

Syracuse Stage Survey Research Report

PRL 315 - Spring '23

Prof. Lim

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Final Survey Report

I. Background and Purpose of the survey

I-1. Background

The problem that our client, Syracuse Stage, is facing is that they are experiencing a decline in ticket subscribers as well as single ticket buyers after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, there is overall confusion as to who Syracuse Stage is and what they do. Syracuse Stage needs more engagement on social media, especially on Instagram and Twitter. Syracuse Stage lacks awareness and social media engagement which makes it more difficult to reach a younger audience.

I-2. Survey Purpose

Through this survey, we wanted to discover Syracuse Stage subscribers' preferences and better understand their experiences. With these results, Syracuse Stage will be able to improve on the areas that their subscribers want to see more from. By making these improvements, Syracuse Stage will grow its subscriber list, make more through ticket sales, and boost the number of people who subscribe to ticket packages.

I-3. Research Questions

RQ2: In the 2022/2023 season, which best describes your ticket purchasing for Syracuse Stage?

RQ3: In the post-pandemic era, what is your primary reason for not attending Syracuse Stage events?

RQ5: Which of the following is most important to you during a theater experience?

RQ7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

RQ8: Which traits or characteristics would you associate with Syracuse Stage?

RQ9: Rank these performance genres in order of interest, ranging from 1 to 5.

RQ12: What would be the most enticing reason for you to follow Syracuse Stage's social media?

RQ15: Please select the social media platform that you use most for engaging with the following content from a theater for plays and musicals.

RQ17: How do you describe yourself?

RQ18: How old are you?

RQ31: Please select all the characteristics that you believe describe Syracuse Stage.

II. Method

II-1. Population, Sampling Frame and Methods

- **Sampling Frame:** This survey was sent out to Syracuse Stage's listserv. There were 441 responses over a period of 3 days.
- **Sampling Method:** The survey was done through convenience sampling.
- **Participants:** This survey was completed by patrons who are subscribed to Syracuse Stage's listserv.
- **Survey:** This survey was conducted online and made by Qualtrics. It utilized nominal scale and likert scale-based questions.

II-2. Participants and Survey Procedure

For this survey's sampling frame, the survey was sent out to Syracuse Stage's listserv. The survey was completed by patrons who are subscribed to Syracuse Stage's listserv. This is an example of convenience sampling, because the results relied on individuals who decided to participate. There were 441 responses over a period of three days. This survey was conducted online and made by Qualtrics. It utilized nominal scale and likert scale-based questions.

II-3. Measures for Questions in Survey

For this survey, we wanted to measure how Syracuse Stage Patrons felt about Syracuse Stage already and we wanted to learn more about what they wanted to see. We also wanted to learn more about attendance trends following the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the key concepts we wanted to measure were how patrons purchased their tickets (Q2), why patrons did not attend a Syracuse Stage show following the pandemic (Q3), the most important experience when going to a show (Q5), attitudes towards Syracuse Stage (Q8), genre preferences (Q9) and patron's media preferences (Q12 and Q15).

To measure the concept of how patrons purchased their tickets, we used a nominal scale question with the options of choosing season subscriber, single-ticket buyer, multiple-ticket buyer and no, I haven't purchased any tickets this season. To measure why patrons have not attended a Syracuse Stage event following the pandemic, we used a nominal scale with the options of financial constraints, health and safety concerns, lack of interest in the current programming, prefer streaming services at home, my schedule is too busy or other. We also used a nominal scale to measure the most important experience to patrons when attending a production. The options were overall quality of production, comfortable seating, ease of purchasing tickets, professional and friendly staff, availability of refreshments and snacks, accessibility for people with disabilities, clean and well-maintained facilities, reasonable ticket price or convenient location and parking facilities. To measure attitudes towards Syracuse Stage, we used a likert scale. The traits were artistic excellence, community engagement, innovative productions, diverse programming and educational outreach. They had to rank the terms on a scale of 1-6, with the following anchors: strongly do not associate, somewhat do not, neutral, somewhat associate, strongly associate and don't know. To measure the patron's genre

preferences we used a rank choice question where the patrons had to rank comedy, drama, family-friendly, musical and mystery on a scale of 1, being the most interested, to 5, being the least interested. To measure patron's media preferences we used a nominal scale and a likert scale. To measure what content patrons wanted to see, we used a nominal scale with the answers, exclusive interviews with the cast and crew, musical highlights, sneak peeks of production and rehearsal, special promotions and ticket discounts, access to exclusive content, job announcements and other. To measure where patrons were engaging with Syracuse Stage on social media we used a likert scale. The content was trailers or teasers, highlights from the musical/play, behind the scenes content, interviews with the cast, upcoming productions and news/events from Syracuse Stage. They had to pick between the values of 1 and 6 with the anchors being: Google search (1), Twitter (2), YouTube (3), Facebook (4), Instagram (5) and TikTok (6).

The survey breaks down into the following questions:

- Likert Scale: 5
- Semantic Differential: 1
- Nominal: 13
- Ranked Choice: 1
- Fill in the Blank: 2

Scholarly Articles:

Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2022). *Business research methods*. Oxford University Press.

Check, J., & Schutt, R. K. (2017). Research methods in education.

<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781544307725>

III. Results:

III-1. Demographics of respondents:

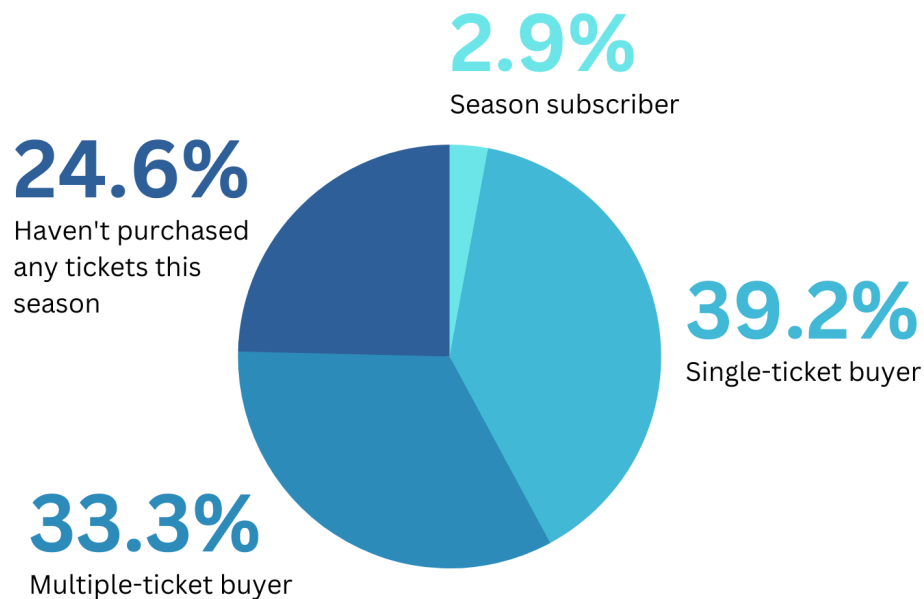
Demographic Characteristics	N	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	110	24.9
Female	308	69.8
Other	3	0.7
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
White	400	90.7
Hispanic or Latino	7	1.6
African American	4	0.9
Asian American	5	1.1
American Indian/Native American or Alaska Native	3	0.7
Multiple Races/Ethnicities	6	1.4
Other	3	0.7
<i>Education</i>		
High school diploma or GED	15	3.4
Some college, but no degree	35	7.9
Associates or technical degree	39	8.8
Bachelor's degree	103	23.4
Graduate or professional degree	234	53.1
<i>College Student in CNY</i>		
College student currently enrolled in a school in Central/Upstate NY	15	3.4
College student but do not attend school in Central/Upstate NY	4	0.9
I am not a college student	403	91.4
N/A, I am not currently living in Central or Upstate NY	7	1.6
<i>Income</i>		
Under \$ 25,000	8	1.8
\$ 25,000 - \$ 49,999	31	7.0
\$ 50,000 - \$ 74,999	42	9.5
\$ 75,000 - \$ 99,999	60	13.6
\$ 100,000 - \$ 149,999	89	20.2
Over \$ 150,000	101	22.9
Prefer not to say	98	22.2
<i>Generation</i>		
Gen Z	12	2.7
Millennials	63	14.3
Xers	109	24.7
Boomers	224	50.8

III-2. Descriptive statistics and III-3. Subgroup analysis (Crosstab analysis)

1. Table 1: *Ticket Purchasing for Syracuse Stage in the 2022/23 season*

Ticket purchasing for Syracuse Stage in the 2022/23 season			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Season subscriber	13	2.9
	Single-ticket buyer	172	39.0
	Multiple-ticket buyer	146	33.1
	No, I haven't purchased any tickets this season.	108	24.5

Table 1: Ticket Purchasing for Syracuse Stage in the 2022-23 Season



This data shows that only 2.9% of survey respondents are season subscribers, which is much lower than Syracuse Stage aims for. However, it is important to note that season subscribers may not have responded to this particular survey due to the number of emails they get regularly. The largest number of respondents are single-ticket buyers and multiple-ticket buyers, which tells us that there is a market for live theater in the Syracuse community, but people may be apprehensive about committing to an entire season. They might prefer to wait to

see what shows are coming before purchasing tickets, which is why popular shows like “The Little Mermaid” have such high attendance. Ticket buyers seem to be more interested in shows they are familiar with because there is less risk of not enjoying it and wasting their money.

However, Syracuse Stage’s reputation indicates that they are reliable and dedicated to producing high quality shows, so if they can highlight that, people might be more inclined to subscribe for an entire season resting assured they will not be disappointed.

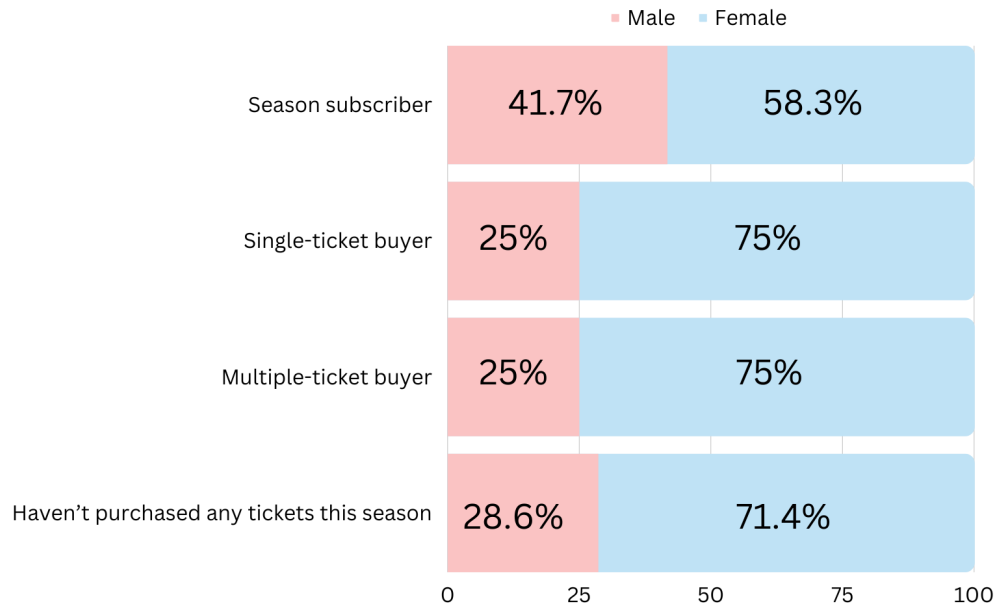
2. Table 2: Ticket Purchasing by Gender for Syracuse Stage in the 2022/23 season crosstab

This data indicates that the majority of Syracuse Stage patrons identify as female.

Females outnumber males in every category of ticket purchasers, however, most male respondents are season ticket holders whereas most female respondents are single and multiple-ticket buyers. This shows that men are interested in the shows and are even enthusiastic about season tickets. This information can help Syracuse Stage tailor a marketing campaign to the majority of patrons, women, while adjusting to accommodate and attract more men in the audience.

Ticket purchasing by gender for Syracuse Stage in the 2022/2023 season			
		Sex	
		Male	Female
In the 2022/2023 season, which best describes your ticket purchasing for Syracuse Stage?	Season subscriber	41.7%	58.3%
	Single-ticket buyer	25.0%	75.0%
	Multiple-ticket buyer	25.0%	75.0%
	No, I haven’t purchased any tickets this season.	28.6%	71.4%

Table 2: Ticket Purchasing by Gender for Syracuse Stage in the 2022-23 Season



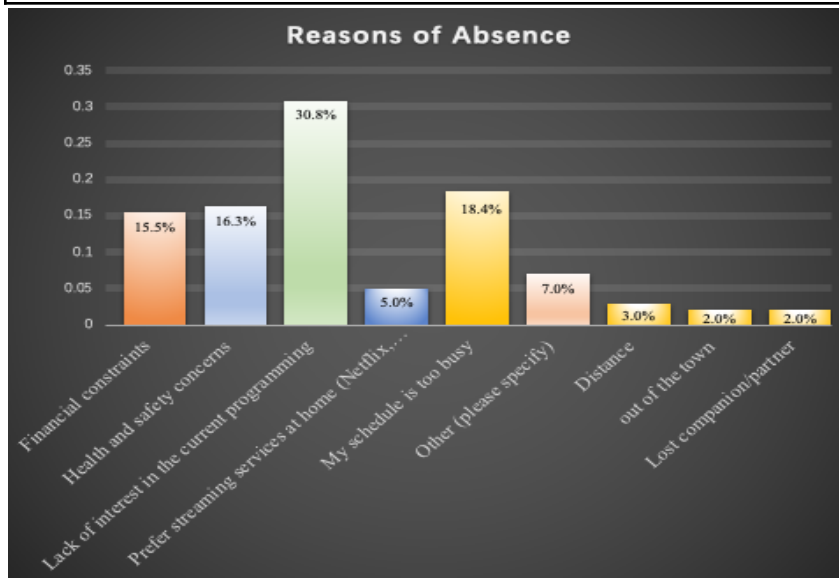
3. Table 3: *Reasons of Absence for Syracuse Stage in the 2022/23 Season*

The data set provides insights into the reasons for absence at Syracuse Stage during the 2022/23 season, with a total of 103 respondents. According to the data, the most prevalent reason for absence was a "lack of interest in the current programming," accounting for 30.8% of responses. "Health and safety concerns" and "financial constraints" followed at 16.3% and 15.5%, respectively. Other reasons cited were a "busy schedule" at 18.4%, "prefer streaming services at home" at 5%, and "other" at 7%. Distance, being out of town, and lost companion/partner were the least common reasons at 3% and 2%, respectively.

From the data, it appears that Syracuse Stage could improve their programming to generate more interest among potential audience members. Targeted communication and promotional strategies could also help address health and safety concerns and financial constraints. The possibility of providing streaming services or on-demand access could

also be explored to cater to those who prefer to watch shows from home. By understanding the reasons for absence, Syracuse Stage can identify any barriers and improve their services to better serve their audience.

Reasons of Absence for Syracuse Stage in the 2022/23 season (Table 3)		
	Frequency	Percent
Financial constraints	16	15.5%
Health and safety concerns	17	16.3%
Lack of interest in the current programming	32	30.8%
Prefer streaming services at home (Netflix, Hulu, etc.)	5	5.0%
My schedule is too busy	19	18.4%
Other (please specify)	7	7.0%
Distance	3	3.0%
Out of the town	2	2.0%
Lost companion/partner	2	2.0%
Total	103	100.0%

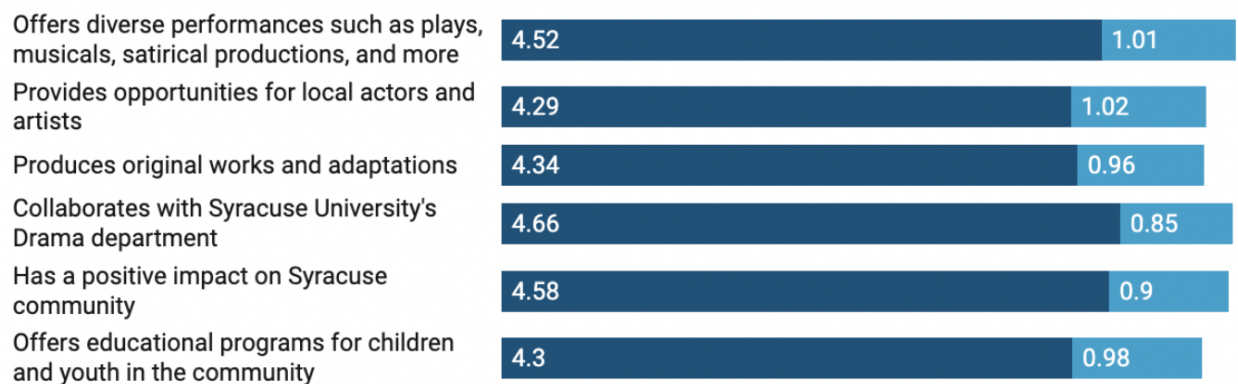


4. Table 4: *Statements Describing Syracuse Stage*

For question 7, we asked “To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?” on a scale from “strongly disagree” or 1 to “strongly agree” or 5, with the option of choosing “don’t know” or 6. From the data, we can see that the mean of all responses is between 4 and 5, showing that patrons either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with each statement. These results are important to note because they show that patrons have a good understanding of what Syracuse has to offer in terms of different programs, productions, and opportunities, and it also highlights that patrons believe that Syracuse Stage has a positive impact on the Syracuse community.

		Statistics					
		offers diverse performances such as plays, musicals, satirical productions, and more.	provides opportunities for local actors and artists.	Syracuse Stage produces original works and adaptations.	collaborates with Syracuse University's Drama department.	has a positive impact on Syracuse community	offers educational programs for children and youth in the community.
N	Valid	429	375	389	393	419	336
	Missing	12	66	52	48	22	105
Mean		4.52	4.29	4.34	4.66	4.58	4.30
Std. Deviation		1.013	1.022	.955	.848	.896	.981

Statements Describing Syracuse Stage



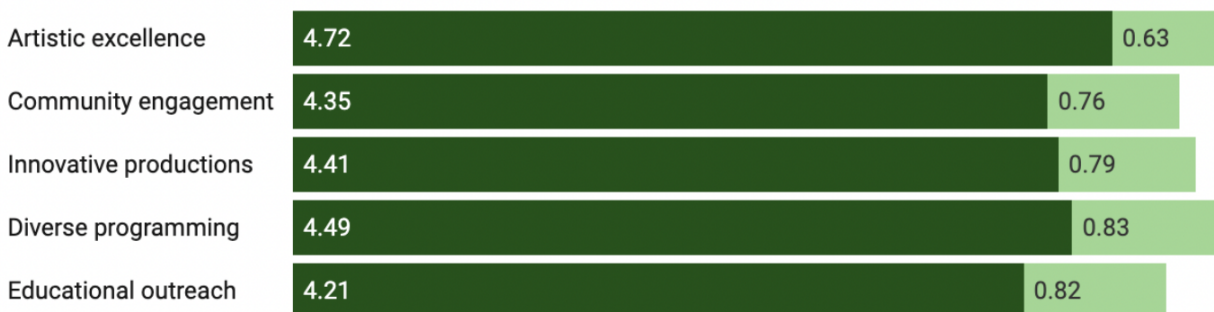
5. Table 5: *Traits Associated with Syracuse Stage*

Similarly, for question 8, we asked “Which traits or characteristics would you associate with Syracuse Stage?” on a scale from “strongly do not associate” or 1 to “strongly associate” or 5, with the option of choosing “don’t know” or 6. By looking at the data, we can see that, again, responses ranged between 4 and 5, which means that patrons either somewhat associated or strongly associated the listed characteristics with Syracuse Stage. In addition, the standard deviation is small, meaning that most of our data is clustered around the mean, showing that there was a low variability in patrons’ responses. This is a positive outcome because this means that most patrons can agree that Syracuse Stage offers each of these 5 listed characteristics, which is good for its brand and image.

		Statistics				
		Artistic excellence	Community engagement	Innovative productions	Diverse programming	Educational outreach
N	Valid	424	390	422	423	341
	Missing	17	51	19	18	100
Mean		4.72	4.35	4.41	4.49	4.21
Std. Deviation		.634	.757	.789	.831	.820

Traits Associated with Syracuse Stage

■ Mean ■ Standard Deviation

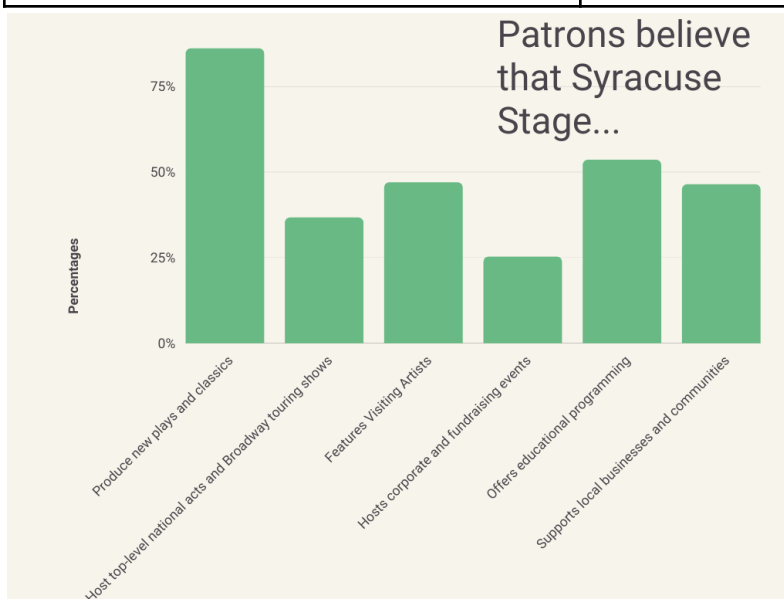


6. Table 6: *Patrons who have seen a Syracuse Stage Production before associate these terms with Syracuse Stage:*

This table and graph indicate the terms that Syracuse Stage patrons associate with the theater company. It is important to note that the respondents could answer with

multiple terms in this question. The patrons that answered this question are patrons who have seen a Syracuse Stage production this season. 143 out of 166 participants associate the term “produce new plays and classics” with Syracuse Stage which is extremely positive. From this data it can be concluded that Syracuse Stage patrons know a lot about the theater company. The term that people least associate with Syracuse Stage is hosts corporate and fundraising events, meaning that Syracuse Stage should do more to promote their events through social media and SEOs.

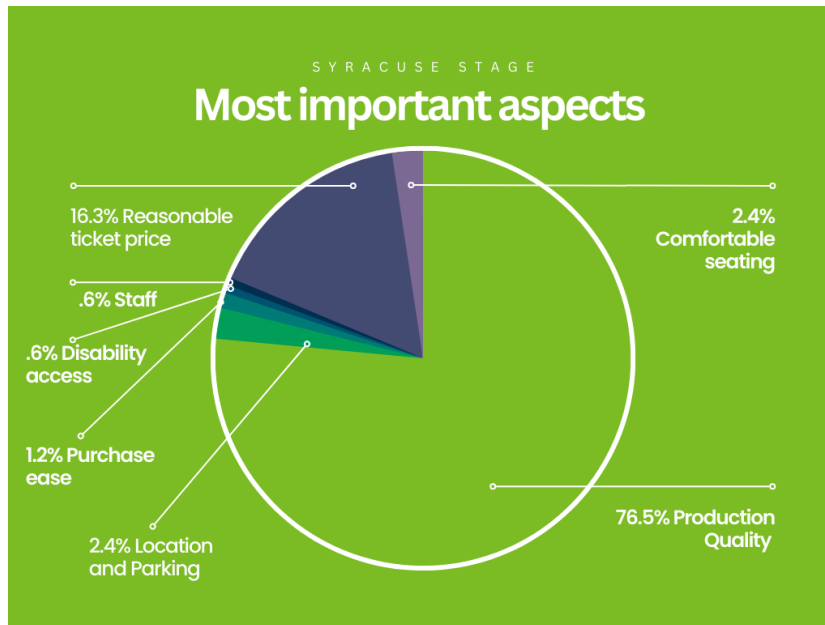
	Frequency	Percent
Produce new plays and classics	143	86.1%
Hosts top-level national acts and Broadway touring shows	61	36.7%
Features visiting artists	78	47%
Hosts corporate and fundraising events	42	25.3%
Offers educational programming	89	53.6%
Supports local businesses and communities	77	46.4%



7. Table 7: *Patrons who have already seen a Syracuse Stage production say that this is the most important experience when going to the theater:*

This table and graph shows what experiences are most important to the patrons who have already attended a Syracuse Stage production this season. 166 people responded to this question. 127 out of 166 participants responded that they care most about the overall quality of production. This is extremely important and positive because it shows that Syracuse Stage produces high quality performances that keep people wanting to come back. The second most popular response was reasonable ticket prices. This is important because it shows that Syracuse Stage patrons believe that their ticket prices are accurate for the production that they are for.

	Frequency	Percent
Overall quality of production	127	76.5%
Comfortable Seating	4	2.4%
Ease of purchasing tickets	2	1.2%
Professional and friendly staff	1	0.6%
Accessibility for people with disabilities	1	0.6%
Reasonable ticket price	27	16.3%
Convenient location and parking facilities	4	2.4%

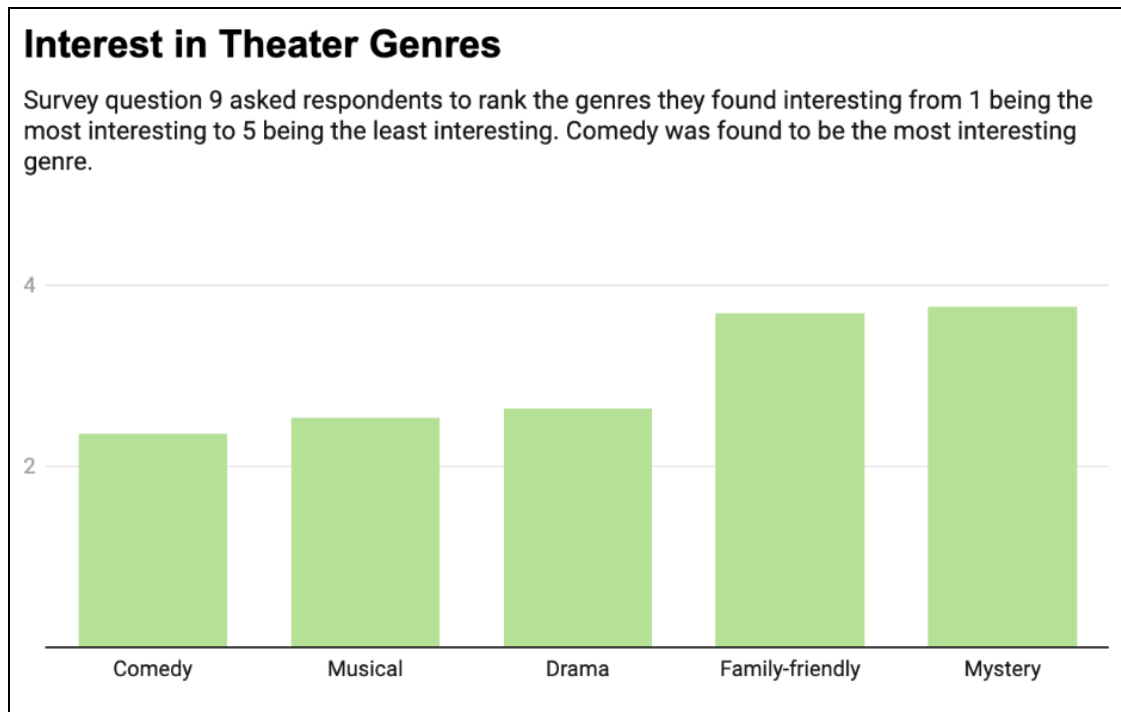


8. Table 8: *Interest in Theater Genres*

This table looks at a question on the survey that asked about which genre respondents found most interesting. The scale was from 1-most interesting to 5-least interesting.

Comedy was found to be the most interesting, with a mean score of 2.36. It also had the smallest standard deviation of 1.111, suggesting that most answers were clustered around this number, so most respondents would agree with its high ranking. The least interesting genre was mystery. This can be insightful to help direct marketing and communication strategies to highlight comedic aspects of shows.

<u>Genre</u>	Comedy	Drama	Family-friendly	Musical	Mystery
<u>Mean</u>	2.36	2.64	3.7	2.54	3.76
<u>Standard Deviation</u>	1.111	1.359	1.288	1.428	1.192



9. Table 9: *Reasons to Follow Syracuse Stage on Social Media*

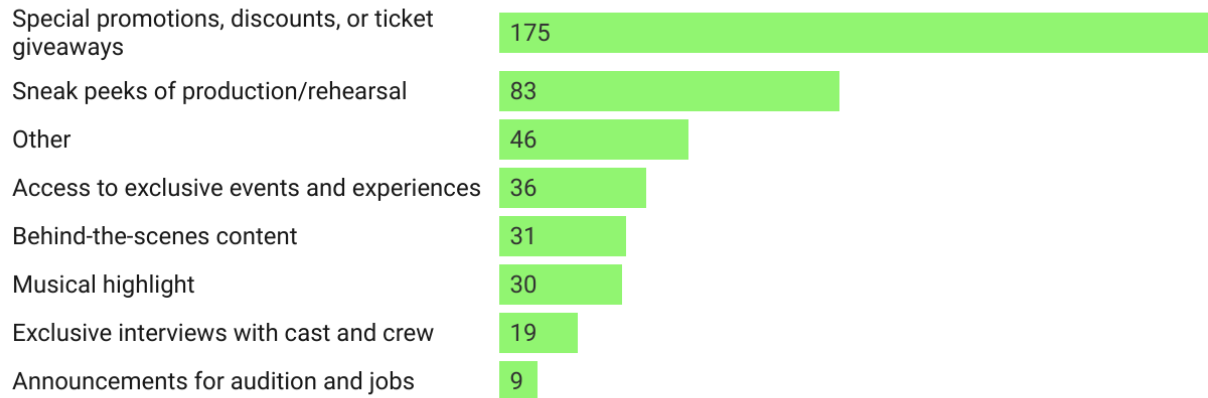
Survey question 12 asked respondents which of the following reasons would be the most enticing reason to follow Syracuse Stage on social media. “Special promotions, discounts or ticket giveaways” enticed respondents the most to follow Syracuse Stage’s social media, followed by sneak peeks of production/rehearsal. The least likely reason was for auditions/jobs, confirming why these posts get little engagement.

<u>Reason to follow social media</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Exclusive interviews with cast and crew</u>	19	4.3%
<u>Musical highlight</u>	30	6.8%
<u>Sneak peeks of production/rehearsal</u>	83	18.8%
<u>Special promotions, discounts, or ticket giveaways</u>	175	39.7%
<u>Access to exclusive events and experiences</u>	36	8.2%
<u>Behind-the-scenes content</u>	31	7%

<u>Announcements for auditions/jobs</u>	9	2%
<u>Other</u>	46	10.4%

Reasons to Follow Syracuse Stage's Social Media

Survey question 12 asked respondents which of the following reasons would be the most enticing reason to follow Syracuse Stage on social media. Special promotions, discounts or ticket giveaways was the top reason.



Created with Datawrapper

Reasons to follow Syracuse Stage's social media - Gen Z Survey

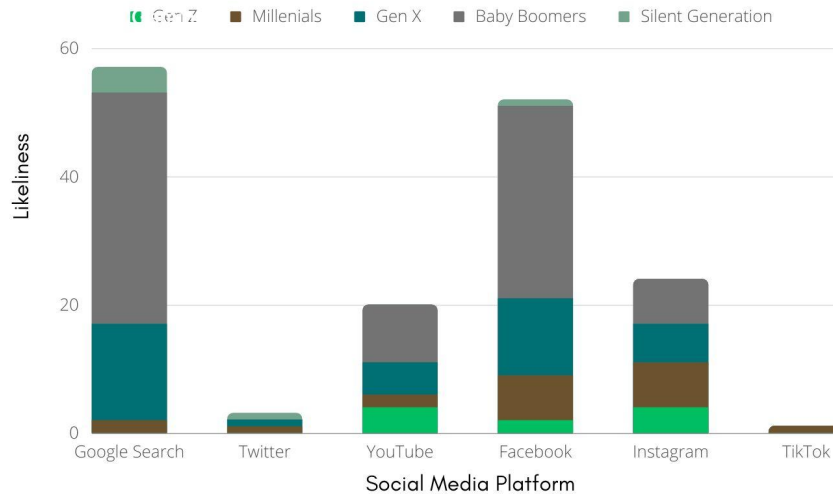
<u>Reason to follow socials</u>	Frequency	Percent
<u>Exclusive interviews with cast and crew</u>	5	6.3%
<u>Musical highlight</u>	11	13.8%
<u>Sneak peeks of production and rehearsal</u>	18	22.5%
<u>Special promotions and discounts or ticket giveaways</u>	26	32.5%
<u>Access to exclusive events and experiences</u>	8	10%
<u>Behind-the-scenes content</u>	9	11.3%
<u>Announcements and opportunities for audition and jobs</u>	2	2.5%
<u>Other (please specify)</u>	1	1.3%

10. Table 10: *Social Media Platforms you Would interact with the Syracuse Stage on by Generation*

This table and corresponding chart shows the relationship between generation and which Syracuse Stage social media platform that they are most likely to interact with. When looking at this chart, it is important to note that a significantly greater number of baby boomers and generation X members completed the survey. It is also important to note that social media engagement definitely varies based on age. When looking at the data, we see that overall, people are more likely to interact with the Syracuse Stage's Google search and Facebook page, with people being very unlikely to interact with their Tiktok and Twitter pages. With this information, we now know what platforms are best to advertise productions on. Additionally, the age breakdown helps us target specific demographics. Knowing that there is a large baby boomer and generation x engagement on Google and Facebook, we can focus promotions on those platforms for shows that may cater to that demographic.

		How old are you? Generation					Total
		Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Baby Boomer	Silent Generation	
Please select the social media platform that you use most for engaging with the following content from a theater for plays and musicals. - Behind-the-scenes content	Google Search	0	2	15	36	4	57
	Twitter	0	1	1	0	1	3
	YouTube	4	2	5	9	0	20
	Facebook	2	7	12	30	1	52
	Instagram	4	7	6	7	0	27
	TikTok	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total		7	27	39	1	6	166

Social Media Interactivity Based on Generation



IV. Discussion and Conclusions:

IV-1. The summary of key findings:

The survey had several key findings which revolved around different aspects and showed that a majority of patron buyers are single-ticket buyers but that Syracuse Stage has an overall positive perception for its impact and productions. To have patrons return for more shows, the survey revealed insights into how to improve engagement and outreach. For social media engagement, mainly utilizing Facebook, Instagram and search engine optimization with posts revolving around special promotions may help. It also revealed that offerings should reflect its positive reputation and genres like comedy or musicals.

IV-2: Key insights (or Key takeaways):

- **Social media:** The main reasons to follow Syracuse Stage on social media was found to be for special promotions, discounts or ticket giveaways (39.7%), followed by sneak peaks (18.8%).

- **Theater shows:** Comedy was found to be the most interesting genre (2.36), followed by musicals (2.54), while mystery was the least interesting (3.76).
- **Ticket sales:** Only 2.9% of patrons are season ticket buyers. The majority of patrons are single-ticket buyers.
- **Offerings:** Most patrons agree that Syracuse Stage offers original works, diverse programs, community engagement, and educational opportunities, having an overall positive impact on the community.
- **Production Quality:** Most patrons keep coming back to see a Syracuse Stage show because of the excellent production quality.

IV-3. Conclusion:

Overall, Syracuse Stage has a positive reputation (Chart 4 and 5), but most patrons are single ticket buyers (39.2%), while only 2.9% are season subscribers. It is important to take into consideration that the reason the season subscribers seem so low could be due to the many emails they receive on a regular basis, causing them to not respond to the survey. It is reassuring to see that most patrons strongly associate Syracuse Stage with positive qualities such as diverse programming, providing opportunities for local actors and having an overall positive impact on the Syracuse community (Chart 4). This shows that Syracuse Stage as a company is conveying its message and its fanbase is loyal. The main objective is to expand this reputation by distinguishing Syracuse Stage from local competitors and obtaining higher engagement and ticket sales among audiences.

Additionally, we can compare it to the Gen Z survey findings to reveal even more. For instance, the number one reason a Gen Z respondent would follow Syracuse Stage was for the same top two reasons: special promotions, discounts or ticket giveaways (32.5%), followed by

sneak peaks of rehearsals/shows (22.5%). This emphasizes that such communication is great to reach a wide audience, from young to elderly. Contrastingly, Instagram seems to be the main platform Gen Z would receive their content from, while it's Facebook for older generations.

The survey provides key insights into how to better improve engagement in hopes of increasing ticket sales and earning subscribers. Firstly, women tend to buy more tickets, highlighting that subscriber marketing for ticket buyers on Syracuse Stage's listserv should mainly target this demographic, while marketing for new ticket buyers can look to men as a new potential audience. Part of these communications need to convey interest in the show, as lack of interest was the number one reason for not attending, and quality of production was the main aspect that patrons look for. Platforms, primarily Facebook and Google Ads, should do so, in addition to ticket giveaways/promotions. One way to generate interest is to promote comedic aspects, as comedy was considered to be the most interesting genre.