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Club Verticals

Analyse the validity of the above assumption, and in doing so, tell us if there needs to be additions or partitions (or truncations?) made to the verticals. If so, what would these be, and justify the modification appropriately.

You are free to revamp, redefine or retain this system with any amount of changes. Exhaustiveness of the union is essential.

The verticals mentioned indeed cover the broad areas of comedy as it is prevalent in the industry now. I would however prefer to see them in a different light:

- On Stage Performance - Stand Up, Improv, Sketch
- Behind the stage - Script, (Material; in the case of stand up), Screenplay, articles, comics

Projecting the verticals in this manner, in my opinion, would give the enthusiasts a better idea of what to aim for, among the areas they'd like to see their skills developed and see the things in a directed manner as opposed to a bird's eye view.

That being said, my motto for this year would be along the lines of "skill building" and "training". In other words, I would prefer the club to be seen as one among the many sources to provide mentorship to ideas, along with avenues to practise the idea/art and also facilitate the transformation of ideas into production/ presentable content.

Club Events

- **Who according to you plays the major role in event ideation, the conveners or the coordinators? Explain either choice.**

If there is to be a comparison, my answer would depend on what time of the year we are talking about here. During the initial stage, when the club has just formed, the responsibility of kick starting events and having an overall idea of the club's visions rests largely on the conveners. And the coordinators, having relatively less experience (exceptions as always, do apply) would go easy on the feasibility checks while proposing ideas and will largely base their ideas on how the club's forte, in this case, comedy is projected to them- and hence, often shoot their arrows high up in the sky. But as time progresses, as the coordinators get acquainted with the intricacies of the club working and risks and the resulting successes and failures in the run so far, their mind, logically, would get shaped into proposing and carrying out feasible ideas and practical solutions to the problems that would arise.

- **Should you have answered the former, Enlist your event ideas for each vertical, both currently pursued and newly introduced. Lay special emphasis on the validity of new events, and identify collaborations and clashes if any.**

On Stage:

→ **Open Mics:**

- Motivation : To address the complaints pertaining to having less number of open mic nights during last year.
- Structure: Two open mics per month. Preferably on thursday/fridays.
- Not targeted to attract large audiences but a handful of audience and performers who may not be too enthusiastic to perform at Open Mics outside the institute.
- Modification from the current format: Having an outside host and guest performers is a must. Preferably people from the Chennai comedy circle. The performers getting to interact with these people is a big plus.
- This way, we set up an avenue for the budding artists to meet with the er, also budding artists but a little more well connected within the Chennai comedy circle. So mentoring and going out of insti to perform is bound to happen.

- Another possibility we can explore is to prepare contingents/ individuals for competitive standup in Mood Indigo and other cultural event

→ Improv:

- Motivation: To increase the number of CWS (During the even semester) devoted to Improv with external and more experienced conductors and observe the changes as to how well it dissolves into the institute culture. Increasing the number of session would finally let us know if less focus to Improv was the reason it failed to attract much enthusiasm last semester.
- Main logistics to take care of
 - ◆ Take a google form survey:
 - To get an idea of the people's picture about improv and its growing importance in the comedy scene.
 - To get specific areas of Improv they'd like to tap into. This will let us know if they prefer to see Improv as an exercise to improve their Thespian skills or prefer to market it as having a large overlap with comedy. Quality of responses will also matter and would let us know how aware people are of their own interests.
 - ◆ Using this data, make appropriate decisions to tap into the improv network - if required, that is. Contact necessary people over the summer/ odd semester and set things up for the even sem. If the responses are poor, the focus on Improv would be dimmed down in CWS.
- Having a litsoc event is a possibility we can explore. Non competitive is what I would prefer but open to suggestions from the other convenors and coordinators.

Behind the stage:

→ CWS for Writing:

- Motivation: As the popular media is flooding up with humorous content requiring quality writing apart from the execution, I would like to explore this option and see if it would fit into and cater to the usual demographic of the comedy club.
- Objectives to be completed by the end of the odd semester:
 - Hold regular CWS to improve the skills, facilitate jamming of ideas within the sessions and direct people with ideas to necessary sources to come up with a production.
 - Preparing a list of concrete avenues for writers under other institute bodies like Thespian Club, Peepal Pol and T5E and the associated schedule/ objectives and enable networking of the interested people with ideas with these bodies during the CWS.
 - If possible come out with a production in collaboration with the aforementioned bodies by the end of the semester.
- Logistics:
 - Send out a google form to gauge the interests of the students in the areas of story and script writing before designing a CWS. It would cover the following main points:
 - ◆ Amount of regularity in these sessions one can expect of them if proper mentorship is promised
 - ◆ Amount of time they'd be willing to give for a production as more often than not, people lose enthusiasm midway, and
 - ◆ See if people are more enthusiastic about gaining the skills for the time being and going independent later or would see it fit to collaborate with the existing student bodies. The way this point is different from the previous is that, these results would lead us to realisation of whether to go for short workshops covering more breadth in the areas pertaining to writing than depth or vice versa and help us model a more targeted CWS.
 - ◆ Segregation of people into groups based on interests. In other words, identify whether people would prefer to write for a play / sketch / youtube video / blog etc.
 - Once the responses are in hand, collaborate with Peepal Pol (talks are already in place) to design and model the CWS incorporating the segregation.

- Discussions with the experienced artists in Chennai to incorporate their ‘fundae’ sessions into the CWS.
- Having regular feedback forms circulated amongst the participants to tie loose ends and come up with a better future CWS.

Workshops:

As I have already stated, I would like to project Comedy Club as an avenue for growth and skill building and workshops play an important part - often to kick start a particular sphere of interest in comedy and lay the foundation upon which people and their skills grow, aided by nourishment from the regular CWS that follow.

- Stand Up Workshop

- To kick start the open mics at the start of the open mic.
- Taking feedback from last year’s workshop(s), in terms of the turnout or importance of carrying out the event, here are a few things I’ve realised:
 - A stand up workshop MUST include stand up performances by experienced artists which was missing last year. This has a two-fold benefit- with the first one being the fact that we can expect more turnout if publicised as a **Show Cum Workshop** and the second one that, there is an immediate feedback or better put, a materialization of what the workshop conductor has spoken about what one should do or become to be a standup comedian, into a live example and thereby, according to me, leaving a better lasting impact and getting people interested to try out stand-up. The workshop could both begin and end with a lineup of performers. So naturally, I’d prefer it to be a multi- performer organised workshop as opposed to being carried out by a single person.
 - With more than one person conducting the workshop, there’ll be variety of styles and thoughts presented to the audience.
- Logistics:
 - Preparing and contacting a line up of performers and preparing a format for the workshop to give it a structure, and see to it that everyone’s ideas are being catered to and given enough time to convey. This has to be done over summer.

- Improv Workshop:

- To kick start the improv CWS in the even semester.

- Contact local improv artists and Thespian club
- Again, the workshop would be followed by a show
- Logistics:
 - Contacting the artists to be done over the odd semester and winter holidays.

Final/ Closing Show:

- The idea of final show is to set the stage and provide a medium to showcase the skills gained during the semester through CWS and open mics and close the line up of events in the sem.
 - This would serve as an added incentive to people associated with the club through open mics and CWS to be regular at these club events.
 - In the odd sem, performances would contain both standup and sketch. Improv and StandUp will be taken up during the even sem show.
 - ◆ For setting up sketch(es), thespian club collaboration is necessary in terms of providing the actors as the main focus of comedy club during the semester is on writing.
 - ◆ People who are regular in the open mics (criterion- should have performed in atleast 4 out of 6 open mics) would get a chance to perform.
 - ◆ Will be publicised as a show with an expectation of great interest and anticipation among the students.
- **And if the latter, explain the mechanism you'll set up for your coordinators to ideate on new events, starting with the application of course, and further on to the summer.**
- As I have stated before, coordinators would keep forming a better image of the club dynamics and feasibility of events as the semester passes on. And having organised a handful of CWS and open mics, they could give suggestions on improving the existing structure of these events and maybe bring a new model for the CWS.

→ Content generation through Facebook is one avenue coordinators can work and continuously bring up new ideas to keep the FB page going.

- **Explain the logical pathway you would like to follow for the events in each of the above defined club verticals.**

I think I have more or less answered the above question in my previous answers. I'll summarise the main points below:

- I would focus on writing and sketch comedy for the odd semester apart from the open mics running in the background.
- The open mics will be once in every two weeks. In the weeks in which there are no open mics, the club will have a working session.
- There will be a stand up workshop in the beginning to kick start open mics and CWS will start off with writing fundaes from Peepal pol,
- Even semester would see inclusion of Improv, Comics into the picture
- The longevity of having an improv contingent for outside collaborations will be tested in the even semester. Need to speak to the Thespian convenors before taking a step.
- Comic workshop in the starting of the second month to be followed by an online event.

Having done this, create a Google Sheet/Calendar charting out a tentative weekly timeline for these pathways.

[Calendar | Odd Sem](#)

(https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1b6F1keV6t7TN_hmmODeK9kTMZAKYVRDwf6F4o76IENY/edit#gid=0)

Even Sem- Same format of 2 open mics + 2 CWS will be followed in the even sem as well. Since the institute calendar isn't out yet, I haven't specifically place the events week-wise,

Saarang

Explain your plan for Saarang in terms of events and collaborations.

In particular, if you're hoping to carry forward club events into Saarang, explain the value addition you hope to create with the Saarang platform in terms of the verticals mentioned in Background.

- Comp Events:

Stand Up :

- Format- Prelims followed by finals. 3 minute set in the prelims, 5 mins set in the finals.
- Top 2/3 position holders get to open for the comedy pro show on Day 2.
- Also, contacting reasonably big groups in the youtube and standup scene for judging can add to theirs and Saarang's branding. There is a window of opportunity with respect to the winners getting to be a part of their production or their show.

- Non Comp

Improv Workshop + Show:

- Motivation: As opposed to a comp event we had last time, I'd like to explore the possibility of bringing improv into the scene in the form of a workshop and see if it turns out to be more far reaching and organized.
- At the end of the workshop, the teams will have to put up short performances.
- The entity conducting the workshop can video record it and put it on their channel if they wish.

- Can span into the more than one day. Will depend on how the entity chooses to conduct it.
- Registrations- Online. And if there are open spots to be filled, limited number of onspot registrations also taken.
- For the same reasons as stated earlier, having a show as a part of the workshop - before or after the workshop- will give it better visibility among people.

Club Collaterals

- **Ideate on the need/possibility of additional collaterals alongside the Facebook page or at the very least, content modules and their structures to boost the Facebook page activity.**
 - Additional collaterals will require more manpower and planning to maintain and as a club, pertaining to my current vision of the club as a facilitator than a generator, I think we can go without having anything else as long as our facebook page is updated with the pics of what we do, and occasional pieces of funny articles, memes, comic strips and interviews.
 - I would propose a 2-3 member team for maintaining the facebook page, along with collaborating with Peepal pol and other clubs if needed.
- **What is the scope that the Comedy Club, through its facebook page or otherwise, has for content generation - considering existing avenues and platforms for content? Consider a Content Release Model - where internally created content is released on the platform to the public, or an Open Platform Model - where we receive content from the student body and moderate/facilitate its' release; or a mix of both.**

→ **Content Release Model -**

- ◆ Glimpses of Open mic, CWS and workshops,
 - ◆ The page will have its own series of memes and comic strips- something similar to Pod,da. But the main focus of the content team will be getting out articles. Again comic strips can be under the spotlight as well - open to suggestions from the coordinators.
- Open Platform Model - Meme war, Vines, Pun Competition, Comic strips are great channels to source content from. Logistics needed to be figured out after discussion with other team members.

Constraints

1. Why does the institute need a comedy culture? With close reference to your tentative list of events, suggest why each of the events cannot be subsumed by an existing institute Club/Vertical?

- My main focus during this year is to make Comedy Club a facilitator for building skills and experience in the areas pertaining to both on-stage and behind the stage domains by bringing people together and exposing them to stuff going on in the industry by connecting them to the right people.
- So in every event except for Stand up, which can safely be assumed to be in the comedy club territory, the other events and CWS are more or less collaboration events involving different clubs like Thespian and Fine arts and other insti bodies like Peepal pol. Mainly because, these entities have overlapping long term goals which overlaps with comedy or can be exploited for comedy (sketch, comics) but are not quite visible to people who want to try some things out in comedy in terms of writing and improv. So if we project Comedy Club as a medium through which they can get their ideas validated and executed, I think we would have justified the definition of a club.

- **Comedy Club 2016-2017 did not achieve much success in integrating improv and sketch comedy into the club's calendar. Keeping in mind the existing improv and sketch comedy scene in Chennai and feasibility of holding these events in the institute, as well as how they will be received, make an argument for/against the inclusion of these events. (With reference to your answer under Ideas - Club Verticals, check feasibility.)**

1) Sketch Comedy -

- I am planning to approach this from the POV of attracting writing enthusiasts. Once they have a good script (which comes from various CWS with attached workshops) the Thespian club/ Peepal pol can make it into a production. Also mentoring by the youtube folks is also a possibility that we can tap into - but no promises on this one.
- I've run it through the aspiring convenor of Thespian club and the current team of Peepal pol- they are, as of now, enthusiastic about this.
- Not expecting a huge turnout of applicants, as this requires a bit of long term commitment from filing the first draft to running it through iterations and finally come up with the draft that goes into production.

2) Improv- Still a bit skeptical about how to look at Improv. CWS and workshops should hopefully instill some Improv culture into insti. And so if carried forward into the next semester , we can have improv talents getting to perform with established improv groups. We will have to see if the response to Improv remains lukewarm or if it boils on enough stirring.

- **With close reference to the past two questions, would you categorize Comedy as a competitive or a non-competitive vertical with regards to Saarang? State your preference, and justify it. Actually, why not justify both? Cover the points given below.**

- Stand Up Competition, Judging criteria:
 - Audience response, delivery, number, modelling and positioning of punchlines, wit and in the case of dry humor- Sarcasm, intelligence of the joke, creativity
 - Evident enough, the list cannot be exhaustive and the weightage to each criterion depends on the judge
 - If not competitive, the same line up of performers/ participants will have to perform in an open mic sort of environment - if there is scope for stand up in any form in Saarang - and this is less appealing than giving it a competitive flavour and having an incentive to open for an established comedian.

- Competitive improv-
 - As stated before, I would like to see Improv in the form of a workshop as opposed to a competition since by and large, everyone is kinda new to this. And the judging criteria - is even more obscure than what a stand up competition would have had- it being more or less solely dependent on the audience response and the overall conduction and smoothness heavily dependent on the host/judge of the event as it doesn't have solid set of rules to follow.
 - Also having a workshop would give us, the comedy club, an overall idea which I think we lack as of now and hence have a better grip on avenues of improv that could be tried on campus.

- **As far as regular operations are concerned, how many coordinators do you anticipate you will need? What are the functions of a coordinator? Do you plan on dividing functions between coordinators or evenly distributing them? With reference to both ideation and execution, how do you ensure that club structure does not become top-heavy?**

❖ Coordinator Structure -

- Event Management Team:
 - 3 Coordinators
 - Roles -

- Organising Open mics and CWS
- Point of contacts to the guest performers/ chennai comedy circle
- POCs to the other clubs as well

➤ Content generation wing:

- 3 Coordinators + 1 Convenor as the Content Generation Head
- Roles:
 - Content Release Model -
 - i. Glimpses of Open mic, CWS and workshops,
 - ii. The page will have its own series of memes and comic strips- something similar to Pod,da. But the main focus of the content team will be getting out articles. Again comic strips can be under the spotlight as well - open to suggestions from the coordinators.\
 - Open Platform Model - Meme war, Vines, Pun Competition, Comic strips are great channels to source content from. Logistics needed to be figured out after discussion with other team members.
 - Content Generation Head curates the content, is involved in the ideation of new avenues of content or improving the existing ones and makes sure that there is a regular outflow of content.

For competitive events, workshops and shows, the club has to rely on help from outside - judges, performers etc. It is often the case that coordinators are left frantically searching for judges/performers on the day before an event. What are your suggestions in order to make managing this network more reliable?

- Use the summer to build connections and make deals to get a head start into the semester.
- Renewing the already existing connections will take the load off during the semester
- The coordinators must be acquainted with the Chennai comedy circle and how to tap into it before the semester.
- For Saarang, get in touch with the PR strategist and look into avenues of collaboration with the comedy sponsors well before Saarang (dice media, The timeliners etc)

