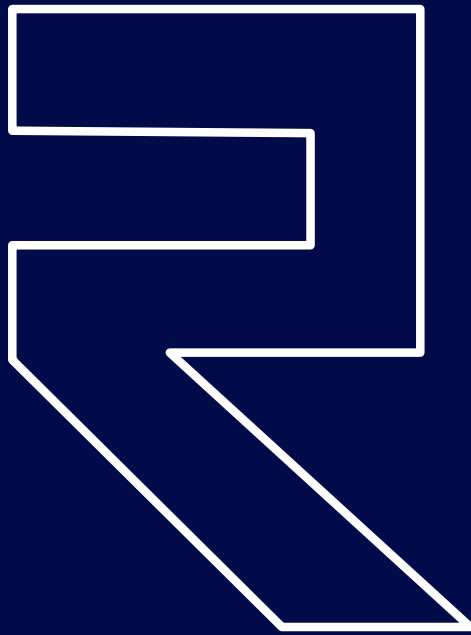


# Communication Excellence at



The Roberts Group

Presented by: Jennifer McGowen

PR 605 Sec. 800

Professor Ingrid Cummings

November 27, 2022

# Table of Contents

Organization Overview.....	2
PR/Media Personnel.....	3
Operation Cost.....	4
General Workflow.....	5
Leadership and Management Structure.....	6
Communication and Content Decisions.....	7
Organization Attributes.....	8
Organization Evaluation.....	9

# Organization Overview

Founded in 1999 by owner and CEO Tim Roberts, The Roberts Group (TRG) has placed an emphasis on development of theatrical-based subscription series in secondary markets. Broadway is a primary market for theatre, so The Roberts Group aims to promote touring Broadway shows or touring speakers and acts in secondary markets to spread theatrical performances across the country.

Currently, TRG promotes and operates subscription series in five primary markets: Columbia, SC; Daytona Beach, FL; Wheeling, WV; Newport News, SC; and Bangor, ME. Additionally, TRG also promotes touring Broadway shows and speakers in around 60 venues across the country. TRG promotes and partners with venues for about 200 shows each year. Shows that TRG has promoted include but are not limited to *Wicked*, *The Lion King*, *The Book of Mormon*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Mannheim Steamroller's Christmas*, *Les Miserables*, *Johnny Mathis*, *An Evening with Neil deGrasse Tyson*, *Weird Al*, *Alton Brown*, and more.

Beyond their typical markets, The Roberts Group aims to expand their operations with more venues and more shows and artists in the coming years so that theatrical entertainment can continue to be a prominent source of joy in the entertainment industry. TRG is a for-profit independently owned organization, so having excellence in communication is vital to their organization's success. Operating with four individuals, The Roberts Group works in a fast-paced environment and continues to expand their markets.

BROADWAY IN COLUMBIA BANK OF AMERICA



FEB 15-16



FEB 22-23



MAR 7-8



MAR 28-29



APR 14-15



JUN 28-JUL 2

# PR/Media Personnel



**Daniel Hampel | Managing Director**

- Schedules shows between tours and venues
- Plans ticket on sales for show dates
- Arranges Subscription Series and one-off shows
- Forms partnerships with venues
- Communicates with owner of company



**Kristi Chambers | Director of Marketing**

- Creates ad plans for venues and shows
- Shares social media content to be scheduled
- Updates TRG and venue websites
- Communicates with venues about marketing needs
- Boosts ticket sales when needed



**Shelby Spray | Assistant Marketing Director**

- Works with radio stations for giveaways
- Schedules social media posts
- Creates graphics for social media posts
- Communicates with freelance graphic designer
- Forms playbills for venues



**Alan Paramore | VP of Operations**

- Manages invoices and settlements
- Travels to shows at venues
- Monitors ticket sales for every venue and show
- Maintains relations with venues
- Resolves internal venue problems

# Operation Cost

For The Roberts Group, the majority of their costs come from marketing and settling shows. Marketing budgets must be followed so that an end profit is made, but marketing materials must also follow tour and venue needs. The budget for a show depends on the touring performer's requirements and the venue's requirements. These requirements for tours and venues include, but are not limited to:

## **Tour's needs:**

- Catering
- Housing
- Dietary needs
- Travel compensation
- Posters
- Digital Ads
- TV ads

## **Venue's needs:**

- Stagehands
- Security
- Labor
- Rigging
- Ticket fee
- Specialty equipment

Generally, a venue will cover specific costs for the touring show while TRG will cover the other costs. TRG earns profit from their sales on tickets, so maintaining a budget is essential for the company's success. A show budget can range anywhere from \$10,000 to over \$200,000. The scale of the touring show and the estimated profit for the show are huge factors that play into forming the budget for each show since The Roberts Group wants to earn money from each show they promote.

Additionally, The Roberts Group has internal costs that they must maintain. With an office located in Carmel, Indiana, TRG must pay rent, electricity, water, and any additional fees they feel are necessary to run the office. TRG spends around an estimated \$55,000 a year on their office needs and supplies. With expenses like these, it is essential that communication excellence is achieved since a few bad-selling shows could cause a significant decrease in profit for TRG.

# General Workflow

As a for-profit organization, The Roberts Group earns profit by selling tickets at the performances of shows that they promote at venues across the country. There is lots of communication that occurs to make these shows happen, but the general work flow of TRG is as follows:

**Managing Director pitches and sells a touring show or stage performance to a venue**



**Managing Director works with venue and VP of Operations to decide on show dates and tour route**



**VP of Operations organizes settlements and ticket prices with input from Managing Director**



**VP of Operations and Director of Marketing communicate budget and needs for advertisements**



**Director of Marketing and Assistant Marketing Director create and execute ad plans for advertising for the tour and venue while following tour marketing guidelines**

# Leadership and Management Structure

As small of an organization as The Roberts Group is, it is still essential for the company to have some form of heirarchy in decision making. Since TRG is a for-profit company, discussions are encouraged among the staff, but when important financial decisions must be made, the Managing Director or sometimes the owner of the company will be the ones to make the final call on decisions. Therefore, the structure is as follows:



Ultimately, the Managing Director of TRG has the final call when it comes to decision making. The VP of Operations and Director of Marketing often hold discussions and conversations with each other about what will be best for a venue and touring show, but the Assistant Marketing Director does not hold much decision-making authority within the company.

# Communication and Content Decisions

Even though the hierarchy of workflow for TRG begins with the Managing Director, content decisions are still communicated throughout the office. With TRG being such a small organization, every decision is impactful to each individual's responsibility.

Ultimately, the Managing Director has final say on content decisions. Communication, however, is still used throughout the office. When problems arise, such as a change in a ticket on sale date or a show not selling well, the Managing Director will ask for advice and ideas on how to move forward.

Generally, the Director of Marketing will make final decisions on marketing content, such as digital ads and ad plans, but the Managing Director prefers to still proof everything and be aware of the decisions that are being made. Within the marketing department, the Director of marketing and Assistant Director of Marketing will communicate daily on what needs to be completed and discuss how to complete their tasks. Once these tasks are completed, the Managing Director will proof materials and plans before they are released.

Additionally, the VP of Operations does not involve himself with marketing decisions unless it has to do with a financial topic. When deciding to release a ticket coupon or sale, the VP of Operations will work with the Director of Marketing to manage the ticket on sale and changes in ticket pricing. These price changes, however, will have to be approved by the Managing Director before they are issued.

Therefore, the Managing Director makes the final decisions on content that is produced for their promoted shows and events for venues. The Managing Director does, however, ask for input from the other individuals in the company when important decisions arise, but he is typically the individual to make the final decision. The Director of Marketing is able to make final marketing decisions for designs and ad plans, but the Managing Director still asks to be in the loop with such matters. Although the communication for TRG is evident in their daily morning discussions, weekly detailed meetings, and frequent conversations over show promotional matters, it is still apparent that TRG operates under an authoritarian culture since the Managing Director makes final decisions frequently and ensures he is aware of all decisions that are made within the company.





# Organization Attributes

As a private, independent organization, The Roberts Group does not abide by many of the traditional company expectations that other companies may hold their employees to. For TRG, each employee is salaried, but their benefits are slightly different than that of a public company. The attributes of the organization are as follows:

<p><b>Work Hours</b></p>	<p>As an independent company, the work hours are flexible at TRG. Employees generally work from 9 to 5, but have flexibility to arrive later than 9 and leave earlier than 5. Working from home is not encouraged, but can be arranged for when it is needed.</p>
<p><b>Vacation</b></p>	<p>Since TRG is based on a seasonal schedule, vacations and time off are not defined. TRG operates under the ideology that if employees manage their work and remain on top of their workload, then they can take vacation when they want as long as their work is complete and they are not needed for a show. TRG also holds more days off during holidays, so employees enjoy ample time off.</p>
<p><b>Performance Evaluation</b></p>	<p>TRG operates at a high-capacity, and there is not much time to sit down and provide a performance evaluation. Evaluations are constant in that if work is not complete, someone else in the company must pick up that workload. Therefore, multiple mistakes leads to a discussion of the issues and a deliberation of how to move forward.</p>
<p><b>Professional Development</b></p>	<p>Professional Development is not provided by TRG. There are aspects of the job, such as CRM web-training and Adobe Suite programming, that can help an employee at TRG learn new skills, but the environment of TRG requires the individual to be well-trained in marketing and promotional skills within the live entertainment industry before they start.</p>
<p><b>Communication Integration</b></p>	<p>TRG integrates their communication into everything that they do. Each morning starts with an overview of what is needed for the day. Weekly full staff meetings and twice a week marketing meetings are held to encourage continued review and communication with each individual in the company.</p>

# Organization Evaluation

After reviewing the hierarchy and communication structure of The Roberts Group, it is clear that they operate under a mainly authoritarian communication structure which prevents excellence in communication from being achieved.

Communication excellence thrives in a participative environment. Although The Roberts Group does maintain consistent communication by holding weekly meetings and daily check-ins, TRG still leads with the Managing Director approving or making final decisions. Discussions over important matters may be held so all thoughts and ideas are heard, but the Managing Director will make any necessary final decisions even if the group does not agree. TRG operates under this authoritarian environment instead of a participative environment because all their profits are tied in with many of these decisions, creating a high-stakes environment that requires consistent and constant communication.

Additionally, excellence in communication must be achieved internally before it is achieved externally. For The Roberts Group, external communication is a primary responsibility for all members of the company. From communicating with directors of tours, marketers for both tours and venues, and venue personnel, external communication needs to be effective. Therefore, it is essential for the company to be able to effectively communicate internally before they can communicate efficiently externally. If clear internal communication is not occurring within The Roberts Group, then the external communication can become misunderstood or jumbled, which happened on many occasions during observations.

Overall, The Roberts Group has not succeeded in achieving excellence in communication. The first step to facilitating communication excellence would be to create a participative environment internally. Once the company is able to hold discussions in which each individual is heard and each opinion is considered when making final decisions, internal communication excellence will increase since each individual in the company will be on the same page. When each member of the company has the same understanding on discussions that are held, each individual of the company will then be capable of sharing this knowledge and beliefs of the company externally with their contacts. At that point, communication excellence can be achieved by The Roberts Group since every individual in the company will have an understanding of each situation which will no longer cause miscommunication or confusion externally. The Roberts Group just needs to begin with working on building a participative environment, and then TRG will be on their way to communication excellence.

