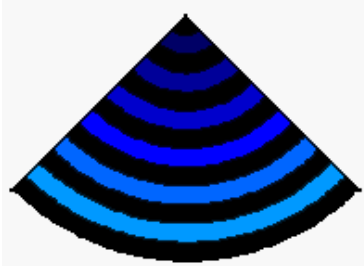


The monthly chapter newsletter of the Alexandria Harmonizers



The Echo

September 2003

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Sell, sell, sell!

Admit it, folks: you just love Harold Hill!

Why, sure you had misgivings at first; who wouldn't? I certainly know I did, but he won me over, won me over with combination of charm, good sense, and inspiration flaming with bright hopes for the world of what's possible if only you, I, and all music-loving Americans have faith.

I'm talking about salesmanship! Salesmanship, which turns commercial hopes into economic realities, inspires others to broaden their horizons by sampling your wares, and makes others realize your value and the value of what you have to offer them!

So, let's roll up those shirt sleeves, don our straw boaters, and think about how to sell our chapter! Unless, of course, you don't have the gumption for it; unless maybe you're more of an...anvil salesman type!

Look for:

The upside down tickettaker!

Martin Banks on the joys of branding yourself!

The invisible man!

Ken Rub on the joys of selling yourself!

A fluffy teddy bear!

Chad Hoseth on the joys of exposing yourself!

An event so momentous, the gods heralded it with lightning and thunder!



Salesmanship, says Harold Hill, is as American as apple pie.



To Market We Shall Go

by Ken Rub



The Marketing and Public Relations Teams have fulfilled several goals over the past few years, including our new and improved website, the ability to purchase tickets to our shows on-line, and the creation of marketing materials that will increase the number of shows we perform in, with a special focus on paid performances. These accomplishments

are the result of tireless efforts of many chapter members, and several key board members, and I thank them for their continued efforts.

We get to add one more accomplishment to our list – we are now marketing the Harmonizers in a seasonal format! As you have probably noted, most performing arts organizations plan their program several years in advance, and in an annual effort design marketing materials that cover the upcoming year. Many times, they offer customers who buy the entire season a discount on their subscription. This allows customers to make sure they get the tickets on the night of their choice (many arts group sell out their shows...), but also allows them to choose which seat in the auditorium they prefer, and lock that in for the year.

The benefits of offering season subscriptions to arts organizations are numerous. First and foremost, funds received today are always preferred to funds received in a few months, or next year. It also provides their clients with an additional marketing “touch”, whereas their clients not only receive notices about each performance throughout the year, but one encompassing the entire year. It rewards their best patrons for the loyalty. It also forces them to plan ahead – and think more globally about what they will

The front of our new season flyer!



offer their audiences. Each show in the season must be different and exciting enough to encourage customers to want to attend each event. I believe this last benefit will enhance the Harmonizer’s efforts to sell out our show. Too often, we are only focused on the “next show”, sometimes forgetting that it is awfully similar to our last one. By planning a year at a time, we can make sure that each show has something new and exciting to reward our customers, and that our friends and families won’t want to miss any of our shows!

For these reasons, I am proud to introduce the Harmonizer’s 2003-2004 season, starting with the Fall Show, where the chorus will feature new material and our contest package, as well as the hilarious quartet FRED. Next, we have our Holiday Show, which serves as an outreach to our community, and raises funds for our local school music program. And our Spring Tonic, with its theme of All Aboard for Dixie Land, a musical journey about life along the river in the late 1800s, features another fantastic quartet, Four Voices.

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To market

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The inside of our new season flyer!

Within the next several days, we will provide you professionally designed and printed materials to help sell out upcoming shows. The mailer is visually appealing, fun, and is printed in vivid colors. The order form will allow your customer to buy our Season Subscription, or individual tickets to our Fall or Spring Shows.

As I end my role as Marketing Vice President, I am proud of the accomplishments the Marketing Team has made over the past two years. I want to thank all the team members who have spent countless hours on marketing efforts. I know that the next marketing guru will have your full support, and I plan on providing my experience, time, and energies to make sure the team continues its forward momentum. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve the chapter in this capacity.

Expose Yourself!

by Chad Hoseth

If a barbershopper sings in a forest, does anyone hear him?

Here's a multiple choice question for you. The Alexandria Harmonizers are:

- A. Four-time international chorus champions
- B. The largest chapter in the Barbershop Harmony Society
- C. A 55+ year old chapter with an active history in the city of Alexandria
- D. A great big secret
- E. All of the above

Sadly, the correct answer is (E) – All of the above.

It's hard to understand but despite the success of the musical program, the size of the chapter and the history of the organization, the Alexandria Harmonizers are a little known gem in the Greater Washington region.

There are a number of reasons why this might be the case. Some might say that there's a lot of competition in the DC area. With the Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap, Choral Arts Society, Master Chorale and countless community choruses and community theaters, there is certainly a lot of competition for singers and audiences. Others might say that the pace of life in Washington is so fast, and people are so busy, that they can't take time to enjoy or participate in the arts. Others might also have preconceived (and incorrect) perceptions about barbershop music.

Whatever the reason, it is extremely important that the chapter elevate their

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Expose yourself

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profile within our community. Here's another question for you to consider. Which of the following would improve through increased recognition in Washington:

- A. Musical Program
- B. Chapter Development
- C. Finances
- D. Chapter Administration
- E. All of the above and more

Of course, it's (E) again. Greater recognition can help bring in more fans, bigger audiences, new package shows, and new members. With new members come a bigger sound, more chapter volunteers, more guys to sell tickets and a stronger chapter.

There are a number of ways in which we try to elevate our exposure in the region. For example, the chapter recently gave an important concert for the Annual Meeting of the Greater Washington Society of Association Executives (GWSAE). Washington is home to over 3,000 associations, making our region the international capital of associations. GWSAE is the association for the heads of the associations. Make sense?



**Exposure is a good thing...
for decent folks like us, at least!**

...nity to make an impression on someone's life, and improve the life of the chapter as well.

In other words if you run an association, you want to belong to GWSAE to learn how to get more members, provide services and plan great meetings and conferences. And what better way to enhance your conference, than to have great, affordable and family friendly entertainment.

The Alexandria Harmonizers provided a free luncheon performance for a packed house of nearly 450 meeting planners. Shortly after the performance, a number of the people in the audience asked for more information and expressed an interest in having us perform for their organization. Hopefully, over the next few years, we may find new audiences and new fans.

There are a number of long-standing traditions that we continue as well. Our performances at Ft. Ward Park and at Market Square are important for a variety of reasons. They are excellent opportunity to perform, for free, for the community. In addition, they continue to provide much needed rain for area trees in need.

Next month, we will participate in another important community event to increase our exposure and thank the city for their continued support. The Alexandria Festival for the Arts will be another important chance to perform for people who have never heard barbershop, and have never heard of the Alexandria Harmonizers. What an important opportunity



DOG DAYS IN MANASSAS: A PHOTO ESSAY OF AN EVENT FOR THE AGES!



THE PAGEANTRY!



THE MAJESTY!

Once again we attended Dog Days, an event so momentous the gods themselves heralded it with lightning and thunder to shake the heavens!



THE ECTASY!



**THE
WONDER!**



THE SPLENDOR!



My Experience at Harmony College

by Jeremy Richardson

My trip to Harmony College began when I boarded a shuttle to BWI at 3:30AM. I had found such a great price on the airfare that the departure time wasn't important. The shuttle ride was harrowing at times, because the driver was falling asleep at the wheel; he literally couldn't keep the van between the lines on I-95!

After safely arriving at BWI, the trip improved greatly. I arrived at Kansas City International Airport, and while waiting for the shuttle to St. Joseph, I sang the first of countless tags for the week. For those of you who have not yet had the chance to attend Harmony College, I encourage you to make the trip! The week was packed with singing, new friends, and, of course, lots of ice cream (the rumors are true!).

The class schedule was fairly intense, with five sessions, usually lasting from about 10AM to as late as 9:30PM. One of my classes was Advanced Vocal Techniques, which was particularly useful to me. In this class I was lucky enough to experience a week of coaching with Dave Calland! I learned about proper breath support (or more accurately, I was reminded about it!), and I realized that this is an area where improvement is needed in my singing. Dave discussed a variety of topics at length, from breathing and posture to vocal techniques and vocal health.



As a first time Harmony College attendee, I had to wear a beanie. The tradition is that the different color beanies form choruses and compete on Wednesday night. This year there were four colors: red, blue, green, and yellow. Joe Kane (my roommate for the week and fellow scholarship recipient) and I were both red beanies. Our chorus butchered a parody of "Coney Island Baby," but we had a good time! Chris Buechler remarked to me that he believed that the beanie choruses had reached a new low this year!

Aside from my classes and the various events and shows, I spent the rest of my time singing tags. The picture shown here actually appeared in the Harmo-ssourian, the daily newsletter of Harmony College. Probably one of the most memorable moments happened early Sunday morning, and I was so excited about it that I didn't think to get a picture. I sang a tag with Chad and Brandon from Four Voices, and with Myles Glancy (the tenor from Trade Secret that the Harmonizers also sponsored to attend). Man, I wish I had that picture! After only a few hours of sleep on Sunday morning, I boarded the last shuttle to KCI.

I want to publicly thank the Harmonizers for the opportunity to attend Harmony College. It was a wonderful experience, and I hope to share what I learned with all of you.



Marketing the Chorus: An Overview

by Mike Calhoun

There are several reasons that the Alexandria chapter conducts two major shows and a holiday show.

- To show case our Internationally acclaimed Harmonizer chorus.
- To show case our excellent chapter quartets.
- To present premiere Society quartets to our audiences.
- To fulfill the SPEBSQSA and Alexandria chapter mission and vision.
- To provide a significant portion of the Chapter's income.
- To help fulfill the important role the chapter plays in the community.
- To assist the chapter in our marketing, public relations and recruitment efforts.

The Chapter has had a mixed track record in providing the audience and income that we count on from these shows. For example only 1,928 tickets were sold to the 1993 Spring Tonic, while 3,380 were sold to the 1996 Spring Tonic. Income of \$49,000 was budgeted for the 2003 Spring Tonic and we realized only \$32,303 or \$16,700 below budget.

The purpose of this presentation is to explore and suggest ways in which the chapter can most effectively work toward realizing maximum income related to the three fall performances and to sell the 1,089 tickets for each performance which are available at The Rachel Schlesinger Center. This would be 3,267 total tickets for the three performances.

Chapter income comes from the following sources:

- Show receipts (including program ads)
- Member pass-thru
- Harmo-Store sales
- Contributions & Grants
- Performance Fees
- Chapter dues and fees.

Show receipts account for 44% of our budgeted income. It is also reasonable to suggest that contribution income and Harmo-Store income are directly related to the number of patrons who attend our shows.

The "Case for Support" is the rationale—the collected reasons—that are marshaled to induce prospects to attend the Fall Extravaganza, to take ads in the program, and to contribute. In presenting our case we must recognize that most people are tuned into WIIFM (What's In It For Me) and we should package our case to meet those needs and interests.

What makes the Society and the Chapter unique and special; what do we bring to the community that is exciting, critical and/or important; if we ceased to exist who would care and how would it affect the "community" (globally & locally). Some of the answers to those questions are:

- The Chapter is preserving a unique American art form barbershop harmony and the barbershop quartet.
- We play a leadership role in encouraging vocal music in our schools and communities.
- We are a four time International Gold Medalist Chorus.

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Marketing

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- we have received numerous silver and bronze medals.
We are widely recognized as one of the finest a cappella singing organizations in the world.
We have performed at the White House, the Supreme Court, the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Wolf Trap and on National TV.
We are G-Rated entertainment.
We are the best buy in town.
The buyer/donor would be proud to be associated with us.
We offer a money back guarantee.

While it is always most important to meet the needs and interests of the donor/patron, we should also be aware of the needs and interests of the chapter when approaching prospective donors and we should make every effort to present them in way that the donor/buyer understands.

- This is our primary source of income which permits the chapter to continue our out reach programs and operations.
- This income allows us to keep our dues and other member expenses at a reasonable level so anyone can afford to participate.
- This income helps underwrite many chapter expenses such as costumes, risers, truck and travel, equipment and facilities.

Whether it is soliciting contributions, selling tickets and/or ads enthusiastic leadership is the most important factor for success. We must ask and answer the question, “Who cares whether the Alexandria Chapter exists?” When you think of it to a large extent the members of the chapter and our families are the only people who **really** care whether the chapter exists and are committed to seeing the chapter remain a healthy, viable organization.

Therefore **we**, the members of the Harmonizer Family, must demonstrate “the intensity of our commitment”. We must redouble our efforts to identify and approach potential buyers and donors. If we don’t so it no one else will.



While “It’s not just about the money, it’s about the money”, and whether it is a fund raising campaign or a sales effort the first thing we must figure out is where the \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ are.

We must take a look at our “sphere of influence”. Prospect lists will fall into one of several categories:

- A-LIST— Individuals who and organizations which should respond favorably to a request you make for support. Examples are your major suppliers, your dentist, doctor, vet, barber/beautician, butcher, builder, repairmen, etc, etc. Essentially anyone who gets income from you. This list should also include family members, individuals whose organizations you have supported, etc.
- B-LIST — People and organizations where you have a close relationship. Examples are business associates (excellent opportunity for group sales), customers, clubs and other organizations to which you belong, church or synagogue members, friends, neighbors and their extended families, Condo and Homeowners Associations, Christmas card list, etc
- C-LIST — People you know casually or even those you meet for the first time. Wear one of your Harmonizer shirts and always have a flyer and/or ticket order form with you. You would be amazed at how often this works. Anyone who doesn’t fall into any of the above categories.



Marketing

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When you have put together these three lists break them down into one of the following categories based on your evaluation of their potential. Donor, advertiser, ticket purchaser, any combination of the above and/or all of the above.

Perhaps you have supplier or someone on your lists who is not located in our area. While they may not be potential ticket buyers, they may very well be willing to make a contribution to support you, our mission and our programs. Please remember these fund raising axioms which are applicable to our efforts.

“The most important factor in every solicitation is who is being asked and who is doing the asking”.

“Nobody gives unless they are asked”.

How should we go about doing this extremely important task. We have all received solicitations or sales calls of one sort or another and I am sure we will all agree that

- The most effective solicitations are those which are done in person “Face to Face”. This clearly demonstrates the “Intensity of your Commitment”.
- A personal note or letter followed by a call and a personal visit.
- A personal call followed as appropriate by a personal letter/note.
- A personal letter followed by a phone call. Ideally the follow up call should come from the person signing the letter. If that is not possible then a member of the chapter or a Harmonette who is willing to be on a telephone team should make the call.

Profile on: Roger Day

By...Roger Day!

I was born to Millicent May Day and Elmer (Buddy) Day; (thank God there were no juniors the family, Phew!) And yes my mother’s name is May Day! (Answers a few questions doesn’t it!)

Even though I was born in Washington, DC, we moved to Arlington, VA when I was six and there I was raised. I attended Stratford Junior High School, where I was first introduced to music and singing and barbershop harmony. During a concert I was asked to be in a quartet called the Stratford Four (see photo, I am the cute one to the left), I remember, that it must have been fun because I didn’t die from fright!

From there I attended Washington-Lee High School where I took every advantage to sing and auditioned for the elite Madrigal singers and was accepted as a bass/bari singer.

I attended, Shenandoah Junior College and Music Conservatory, in Winchester VA. Now Shenandoah University. I discovered that college and I didn’t see eye to eye. I was in the business school, but my desire was the Conservatory. One of my friends sneaked me into the Madrigal auditions and I became one of the first non-music student ever to be accepted in to the madrigals at the school.

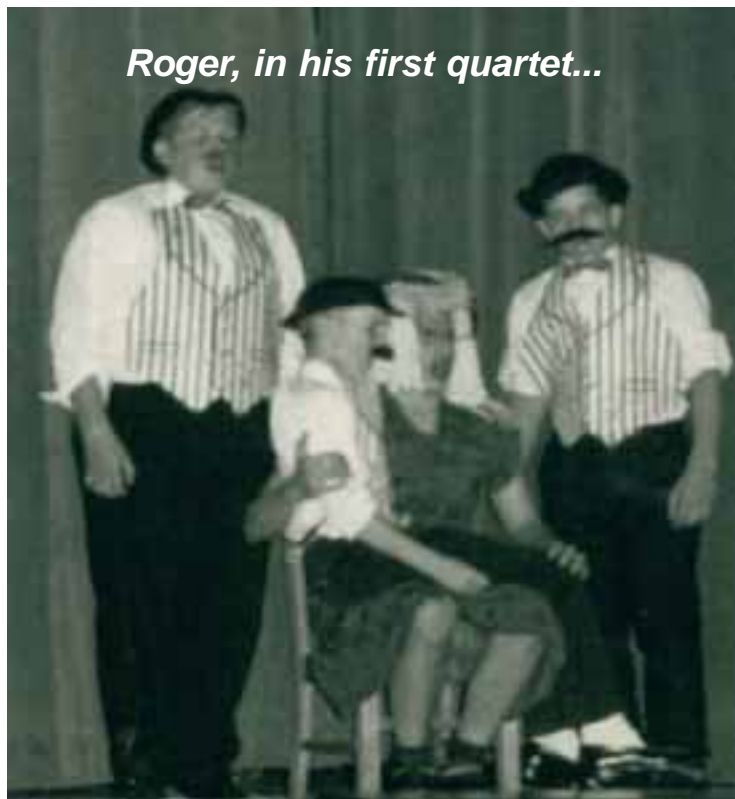
After dropping out of school, I decided that I liked to eat on a regular basis. So I started working for Washington Gaslight Co. in Washington, DC, There I stayed for 30 years and retired in 1995.

During my career at Washington Gas I enlisted into the United States Navy in 1966. While stationed in San Diego California I auditioned for the United States Navy’s Bluejackets Choir. I was accepted and was very proud. The

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Roger, in his first quartet...

Bluejackets Choir is a marching/singing group dressed in special military uniforms that would perform for dignitaries from all over the US and the World. I really loved singing with that group of guys!

Upon leaving the Navy and returning to work at Washington Gas, I started searching for that male sound I so loved back in the Bluejackets Choir. Someone I worked with suggested that I check out the Alexandria Harmonizers. I had heard of them but thought they were a professional group. My friend assured me that they were not professional, so I went to one of their rehearsals and fell in love with the sound. The guys made me feel very welcomed and the rest is history!

I joined the Harmonizers in 1989 and have two Gold Medals from Miami and Atlanta. I was lead in a quartet called Looking Glass. We were asked to do a half-hour show once on a local station, Fairfax access channel 10. That show has been running now for 3 years. People are still coming up to me and asking, "Didn't I see you on TV?" I would respond by asking, "Was It Good?" and if they responded positively I would say "Why Yes It Was Me"

In 1990 a fun thing happened to me. I was asked to do a TV commercial for Jiffy Lube. I had sent in a letter of commendation for my local Jiffy Lube station. I expected to receive a letter in return. Instead I received a phone call asking me if I would be interested in doing a commercial! It was soooo much fun. The commercial aired for 3 years and some unusual things happened because of my commercial. A girl I worked with who had never seen the commercial was about to have a baby and was put in the Hospital to have labor induced. While in her room and waiting for the Doctor she looked up and there I was on the TV. She immediately went into labor. Because of that she named her baby Mary? (Silly, the baby was a girl and couldn't be called Roger, geez!) Another friend who had never seen the commercial went shopping for a TV at Circuit City. Yeah! You guessed it, there I was on all the TV's in the store (boy talk about exposure)! That was my 15 seconds of fame! Many offers came in to do feature films and TV spots but I turned them all down because of my dedication to the Harmonizers! (Boy, if you believe that then I want to talk to you about a bridge and some swamp land in Florida!?!*)

Actually, the Alexandria Harmonizers have been so important to me that I can't think of anything I would rather be doing in stead! (Well, there are a few things, but I really can't put them in this article!) I really look forward to the future and all the possibilities it holds for the Harmonizers. The desire is there and the tools are all in place. Now it's up to us. There is Gold in our future. Again and again and again!



Invisible Man

by Martin Banks

In H. G. Wells' classic tale of psychological terror, "The Invisible Man," a young scientist must live in the personal hell created by his own experiments. Using himself as the subject, the scientist discovers the key to invisibility; yet, he is unable to reverse the results.

Which naturally leads us to the question — how to sell the Harmonizers? I would submit that one of the best ways to sell barbershop is from the risers. If we are to succeed in audience development and member recruitment, we need greater visibility in the community, especially in actual performance. As Alan Wile reminds us in a discussion of the Society's most important issues for 2004-2005: "good singing is good for public relations, attracts good singers and patrons...chapters need to become more conspicuous to the male public in a manner that creates interest and appeal." (*The Mid'l Antics, Summer 2003*)

Over the years, the Harmonizers have been able to "capitolize" on the landmark settings across the Potomac and our national reputation with "high visibility" performances, often complemented by national television broadcasts. Each time the Harmonizers perform, they expose the



barbershop art form to others and advertise the cultural activities resident in Alexandria.

In our own neighborhood, the Harmonizers have many opportunities to be visible while giving back to the community in performance and outreach, i.e. Young Men In Harmony. We nurture our close relationship with the City of Alexandria with traditional performances throughout the year at Fort Ward Park, Market Square, and Lee Center. Our chorus and quartets are often performers at hospitals, retirement centers, schools, churches, and special events in the city. In our own Community Holiday Song Festival, we expose the barbershop art form to a culturally and musically diverse audience.

Recently the Harmonizers became spirited community arts partners in two special marketing projects. The first occasion in late summer featured Alexandria artists in a series of demonstrations and performances to complement the Alexandria Scottish Heritage exhibit at the Smithsonian's Arts and Industries Building. The Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association arranged this series of appearances to emphasize the rich visual and performing art offerings in Alexandria in a setting previously unavailable for

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Invisible

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this type of use. Several Harmonizer quartets volunteered their time to represent the chapter in weekend performances – Limited Edition, Bachelor Party, Four Good Measure, and Mercury.

The second project is the Alexandria “Festival of the Arts,” a two-day, outdoor festival on September 13 and 14 spotlighting more than 150 juried artists from around the country. A capacity crowd invaded the streets of Old Town for this widely promoted event. The

Harmonizer chorus joined other performers on stage at Market Square for a Saturday afternoon cavalcade of entertainment arranged by the Alexandria Arts Forum. We participated in “media day” with a quartet performance and used the festival opportunity to publicize our fall show. It was an exciting chance to promote “art for Alexandria’s sake” – and our own!

As O. C. Cash might have said, “just present great barbershop harmony, and they will come.” In order to put that new audience member or chapter member “front row center,” we need Harmonizer visibility, in open performances and circumstances that attract a wide and diverse audience. And to make any of our performances truly great, we need every possible member on the risers to “sell” the Harmonizers. Don’t be the invisible man.

Calling all reporters!

by Scipio Garling



You, too, can write for the Echo!

The Echo can be a venue for you to share your thoughts and feelings with your fellow Harmonizers. Everyone has a unique perspective on things; why not share yours?

If you haven’t ever contributed an article, you deserve to. The Echo is your chapter newsletter and you deserve to take advantage of it.

What you say doesn’t have to be world-shaking, doesn’t have to be Shakespeare, doesn’t have to be hilarious. It just has to be...from you!

A lot of people say they like the Echo because it has a diversity of writers who write on an unknowable variety of subjects; that’s what makes the Echo great!

You can be part of what makes the Echo great; don’t wait to be asked; don’t worry about fitting into a ‘theme’ issue; don’t worry that you can’t write the Great American Novel.

Contact the Echo and let your voice be heard! Just send us an e-mail via the Echo page on the Harmonizer website, www.harmonizers.org.



Branded for Life!

by Martin Banks



How to sell the Harmonizers? How to be a speiler for the four time international chorus champion, the Alexandria Harmonizers? We might take a clue from one of the most successful international entertainment conglomerates to come down a steamboat, Willie – The Walt Disney Company.

When you go into the super market, what do you look for? A bargain? The latest fad? Chances are you're looking for brand names that you can trust for value and quality. Whether it's beans or barbershop, in the business world competitive advantage is established by maintaining strong and differentiated brands.

There are two principal attributes that make a brand powerful from a business perspective. It must be unique, and it must be relevant. Uniqueness is the quality that determines the ability to use the brand to differentiate one's products. In this sense, the Disney brand is truly unique. However, to be commercially powerful, a brand must also be relevant to consumers. Clearly Disney passes this test. Disney is about family, fun, and fantasy.



What makes the barbershop brand unique and relevant among a myriad of entertainment choices? What attracts audiences and members? Barbershop is about family, fun, and fifths. The original American art form of barbershop harmony creates enjoyment for audiences of all ages and barbershopping engenders a special bond of friendship within its ranks. Both of these qualities feed on one another. A single singer cannot create barbershop harmony. The requisite ensemble of voices — mirroring the unique kinship of barbershopping — creates a closeness of sound and an emotional intensity. Harmony begets harmony, as it were.

And where do we find those new members for our brand of entertainment? A study conducted by Chorus America (*A Study of Choruses, Choral Singers, and Their Impact*, 2003, <http://chorusamerica.org/files/chorstudy.pdf>), finds that choral singing is the top choice in the performing arts for adults and children, with an estimated 28.5 million Americans regularly performing in one of approximately 250,000 choruses. Many sing regularly in more than one chorus. Interest in choral singing develops early in life and is influenced by school and family experiences. Choral singers help build strong communities and bridge social gaps. Choral singers are well informed and politically aware. Choral singers are joiners and major consumers of culture and the arts. Choral singers are motivated by making beautiful music, enriching their communities, and personal fulfillment.

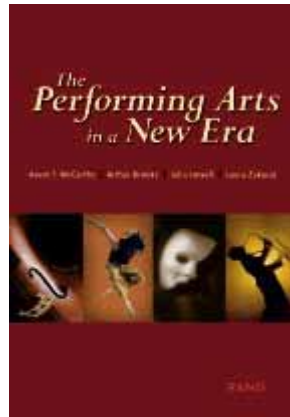
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Branded

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And how do we pursue audience development? If the trends of the past 20 years continue, the authors of a new RAND report, envision a fundamental shift in the performing arts system. Instead of a sharp demarcation between a non-profit sector producing the live high arts and a for-profit sector producing mass entertainment, major divisions in the future will be along the lines of big versus small arts organizations, or firms that cater to broad versus niche markets. In the nonprofit and volunteer sector, the growing number of small organizations will have little in common with larger nonprofits in terms of programming, audience demographics, or the professional stature of most of their artists. The authors suggest that the quantity of performances will increase in some areas and decrease in others, depending on whether they are live or recorded, and whether they involve the high, folk, or popular arts.



Advances in production, recording, and distribution technologies will allow Americans to choose among a wider variety of performances and art forms than they do today. Americans will also have increasing access to live performances in their own communities. Small professional nonprofit and for-profit performing groups will be able to build and maintain comparatively small but loyal audiences who value their artistry and will be willing to participate both as consumers and patrons. Small organizations in the volunteer sector will continue to provide low-budget productions of great cultural and artistic diversity performed largely by volunteers.

The effect of future changes on the quality of the arts could be more serious. The pressures on performing arts organizations to earn even greater revenues are producing programming that appeals to mass audiences with little innovation. The effects of change on access to the arts will be mixed, as are the effects on quantity. Although live professional performances will decline in some parts of the country, community-based performances and recorded products will proliferate. The central issue for access is likely to hinge on future patterns of demand.

We can be proud that the Alexandria Harmonizers have succeeded in creating their own unique and relevant brand of barbershop, that the Harmonizers have established an enviable reputation as a world-class competitive and performing chorus, able to reach audiences with emotional power at the highest level of artistry, and that, with over 50 years of accomplishment and strength drawn from the entire Harmonizer family, every member is proud to declare: “It’s great to be a Harmonizer!”

Investments are designed to protect, buttress, and build the Disney brands to secure their competitive advantage for a very long time. Expansions and investments in Disney build on the uniqueness and relevance of its brands. In so doing, they have created a protective moat around these assets, making them safer and more secure so they can thrive in the years to come. Harmonizers must do the same. We must continue to invest our time and capital in building upon our brand of barbershop — our musical excellence, performance artistry, organizational leadership, and community service.

Within The Walt Disney Company businesses – Disney, ESPN, ABC Television Network – Disney continues to work at creating the finest content possible. After all, it’s called the Entertainment Industry for a reason. They’re here to entertain people. If they continue to do this, they will be successful. Not a bad measure for barbershop and the Alexandria Harmonizers either.



Smart Alex Aim for Exhaustion!

by Brad Jones

I don't know if the Smart Alex are really aiming for exhaustion, but just thinking about their performance schedule certainly made me feel exhausted! Imagine, over 300 performances in just over 6 years of existence! That's almost 1 performance a week for each of the 6 years since the quartet formed in the spring of 1997!

Billing themselves as "retired, semi-retired, or just plain tired" the quartet members are: Bill Curtis on Lead, Mike Everard on Bass, Paul Greiner on Tenor, and Jim Lucey on Baritone. The foursome are all members of the Alexandria Harmonizers and the Harmony Heritage Singers, so apparently 300 performances were not enough to keep them out of trouble!

This quartet prefers the fun of performing for their fans rather than focusing on quartet competitions. With their "retiree" schedule they are able to take many performances during the daytime hours that can't be worked into the schedules of other quartets. Not surprisingly, they are very proud of their status as the Most Active Harmonizer Quartet Champion for 2000, 2001, and 2002. Their efforts to spread the barbershop sound as widely as possible includes performances in DC, Maryland and Virginia, where they can have many opportunities to utilize a 40 minute act that includes jokes, props and a lot of fun.

Smart Alex shows no signs of slowing down, being booked months in advance. To describe the operation of the quartet one member notes: "Paul drives the car, Jim drives us musically, Mike drives us administratively, and Billy drives us nuts."

We can all be grateful to have these energetic fellows as ambassadors of our hobby to so many folks. In the Echo issue on "selling" barbershop,



who better to feature than our most relentless quartet! For those wishing to try to add one more show to their record -breaking schedule, the contact information for the quartet is:

**Contact: Mike Everard
4911 Bristow Drive
Annandale, VA 22003
(703) 941-1057**



Selling the Chorus

by Jack Pitzer

What if...

the chapter asked each member to raise \$1,000 per year over and above his dues and payments to the chapter for uniform parts and convention or event fees?

Based on my observations of how the chapter is operating, it could happen someday.

Actually, in the past, I think we did do more as individuals to bring in money. And not just assume “somebody” would sell a couple of package shows or a batch of show tickets.

We’ve lost some men who were champs at raising money – Ben Collins and Wilbur Sparks, for example. Wilbur sold lots of show tickets because he kept a list of prospect addresses and phone numbers. (And this was long before computers!) I think he had several hundred names on his list. He mailed them a postcard early in the ticket selling season. Then he called them.

I know he worked at it. He also recorded who bought tickets and likely thanked them. Sometimes he even bought a ticket or two and gave it to someone he thought was a good prospect. In his day he sold about 85-100 tickets.

Did you know you should be submitting ticket prospects to the chapter for the mailing list? The chapter has a system in place to keep the records and do



the mailing (although there is usually a “mailing” party that volunteers are needed for).

The only other thing you’ll need to do is update addresses when the committee chairman gives you your part of the list to review.



Actually I have about 100 names in the database. I keep the list in my computer too, and when Carlos or someone creates a flyer, I email it to all my ticket prospects. I usually send them two emails before a show.

Let’s all turn in names with addresses and phone numbers to Karl Kauffmann. I suspect a couple of generations of chorus members do not know about this list.

Ben Collins sold a lot of tickets because he was a “salesman” at heart. Plus I suspect his wife also spread the word. But you gotta tell folks about every show.

I think Alan Wile has a great idea too — he helps a huge block of show patrons organize a dinner after the matinee in a nearby restaurant. He joins them for the fun before the returns for the evening show.

Another way we used to bring in some money was our every-other-year flea market. It earned us \$2,000-\$3,000, I think. It was fun. Not too hard to pull off. And like the picnic, a chance to see other family members and friends of chorus members. I’d like to do one this fall and could help a

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Selling the Chorus

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couple volunteers organize it. (I was the chair once with Wilbur, Al Duddleston and Brian Rhodda – my quartet “The Best of Friends.” We never sang in public, but got together with our wives four or five times a year for a meal, some songs and talk.)

Dick Hall reminds me about how Dave Barton, a former front row guy now retired in Florida, raised extra money at the flea market. He collected

ties from all the guys and recycled them. So for a dollar or two you could get a few new ties instead of wearing the same old ones all the time.

Many of you have heard about our cheese sales project. That one, too, caused members to bring in income for the chapter over and above our dues. Times have changed, but it worked!



I have a new idea in the works that will be easier to sell and should net some super income. It's a Harmo-Bear – sort of like a Beanie Baby Bear.



The idea is in its infancy now and Harmo Store Manager Chris Buechler is investigating the possibility with chapter leaders. I hope it can be a go. It's a cute item, reasonable and profitable. And unlike cheese, not perishable!

Certainly the Christmas ornament idea has paid off – thanks to Skip Coburn, Chris Buechler and Dixie Kennett. And the dedication, year after year, by Chuck Harner to lead the sales operation of discount coupon books has paid off.



We have done Singing Valentines, but I gotta believe we just tapped the surface on this one. For sure the leadership team needs more quartets to be assembled. Take time off now for Valentines 2004.

Finally, let's each try to get more sponsorship money in the coffers. Starting with the printed show program. But who else do you know who is in marketing or sales for bigger local companies? They might hire us to do a Labor Day concert in a park someplace in the community. They pay us and promote mostly it as their free concert for customers or friends.



Dallas's Vocal Majority is doing a lot of this – some guys in that chapter are doing more than singing on Tuesday nights. We all need to do more

Sell, sell, sell!