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Phd thesis summary

ARTISTIC PRODUCT MARKETING

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The research includes a total of 207 pages and opens with an INTRODUCTION, where the author motivates her choice of the topic and its utility (p. 9-12), the scientific deepening of the topic is carried out in five large chapters, each containing several sub-chapters, followed by a final chapter of CONCLUSIONS, THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WORK and related APPENDICES, as follows:

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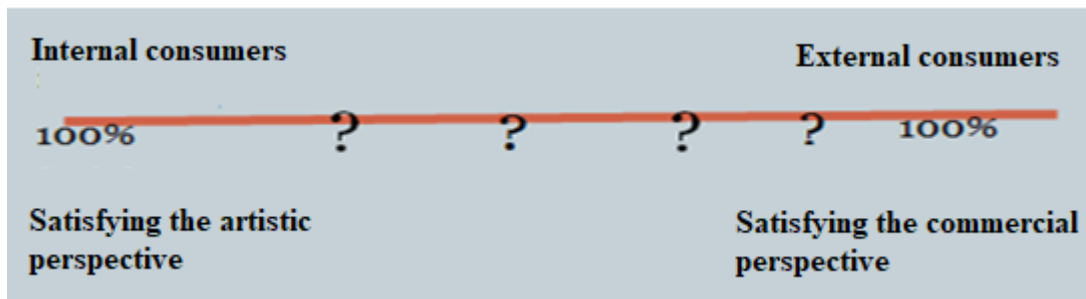
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Key words: artistic marketing, artistic direction, artistic marketing mix, artistic product, augmented product, optimization model, 7P

Artistic Product Marketing

SUMMARY

The work is a search for the optimal recipe between values, artistic aspirations, and commercial objectives without which, profile organizations cannot function and survive. We can consider artistic marketing, as a distinct category of the field, with particularities, limits, and specific requirements where managers are often put in a position to make compromises choosing between artistic freedom and satisfying market demands. Because, unlike other categories of products, where the main purpose of the marketing activity is to satisfy the needs and aspirations of the consumer as precise as possible and more operatively compared to the competition, in the case of the artistic product, the faithful consumer's wish fulfillment is accompanied by the risk to compromise the value of the artistic act and to limit the creative potential of the artistic team. Full compliance with the demand requirements, even when necessary resources are available, is therefore not recommended. In this sense, the paper clarifies the particularities of the field concerning the artistic product and provides information, benchmarks, and support for the optimization of the decision-making process for performing arts teams and organizations.



The paper provides directions in response to this fundamental problem, centralizes and complements elementary concepts from an intersecting perspective of the fields of marketing and art direction, and suggests precise solutions to specific research questions such as:

- 1. How can a marketing vision be effectively integrated into the managerial strategy of the organization with an artistic profile?*
- 2. What does the marketing mix concept mean in the performing arts? What are its features and development possibilities?*

3. *What are the healthy limits of the marketing mix product variable concerning a purely artistic directorial vision of the show?*

4. *How can we use observations related to consumer behavior in choosing a successful repertoire?*

5. *Is marketing a form of limiting artistic creativity or, on the contrary, a way to complement and enrich it?*

In the final chapter, chapter five, the work focuses on and exemplifies the entire course of research in *a model for optimizing the marketing activity of the artistic product in specialized institutions.*

In the scientific literature research, the author resorted to intersected research of specialized materials from the field of marketing and the field of stage art direction, to be able to adapt, define, complete fundamental concepts, and extract the particularities that define the artistic product marketing in performing arts. Thus, the studied materials can be classified into three broad categories: general marketing materials by renowned authors, for example, PALMER, A. (2014), *Principles of services marketing*, 7th Edition; KOTLER, P., KELLER, K.L. (2016), *Marketing Management*, 15th Edition; VORSZAK, A., PAINA, N., POP, M., POP, M., SZEGO, I. (2006), *Services Marketing*; COSMA, S., BOTA, M. (2004), *The basics of marketing*, etc., emblematic materials in the field of directing, especially essential directing doctrines such as STANISLAVSKI, K. (1951), *An actor's work*, GROTHOWSKI, J. (1971), *Towards a poor theatre*, ARTAUD, A. (1997) *Theater and its double*, ALBERTS, D. (1995) *Rehearsal management for directors*, etc., and, to a lesser extent, the field is being still young, poorly documented, and in full of development phase, effective marketing materials in the performing arts as BERNSTEIN, J. – S. (2014), *Marketing insights for engaging performing arts audiences*; O'REILLY, D., KERRIGAN, F. (2010), *Marketing the Arts. A fresh approach*; KERRIGAN, F., FRASER, P., OZBILGIN M. (2004), *Arts Marketing*; HEWITT, P. (2005), *Changing Places*, etc.

On a conceptual level, the work followed the same three directions focusing on the general level of the field of concepts such as service marketing, goods, services, product layers, the product (commercial) life cycle, the theory of needs and motivations, the theory of modeling, segmentation, targeting and positioning. From the art directing field, the work appeals to

concepts such as artistic team management, rehearsal management, role, action, over the theme, the authenticity of stage interpretation, the main motivations of art throughout the history of humanity, communication in and through the artistic act, public – artists' codependency. Based on these two foundations, the author defines, extracts, expands, and completes concepts such as art marketing, types of performing arts products, product levels in the performing arts, the artistic life cycle of the artistic product, consumer needs, and motivations of the lyrical artistic product and defines art as a response to these categories of needs, art as a tool for influencing, etc.

The paper focuses specifically on the marketing mix, the marketing mix variables in the performing arts which it analyzes and describes Product (artistic), Price, Distribution, Promotion, Process, Physical Evidence, and People. In the second part of the paper, they are observed and exemplified in practice.

The (artistic) product is described as being closer to the sphere of services, aggregating both (tangible) goods and (intangible) services. It is intangible, inseparable, heterogeneous, perishable, and cannot be owned. It consists of three levels: basic product, which refers to the basic need that the consumer wants to satisfy (the need for education, entertainment, socialization, emotional needs, spiritual needs), the actual product, the performance, together with all the goods and services that accompany the experience of the show and the potential product that refers to all the improvements and changes that can enrich it in the future.

The price (of the ticket) is most often irrelevant if viewed as an amount of money. However, it involves other categories of costs that are worth considering, such as the time invested, the effort to be present, or the psychological comfort. Another characteristic aspect is the impossibility of fully including production and delivery costs in the final sale price. This instantly generates the need for collaboration, sponsorship, and patronage. The author specifies the fact that, in particular, lyrical artistic performances (opera, ballet, orchestral concerts, etc.) are, at a quick look throughout the history of the genre, the result of the involvement of "patrons" in both their birth and survival, being by definition products that appeared as a result of the involvement of the wealthy social classes like aristocracy and nobility.

The place (distribution) is most often described, in scientific literature, as the place of performance delivery and the place where the attendance ticket can be purchased. The author expands the concept of distribution in the performing arts by looking at it layered from a cross-sectional perspective. Thus, at the deepest and "microscopic" level, the distribution refers to the

allocation of roles and the selection of artists, because the artist, from the director's point of view, is the "place" that hosts the character. The effect that the audience will feel by choosing each artistic cell, differs according to the personality, talent, and experience of each selected performer. The second layer refers to the type of direction and set design that creates the context and how the performers will perform. The type of artistic distribution takes into account the degree of physical proximity and artist-audience interactivity, as well as the position of the audience and its possible changes during delivery. Geographical location and space architecture represent the most comprehensive level of distribution. The author also mentions the major importance of distribution from a temporal point of view, the date and time of delivery being an essential aspect for consumers.

In artistic product *promotion* analysis, the paper emphasizes several recommendations. An elementary first step is to change the point of orientation from the grandeur of the performers and the performances on the stage to the benefits that the audience in the hall has through their consumption experience. Another essential aspect is to highlight the benefits offered by the cultural institution to the community of which it is a part and the openness to collaboration and co-creation as a tactic to expand notoriety. Another effective tactic is to include well-known and acclaimed artists in the cast, but also to invest in building new talent and personal brands within the internal team. The author completes the proposal to design promotional materials as close as possible to the artistic directorial vision of the shows to attract the right audience, more likely to react positively to what is being delivered. They can be as original and spectacular as possible, appealing to the emotional nature of the target audience as performing arts institutions enjoy the advantage of having multiple creative resources at their disposal. However, the materials in which moments or artistic interpretations are used must be checked by connoisseurs in order not to present artists with examples of incorrect execution.

In specialized literature, the process refers, above all, to the process of ticket purchasing. A more original approach is the one introduced by Goffman in 1961 in the work *Encounters: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interactions* where he explains the variable process of the marketing mix by analogy with participating in a show where the customer is the main performer acting based on a predefined scenario in a certain scenography. The author adapts this perspective by describing the scenario of participating in a lyrical performance.

Physical Evidence is, in the author's opinion, loaded with the greatest creative potential and able to quickly enrich the consumption experience of the show. An essential question is to determine when the consumption experience begins. In this sense, we understand that not only what happens in the performance hall is important, but the entire external atmosphere and the details that describe and accompany it. Thus, aspects such as the arrangement of the foyer area, the decor, the furniture, the temperature, and the existence or not of facilities such as a mini bar, souvenir shop, and photo corner, which are often absent or neglected, have a major impact on the experience of consumption, able to intensify or cancel the effect of the artistic act in the performance hall. The author proposes, at the level of this variable of the mix, the extension of the scenic product outside the performance hall by inserting elements of costume, props, and scenography also used in the show, or even short artistic moments in following what is happening on stage.

The people variable is treated at the level of two categories: support staff, i.e. those who interact directly with the audience at the time of the performance (hostess, cashier, wardrobe, etc.), and other representatives of the audience. Both categories can affect the final consumer experience. Of these two, the author considers the audience to have a major impact because it affects not only the consumer but also the stage product through the energy and feedback provided to the artists during the performance.

These theoretical and conceptual aspects are predominantly addressed in *chapters one and two*. Chapter One *The Artistic Field and the Performing Arts* begins with a review of the meanings of art throughout the history of humanity, based on which the author asserts that, nowadays, a show of, success to the rank of a universal masterpiece, can assume all these meanings are *a means of aesthetic and sensory expression, a form of communication and emotional connection, and a tool of education and personal development*. The chapter continues with an analysis of art as a form of communication as well as how it was and is used to educate the masses, to influence or manipulate the behavior of the consumer and society in general. Toward the end, this first chapter briefly addresses how marketing and art complement and harmonize each other. Art is an indispensable and an essential tool in marketing campaigns, a fusion that gave birth to the concept of branding developed by the famous artist Andy Warhol.

Chapter Two *Peculiarities of Marketing in the Field of Performing Arts* delves punctually and deeply into the description, analysis, and completion of the concepts described above. In

addition, it includes an overview of the field of performing arts with its main genres, characteristics, mode of organization, and operation. The last part of the second chapter presents and argues the conflict between the supply and demand of artistic products in the marketing approach which is the basic object of the paper.

In chapter three, *Demand Perspective Analysis in the Performing Arts*, the paper continues with a study of the Cluj-Napoca local level demand for the lyrical stage art market, and chapter four, *Suppliers' Perspective Analysis in the Performing Arts*, focuses on outlining the perspective of the three main suppliers, major local opera producers: National Cluj-Napoca Romanian Opera, Hungarian Opera, and Transylvania State Philharmonic. In the fifth chapter, the two perspectives are analyzed comparatively.

The demand-level research (chapter three) is a quantitative, descriptive type of research, it is based on the interview method as a targeted online questionnaire. Data were collected online via the Lyric Opera Research social media page (<https://www.facebook.com/LyROCluj>), created specifically for this purpose. It has a visual identity using representative colors of the lyrical genre associated with the aristocracy, yellow and purple, and it, so far, accumulates a total of 518 fans. Through this platform, paid campaigns were run. They were targeted at the location of the three institutions while they had performances in progress. So, the respondents were people who were at the shows when they filled out the questionnaire. The data gathering period was March 31, 2019 – June 23, 2019. The total number of final respondents, who provided complete answers to all questions, consists of 200 people. The sample size and margin of error were checked and validated using the determining research sample formula and the formula for calculating the margin of error Cătoi et al. (2009), p.494-495. The accepted margin of error for the sample of 200 respondents is 6.9%.

The questionnaire included two large question categories. The first category included questions in order to collect the demographic and behavioral data of the respondents and the second questions were destined to outline the consumer's perception of the seven variables of the marketing mix (product, price, distribution, promotion, process, physical evidence and people) corresponding to local lyrical products. Based on the total of 200 answers, the author extracted a detailed profile of the Cluj consumer of lyrical products.

Overall, reducing the results to the categories with the highest absolute and relative values, we can illustrate the profile of the Cluj lyrical consumer as being defined by a very high

percentage of women, 80.5%, and 43.5% represented by people aged between 46 and 65 years old. It appears to consist of a well-educated or very well-educated audience, mostly college and master's graduates, altogether covering 63%, but they usually possess neither studies nor artistic activity nor do they have artists in the family or group of friends. Incomes and activity fields are apparently not relevant. There is even a consistent segment of low- and very-low-income audience members, most likely students. In general, it includes, relatively evenly, people from all income brackets. As for the professions, they are also very varied, with a slight predilection in favor of the medical, technical, and economic fields. Students cover the most consistent segment of 17.5% and pensioners cover 10%. Lyrical consumers mostly have a flexible work schedule or finish their schedule before 6 p.m., 60% cumulated. They live, especially, in old city neighborhoods, with the best transport infrastructure: Mănăştur, Gheorgheni, Mărăşti, and Centru, and rarely in peripheral areas. The general tendency is to rarely attend shows 46%, most often only a few times a year. Cluj has, of course, an audience consisting mainly of Romanian ethnicity, but it was interesting to note that, apart from the Romanian and Hungarian audiences, other nationalities are almost completely absent, although their volume in the city has increased in recent years and the lyrical repertoire is by definition universal, not national (Caraba, 2018).

After extracting consumer's perception, at the level of each marketing variable, the following resulted:

As far as the artistic *product* is concerned, the most common needs underlying participation in performances are of an emotional nature (a special personal experience), and educational (to learn something new, to diversify my general culture). The lyrical audience prefers the opera seria genre and is least interested in contemporary ballet. It came into contact with the product for the first time in his/her childhood or school years, 67% cumulatively. It can also be found at theater performances, light music concerts, and, to a lesser extent, electronic music concerts.

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also be found at theater performances, light music concerts, and, to a lesser extent, electronic music concerts.

At the *distribution* level, both geographically and temporally, the greatest incompatibilities with consumer preferences have emerged. First, the weekday show times were found to be incompatible with the work schedule of a 24% segment of active consumers who finish work after 6 p.m. with the mention that these do not include potential consumers at all, as they were not part of the study. As a result, several consumers are automatically excluded from the possibility to attend since most performances of Cluj institutions start, during the week, between 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., when many people would still be at work, or shortly after they have finished work and leaving not enough time to prepare and get to the shows. Moreover, sometimes suppliers' performances tend to overlap, which further divides the potential audience. Last but not least, during the summer, when the sun sets late and the city's inhabitants have more energy and spend most of their time in the city center, on various activities, the lyrical institutions have no, or almost no, activity, thus eliminating this optimal period for performances.

A second barrier to participation derives from the fact that, in addition to the challenging start time of the performances, the consumer either does not have enough time to travel or has nothing to travel with other than their personal car. In the context in which he/she chooses to take the car at rush hour in the ultra-central areas of the city, there are no parking possibilities. None of the analyzed institutions offer logistical facilities, or parking spaces, for the attendees. In this sense, the author proposed the idea of including this benefit in the price of a VIP ticket. Not surprisingly, the lyrical audience is limited to people coming from older neighborhoods with developed public transport infrastructure and excludes major segments of young people living in new neighborhoods, on the outskirts, or people from the city's neighboring localities.

In the ticketing *process*, it was found that almost 60% of respondents prefer to purchase online. Even though the study was carried out in 2019, a year before the pandemic, the percentage, is still high, currently leaning even more in favor of online purchasing. Among the words used to define the online purchasing process were: *convenient*, *fast*, and *practical*. Among the justifications mentioned were: *the possibility to choose better seats yourself* than in the case of the request from the ticket office, *fast payment by card*, and the *safety of keeping the ticket in electronic format*. The purchase from the ticket office was justified only by the fact that it is the

only possibility to obtain discounts or as a last-minute solution when the intention of participation is uncertain.

In analyzing the *physical evidence* the author observed the main hall perception and the foyer area separately. Although the analysis was carried out separately at the level of the space of each institution, objections and advantages perceived by consumers turned out to be relatively common. They evaluated the performance spaces as clean, with good visibility and resonance, and were unanimously dissatisfied with the lack of seat comfort in the stage hall. In the case of OM, the presence of thermal discomfort was also specified. ONRC appeared to have a competitive advantage: attractive interior design. The foyer spaces were also perceived as clean but insufficiently arranged for relaxation during breaks and very poorly, or not at all, equipped with facilities such as a minibar or a souvenir shop. Only OM gained a competitive edge by including a more generous mini bar.

The direct customer interaction *staff* was described, by the respondents, as very positive at the level of all three institutions. This may include the foyer coordinators, ushers, wardrobes, and occasionally representatives from the PR team. The staff obtained positive qualifications in terms of kindness, competence, and promptness, and unanimously there were recommendations to improve physical appearance. A solution that the author suggests in this regard, is contact staff inclusion in the make-up and hairdressing program of the institution's team of specialists, the contact staff being as important in the interaction with the public as the team of artists on stage who benefit from these aesthetic services. Perception regarding *the audience* was assessed by separately tracking perceived behavior in the stage hall and the foyer area. In general, Cluj's audience was perceived as behaving appropriately but there is a tendency to be less amiable outside the performance hall, especially in the case of the ONRC audience.

Also at this stage, in chapter three, the author completes the research with a statistical processing of the respondents in order to observe, also in this way, which are the most relevant consumer segments. The SPSS v.26 analysis package was used: two-step segmentation, SPSS first performs a "pre-grouping" step to group similar cases into a set of initial segments. The algorithm then uses AIC and BIC to determine the optimal number of segments for the final segmentation step (Thrun, 2018, p. 29).

Two clusters were defined. The first cluster is dominant, occupying 71.5% of the respondents. It includes people aged between 46 and 65, with a university degree (bachelor's

degree), and an income of over 5000 lei per month, but who rarely attend lyrical events. The second cluster, 28.5% represents the young audience, made up of people younger than 25 years old, with high school education (current students) and an income of less than 1400 lei, but who often attend the Cluj opera performances.

Regarding the predictors used in determining the model, the most relevant are education, age, and, to a lesser extent, income level and participation frequency. Following the association of these four demographic factors and the marketing mix, a very weak positive correlation resulted between the preference for the consumption of *concerts* and *purely orchestral moments* and the performance *attending frequency*, from which the author deduces that spectators who attend concerts have a greater preference for these and tend to consume more often. The most loyal and music-loving public in Cluj, although less numerous, is most likely to be found at the Transylvania State Philharmonic, which prioritizes a greater diversity of these genres.

At the level of the *age* variable, weak positive correlations were identified between age and the preference for *opera seria* and *operetta*, and very weak positive correlations between age and the preference for *classical* and *contemporary ballet*. The results show that the older the audience is, the greater their preference for these four lyrical genres, confirming that the city of Cluj-Napoca is also facing the problem of the presence of an aged audience or with certain aging tendencies. At the same time, we can also notice a slight inclination, especially towards the genre of *operetta*, which can thus be attributed to the preferences of the oldest age groups among the spectators.

At the level of preferred ticket purchase method, a Mann-Whitney U test was applied to see if there were differences in the frequency of attendance at shows comparing audience members purchasing online with those purchasing at the box office or attending by invitation only (offline). No significant differences were found between the two categories of buyers (online/offline). Spectators who buy tickets online have a similar frequency of participation to those who purchase offline, from which we infer that the purchase process is less relevant in their consumption decision and that there are no definite barriers in participation at the level of this variable of the mix. The same test was applied to see if there were differences between the age of spectators who purchase online and those who purchase from ticket offices or by invitation (offline), but surprisingly, no significant differences were found between the two

categories of buyers (online/offline). Viewers who purchase tickets online have a similar age distribution to those who purchase offline, or the same age groups purchase through both methods, the purchase process being appropriate or less important to them.

The most significant associations are present among *participation needs* and *preferred genres*. In this sense, a very weak positive correlation was identified between the need for *general culture* and the preference for *opera seria*; a very weak positive correlation between the need for *general culture* and preference for *ballet*, a weak positive correlation between the need for *meditation* and preference for *opera seria*, and a weak positive correlation between the need for *socialization* and preference for *opera buffa*. In conclusion, these need-gender couples are interdependent and can be used to target the revealed public according to each individual gender. The more a person is interested in developing their own level of general culture, the more they will prefer the consumption of opera seria and ballet. More meditative people, with more clearly defined spiritual needs, consume opera seria as a priority. The more expansive and sociable people, looking for a pleasant environment in which to express themselves, are consumers of opera buffa. It is very possible that, for example, the following couples: socialization needs – opera buffa and spiritual needs – opera seria are very different, even incompatible. Tailored marketing strategies can be built for each individual couple.

The suppliers' level research (chapter four) is qualitative research focusing on studying the key factors at the city level, the producers of the most difficult categories of artistic products, and the lyric ones (opera, ballet, orchestral performances from the classical repertoire). Secondary data analysis was used by consulting their websites, social media pages, various press articles available online, and the objective papers of the three institutions (ONRC, OM, FILA). Additionally, an individual structured interview was applied with one of the leading factors of the Hungarian Opera, this being the only minority opera in the world. It included questions to describe the organization (activity, structure, objectives, limits, stakeholders), questions to identify the perception of marketing mix variables, and questions to elicit the perception regarding the demand. Some results collected coincide with the perception of the consumers from the previous chapter, however, in chapter five *Observations and Proposals in order to Harmonize the Two Perspectives*, where results are confirmed and expanded, a series of incompatibilities, confusions, and opportunities were also noted on the basis of which the author suggests solutions.

Chapter five begins with a practical application of choosing a season's repertoire using information obtained in the demand analysis of chapter three. The author chooses as the main benchmark the education variable, considered the most relevant according to the statistical analysis, and relates it to the preferred lyrical genre. A percentage of the preferences of the broadest segments segmented by education level, bachelor's and master's graduates is obtained. The percentages obtained from each genre are applied to the total number of shows delivered in a year (80 shows), resulting in a required amount for each genre.

Education level	Opera Seria	Opera Buffa	Opereta	Classical Ballet	Contemporary Ballet	Pur Orchestral
Faculty	14.94%	10.92%	4.60%	8.91%	4.60%	10.34%
Master	10.92%	8.33%	7.76%	7.76%	4.31%	6.61%
Total	25.86%	19.25%	12.36%	16.67%	8.91%	16.95%

- 21 opera seria performances per year, 2 or 3 per month ($80 \cdot 0.26 = 20.8$)
- 15 opera buffa performances/year, 1 or 2 per month ($80 \cdot 0.19 = 15.2$)
- 13-14 purely orchestral performances/year, 1 per month ($80 \cdot 0.17 = 13.6$)
- 13-14 classical ballet performances/year, 1 per month ($80 \cdot 0.17 = 13.6$)
- 10 operetta performances/year, 1 per month ($80 \cdot 0.12 = 9.6$)
- 7 contemporary ballet performances/year, 1-2 per season ($80 \cdot 0.09 = 7.2$)

Later, the thesis observes the degree to which local bidders approached or derailed from this recommended optimum.

Chapter five continues with a detailed definition of the consumer profile at the level of each analyzed institution from a demographic data perspective and the marketing mix perception, meanwhile observing the presence of the two clusters.

In the case of ONRC, we observe that the first two income segments confirm the truth by representing consumers with very low incomes, of *up to 1400 lei* per month, and those with high incomes, *over 5000 lei*. From these two, the segment of those with low incomes is the main one. At the *education* level, also in this case, the response segments with *high school* and *bachelor's studies*, specific for the two clusters, occupy dominant positions, covering major percentages, but

in the first position, according to the level of education, a third category of response stands out, including persons with Master degrees. Dominant participation frequencies are *often* and *rarely* tilting slightly in favor of cluster A, with *low participation frequency*. Regarding the age categories, the largest volumes are represented by cluster A: *46-65 years old attendees*. The specific category of cluster B, young people *under 25 years old* is visible and present in a slightly lower percentage than a distinct category of people aged between 26 and 45 years. In conclusion, ONRC includes representatives from both clusters in major proportions and may also possess a particular consumer segment with a master's level of education and ages between 26 and 45.

In the case of OM, clusters are visible, first of all at the level of education where the largest audience segments are college graduates and, at a short distance, those with high school education. The income levels (0-1400 and >5000) are also present but do not occupy dominant positions in the case of OM, being ranked below the public with incomes between 1400-2000 and 2000-2500. The frequency of participation with the largest percentage is frequent participation, characteristic of cluster B, followed by the rare one, representative of cluster A. Most consumers in favor of OM, according to the main age category, reflect the presence of cluster A, consumers aged between 46-65 years. The 26-45 age category outranks, also in the case of OM, the representatives of cluster B, young people under 25 years of age. In conclusion, apart from the visible presence of the representatives of the two statistically validated clusters for Cluj-Napoca, there are possible segments of consumers with low to medium incomes and ages between 26-45 years.

Among consumers in favor of FILA, we can most clearly identify the dominant presence of all the traits that characterize cluster A. Most FILA consumers are between the ages of 46 and 65, are college graduates, rarely attend, and earn, over 5,000 lei per month, but in the same percentage income-based, there are also those with average incomes of 3,000-3,500 lei. The representatives of cluster B seem to be rather poorly represented in the case of FILA: under 8% are youth up to 25 years old, only 10% are high school graduates, and 5% earn under 1400 lei. There is a consistent segment of the public that participates often, but most likely includes people who are not defined by the rest of the characteristics of cluster B. We can conclude that, among the three analyzed institutions, FILA is the most strongly affected by the phenomenon of aging

lyric audience tendency, the youth being, at least at the moment of the analysis, very poorly represented.

In summary, we can conclude that ONRC attracts the youngest audience members, OM has the most loyal type of audience and FILA is the oldest, most educated, and with the highest income type of audience at the city level, observations that can be the basis a marketing strategy focused on differentiation.

The most practical section of the thesis, by the end of chapter five, is the *model for optimizing the marketing activity of artistic products in specialized institutions*. This is also a synthesis of all the steps carried out throughout the research in a flexible and adaptable form, very easy to apply regardless of the type of artistic organization. It has the advantage of leaving a high amount of freedom to adjust the model according to its own particular objectives and limits. The model includes eight steps as follows:

1. Organization description
2. Identifying main challenges and directions to consider (independent/following imposed stakeholders' objectives)
3. Market data collecting based on possibilities, ideally taking into account target segments following previously defined objectives
4. Consumer's demographic profile or profiles short description
5. Shaping demand perception concerning marketing mix variables
6. Establishing the target segment and analyzing it
7. Choosing the marketing mix at the level of the target segment(s)
8. Determining the discrepancies between the offer perspective drawn and the results extracted from the demand analysis. Conclusions and suggestions for bridging the gaps

The first step, *the description of the organization*, involves a review of all the defining aspects such as the profile of the organization (how the activity is carried out and types of products delivered), details about the internal beneficiaries (employees, collaborators), information about the decision-making factors and their objectives, information about influencers (political demands, suppliers, sponsors, partners or other interested parties) and, last but not least, relevant aspects about the perception of external beneficiaries (public, consumers). This phase also includes a description of the seven marketing mix variables (product, price, distribution, promotion, physical evidence, process, people) from the offerer's perspective.

In the second stage, *identification of the main difficulties and directions to follow*, the main analyzed organization objectives will be defined. Some common examples of such objectives are:

- Growth of the young audience segment (25 years old) by a percentage of ...% per month or year;

- Increase in the number of tickets sold for a certain product category (for example, the modern opera) by a percentage of ...% until the end of the season;

- Increase by ...% of participants with monthly frequency until the end of the season (for example, 2023-2024).

Step number three, *gathering market data according to the possibilities*, is the phase where the analysis data is obtained according to the available resources. Most of the time, organizations already have their customer database that can be contacted at no cost to administer a questionnaire. Otherwise, online or offline possibilities are varied, depending on the budget.

Once the data is collected, we can proceed with the analysis and extraction of the results. As a result, in steps five and six, *the consumer's demographic profile* and his/her *perception is defined in relation to the marketing mix variables*, just as in chapter three.

Step six, *establishing and analyzing the target segment(s)*, requires that we define which target segment or segments are relevant in order to reach the defined objectives, as well as which variables should be used for the segmentation. While in the fifth and sixth stages, we extracted and defined a general consumer profile for the current market, in this phase, we penetrate more specifically into the niches that can determine the achievement of the objectives. To exemplify, the author applied the model to the young audience segment, under 25 years old, a segment of universal interest for all lyrical cultural organizations. In step number seven, we continue by choosing the marketing mix for this particular target segment.

Young, under 25 years old, audience profile

The typical consumer, in the case of this segment as well, is female. The gender distribution follows the city-wide trend identically. The distribution of ethnicities remains relatively similar to that of the generic profile, but an increase can be observed among the young audience of Romanian ethnicity 89.47% compared to 84.5%, as well as a decrease in the Hungarian ethnic group of young attendees 10.53% compared to 13.00%. In the case of the Hungarian Opera, it appears to be a greater need for cultivating ethnic Hungarian children and

teenager segments in order to restore or reverse the trend. The young attendee is mostly a high school or gymnasium graduate, and rarely a college or master's graduate. It, therefore, includes the category of active students. Almost 85% of the young public is still in the process of training, pupil or student. The income distribution for young consumers includes mostly people with no income or very low incomes 0-1400 and, in some cases, a few people with incomes up to 2500. The attendance frequency of the youth segment, in the highest individual percentage, is *rare*, but the frequencies *often* and *very often* all together occupy more than 50% of the market, which means that young people have a better attendance frequency than the general city trend. There are higher percentages of young audiences with training and experience in the artistic field, they cover half of all respondents under the age of 25.

Considering the information collected and organized in the first seven stages, the last and most important stage consists in identifying the discrepancies between the suppliers' drawn perspective and the results extracted from the demand analysis. Based on this info, we will extract conclusions and suggestions for solving the gaps between the demand's perspective and that of the supplier (subject of the analysis). For each marketing mix variable, separately, the supplier's perspective, and the general market perspective of the target segment's perspective are shortly recap to facilitate comparisons and be able to conclude with various observations, suggestions, and recommendations:

The product (young people under 25 y.o.)

The bidder is aware of the market preference for the grand opera genre. It estimates that the lighter genres like operetta and musicals are more appealing to the less experienced in appreciating complex genres consumers. According to the analysis based on the extracted data, it turns out that the estimated risk of following a commercial approach is not necessarily founded. The most demanded genres remain grand opera and opera seria, both preferred by the young audience segment as well.

The tendency towards modern directions responds to the youth segment that has declared that novelty and innovation justify a higher price. For the typical consumer, the presence of a famous artist in the cast is a priority.

According to the analysis of the young opera consumer segment, electronic music fusion is not a good choice, a fact that explains the failure of the fusion project mentioned in the bidder's perspective outline interview. Young people from Cluj are consumers of electronic

music, but the young people who represent the opera-consuming youth segment, although they can participate in electronic music shows, have as basic needs: "A special personal emotional experience" and "To learn something new, to expand my general culture". The experience such young consumers seeks by attending a lyrical product is different from that of consuming electronic music followed by a deep socializing character. Among the needs of the young "lyrical" segment, the need for socialization scored last, "The possibility to socialize in a pleasant environment".

Since a major segment of the young public from Cluj does not have artistic education, it makes the artistic quality of the offered product more difficult to recognize. In this sense, adaptations may be necessary in regard to communication in order to be able to inform and educate the young audience, especially since the young audience is motivated by the need to cultivate and educate itself.

In order to respond to youth segment preferences, in terms of genres, a more consistent offer of comic opera and operetta performances is preferable, without diminishing the offer of grand opera. In this sense, one can opt for a smaller number of purely orchestrated moments and ballet performances. The other variables of the mix, not just the artistic product itself, may have a greater degree of importance for this audience.

First contact with the product (young people under 25)

To build a permanent audience with good engagement, the earlier the product contact happens, the better from an overall market perspective. In targeting the group of young people under the age of 25, a first contact while they are still students is also desirable. A strategy of targeting the segment of middle and high school students through partnerships with comprehensive schools, high schools, and preferential offers can work. Another direction can be targeting people with artistic professions and interests: employees of state or independent artistic institutions and students of the Faculty of Theatre, AMGD, Fine Arts, etc.

Family targeting campaigns are useful measures, but it is worth noting in the case of a family that is already an opera consumer and will encourage the consumption of such products anyway, it is much more difficult to attract an adult audience that is not a consumer and has not had early contact with the lyrical universe in comparison to young students. Developing a portfolio of group offers, and low-cost memberships based on the student card can work more effectively to attract more young people.

Meanwhile, outdoor exposure to lyrical products has rather the effect of reminding about the product's existence in order to stimulate participation, and this proved less effective for the category of consumers who declared these exposures as their first contact with the products of lyrical institutions. Therefore, the stimulation of first contact is necessary at a young age, during childhood, especially in the case of students from other localities. It is worth mentioning that young people and children from rural areas and small towns have little or no opportunity to attend opera performances, and most come into contact with them when they relocate for studies in cities that benefit from an opera or philharmonic. Another direction, as a response to this situation, are tours in neighboring towns and cities with the objective of attracting future students from the stage when they are children.

Price (young people under 25)

The studied bidder approximated the average price quite close to that of the generic profile, 100 lei, compared to 118 lei. The results drawn from the demand perspective are, therefore, slightly more optimistic. It should be noted that the average price may vary at the level of each individual segment. Thus, the average price for the youth segment is 101.28 lei.

The supplier mentioned that discount packages were made available: "There are benefits for pupils, students, and pensioners. There are discounts on subscriptions and group discounts". These are effective measures in terms of supply, especially group discounts. Identifying the average price for each consumer segment can help increase the discount's impact if they are targeted, starting from the couple *average price – segment* and possibly *average price – segment – type* or *desirable product characteristic*.

The bidder correctly realized that the presence of at least one renowned artist justifies a higher price from an overall market lever perspective, but it is important to add that for more specific segments the criteria may be different. For example, with young people, innovation may come before notoriety.

The following measures could be successful in targeting the youth segment: priority promotion of innovative shows and keeping the ticket price around 100 lei with slight increases for the seats with the best acoustics and visibility. The presence of some personalities in the hall is not of major importance for this category of audience. For more sophisticated performances and with high production costs to match, other audiences may be more relevant and willing to purchase tickets at higher prices. It is recommended to reduce the expenses of attracting young

people to such shows and to better redirect them towards more innovative genres that might also include additional activities during breaks.

Ticket purchasing process (young people under 25)

The Cluj consumer prefers to buy tickets online. External platforms are the most efficient. This fact does not imply the cancellation of the offline sales which are relevant to a large segment of mature people identified as being over 60 years of age. The amplitude of this segment may be higher than that drawn by the current study taking into account the fact that these people are less likely to have completed the online data collection questionnaire.

Therefore, the measure to maintain box office sales is good, but it must be adapted accordingly to the segment mentioned above without interfering with the preferences of other age categories. Strategies aimed at mature consumer segments are necessary, but these are short-term strategies that must be combined with a longer-term strategy focused on varied age categories, especially young people and children.

The ticket sales for young people can be reduced entirely, or to the greatest extent, to online methods prioritizing sales through as many online platforms as possible, not just own website. Making student discounts conditional on box office purchase is a barrier that reduces their purchase and attendance acting at the expense of the effort to deliver these preferential offers.

Logistical and timing aspects (distribution in space and time)

The artistic product is an experience far beyond the actual delivery of the performance. The city-wide offer is not aware of the importance of the distribution variable and does not take into account the need to provide logistics facilities for customers or look for solutions to reduce the stress of getting to the show that the consumer from varied categories is currently mentioning. The institution that will reduce or eliminate this barrier can gain a competitive advantage. A general market approach automatically implies public parking solutions. For example parking for those who purchase tickets at the box office or a higher price. In the case of the youth segment, an adjustment of the program and the inclusion of a strategy that takes into account various methods of transportation is more varied and relevant.

It is an advantage for OM that it declares flexibility regarding the time of debut and running of the shows. The start time of weekday performances would be appropriate to take into account the audience's work schedule. At the moment it is restricted to those participants with a

flexible schedule or those who finish work before 6. p.m. Furthermore, barriers to participation may arise if performance schedules are incompatible with transportation schedules in areas with less public transit infrastructure where many young consumers live. In this sense, it is possible to opt for collaborations with taxi companies.

The shows defined as the Grand Opera category have the most extensive durations of 3 to 7 hours. These can be scheduled during weekends leaving room for shorter shows during the week that can begin at 8 pm and allow a larger volume of young audiences to attend during the week as well.

Information sources and promotion methods (young people under 25)

The offer correctly identified the most impactful methods of promotion, respectively social media campaigns and events alongside the offers made available directly on the institution's website. Street outdoor display has proven to be more effective at a generic level, but in campaigns targeting young people these should be considered as secondary. If the budget is limited, the digital medium can be prioritized or, taking into account that many young people travel by bus, display in buses and bus stops could prove to be effective.

Radio spots, media articles, and TV interviews, mentioned by the supplier, are not effective. These recorded low or insignificant results both in the analysis of the generic segment and at the level of the one formed by young people under the age of 25. The information materials should be distributed primarily or exclusively, according to the budget, on the website and social media pages.

Another effective direction is given by the impact recommendations. In this sense, offers such as "invite a friend and you both benefit from a % discount, a free ticket to ... (a less salable show)" can be composed.

Moreover, even though it is an institution with a minority profile, the Hungarian Opera can use the notoriety of the Romanian Opera to propose to current consumers an expansion of the lyrical product, as long as they ensure that there are no barriers to participation. For example, communication only in Hungarian or extensive presentations in Hungarian and later in Romanian, automatically exclude the segment of young Romanians who do not speak Hungarian. In the first case, the consumer does not understand the message and, in the second case, he/she might not notice the message. A clarification that lyrical products are universal, and

not specific to a particular culture may be helpful. Targeting the Romanian public can constitute a separate campaign, separate from the institution's general activity.

The Transilvania State Philharmonic can opt for a campaign mentioning common opera products but focusing on attracting the public through more competitive and diversified offers.

Physical evidence (young people under 25)

City-wide performance spaces are perceived to have a good resonance and an optimal level of cleanliness. The offer is aware of the difficulties recorded at the thermal level, which were also confirmed by the market. In addition, for the young audience segment, besides the need to improve the seat comfort level, especially in the case of price increases, visibility was mentioned as well.

The attractive design, an asset of ONRC, is another criterion to consider by the rest of the institutions, especially in attracting consumers under the age of 25. The insufficiently equipped or arranged foyer area is one of the most frequently mentioned aspects, both in general and more specifically for the youth segment.

Young people, especially, have proven to be much more influential and demanding in their assessment of this variable of the marketing mix. For this category, the interior design and the furnishing of the foyer as a nicely arranged relaxation space, the presence of a bar with enough products as well as a souvenir shop are important and very relevant aspects for increasing the degree of satisfaction in the total consumption experience. The youth segment is much more active and consumes a variety of direct and indirect competing products. For example, the experience of consuming a cinematographic product, participating in various festivals, and traveling to international cultural destinations, actively contribute to increasing the level of expectations of this category.

People – Staff (young people under 25)

The youth segment is more demanding in the evaluation of the Cluj-Napoca operas in terms of promptness and kindness, but no categorical complaints were reported. Public interaction staff are valued even if, according to the perception of the offer, there is not a large investment in this direction. It is currently rated as sufficiently kind and competent. If desired, improvements can be added to its physical appearance. A solution can be to facilitate make-up and hairstyling for the foyer team, especially since the institutions benefit from its styling team

People - The public (young people under 25)

The rest of the audience can impact both the artists on stage and the consumers in the hall. In this sense, the offer appreciated that the representative public is composed of people with a higher level of culture, but this fact does not implicitly guarantee optimal behavior for various audience segments. Bernstein (2014, p. 52) raises the issue of the feeling of not belonging as one of the main barriers to participation for novice audiences. Therefore, a very elitist audience could maintain an exclusionary behavior towards certain segments of the market that have less consumer experience or are at the first contact with the lyrical product. Similarly, an audience with a garnish, too casual, or noisy attitude could considerably affect the consumption experience of segments with emotional and spiritual needs.

CONCLUSIONS

1. *How can a marketing vision be effectively integrated into the managerial strategy of the organization with an artistic profile?* The model for optimizing the marketing activity of the artistic product in stage arts institutions represents an effective solution for integrating the marketing vision with the managerial strategy of the artistic profile organization. It is based on a good knowledge of the target segments and the optimal marketing mix content at the level of each segment, within the limits and requirements of each individual organization.

2. *What does the marketing mix concept mean in the performing arts? What are its features and development possibilities?* The performing arts marketing mix can be seen as a performance around the performance delivered on stage. It includes the product (viewed as a complete experience encompassing specific goods and services), price (with related costs and limits), distribution (viewed as stratified on the three levels), promotion (with some recommendations and special requirements), process (can be described as the scenario of the "show around the show"), the physical evidence (a prop and atmosphere with a lot of potentials), the people (the contact staff and the audience with its double impact)

3. *What are the healthy limits of the marketing mix product variable concerning a purely artistic directorial vision of the show?* The real barriers to participation, at least regarding the Cluj public, are not caused by the artistic act delivered but by logistical aspects, communication methods, the lack of market segmentation and information, barriers in ticket sales, the layout of the space in the foyer area, performance schedule, etc. The fact that the public does not have a

high level of knowledge and artistic education makes it less sensitive to the performance itself but does not exempt it from the effect of other variables in the mix, sometimes easily neglected.

4. *How can we use observations related to consumer behavior in choosing a successful repertoire?* Based on information and observations related to consumer behavior we can optimize the composition of the product (or any other variable of the mix) according to the demographic and behavioral data collected from the market, by adjusting them to the preferences identified at the level of the determined major impact factors (eg: education, age, frequency of participation, income – favorite genre)

5. *Is marketing a form of limiting artistic creativity or, on the contrary, a way to complement and enrich it?* Since no interventions are required at the level of the artistic act delivered on stage, we can conclude that marketing activity does not interfere with artistic value and freedom. Moreover, it is the stage production that can expand on the mix variables to enhance and complement the total consumption experience. The marketing mix enriches the experience offered by the stage product, creates opportunities, and challenges art to enter marketing more boldly and creatively.

Combining the field of marketing and artistic direction is not only possible, but it proves to be complementary, being an excellent source of creativity, with latent potential, still little exploited and able to generate consumption experiences unmatched by other means of spending free time. The artistic product includes in its components the ability to redefine itself as a completely distinct experience by choosing a brave and well-dosed marketing mix.

Since the research was based on a local area data collection, a similar, more extensive study applied at the national level could provide more complete results.

An analysis of the interference of the two product life cycles in the performing arts, commercial - artistic, can separately be the object of a useful research in completing the particularities of the field. Although the work introduces and demonstrates on the basis of scientific literature the presence of these two particular trajectories specific to the artistic product, it does not include a practical verification of these aspects, nor does it address the distance or overlaps between the two cycles.

Observing the effect of various audience segments on the stage product, or more precisely, the analysis of the audience-artists relationship as a variable of the marketing mix, can

be another useful direction of research in completing the particularities of the people variable in the stage art product marketing.

It is important to remember that the research takes into account the audience already consuming lyrical performing arts products, the data collected is applied to people in the bidders' buildings while they were delivering products. Similar research on the public who have never consumed this type of product would probably be the most useful addition to the current work.

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