

TEAM 2

DIVERSITY REPORT

SPRING 2019



FIRETOSS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The diversity consulting team working for Firetoss have made it their top priority and main objective to bring an accurate evaluation of the company's current position on diversity. Through extensive research, surveys and evaluations, they have provided recommendations for diversity improvement. These recommendations are presented to the Firetoss executives and employees with the intention of improving their understanding and view on the importance of diversity in their organization. The three-phase plan presents the necessary steps needed to diversify the workplace and company and become a more competitive digital marketing company.

To create valid and accurate recommendations for Firetoss, the consulting team conducted a company evaluation as well as individual employee evaluations. These evaluations included individual interviews with a variety of employees within the different departments as well as a personal interview with the owner and founder of Firetoss. A diversity survey created by the consulting team was sent out to every employee at Firetoss, which provided inside access to personal opinions submitted anonymously. The research process provided the team with ample information to offer a more strategic plan of improvement and growth.

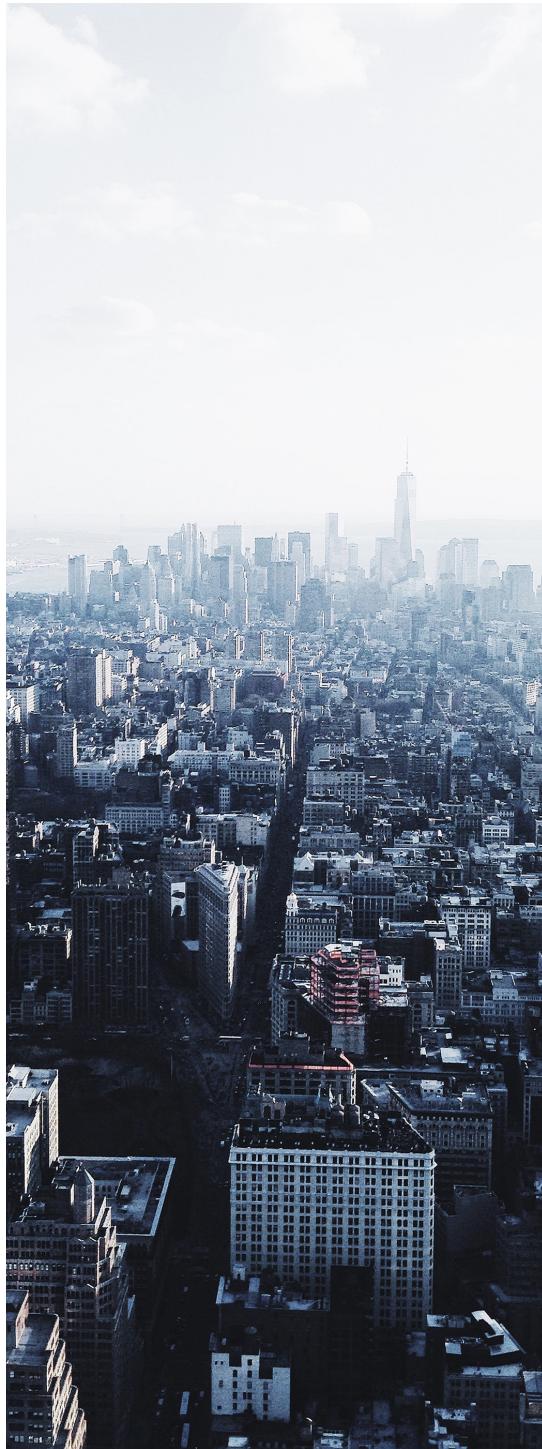
The data and information gathered by the team through the interviews and survey provided specific details to form a comprehensive SWOT Analysis. This analysis brings an easier and more specific way to narrow down what weaknesses Firetoss can improve upon as well as diversity and inclusion opportunities that can be taken advantage of now. The diversity plan consists of three achievable phases that everyone in the organization can participate in to become a more successful and diverse company.

The first phase consists of making changes to specific aspects of the Firetoss website. These website changes should be followed by phase two, implementing employee training sessions on diversity and its importance in the organization along with ADA compliance accommodations. The final phase will incorporate the practice of diversifying their recruitment styles and procedures to be more aware of inclusive hiring from all walks of life. This diversity plan will help Firetoss to achieve their organizational goal of believing in, "simple, honest, and affordable solutions that connect you with more customers."



Looking back

COMPANY HISTORY



Firetoss is a digital marketing company that was founded by Tony Passey on June 1, 2010 and started at the base of the Wasatch Mountains in Salt Lake City, Utah. It is a newer company that we see is continuing to grow rapidly. Firetoss develops, builds and manages digital brands in a variety of industries. The company prides itself on their ability to take a project from just being an idea a client may have to bringing that idea to life and making it happen.

A few things Firetoss does for its clients include building e-commerce stores, creating new corporate websites, and managing digital advising budgets. The company believes that they have a diverse in-house team that has experience in a variety of different areas including web design, organic search, and display advertising.

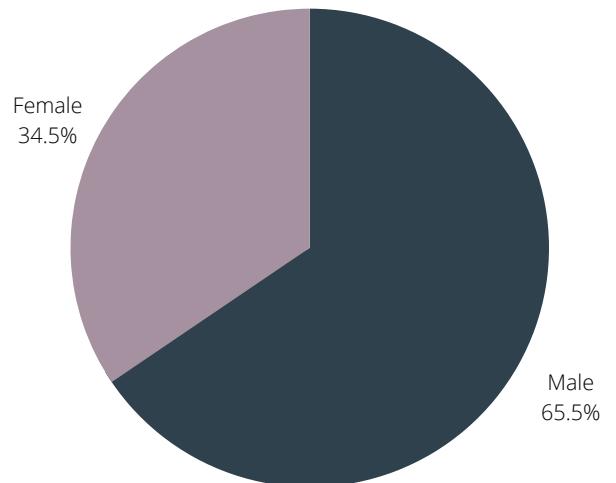
Firetoss currently has two locations. Their primary location is in Salt Lake City, Utah and they recently opened a new location in Las Vegas, Nevada.



PRIMARY RESEARCH

For the primary research of this project, our team conducted interviews with five different representatives of the company as well as a survey sent out to all of the employees. We first interviewed the Director of Marketing Dallin Price. The second representative was Kirk Madsen who is the Creative Director at Firetoss. Our third interview was with Evan Ehat who is the Production Director. Fourth, was the Director of SEO, Maja Sabanovic. Lastly we interviewed the CEO and founder, Tony Passey. While asking the interview questions (see Appendix B) we learned that about 35% of the company is female employees. We also learned that there isn't a diversity policy currently in place, rather they focus on who has the most creative mind when it comes to hiring practices.

In addition to the interview questions, our team distributed a survey to all employees. The purpose of this survey was to understand both demographics of the organization and their existing beliefs on diversity. There was a total of 10 questions, 9 being multiple choice and one being free



response where employees could give feedback on any changes they would like to see in regards to diversity. 29 employees completed the survey which gave us ample information on Firetoss.

When analyzing diversity within Firetoss, their demographics proved to be minimally diverse. Approximately 35% of Firetoss' workforce is female while 65% are male (see Appendix C). It should be noted that none of these women are at the executive level currently. In addition, the age range at Firetoss seems to be diverse until you get upwards of 45. Only 7% of employees answered that they were 45-54. The largest age group is 18-24 with 38%, most likely credited to the owners tie to the University of Utah (see Appendix D).



Interviews & Surveys

SECONDARY RESEARCH

Our secondary research included visiting the website as well as the building that Firetoss is located. When viewing the website, we noticed that there is no page that talks about diversity nor is there a statement on diversity.

When our team had the chance to visit Firetoss, we noticed that there was no ramp access to the front doors meaning that the building is not handicap accessible. Once inside, there is no elevator or lift for people who cannot go up or down stairs or may need extra assistance in going to different floors.

Overall, our research gave us satisfactory information for our team to be able to write Firetoss a diversity plan. Since the company does not have a diversity policy in place, our diversity plan can allow an easier transition into integrating more diversity within the company.

"BREAKING UTAH IGNORANCE AND INTRODUCING OTHER CULTURES TO A COMPANY MAKES IT MORE WELL ROUNDED AND BREAKS DOWN BARRIERS" - MAJA (SEO DIRECTOR)





SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis can be used as a tool in getting Firetoss closer to a greater vision. As we mentioned before, the company is fairly new and has been growing rapidly. In order to continue growing and expanding past the current Salt Lake City and Las Vegas locations, the company needs to be fully aware of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in order to successfully progress forward with as little roadblocks in the way as possible.

The main threat the company faces are competitors who may already have diversity plans in place and who have been actively hiring diverse staff members in order to create a team with multiple perspectives. That being said, this is a great time to implement an effective diversity plan and include more of a focus on diversity when hiring, especially with the company still being in its stages of growing and expanding. Firetoss is in a great position to be a diversity leader among others in their industry. Their company culture and determination to grow is great and a diversity plan would only help with their focus and commitment to creativity.

Strengths	S
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Rapidly growing companyStaff is diverse in context of skill sets and career related abilitiesGreatly value creativity in employees and companyHave access to many diverse individuals through founders connection with the University	

Weaknesses	W
<ul style="list-style-type: none">All employees in similar age groupsNo diversity plan in placeNot taking full advantage of possible connections to nearby diverse communitiesHigher chance of groupthink taking place	

Opportunities	O
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reaching out to diverse individuals with incredible skill sets through the UniversityCareer fairs or presentations to High Schools on the west Side to promote opportunities to a more diverse set of studentsAccess to potential employees of diverse backgrounds through SLCCGreater company growth and expansion	

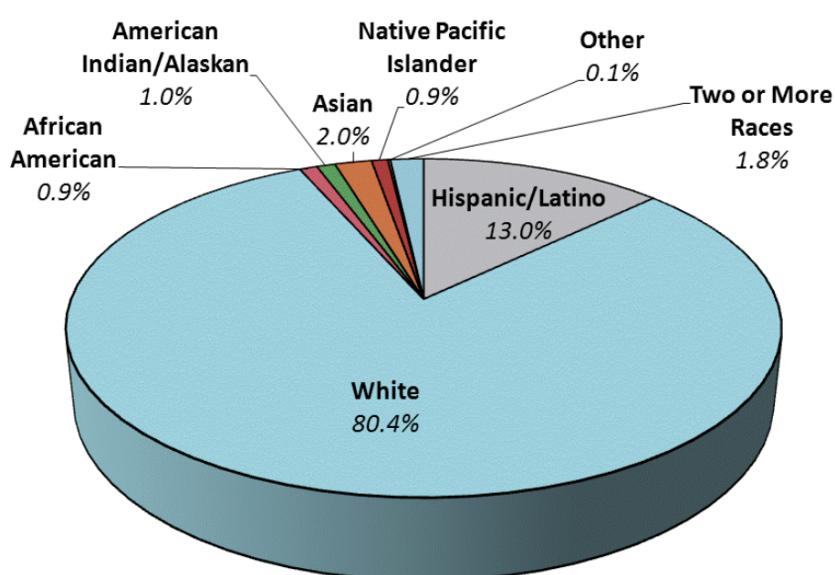
Threats	T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Other companies in the same insudtry who have a diversity plan in placeMissing out on diverse employees with great skill sets due to lack of reaching out and finding these individualsCompetitors with diverse teams could have an edge over the company by having a variety of different perspectives	

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES OF MANAGING DIVERSITY

We acknowledge that making changes in a company comes with challenges. It is no easy task to take advice on diversity or any aspect of organizational culture and implement change. This kind of planning takes time and effort from all parties and levels at the organization. During our interview process, many of these challenges were brought to our attention.

While speaking with the CEO directly about his view on diversity and the practices in the organization, he pointed out that Utah is not a very diverse place and that incorporating diversity is difficult because of that. This is true, so our first step is looking at those statistics to be able to make educated and realistic goals to incorporate these much needed diversity inclusion changes. Below is a graph directly showing Utah's population divided by ethnicity and race. This shows that Utah is 80.4% white, which comes at our first challenge the company may face.

Utah 2010 Population by Race/Ethnicity



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2010 Census.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES OF MANAGING DIVERSITY

The second challenge we became aware of during our interviews was the education about diversity that the employees at Firetoss had. When we asked if they felt their company was diverse, many people answered yes and explained that there was a fairly equal amount of male and female employees. However, gender is not the only aspect in diversity inclusion. Diversity also includes the federally protected classes of ethnicity, race, religion, disability, age, and veteran status. Beyond even federally protected classes, there is so much more to an diverse workplace than gender equity like sexual orientation and physical appearance. Educating employees as Firetoss is one of the first steps in making changes because of these answers. Educating on diversity and the process is not the only challenge in this perspective, we are cautiously aware that integrating new practices and values into an already-established organization will be difficult (see page 9). There will always be a challenge in having new practices and values set into one's culture, but this change is one we are confident is for the better.

Along with facing and acknowledging certain challenges that diversity changes creates, we must also be aware of the opportunities these changes can bring. During this education process we will focus on what the definition of diversity is and the positive outcomes that having it will bring. Change in diversity at an organization can bring new perspectives,values, and ideas as well as introduce new markets for customers and employees.

The opportunities that arise in diversity is something we are advising Firetoss to take full advantage of. Integrating inclusive hiring practices is a key step in adding these diverse individuals in the workplace (see page 11). One option for this is creating and posting more job opportunities in more locations. By opening up the parameters of the search process for open jobs, this will allow this organization to interview and meet more diverse qualified people. Where there is more diversity there are more ideas, access to markets, and competitive advantages that will allow Firetoss to thrive organizationally and financially. Since they are in the process of expanding and growing their organization, this is a tremendous advantage to have.



Proposed

PHASES OF CHANGE

PHASE I: WEBSITE UPDATES AND BASIC DIVERSITY TRAININGS

The first and most simple step for beginning to integrate diversity into Firetoss is to update their website. Given that they are in the digital marketing industry, this should be quite simple and impactful. Companies reaching out to hire them get their first impression of Firetoss via their website, and seeing a page or section dedicated to diversity and inclusion immediately tells clients and potential employees that Firetoss is on the cutting edge of great diversity practices. Given that this is becoming increasingly important in order to be successful and competitive as an organization, this is a vital step.

Great ideas are extremely valuable to Firetoss, and they seek out unique perspectives in order to get those ideas. This value integrates perfectly with the diversity initiatives we are proposing for Firetoss. If they were to state on their website that they value diverse backgrounds, experiences, and people to fuel the unique ideas that make their company so successful, this would be a tremendous way to approach inclusivity that doesn't stray away from the Firetoss culture. This will help attract more diverse employees and clients, as both groups will evaluate the Firetoss website before reaching out to them. Easily being able to see that Firetoss is inclusive and not only accepts diversity but values it will be a significant competitive advantage for the organization.

The other component necessary for a strong diversity plan is an company-wide understanding of what diversity is and why it's important. According to Kotter's Change Model, which is widely regarded as the predominant model for managing organizational change, forming a strategic shared vision is one of the key steps to successfully implementing something like a new diversity initiative (Kotter).



Proposed

PHASES OF CHANGE

Based on the data collected in surveys and interviews, Firetoss employees could benefit from basic diversity trainings educating them on what diversity means, what inclusive business practices look like, and how diversity can bring value to their organization (See Appendix E and F). The diversity paradigms and the Business Case for Diversity are great simple concepts that could be taught in a 30 minute diversity training session. This session could be provided by our team, or by someone that Firetoss brings in. Either way, gaining a company-wide understanding of diversity is a vital part of the first phase of diversity initiatives that will set Firetoss up for success in integrating these practices into their organization.

Suggested time for completion of Phase I: 1 Month

PHASE II: ADA COMPLIANCE

Before Firetoss can begin putting these new diversity initiatives into practice, they must first ensure that they are accessible by all people. One of the federally protected classes of diversity is the disability class. Those with either mental or physical disabilities are often discriminated against, or employers are simply concerned about hiring them due to potential costs or complications. There is also a strong stigma surrounding disabilities, even though most are quite easy and affordable to accommodate. There is also a wide range of what classifies as a disability, ranging from learning disabilities, to scoliosis, to vision impairments, to paraplegia. Regardless of the disability, an organization needs to be accessible in order to recruit a diverse workforce that should include those with disabilities.

Currently, the Firetoss office in Salt Lake City is not ADA compliant. There are steps into their building but no ramp, and there is no elevator to the second (basement) floor of their office. Therefore, there are some structural changes will be required. There are numerous nonprofits available to Firetoss who will design the blueprints for the modifications, and there is federal funding available in order to complete the



Proposed

PHASES OF CHANGE

changes that will make them ADA compliant. Though this is a substantial task, it should not pose a financial burden to Firetoss and will be well worth any investment of time or resources that is required. Due to Firetoss' dedication to finding employees with great unique ideas, we want everyone with the potential to bring those ideas to the company to be able to get in the front door.

Other modifications that may be necessary in order to accommodate an employee with a disability are less substantial, and can be handled on a case-by-case basis. Firetoss should be sure to ask any employees that indicate they have a disability what they need to be accommodated, and we predict that they will find it to be cheaper and easier than they may suspect.

Suggested time for completion of Phase II: 6 months

PHASE III: DIVERSIFY RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES & ESTABLISH INCLUSIVE HIRING PRACTICES

By Phase III, Firetoss will be ready to fully integrate diverse and inclusive practices into their organization. They will greatly benefit from diversifying their recruitment strategies, which will allow them to be more inclusive in their hiring practices. With their current demographics, there is room for growth in the areas of race, ethnicity, disability, religion, and gender (See Appendix C and D). The primary focus for gender diversity should be in their executive leadership. Carol Kurlik and Loriann Roberson have three strategies that they recommend for effective diverse recruitment strategies (from Opportunities and Challenges of Workplace Diversity). They are as follows: "(1) the use of recruiting photos and text that highlight the diversity of the organization's workforce; (2) the inclusion of statements that communicate the organization's equal employment opportunity (EEO) or diversity management policies in recruiting materials; (3) the use of female and racial minority recruiters" (Canas & Sondak, 2014, p. 51).



Proposed

PHASES OF CHANGE

By this time, Firetoss will have created a webpage highlighting their diversity and inclusion values. They can use the same material in recruiting materials, and take them to areas with more diversity where they may not currently advertise employment opportunities. Suggested areas include Salt Lake City Community College, South Salt Lake, West Valley, and Ogden. Utah is heavily caucasian and LDS, but these communities are known to have more racial, ethnic, and religious diversity. For their Las Vegas location, there is less of a necessity to focus on location in order to recruit diversely since they have a much more diverse population, but the above-mentioned recommendations regarding recruitment materials and recruiters should still be implemented.

Another barrier to inclusive hiring that could be eliminated is the current pay structure of Firetoss. The majority of their employees are hired after completing an unpaid internship. This means that those who are most likely to be hired are those who are in college and have enough external financial support to do unpaid work. Firetoss could find that offering other paths to employment may make their organization accessible to more diverse groups. However, these internship programs do pose a great opportunity to recruit foreign exchange students who are seeking work experience and could offer an international perspective. Firetoss may find that this phase is a great time to write a diversity plan as well. This could include their values surrounding diversity, their recruitment strategies, hiring practices, and retention strategies. Having a formalized plan for executing these initiatives and continuing forward to strengthen their diversity management is highly suggested. Assigning diversity management responsibilities to those in executive leadership should be a fundamental part of this plan as well.

By going through these three phases to implement diversity and inclusion strategies into Firetoss, we are confident that they will see a significant positive change in their organization, clients, and financial success.



CONCLUSION



Through our analysis, our team came to the conclusion that Firetoss is a very successful and growing company, and with an implemented diversity plan, it has the opportunity to grow even more. Instead of changing the way Firetoss hires and operates, they need to expand where they are hiring. The initial step would be to update the company website and incorporate diversity trainings to open up employees to knowledge on diversity. The second step would be to make the building and office up to ADA standards. Finally, if Firetoss diversifies where they are recruiting in areas like SLCC, UVU, West Valley, etc. it will increase the variety of potential employees and even clientele. Through these steps, we are confident that these strategies will create a more diverse and inclusive work environment and lead to increased profitability and opportunities for employers and employees.

Our Sources

66 WORKS CITED

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"These Are The 10 Most Diverse Cities In Utah." HomeSnacks, 10 Feb. 2019, www.homesnacks.net/most-diverse-cities-in-utah-128944/.A



Additional Information

APPENDIX A

THREE PHASE DIVERSITY PLAN (CONDENSED)

PHASE I

- Changes to website language, addition of diversity + inclusion values on page
- Trainings for employees/executives about what diversity is and why it's important

PHASE II

- ADA compliance, installation of ramps and other things to make it more accessible. It's important to do this before working to diversify workforce so that they can be inclusive and people with disabilities can access the office..

PHASE III

- Working to diversify their recruitment practices and get a more diverse hiring pool to begin with.
- Evaluating their pay structure and internship programs to make paid positions more accessible for those who cannot afford unpaid work.
- Increasing awareness for inclusive hiring practices. Are what they consider the "best ideas" in line with only a certain type of person/background or does it actually encourage diversity?



Additional Information

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

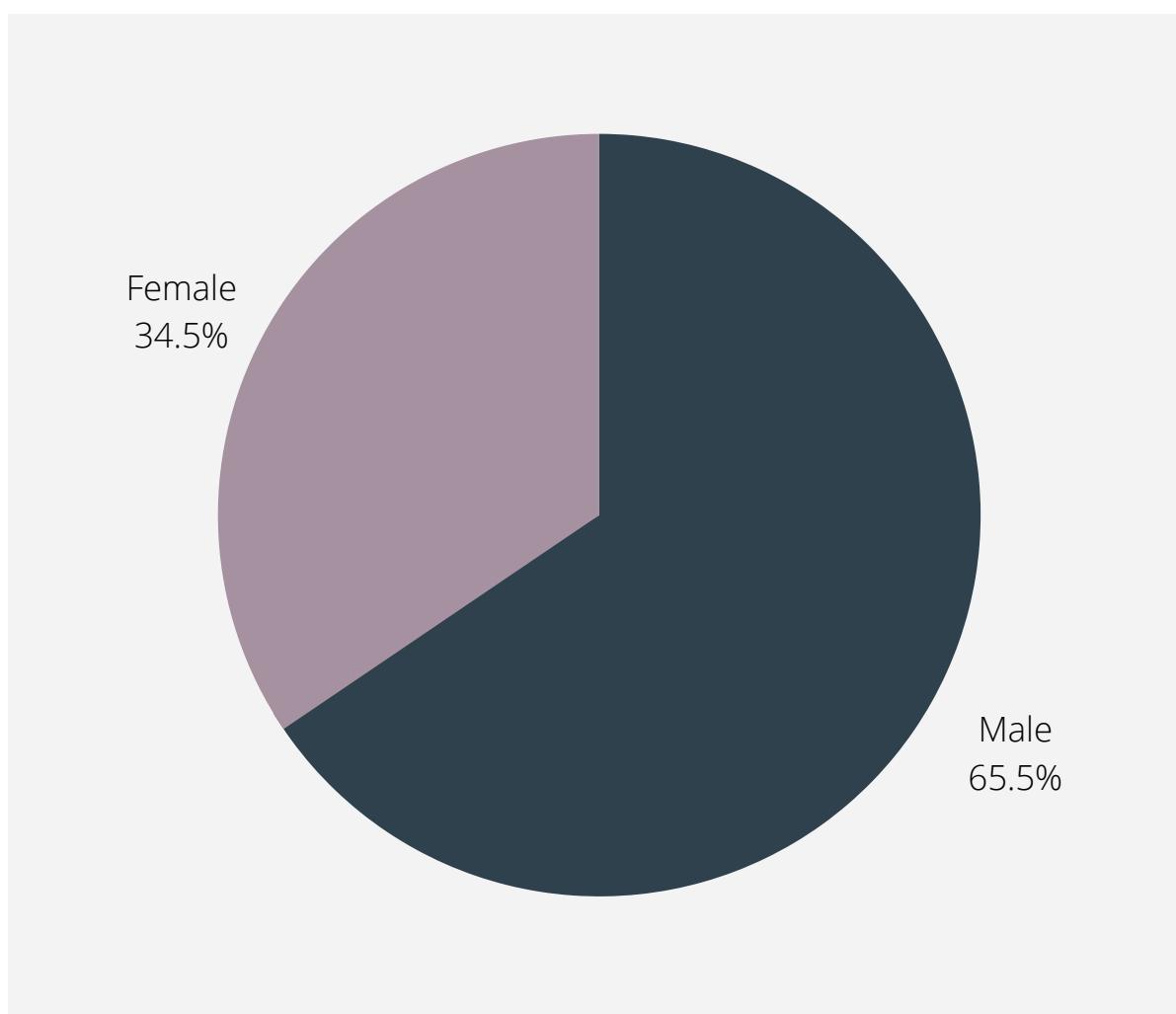
- How would you define diversity?
- How diverse is the executive team?
- Is the leadership team committed to diversity?
- What value (or lack of) do you see in having diversity as a part of your company's values and practices?
- How open are you to adopting a new diversity plan into your company that would open up your values, practices, and organization to being more inclusive?
- When you set out to hire candidates whose beliefs align with your mission, how do you avoid disqualifying people with different backgrounds?
- How have you handled a situation when a colleague was unreceptive to the diversity of others?
- What are some examples of ways that you have incorporated diverse or underrepresented populations into your planning or decision-making?



Additional Information

APPENDIX C

"WHAT GENDER DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH (MALE/FEMALE/OTHER)?"



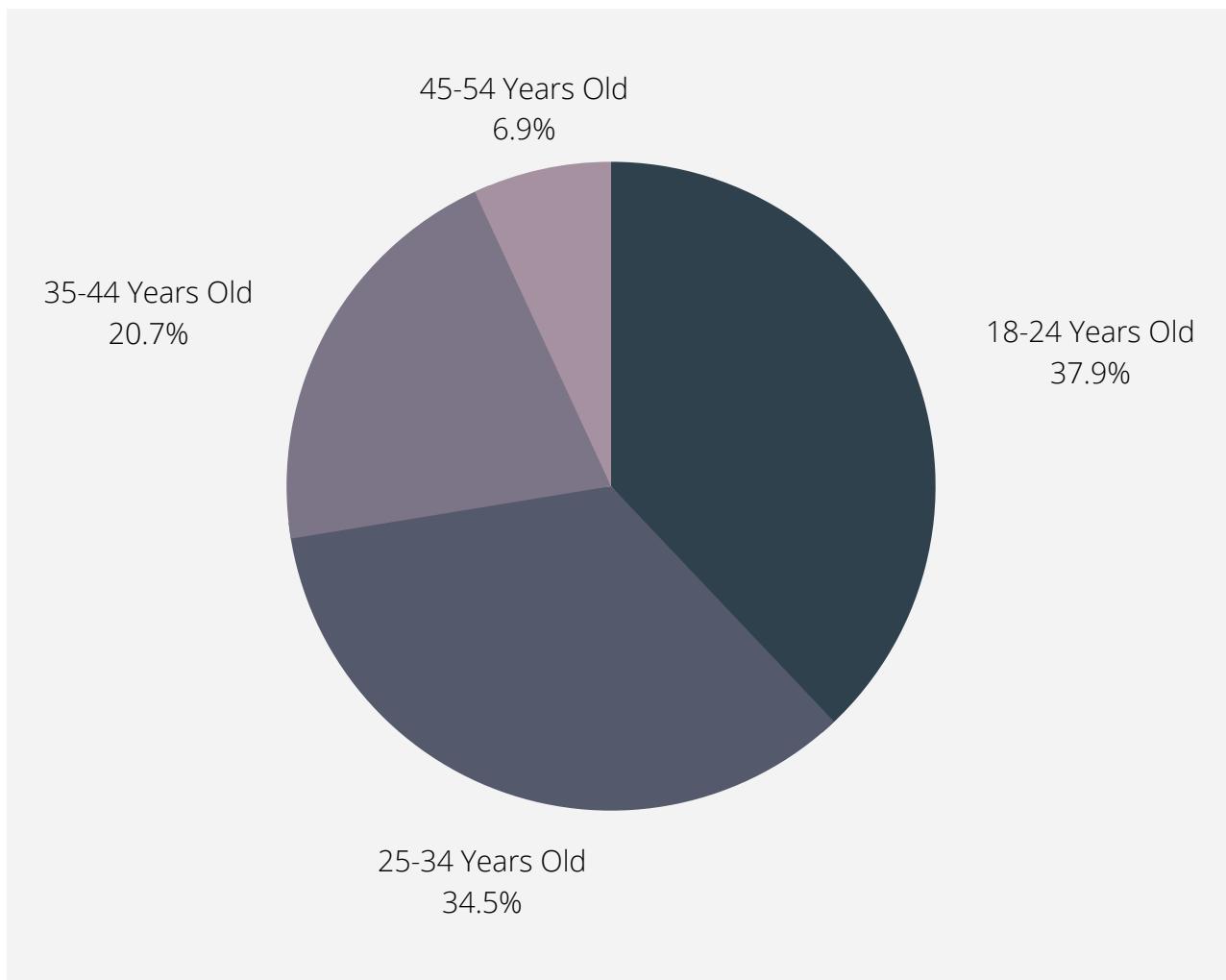
Gender demographics for Firetoss show that there is a predominate amount of men in the organization as opposed to women. All respondents identified as either male or female, but were given a non-binary option as well.



Additional Information

APPENDIX D

"WHAT IS YOUR AGE?



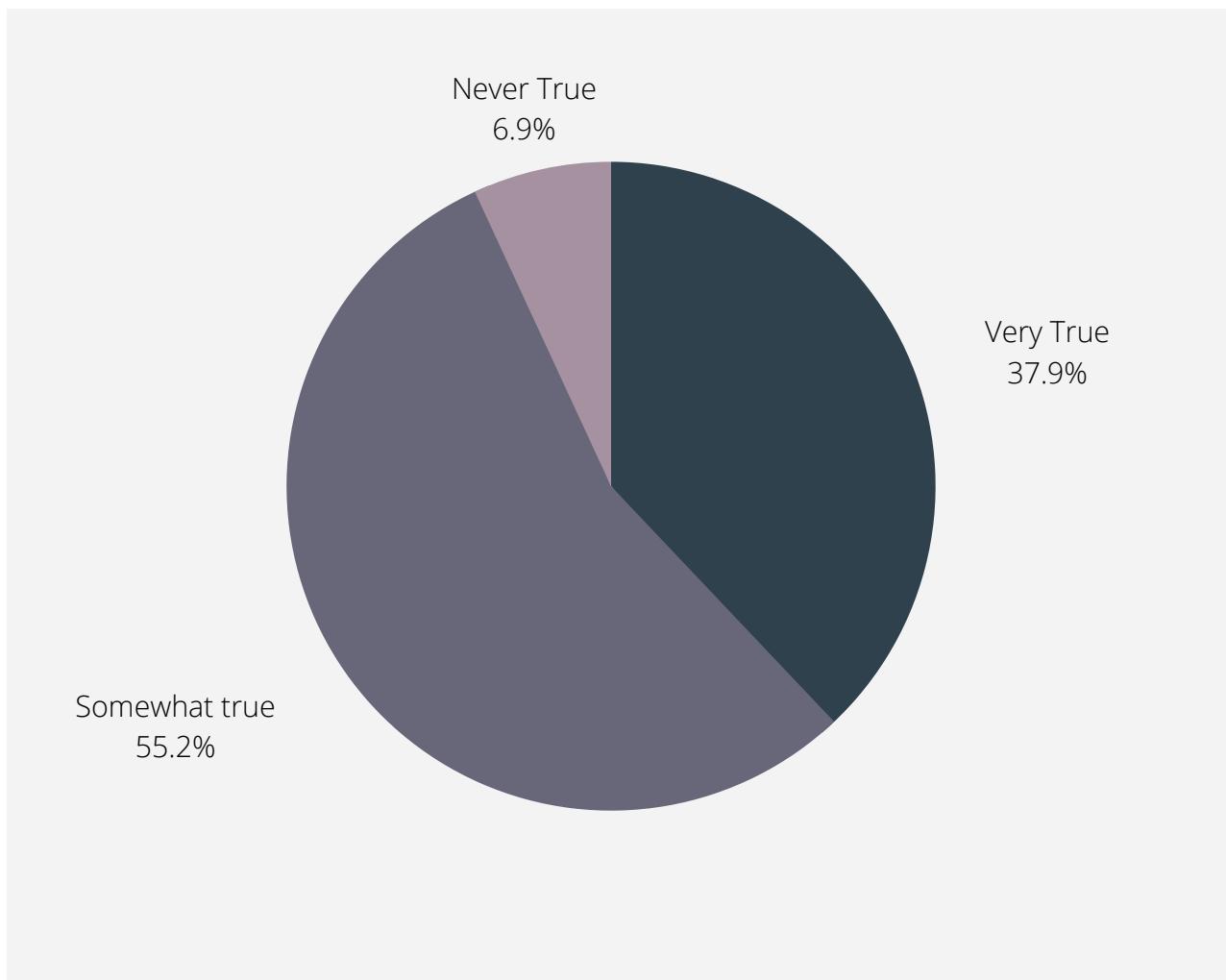
The demographic for age at Firetoss is mixed and somewhat diverse. There are employees that fall into the categories of Millennial/Generation Y (age 21-36) and Generation X (age 37-52), but does not extend to the Baby Boomer generation (age 52-70)



Additional Information

APPENDIX E

RATE THIS STATEMENT: "THERE IS A DIVERSE STAFF AT ALL LEVELS"



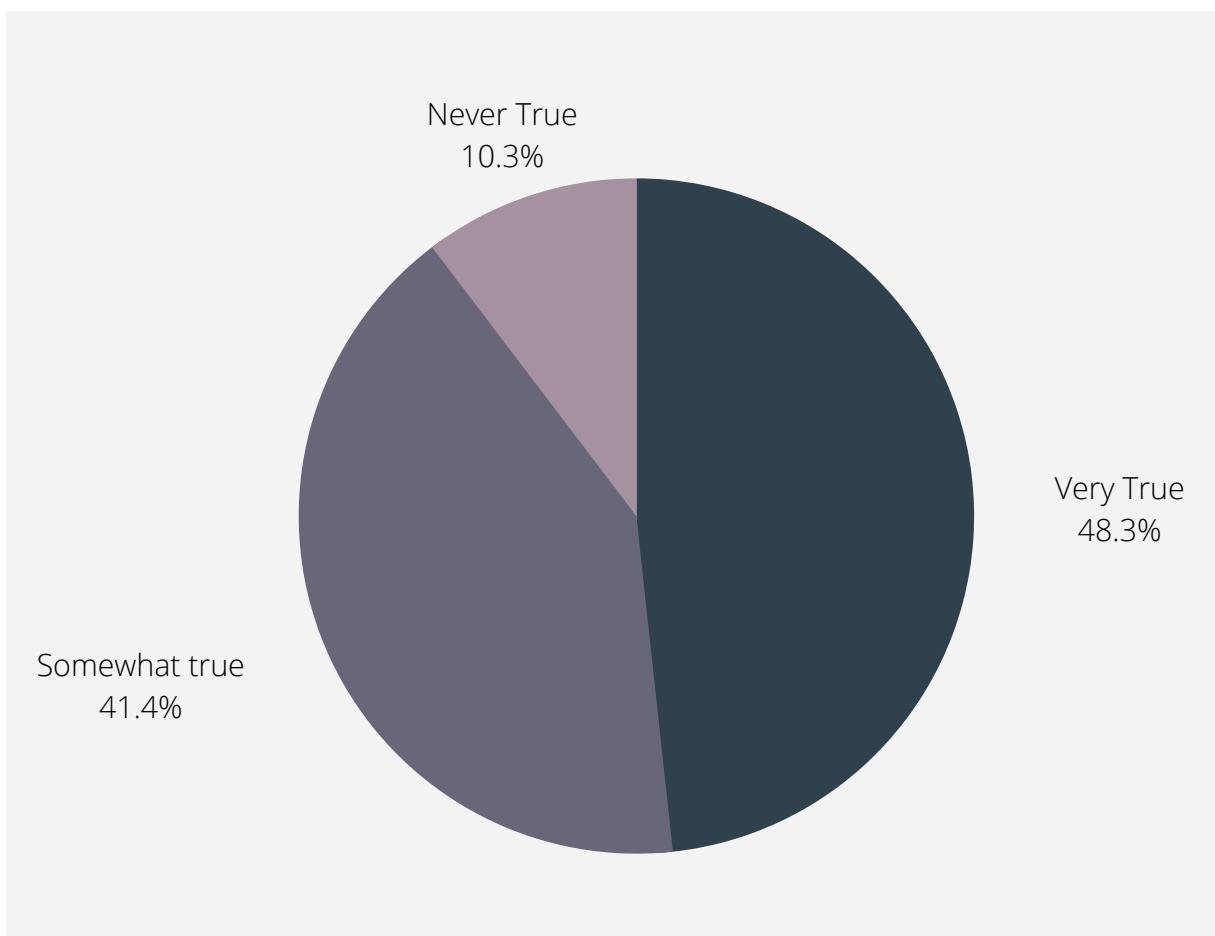
This graph shows the survey response results determining the degree to which the staff felt that they had a diverse organization. It should be noted, however, that they were not given any definition of diversity beforehand so there may be some variance in this data based on their understanding of what classifies as diverse.



Additional Information

APPENDIX F

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR COMPANY USES AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO DIVERSITY?



This graph shows the survey response results determining the degree to which the staff thought Firetoss uses an integrated approach to diversity (or integrates diversity into their organization). It should be noted, however, that they were not given any definition of diversity beforehand so there may be some variance in this data based on their understanding of what classifies as diverse. They were also given no prior information on what the Integrated Approach to Diversity is.