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Captone in Data Science

Present

This section documents ongoing data collection efforts during Fall 2025 and presents findings from post-concert feedback surveys. The goal is to understand current factors influencing concert attendance in real-time, complementing historical patterns identified in the archival analysis from the past section. By analyzing self-reported experiences of students, locals, and employees immediately following concerts, this phase captures authentic feedback about motivations, barriers, and satisfaction while memories are still fresh.

Methodology

I developed a post-concert survey using Qualtrics, in collaboration with Professor Rockwell and Audrey Dunne, and distributed via QR codes displayed on screens and printed in concert programs. The survey included both quantitative rating scales and multiple-choice questions designed to understand first-time vs. returning attendee patterns; factors motivating attendance decisions; promotional effectiveness; demographic composition of audiences; satisfaction levels and future attendance intentions; and social dynamics (attending alone vs. with others).

The survey was administered across 4 concerts between September and October 2025, spanning different event types: student recitals, faculty performances, guest artist events, and large ensemble concerts (orchestra, choir, jazz ensemble). A total of 65 responses were collected and analyzed, and I plan to continue collecting data over the next few concerts, as well as incorporate social media data into this analysis. I included the most popular responses from the surveys for simplicity's sake. I also plan to edit this survey to accommodate the breadth of the audience, as I've recently received feedback on the questions themselves and will apply it.

Survey Responses

First-Time vs. Returning Attendees

The overwhelming majority of respondents were not first-time attendees. This distribution indicates that the Music Department successfully retains an engaged core audience who attend concerts repeatedly. 93 percent of attendees had attended a concert held by the Music Department before. However, the very low proportion of first-timers (only 7%) raises questions about whether the department is effectively reaching new audiences or whether concerts primarily serve an established, loyal base.

Institutional Affiliation

- Non-5C community members (parents, community members, employees): 55%

- Pomona College students: 22%
- Other 5C students (parents, employees, CMC, Scripps, Harvey Mudd, Pitzer): Combined ~23%

Rather than being primarily a student-oriented activity, Music Department concerts draw a majority of their audience from the broader Claremont community. Parents, local residents, and college employees make up over half the audience, with Pomona students representing less than a quarter of attendees. This has significant implications for promotional strategy, programming decisions, and assessment of "student attendance" as a metric.

Music Major Status

- Music majors: Approximately 4%
- Non-music majors: Approximately 30%
- Undecided majors: Approximately 1%
- Non-students: Approximately 64%

Even among student respondents, the overwhelming majority are not music majors, indicating that concerts successfully attract beyond the department for those students who do attend.

How Attendees Heard About Concerts

- Flyers/Printed Materials: 60%
- Word-of-Mouth: 37%
- Social Media: 34%

Traditional printed materials prove most effective for reaching this audience, which makes sense given the 55% community (non-student) demographic. These community members may be less engaged with social media platforms and more responsive to physical signage and printed programs.

However, this also reveals a potential disconnect: if outreach efforts focus heavily on digital platforms popular with students (Instagram, Facebook), they may be optimized for the wrong primary audience.

What Brought Returning Attendees Back

- "I just enjoy concerts!": 63%
- Interest in type of music/performance: 43%
- Knowing a performer: 39%

This suggests that the established audience attends consistently but still responds to programming choices. For this loyal base, variety and interesting repertoire selections help maintain engagement even when they don't know performers personally.

Importance of Decision Factors

Respondents rated various factors on a 0-100 scale for how important each was in their decision to attend. The top factors were:

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1. Genre of Music/Type of Performance: Mean = 71.69
2. Location: Mean = 67.40
3. Timing: Mean = 65.42
4. General Curiosity: Mean = 52.52

Programming decisions emerge as the most consistently important factor. Combined with Q2 data showing 43% motivated by "interest in type of music/performance," this suggests repertoire selection is a powerful lever for both attracting and retaining audiences.

Attending Alone vs. With Others

- Attending with others: 66%
- Attending alone: 34%

Here, we see the role that relationships could play in concert attendance. This distribution likely reflects the mixed audience: students may be more likely to attend in groups, while community members might attend independently or with one other person, or vice versa.

Overall Satisfaction Level

Respondents rated their concert experience on a 0-100 slider scale:

- Mean: 93.69
- Standard Deviation: 7.01
- Range: 73-100
- Total Responses: 65

Analysis

Post-concert survey data reveal a paradox: the Music Department has cultivated a loyal audience (93% returners, 93.69/100 satisfaction, strong return intentions) that is predominantly comprised of non-students (55% community members vs. 45% students). While this community engagement is valuable, it highlights the challenge of student outreach when the primary project goal is to understand and improve student attendance specifically. Furthermore, it is essential to note that I will continue collecting data, which is only reflective of a limited number of concerts.

It appears that, as of now, the central challenge is not retention or quality, but rather initial student recruitment. With only 7% first-timers and 22% Pomona student representation, systematic interventions targeting student awareness, addressing student-specific barriers, and creating student-optimized entry points are essential. The established community audience provides a foundation of sustainability, but growing student engagement will require differentiated strategies specifically designed for the student demographic rather than the general audience currently served, which I will expand on during analysis of the social media data. These insights will inform both the predictive modeling phase and strategic recommendations, with a particular emphasis on leveraging the quality and satisfaction evident among current attendees to drive student audience growth.