



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - APRIL 21, 2022

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

On review of the Sweetwater Music Festival meetings held during the last twelve months, several key themes emerged.

Firstly, how best to build closer links with the local and wider community. Mike VH reached out to a broad range of people in the business community and sought their views on the most effective ways of publicising their services and products - an approach that not only provided new information but also helped the Festival engage with potential sponsors. He also initiated a pilot 'coffee stall' project linked to pop up concerts. Other suggestions raised as the year progressed centred on working with the education committee to raise awareness of the Next Wave project and particularly the young performers selected to take part. There was strong interest in maybe interviewing the performers and ideally shooting short videos which would be shown on the shortly to be relaunched website.

Needless to say there was continued discussion both of the reworking of the website and of the various digital initiatives. Could the digital interviews between the AD and performers be tailored to specifically promote upcoming concerts or the festival? Should pride of place on the new site be devoted to upcoming events and Sweetwater news?

The committee also focused, while not alienating our core audience, on the need to attract both a younger and a broader demographic. The occasional free concert maybe. Free tickets for students. Other ideas included running a competition in the Sun Times where local subscribers are asked to describe their favourite musical experience/ memory, the winners to be given free tickets to the Festival.

There was also considerable interest in the Classical Music Festival Canada initiative and how best to attract music lovers from across Southern Ontario and beyond. There is great potential for promoting Owen Sound/ Meaford as the perfect venue for an inventive and high calibre weekend.

Michael Alder, Co-Chair