

Megan Anderson
Proposal
The Upfront Theatre

Executive Summary –

The Upfront Theatre needs to focus on “families” as a target audience. Focusing on a new demographic that can benefit from The Upfront’s services would help spread the word about The Upfront Theatre, and get the exposure they’re looking for.

As it stands, The Upfront Theatre has classes for the general public, high school and middle school students, and businesses. They specially tailor all their classes for the groups that they are working with. By creating a special family-focused class (in particular for families with children), The Upfront can help provide a fun and exciting environment for family bonding and togetherness.

In addition, by providing a show or two every month that is all-ages and family inclusive, The Upfront Theatre could bring in a bigger variety of interested audiences. An improv show provides a more open and connective experience between family members than just going to see a movie.

Getting The Upfront Theatre more involved with the family demographic is beneficial to both parties and would be a great addition to the theatre and the community.

Body –

Situational Analysis

- Company: The Upfront Theatre
- Customers: People looking to benefit from improvisational comedy shows and classes. People looking to spend more time with their family.
- Competitors: Indirect competitors include movie theaters, school activities, and improv theatres in nearby Seattle and Vancouver, B.C.

Target Audience

The target audience to focus on would be parents, teens and pre-teens. Teens and pre-teens can benefit from classes and performances at The Upfront Theatre, and this would help build loyalty as they get older. It is also a way for adults who wouldn't normally think to attend a show at The Upfront Theatre to become more aware and get involved.

Objective

The objective of this is to utilize The Upfront Theatre in providing family bonding time, while getting the word out about The Upfront and the services they provide.

Background

According to a 2008 study done at the Annenberg Center for the Digital Future at the University of Southern, 28 percent of people reported that they have been spending less time with their families (up from 11 percent that said the same in 2006). The need for family time is essential for healthy childhood bonding, and The Upfront Theatre could provide a safe, fun environment that everyone can relate to and participate in.

Bellingham Household Information

Number of Households	27,999
Households: Family	13,990
Households: With Children	6,854

Average Household Size	2.09
Average Family Size	2.69

The Upfront Theatre offers improv classes for the general public, and is currently running middle school and high school classes until the end of November. The Upfront also does business-focused workshops for companies in the area.

Improv classes are a good resource to teach creativity, teamwork, communication, confidence, adaptability and innovation. Through improv exercises and games, The Upfront Theatre lets individuals explore their creativity and build confidence, while teaching teambuilding and communication skills. The classes are designed to excite and inspire. Each class involves working with an improv teacher and learning the basics of improv, and nurtures creativity from all individuals involved. This can be a valuable tool to use with families.

Plan

The two main options The Upfront Theatre should offer are family-focused classes and family-focused performances.

The Upfront Theatre could also provide the families who sign up to take courses with the opportunity to participate in a live performance at the end of a class session. This would be a way to get children interested in the performing arts and let their imaginations shine, while helping parents to creatively connect with their children. The live performances could be on a family volunteer basis, and include an improv skit that the family puts together with the skills and ideas they have learned from their classes.

In addition to class options, having a family-friendly improv show once or twice a month would be a good way to bring in bigger and more diverse audiences. It's a way to get

families out of the house by bringing them to The Upfront Theatre in downtown Bellingham, and the family will spend time together in an enjoyable atmosphere.

Spreading the Word

It would be easy for The Upfront Theatre to spread the word about classes and performances through newsletters. There are many group and community newsletters, such as the Bellingham Public Library and Bellingham Child Care, that would be appropriate. School newsletters and church newsletters would also be a good resource. The Upfront can also post on their webpage and at their regular weekly performances.

Cost

The Upfront Theatre currently offers classes that are two hours long and that run for eight weeks, at a cost of \$160. The most viable option is to have one “family class day” twice a month to start with; depending on how many families register, there can be two or three class sessions a day. The cost can be based on a family discount.

For family shows, they could be offered as an early show on the first and third Friday of every month; those evenings are convenient because it’s not a school night and there is room for an early show in The Upfront’s schedule. Children under the age of 12 could attend free with the purchase of an adult ticket. There should also be a discounted ticket rate for children 13-18 to encourage participation.

Appendices –

<http://profiles.nationalrelocation.com/Washington/Bellingham/>

<http://www.bellingham.com/content/community/demographics.asp>

<http://www.enotalone.com/article/19683.html>

<http://www.theupfront.com>