

Marketing for Composers

Ideal Audience Worksheet

Your audience, or in business parlance your target market, is the group of people you serve. Your niche is the service you specialize in offering to your audience.

You cannot be all things to all people. There is a lot of fear in choosing only a small sliver of all the potential audiences. The truth is that by going a mile deep and an inch wide with your audience you will greatly increase the impact you can have. Once you have established yourself with one audience and/or niche you can expand into others. By trying to do too many at once you minimize the effectiveness of your efforts.

It's time to identify your audience.

1. To determine your audience answer the following questions:

Who is going to buy your music, commission it, and perform it? The more specific you can get here the better. You may compose chamber music, but that category contains many different ensembles and styles. Perhaps your audience is string quartets (a specific ensemble) that perform in non-standard venues (even more specific).

Your audience might literally be an audience. Are you a performing composer or do you have an ensemble and want get people to your performances?

- List all the groups of people (ensembles, performers, and directors) who use the type of music you provide.

- Of the groups listed in question one, which of them do you get the most excited about working with?

- Think of your network and identify the groups that contain people you already know, or have purchased or performed your music. or attended your concerts?

2. To determine what your audience wants and needs answer the following questions:

Your audience is always moving away from and towards something. They make decisions based on what they don't want (moving away from) and what they do want (moving towards). If you can identify these two factors you can place yourself more effectively in the moving towards category. Motivations for these decisions run the full gamut. Factors could be financial, political, relational, geographic, you name it.

Take some time to really think through what it is your audience does and doesn't want. You need to offer your audience something they *want* to buy, not what you want to sell them. A salesperson would struggle to sell air conditioning to someone who lives in Alaska, but could successfully sell radiant heating and warm parkas.

- What is pushing your audience? From what is your audience moving away from? Is there activity in the marketplace, or from other composers, ensembles, performers, or directors that your audience is reacting to and doesn't want to participate in?

- What is pulling your audience? What is your audience actively seeking and moving towards?