



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS ON YOUR OWN

A PRIMER FOR REACHING OUT TO
BUSINESSES IN YOUR AREA.

If you've decided you want to start building a relationship with a local business, you've come to the right place!

You are now involved in The pARTnership Movement, an Americans for the Arts campaign designed to work with you to send businesses the message that the arts can build their competitive advantage and offers real world examples and practical partnership techniques. The pARTnership Movement demonstrates how arts and business partnerships provide a number of benefits for companies enhancing critical thinking skills and creativity within the workforce, attracting and retaining the best employees and publicizing companies' brand, core values and priorities.



The arts help create productive and thriving communities, and together we can prove it!

Bolstered with information from the 2010 [Business Committee for the Arts \(BCA\) Triennial Survey on Business Support to the Arts](#), [Creative Industries](#) reports, and [Ready to Innovate](#), a study Americans for the Arts conducted in conjunction with The Conference Board, we found that businesses are seeking ways to build their competitive advantage and we have the answers.

When arts and business partner, everybody profits. Here's how you can get involved.

- ▶ **MAKING THE CASE: REASONS FOR ARTS AND BUSINESS TO PARTNER**
- ▶ **HOW TO ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS**
- ▶ **WHAT THE ARTS BRING TO THE ARTS AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP**
- ▶ **TOOLS FOR BUILDING SUCCESSFUL ARTS AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS**
- ▶ **HELPFUL LINKS AND ARTICLES**

MAKING THE CASE: REASONS FOR ARTS AND BUSINESS TO PARTNER

There are many reasons for arts and business to partner, [here are 8.](#)

1 Recruit Talent

Employees want to live and work in a vibrant community. When you partner to support local theater, music, museums, dance and public art, you help to make your community more attractive to current and future employees. Happier employees make for a happier workplace. But you knew that already, naturally.

2 Put your company in the spotlight.

The arts help you build Market Share, enhance your brand and reach new customers. Celebrating the arts is a way to build a powerful presence and engage with multiple stakeholders quickly and effectively. Museums, symphonies, dance performances, festivals and more allow you to reach customers and are venues to entertain prospective and current clients. Businesses agree that arts increases name recognition (79 percent) and offers networking opportunities to develop new business (74 percent).

3 Advance corporate objectives and strategies

The arts help you get your message across in engaging ways. The arts can educate the public or your employees about core business issues such as product safety (Portland General Electric's plays about electric safety for elementary school kids) or making healthy choices (Kaiser's ETP program to educate kids about making healthy choices using live theatre.).

4 Foster critical thinking

Did you know that creativity is among the top applied skills sought by employers? More often than not, business leaders say creativity is of high importance when hiring. The arts are about critical thinking, solving and reframing problems and facts in ways that reveal insights and opportunities. Music, creative writing, drawing and dance provide skills sought by employers of the third millennium. In fact 72% of companies that give to the arts recognize that it stimulate creative thinking, problem solving and team building.

5 Engage Your Employees.

The arts challenge employees to be their best. Whether it's showing off their own creative talent in an company art show or battle of a band -- or volunteering for a local arts group -- the arts let your employees use their current skills and develop new ones. For instance, sitting on an art organization's board is great training to sitting on your company's board. In fact, studies show that millennials who frequently participate in workplace volunteer activities are more likely to be proud, loyal and satisfied employees. But don't take our word for it. [Here's the stats.](#)

6 Embrace diversity and team building

The arts create an environment that blends backgrounds, ethnicities and cultures. Through exhibitions, performances and workshops, the arts provide opportunities for employees to grapple with workplace concerns and become more familiar with their coworkers in the next cubicle or around the world. What's more, committing to the arts lets people inside and outside your company know that you value (and promote) innovative thinking and a creative culture.



Say thanks

The arts are a great way to show you appreciate your employees. Providing tickets to events, museum memberships and other arts experiences can be the perfect way to inspire employees and say “thanks.”



Contribute to the economy and to quality of life

When you partner with local arts, you partner with the whole city. The arts are essential to the health and vitality of neighborhoods, cities, states and our nation. They enhance community development; create jobs; spur urban renewal; attract new businesses; draw tourism dollars; and create an environment that attracts skilled, educated workers

Nationally, the nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$135.2 billion in economic activity every year—\$61.1 billion in spending by organizations and an additional \$74.1 billion in event-related spending by their audiences

For examples of companies who are already taking advantage of the skills the arts have to offer, [click here](#).

Now that you're armed with 8 reasons for businesses to partner with the arts and successful examples, it's time to use them!



HOW TO ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS

If a business person calls you:

Ask them what they are trying to achieve through a partnership with the arts?

If they have had a chance to spend some time on the site, find out what reasons or success stories caught their attention?



When contacting a local business consider these simple steps:

1 Choose wisely.

Consider businesses that might be interested in partnering with you. Things to think about:

- Do any of your board members have business connections?
- Does the Chamber of Commerce or Rotary Club have meetings or events where you can meet local business owners?
- Are there local businesses that have partnered with other arts organizations?
- Are there local businesses that can benefit from what your organization has to offer?
- Look beyond Fortune 500 companies when considering potential business partners. Most businesses are small or midsize. They include the shop you drop by each morning for coffee, the bakery, gas station, printer, graphic designer, jeweler, restaurant and so many others.

2 Do your homework.

Understand the company you are talking to and their interests. Before approaching a company, try to understand as much about the company's goals and intentions as you can:

- What is its mission?
- What are the company's core strengths?
- What are its biggest concerns?

3 Make sure you have a seat at the table.

Attend business association meetings, become a member of your local chamber of commerce, offer to speak at their meetings, and participate in business networking events. You will need to spend money to ensure that local businesses are hearing your voice and that you are knowledgeable about their concerns and issues. Some organizations you should consider are:

- a. Local chamber of commerce
- b. Rotary club
- c. Economic development association

4 Ask questions first.

Then sit back and listen to the company's needs. Ask them what they want, what they value and how you can help.

5 Turn the tables.

Don't go in to a meeting thinking it's about how the business can help you; think about how you can help them. It's not enough to focus solely on the benefits of partnering with your organization. Think logically and strategically about how your

organization, your programs, products and/or services can help meet key business needs. How can you help the company achieve its mission and/or solve its problems?

Before conversing with business leaders, remember this checklist:

- **Make your story visible** and as salient as possible. Outline specifically what you are looking for and what you can offer to the business.
- **Differentiate your group** from other philanthropic groups. What can you provide that will be advantageous to the company? How does your organization stand out from others and what are the benefits of choosing to partner with your organization?
- **Engage employees** Businesses want to partner with organizations where their employees are invested. Consider ways to engage employees by offering free or discounted behind the scenes tours, tickets to events, performances at the workspace, volunteer opportunities, board service and more.

6 **Compose terms of the partnership.**

Once your organization and a business have decided to partner, clarify what each party wants to achieve. Determine how success will be measured.

7 **Follow through.**

Complete the partnership by following through with goals and reporting back with agreed upon measurements. For your partnership to be successful, you should stay in contact with your business partner. Keep them updated on what your organization is working on or invite business leaders to your performances and events. A partnership is about having a continual conversation and maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship.

8 **Evaluate your success.**

Together, were you able to achieve the desired outcomes?

9 **Continue the conversation.**

Can you continue the partnership? Are there opportunities for the company's employees to join your board or volunteer? Did opportunities arise to partner on a different program or in a new way?

10 **Share your story.**

Submit a [success story](#) on our website to promote the great partnership in your community.

WHAT THE ARTS BRING TO THE ARTS AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

Employees want to live and work in a vibrant community. This is where you come in. For businesses looking to recruit and retain top employees, a vibrant arts scene is a necessity. Make sure local businesses know about the arts assets in your community. For example:

- **Talk** with human resource departments to be sure they know about the arts organizations in the community and are using these assets in their recruitment. Suggest that they purchase museum memberships or tickets to recruit employees or as a signing bonus to recently hired employees.

The arts help businesses build market share, enhance their brand and reach new customers. Celebrating the arts allows companies to build a powerful presence and engages with multiple stakeholders.

What can you do?

- **Invite** businesses to arts events for networking and entertaining clients. Hosting a business event at an arts venue creates a memorable and unique experience for clients and business affiliates to enjoy.
- **Talk** to businesses about incorporating artists, arts organizations and works of art as graphic elements and themes in advertising campaigns.

- **Partner** with a business to underwrite the cost of printing an arts organization's tickets for a season and place the company's name on the back of each ticket.
- **Develop** an on-site promotion such as special shopping hours during which the arts and other community organizations are showcased. Designate a percentage of sales to donate to an arts organization.
- **Encourage** the use of tickets to performances and arts events as premiums to promote products and services.
- **Host** an event for companies to gain an opportunity to network with other businesses while learning about the value of the arts. Consider collaborating with the chamber of commerce or other business associations to:
 - *Present a panel discussion featuring business owners and executives discussing how and why their businesses became involved with the arts*
 - *Host a behind the scenes tour or rehearsal*

The arts are a creative tool to advance a business's strategies. The arts can educate people about core business issues such as product safety or making healthy choices. The arts provide an opportunity for storytelling and illustration that leave a lasting impression. For example:

- **Coordinate** with different business divisions including the marketing department to incorporate arts.
 - *A theater group can perform plays that educate customers about healthy living or financial literacy.*
 - *Visual artist can illustrate important business messages to a community where English is not the first language.*

- **Work** with human resources to use the arts to inform employees about company policies, new products, and other initiatives.

Did you know that creativity is among the top applied skills sought by employers? Music, creative writing, drawing and dance provide skills sought by employers of the third millennium. The arts are about critical thinking, solving and reframing problems and facts in ways that reveal insights and opportunities. In fact 72 percent of companies that give to the arts recognize that it stimulates creative thinking, problem solving and team building. To learn more, [click here](#).

Here's what your organization can do to advance employee's creativity.

For example:

- **Encourage** businesses to partner on arts education programs. These programs help build the skills necessary for the next generation workforce.
- **Collaborate** with a company to bring art programs into the workplace to encourage employees to think differently.

The arts challenge employees to be their best.

The arts enhance employees current skills and develop new ones.



For example:

- **Provide** business employees with leadership, professional development and career advancement opportunities through pro bono projects for the arts. Skills-based volunteering gives workers an opportunity to test their skills in a setting outside of their job by assuming leadership roles and challenging themselves in new and interesting ways.

Employee volunteers can:

- **Assist** with fundraising events, phonathons, auctions, dinners, press briefings and other events.
- **Design**, write and print brochures, invitations, programs, posters and press materials for performances, exhibitions and events.
- **Undertake** the leadership of a special fundraising project, such as a capital campaign or an endowment fund.
- **Serve** on the boards of arts organizations.
- **Provide** input into strategic planning.

Links:

- [Business Volunteers for the Arts \(BVA\)](#)

The arts build a more cohesive work environment.

Through exhibitions, performances and workshops, the arts help employees become more familiar with their coworkers in the next cubicle or around the world. Employee art shows and battle of the bands provide opportunities for employees to show off their own creative talent and encourage teamwork and lowers silos.

- **Facilitate** arts-based corporate training to spur creativity and innovation. Arts-based corporate training lends the creative spirit of the arts to the corporate world to make brainstorming sessions and meetings more fruitful.

Kelly Pollock of COCABiz, an **arts-based business training program** run by the Center of Creative Arts (COCA), offers these suggestions when considering starting your own program:

- Make sure the program makes sense for your organization (aligns with your mission, core values and core assets).
- Plan thoroughly, being realistic about the idea, its costs and how it might impact your organization (positively or negatively).
- Make sure there is sufficient community interest to your idea and think about board and community members to engage in the development process.
- Consider budgeting a small portion of your staff and financial resources for new programs and product development.
- Give your organizations adequate time to develop the idea, engage the community in planning and resource the idea. It has been a three-year process for COCABiz.
- A new program provides an opportunity to talk to new and different businesses, investors and funders.

Want to learn more? Here are some organizations and people already involved in arts-based learning:

- [Jazz Impact](#)
- [Second City](#)
- [Liz Lerman Dance Exchange](#)
- [Blue Man](#)
- [McColl Center](#)
- [COCA](#)
- [Think Like a Genius](#)
- [Arts-Based Learning: An Interview with Ted Buswick](#): BCAnews, August 2010

- **Organize** employee art shows and band challenges to create a positive, lively work environment for the businesses in your community. Have businesses across the community compete in a juried art exhibition or a corporate band challenge or organize events for a single business.

See how some organizations are already involved::

- [Music City Corporate Band Challenge](#)
- [Fortune Battle of the Band](#)

The arts are a great way for businesses to show they appreciate their employees. Providing free or discounted tickets to events, museum memberships and other arts experiences is the perfect way to inspire employees and say “thanks.”

For example:

- **Offer** free or discounted performance tickets or memberships to employees to boost morale, increase retention and instill a sense

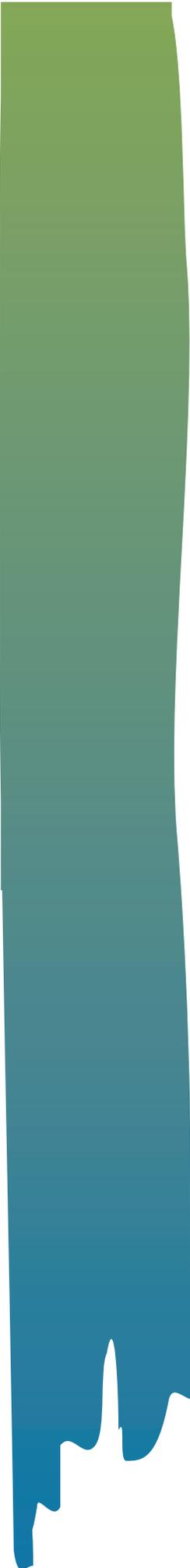
of community. If employees are encouraged to participate in and attend events in their community, they are more likely to feel a sense of satisfaction in their jobs and feel connected to the community.

When businesses partner with the arts, they partner with the whole city. The arts are essential to the health and vitality of neighborhoods, cities, states and our nation. They enhance community development, create jobs, spur urban renewal, attract new businesses and draw tourism dollars. Nationally, the nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$166.2 billion in economic activity every year—\$63.1 billion in spending by organizations and an additional \$103.1 billion in event-related spending by their audiences.

For example:

- **Encourage** businesses to organize outings to a museum or attend a performance for business meetings or conference attendees.
- **Suggest** that company’s invite the community to attend performances or arts events at their headquarters.





TOOLS FOR BUILDING SUCCESSFUL ARTS & BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Make sure you have everything at hand to succeed.

-  Create a sample script of a conversation with your local business person
-  Be ready to place pARTnership Movement ads in business publications
-  Promote successful partnerships in local business journal or share with business associations
-  Prepare a list of artists and arts organizations that provide arts-based training in your community.
-  Compile a list of business leaders who can advocate for the arts.
Work with them to place op-eds and communicate with other businesses.

HELPFUL LINKS & ARTICLES

Research

The arts are good for business and we can prove it. These links will provide you with valuable statistics and data to help you prove your case to businesses.

Ready to Innovate: Are Educators and Executives Aligned on the Creative Readiness of the U.S. Workforce?

[Key Findings](#)

[Full Report](#)

Americans for the Arts and The Conference Board, in partnership with the American Association of School Administrators, surveyed public school superintendents and American business executives to identify and compare their views on creativity and innovation.

- Superintendents (99 percent) and employers (97 percent) agreed that creativity is of increasing importance in the workplace.
- For both employers (56 percent) and superintendents (79 percent), a degree in the arts was the most significant indicator of creativity

2010 Business Committee for the Arts Triennial Survey of Business Support to the Arts

[Executive Summary](#)

[Full Report \(Americans for the Arts members\)](#)



The Business Committee for the Arts Triennial Survey of Business Support to the Arts

tracks the trends and levels of business support to the arts in the United States. A total of 600 businesses completed telephone surveys. The businesses are divided into three revenue size groups: under \$1 million, between \$1 million and \$50 million, and \$50 million and over.

- Small and mid-size businesses more than ever contribute the largest share of arts dollars. Small businesses contribute 69 percent, mid-size businesses contribute 24 percent and large businesses contribute 7 percent.
- More than 33 percent of businesses believe that giving to arts is tied to corporate goals, and another 66 percent preferred choosing organizations that provide opportunities for corporate recognition.
- Businesses—both those that now give to the arts and those that don't—agree that arts giving can also benefit them by increasing name recognition (79 percent) and offering networking opportunities and the potential to develop new business (74 percent).
- When it comes to specific motivations, businesses responded with these top five reasons as most important in deciding to support specific arts organizations:
 - 1) *Offers arts programs to reach the underserved*
 - 2) *Offers opportunities for company recognition*
 - 3) *Is engaged in arts education*
 - 4) *Has an existing relationship with someone at the business*
 - 5) *Ties the arts to social causes such as hunger, violence or homelessness.*

National Arts Index created by Americans for the Arts, is a highly-distilled measure of the health and vitality of arts in the U.S. It is composed of 81 equal-weighted, national-level indicators of arts and culture activity that covers a 12-year period, from 1998 to 2009. Each indicator is updated annually and a new report is produced.

- The arts follow the nation's business cycle. The Index is high when Consumer Confidence and GDP growth is high.
- The fortunes of the arts affect many people. While it may be no surprise that the arts track the economy, most people are unaware of the size of the sector: 109,000 nonprofit arts organizations and 550,000 more arts businesses, 2.2 million artists in the U.S. workforce and billions of dollars in consumer spending.
- Arts nonprofits are struggling financially. More nonprofit arts organizations are ending the year with a deficit. Almost half (41 percent) were in the red in 2008, up from the 36 percent in 2007.
- Arts and culture is losing its market share of philanthropy to other charitable areas, such as human services and health. The share of all philanthropy going to the arts has dropped from 4.9 percent to 4.0 percent over the past decade. If the arts sector merely maintained its 4.9 percent

share from 2001, it would have received \$14.9 billion in contributions in 2009, instead of \$12.34 billion—a \$2.5 billion difference.

- Demand for arts in education is up. College arts degrees conferred annually have risen steadily from 75,000 to 127,000 in the past decade. Reasons for this increase include an uptick in design degrees and more double-majors, such as science and music. This news is promising for business leaders looking for an educated and creative workforce.

Need more information:

Americans for the Arts conducts extensive research on all aspects of the arts and culture industry. Here are recent “one-pagers” on a variety of topics.

http://www.americansforthearts.org/get_involved/advocacy/advocacy_004.asp

The Americans for the Arts website contains other information and resources on building arts and business partnerships.

http://www.americansforthearts.org/information_services/arts_and_business_partnerships/default.asp

Still can't find what you need, email privatesector@artsusa.org or call 202-371-2830

We are here to help.

