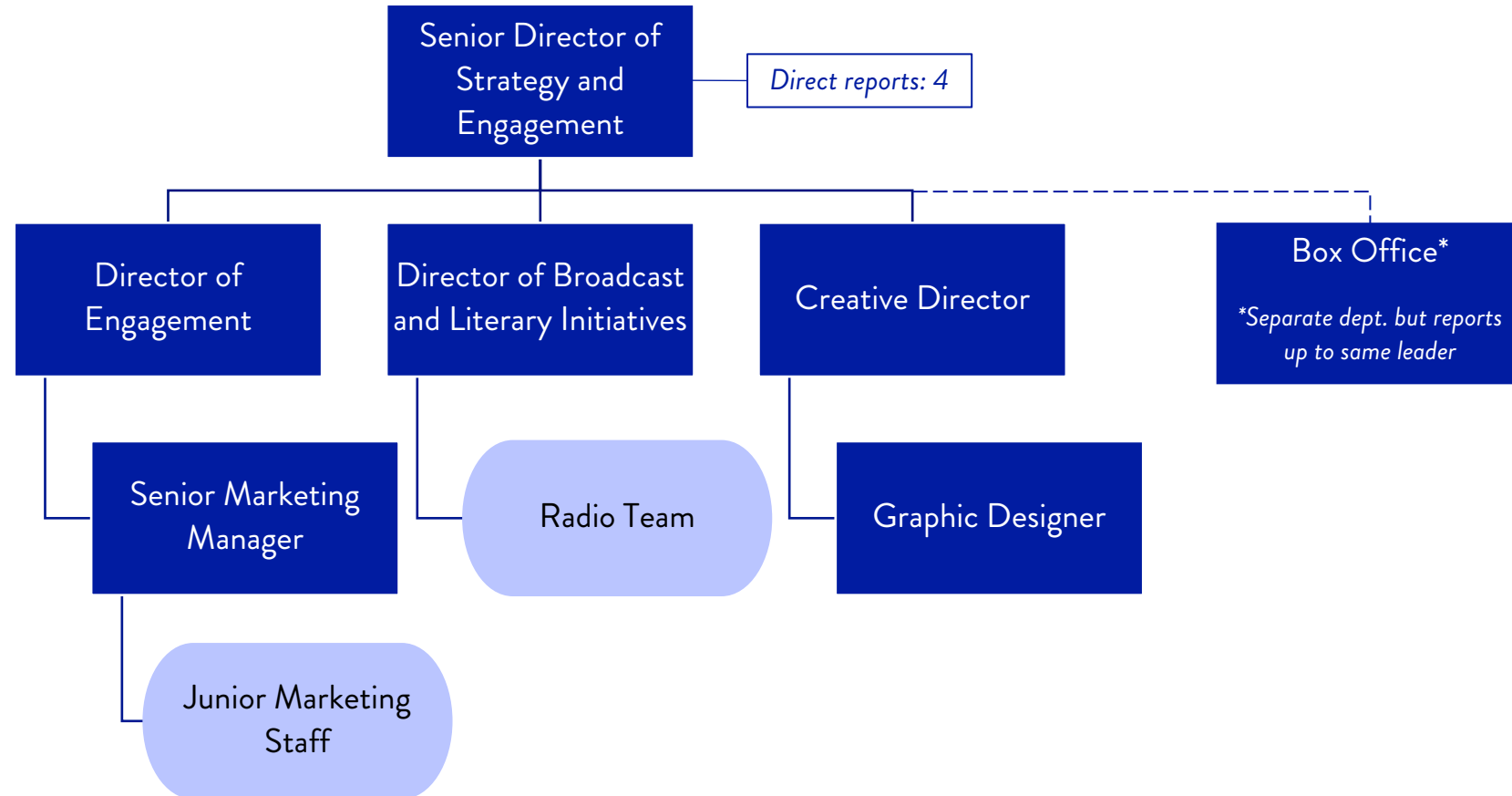
BAM: Key Lessons



- **Shifting a traditional structure towards an institutionally aligned approach:** with the recent addition of the Insights & Engagement function of the team, BAM's marketing leadership is working towards an approach that incorporates all public-facing work under one umbrella so there is a **central point of thought for all strategy** — one that is rooted in the needs and wants of the audience and the organizational mission and values. Ideally this would include rentals as well, though this is currently a separate function at BAM.
- **Ticketing as a part of marketing:** the approach to marketing at BAM is audience-first — **speaking to customers when they wish to be spoken to, rather than only when the organization has something to say.** As such, incorporating ticketing into the marketing team allows these functions to speak the same language, and engage audience members more thoughtfully. The development and marketing teams also collaborate to ensure that messages for fundraising and ticketing are strategically aligned and don't seem to take a bifurcated path.
- **Investment in digital:** BAM's marketing leadership sees a critical need for arts institutions to **invest in digital technology infrastructure.** When dealing with older technology, there is significant increase in cost and loss of agility as an organization.

Symphony Space: Marketing Structure

Organization's approx. annual revenue: \$4.5m



■ Individual ■ Team ■ External/Contractor

Symphony Space: Key Lessons

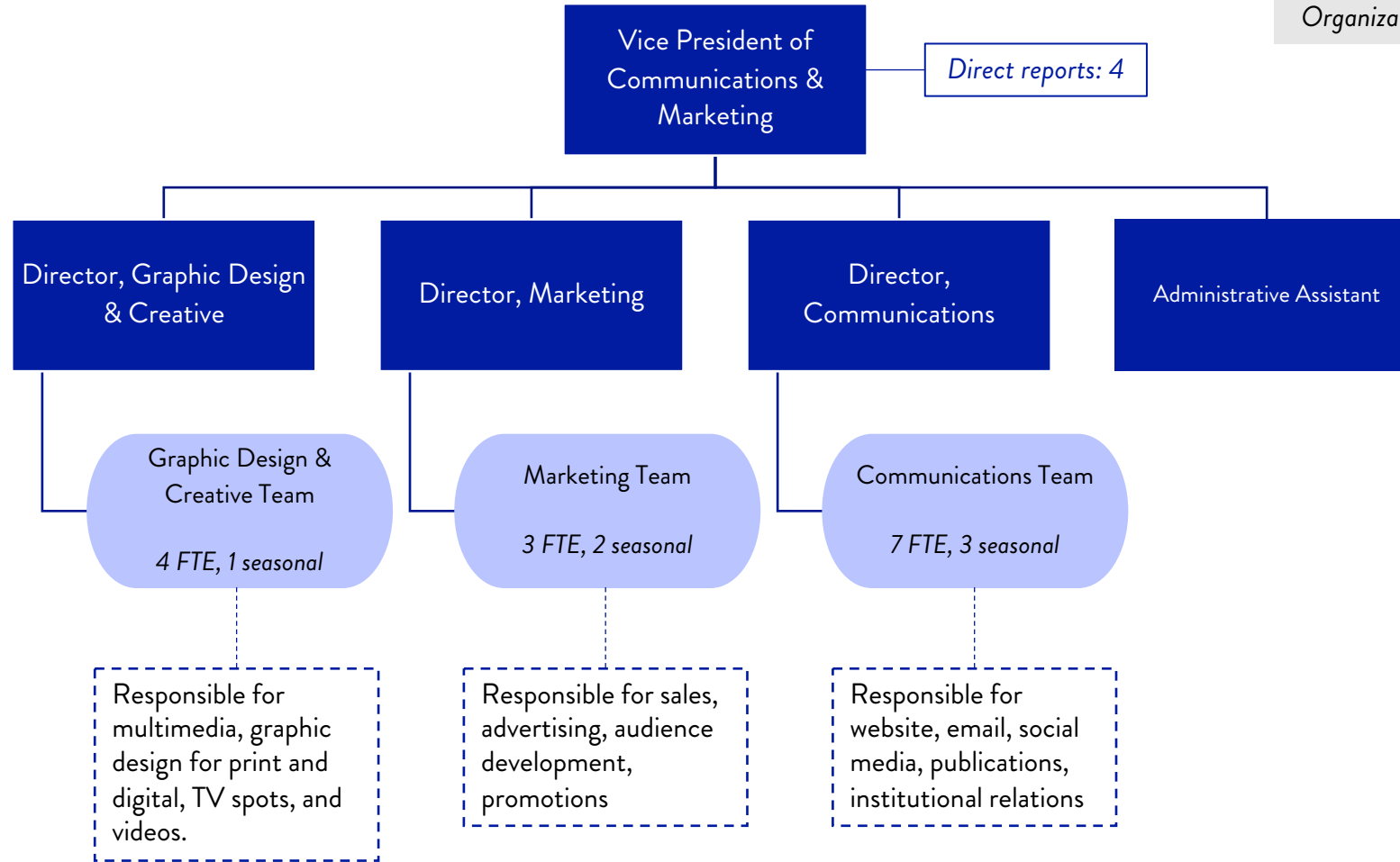
- **Restructuring for clarity of responsibilities:** prior to a large shift in the organizational structure, there had been confusion between the responsibilities of marketing vs. development, specifically the marketing associated with development efforts around membership, fundraising events, etc., which ultimately resulted in less clarity overall about the institutional message. Additionally, as a result of the pandemic, the marketing department expanded beyond the traditional roles and became responsible for the livestream program, virtual customer service, special partnerships, etc. In light of this, Symphony Space's leadership **restructured the teams to better align with marketing's role as an internal service department for the entire organization**, which includes the specific responsibility of marketing for development — with the development team better able to focus on their fundraising tasks and goals.
- **Investing in digital has become even more important:** after the start of the pandemic, **the need for increased video content became clear, so Symphony Space brought on a full-time video editor**. When looking ahead to a future where the arts sector is sufficiently funded and better recovered from pandemic losses in staff, budgets, and audiences, Symphony Space would like to further grow their digital team with dedicated positions restored for website management and social media. Currently, both website and social channel management are divided amongst several team members' roles.
- **Fewer direct reports for top leadership:** part of the restructuring effort was to **significantly reduce the number of staff members reporting directly to the Senior Director of Strategy and Engagement**, down to three directors. Prior to this change, they were spending a bulk of their time on HR, while they can now dedicate time and energy to strategic institutional efforts.
- **By nature, a smaller team allows for agility in the face of change:** the Symphony Space marketing team has a strong understanding of each other's roles, and an ability to fill in where needed. They are able to take on big projects as a small team because **the horizontal nature of the structure allows them to remain agile both during increased pace and workload**, and in the face of a quickly changing cultural landscape where organizations need to pivot often to survive.

Wolf Trap: Marketing Structure



FOUNDATION FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Organization's approx. annual revenue: \$43m



■ Individual ■ Team ■ External/Contractor

Wolf Trap: Key Lessons

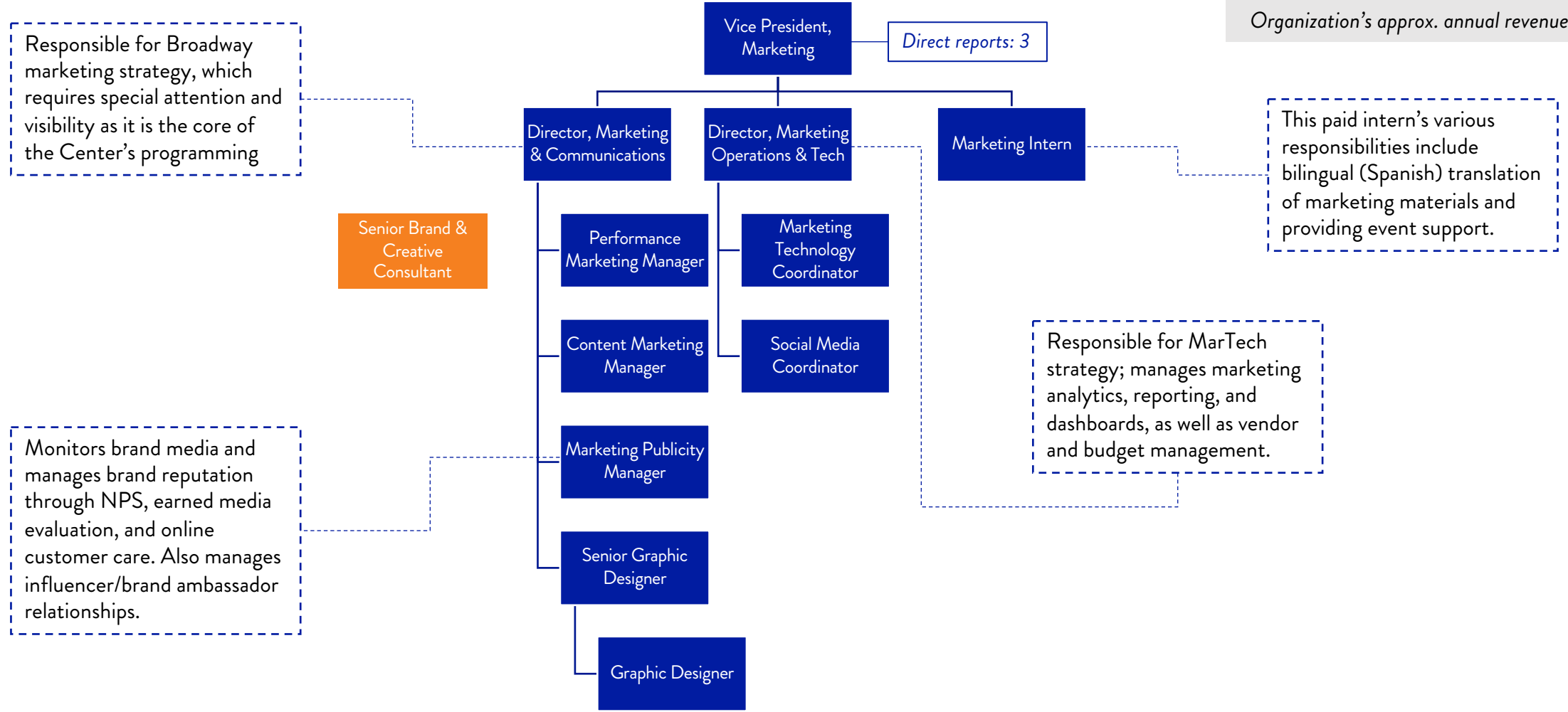


FOUNDATION FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

- **Taking a strategic approach to restructuring:** Wolf Trap’s marketing team recently underwent a three-year restructuring process, and recommends taking their “step-by-step” approach to this type of process. The team’s leadership **looked at the strengths of various team members and made incremental changes to how the team was organized accordingly**, allowing for a much more thoughtful end result.
- **Putting time and dedicated resource towards digital:** marketing leadership at Wolf Trap sees digital as being 80% an engagement tactic, and 20% a ticket selling practice. Therefore, the team would like to have a **dedicated digital content sub-department** (whereas this work currently belongs to the communications function). Given the increased emphasis of digital content in arts marketing — particularly video content — this specialization will be crucial to produce marketing content that engages audiences.
- **Partnering with contractors to expand team capacity:** with a smaller team, Wolf Trap uses a **variety of external agencies and contractors to supplement their work**, specifically for digital/print advertising, digital programs, TV spots, website development, and additional graphic design assets.

AT&T PAC: Marketing Structure

Organization's approx. annual revenue: \$21m



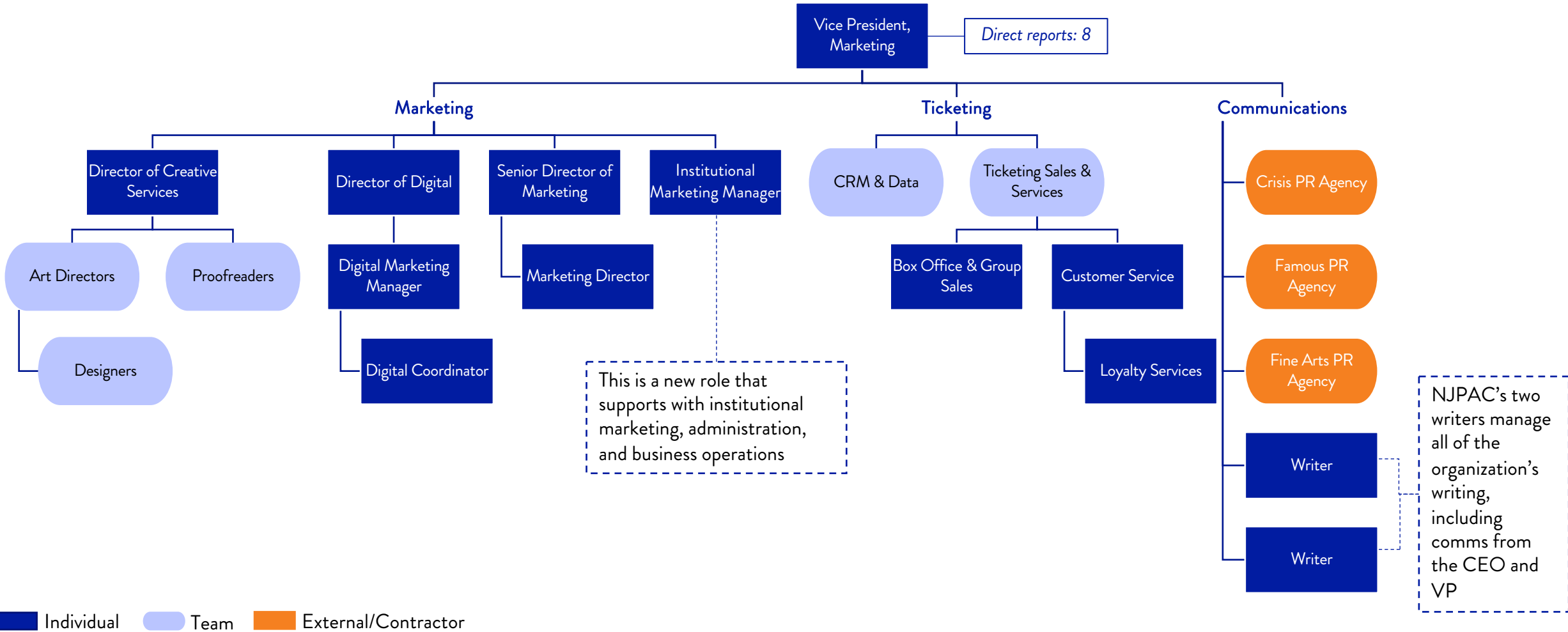
Individual
 Team
 External/Contractor

AT&T PAC: Key Lessons

- **Focusing on brand health:** with the addition of their Marketing Publicity Manager role, the AT&T PAC's marketing team has been able to more effectively monitor online success in collaboration with other departments (in particular, guest services and operations) instead of leaning on the box office for data. Previously, several departments were collecting guest satisfaction data — **having one point of contact and management of all these data sources allows for a comprehensive view of the visitor experience and brand health in the market.**
- **Dedicating resources to social media:** as with many organizations, social media management was previously a side responsibility of several members of the team. **Having a dedicated resource ensures that the institution has a clear social media voice.** As this new role continues to build up, there will be an increased focus on quality control of social channels.
- **Bringing paid media in-house:** previously AT&T PAC worked with an external agency to run the bulk of their digital ads. With a small advertising budget, paying a monthly management fee to post ads was not to their benefit, and so they brought that work internally. **Now there is one individual on the team who manages the entire paid media strategy, which allows for a better understanding of their performance marketing** and what channels work for different types of shows. Though it is a big effort to manage in-house, it is paying off.
- **Visitor experience requires cross-departmental collaboration and clear points of contact:** a key area where marketing works closely with other teams is in the development of enhanced audience experiences. In an effort to expand service offering for their shows, the Center has begun to offer **a series of after parties at each show. This requires effective collaboration between marketing, programming, facilities, and operations.** To make this feasible, marketing leadership made a concerted effort to communicate to the entire organization who the right point of contact is on the team for any marketing need.

NJPAC: Marketing Structure

Organization's approx. annual revenue: \$41m



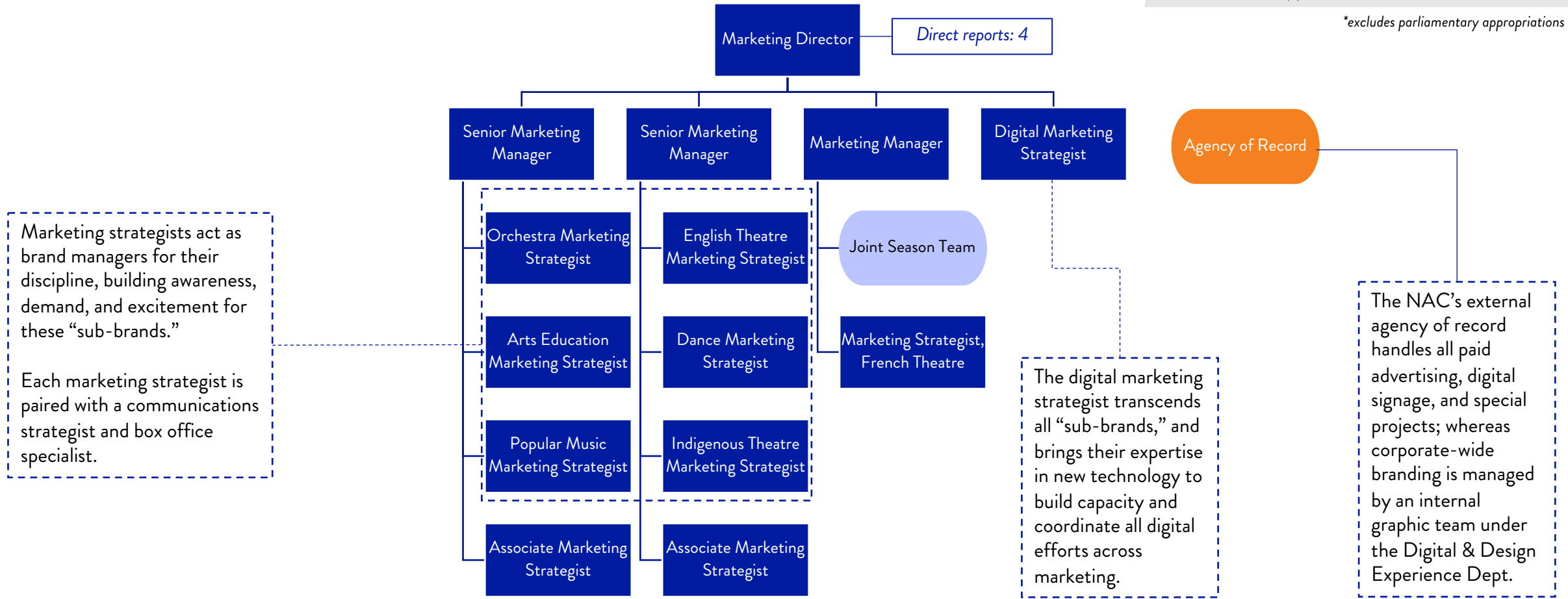
NJPAC: Key Lessons

- **Creating internal cohesion through communications:** based on feedback received around the need for increased internal communication, NJPAC's Vice President of Marketing created and began sending an internal newsletter. Their team of writers connect with individuals from across the organization to share updates, which **aligns team members on the overall institutional vision**. The newsletter also includes staff member highlights and fun giveaways.
- **Establishing an institutional marketing role:** a new addition to the NJPAC marketing team is the **Institutional Marketing Manager**, who oversees marketing for arts education, and assists with community engagement and development. This hybrid role also manages some of the team's operational and administrative tasks, such as budgeting and invoicing.
- **Consolidating in-house capabilities will be a priority moving forward:** NJPAC's marketing leadership hopes to make some key structural changes that would increase the effectiveness of the marketing organization, including:
 - **Reducing the number of direct reports to the VP of Marketing** and consolidating leadership of each function (i.e., ticketing, creative services) under one individual
 - **Absorbing all areas of arts education marketing** — currently the marketing team manages acquisition and the education team manages retention, but in the future these responsibilities could both live with the marketing team.
 - **Creating an in-house PR function**, which would reduce the challenge of working with multiple external agencies for different PR needs.

National Arts Centre: Marketing Structure

Organization's approx. annual revenue: \$22m CAD*

*excludes parliamentary appropriations



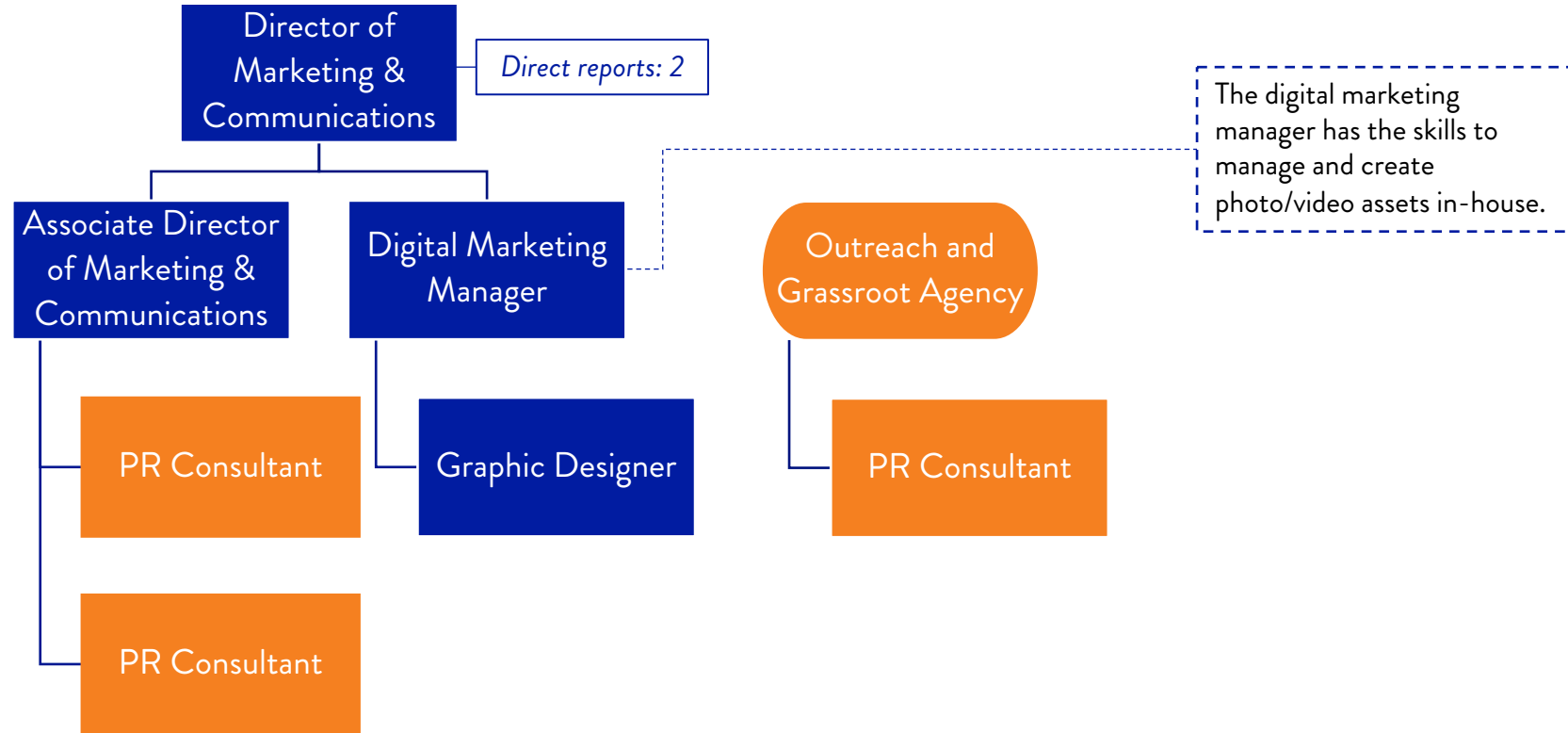
■ Individual ■ Team ■ External/Contractor

National Arts Centre: Key Lessons

- **Building marketing expertise around genres:** among participants in the research, the NAC was unique in its structure of **genre-specific marketing specialists**. The marketing strategists are responsible for building awareness, demand and excitement for their programming area. Even in recent restructuring efforts, this organization remained, as the marketing strategists have such deep knowledge of their artistic areas and are so enmeshed in the teams (i.e., the orchestra marketing specialist having close a relationship with the orchestra musicians) that to move away from that structure would cause a loss of efficiency and expertise. For this role to be successful, several key skills are necessary:
 - **Business acumen:** strategists send forecasts; track overall attendance, sales, and goals; mitigate where needed; and redeploy budget as required.
 - **Technical skills:** NAC's marketing team manages Tessitura, which previously lived with the box office.
 - **Artistic sensibility:** strategists must be able to both work with artistic partners and get the most out of their advertising agency
 - **Project management skills**
- **Establishing clear partnerships with sister departments:** to support the work of marketing, the team works closely with several other groups, including:
 - **Digital & Design Experience (DX):** this department is responsible for anything related to the website, UX, and corporate-related graphic design.
 - **Communications & Strategy:** working closely with marketing, Comms & Strategy manages earned and social media.
 - **Box Office:** each marketing strategist has a dedicated counterpart in the box office
 - **Agency of Record:** the NAC has an external agency of record that covers all creative projects from start to finish, including paid advertising campaigns, digital signage, and special projects.
- **Ensuring succession and leadership capacity:** a recent structural change to the team was the formalization of the marketing manager role, which allows for a **stepping stone in the progression from the marketing strategist to the senior marketing manager role**, which previously did not exist. This addition also helpfully reduced the number of direct reports to the marketing director.

Wallis Annenberg Center: Marketing Structure

Organization's approx. annual revenue: \$10m



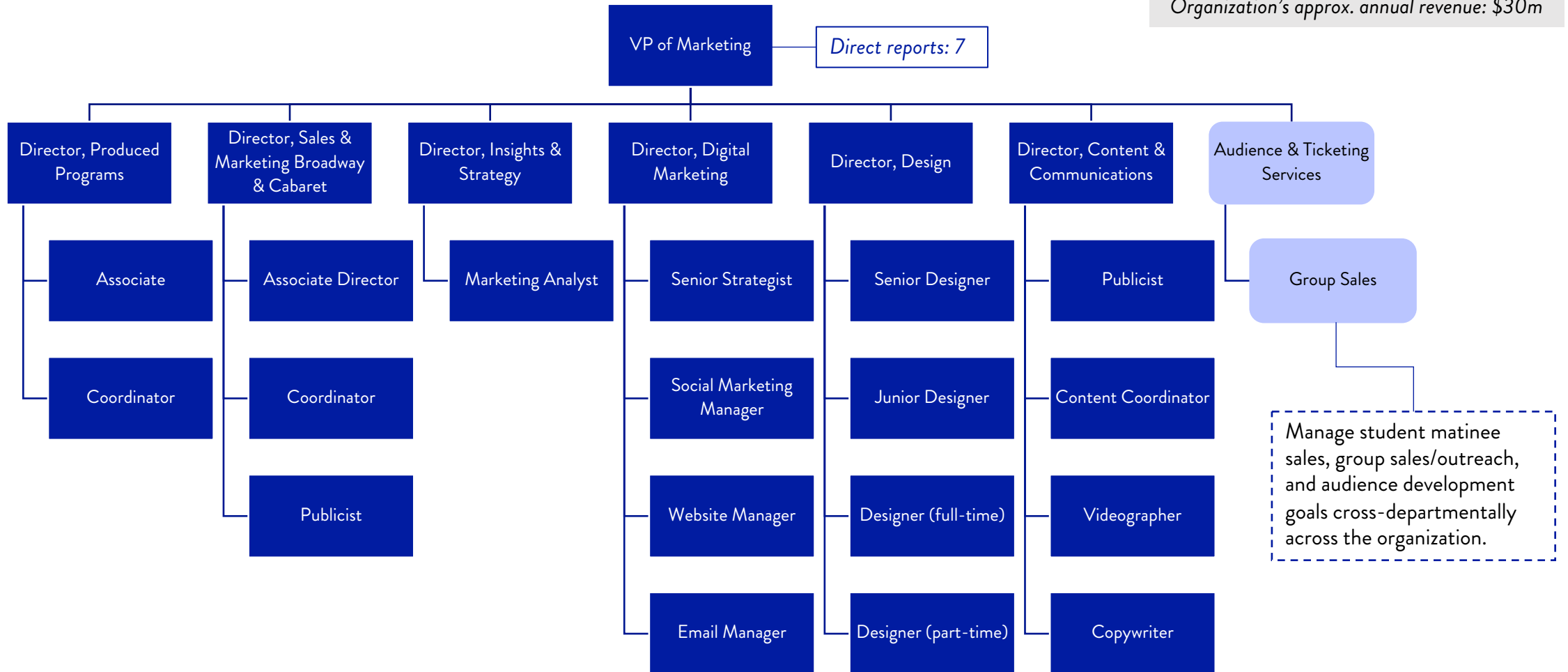
■ Individual ■ Team ■ External/Contractor

Wallis Annenberg Center: Key Lessons

- **Collaborating closely with “client” departments:** the marketing team handles all marketing for the education team, and partners closely with development for their marketing needs. Marketing holds weekly or biweekly meetings with both departments for new project intake and check-ins on ongoing work. The development team also **works directly with the in-house graphic designer for its collateral needs**, which streamlines the working process.
- **Finding creative ways to supplement a lean team:** in addition to working with external contractors for PR and grassroots outreach, the marketing team at the Wallis takes part in the **LA County Department of Arts and Culture’s summer internship program**. This has proven to be a valuable experience for participants, and has brought qualified, full-time support to the marketing team during the busy summer months.

DCPA: Marketing Structure

Organization's approx. annual revenue: \$30m



Individual
 Team
 External/Contractor

DCPA: Key Lessons

- **Finding the balance for product line consolidation:** the two main product lines for DCPA, Broadway and Produced Programs, have their own **specialized marketing sub-groups**. This separate structure is cohesive with the need for different strategies for the two areas, but also requires intentional and well-structured communication. One way in which DCPA has addressed this is by **unifying creative services into one team that provides support for both Broadway and Produced Programs**. This helps the team to have a clear view of bigger picture strategy and to not compete against each other.
- **Adding value with dedicated insights professionals:** DCPA's marketing leadership **feels very fortunate to have a Director of Insights & Strategy** on the team, with a dedicated marketing analyst. This two-person team manages NPS, RFM work, post-show surveys, projections, modeling, and reports for the board — and works closely with the Data & Applications team in DCPA's IT department to request and manage more complex data sources. The team then pulls insights and makes strategic recommendations from these data sets.
- **Ensuring coordination when specializing in product lines:** when speaking with DCPA's marketing leadership, they expressed the need for clear and consistent communication across teams when there are a larger number of product lines and responsibilities under the marketing umbrella. The VP of Marketing holds two weekly director's meetings, which are crucial for coordinated strategy. Programming teams also meet weekly to coordinate sales and outreach efforts.