Communication and Information Management in the Nonprofit Arts Sector

Findings from a Survey of Arts Organizations and Arts Administrators on the Behaviors, Protocols, Preferences, and Perceptions of Communication and Information Use and Management

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*"We are drowning in information
but starved for knowledge."*

John Naisbitt

"Information is not knowledge."

Albert Einstein

Preface

Internet and digital technologies have increased not only the volume of information available in the world but also access to that information and ways to communicate it. That volume of information and the tools available to communicate information continue to grow exponentially.

The nonprofit arts field, like the rest of society, seeks to keep abreast of knowledge germane to its work and to communicate both within and outside of its own sphere to its constituents, stakeholders, governing authorities, and the public. Communication is at the very essence of everything the sector does--key to its mission, operations, and its success as an enterprise. No sector today lives in a vacuum distinct or apart from the technology that has changed the world.

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Vine, and scores of other communication platforms did not exist a decade ago. Smart phones, tablets, mobile apps, and even email are relatively new realities. All of these tools make it easier to access information, data, thinking, opinions and ideas, and that access is both a boon to what the nonprofit arts community does and an increasing challenge for it in managing how it communicates.

While available information is virtually infinite, the resources of the sector and its component organizations are not. Chief among the scarce resources with which the nonprofit arts field contends is time. Limited funding streams impact the ability of arts organizations to employ the personnel necessary to adequately identify, analyze, and apply the volume of information available in some useful way to a typical arts organization's business operation and other objectives. The learning curves of new technologies themselves require an increasing investment of time to master.

While a perceived information overload, and the consequential implications of such a status, are nothing new, the nonprofit arts field has a dearth of information about which communication tools we use, how we are managing that usage, and the impact of that usage on organizations and leaders within those organizations.

This report seeks to provide a baseline of knowledge about the communication tools being used by nonprofit arts organizations and personnel and the management of its communication activities—both within and between—arts organizations.

A national representative survey instrument designed to ascertain arts organization and leadership communication perceptions, behavior, habits, and usage was created to obtain that baseline information in an attempt to begin to understand how arts organizations are communicating.

Specifically, the inquiry sought to understand which communication tools arts organizations and personnel use and to what extent; which sources of information are valued and trusted; how arts administrators are managing the volume of available information; and the impact of the increased available information on a variety of markers relating to productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational efficiency.

The survey also sought to determine whether or not the increased volume of available information is thought to constitute *information overload* [exposure to or provision of too much information or data] for the field.

While the volume of available information is increasing, as are the number of ways to communicate that information, the capacity of human beings to process the increased information is not getting any faster. Causes of the rise of available information and resultant overload include: i) the ease and cost-effectiveness of sending more information to more people, ii) the lack of filters to simplify and summarize information, iii) the chances of factual errors and inconsistencies in the available information, and iv) the failure of people who pass on information to first process it themselves. Every communication, ours included, adds to the potential of overload.

The natural response to the paralysis of overload is for human beings to install filters that can make the inflow manageable. Thus, for example, one response to too many emails in your inbox is to simply not read a certain percentage of them. If your email to someone with whom you want to communicate falls into this category, you have not communicated at all. Effective communication increasingly must concern itself with getting past the filters installed by people to manage the overflow.

How we communicate, how we manage our communication strategies and tools, and the impact of our communication choices are complex subjects. The project recognized early on that preliminary data is needed on which future research and inquiry, by both theorists and practitioners within our field, can build. Drilling deeper into our preferences, perceptions, and behaviors will be necessary in order to better enable our field to improve the effectiveness of its communications, minimize the negative aspects of the information onslaught, and maximize the positive impacts of how we manage information going into the future.

The challenge to our organizations is twofold: First, to effectively and efficiently manage the flow of communication and information, and second, to translate the information we access into knowledge that will benefit our operations and advance our missions. Given the time expended in managing communication and information and the centrality of those efforts to almost everything we do, it is essential for organizations to proactively address the challenges faced in this arena.

Summary of Findings

A survey of a representative sampling of arts organizations finds that their internal and external communication includes a variety of traditional and technological methods, each varying in its preferred usage and perceived effectiveness. While this study was intended to establish a baseline of communication perceptions, behaviors, and impacts, the following conclusions may be reasonably drawn from the survey responses:

1. Communication from arts administrators and organizations, and from others to them, is a major occupier of time. Email in particular dominates average weekly time expenditures.
2. The field's perception of the value and impact of the increased information available to it, and the communication it sends and receives, indicates a struggle with that volume, with a large bloc believing the sheer volume is--or is becoming--unmanageable.
3. While the increase in information being communicated and being received is perceived as having a positive impact on organization productivity, there is a bloc of respondents that believes it is negative on a personal level.
4. Despite the struggle with managing communication of all types and the pervasive feeling among the respondents that there are significant negative impacts on their time and ability to do their jobs, most arts organizations do not have any formal plan to address these issues.
5. Due to the limitations of this survey, it is unclear the extent to which arts organizations are aware of, and are dealing with, communication and information issues, including the challenges posed to staff personnel.
6. Most arts organizations do not have the resources to engage a full-time communications officer.
7. Administrators are challenged to relate the increased information to their specific needs.
8. It may be a myth that executive summaries in reports are the preferred method of reviewing information by arts administrators.

For many organizations, this respondent's observation encapsulates the challenge with communication and information management: "*We have 20th century resources in a 21st century environment.*"

Internal Communication

Preferred methods of communication While a wide range of communication tools are employed by arts organizations, including traditional and technological, three principal means dominate: email, face-to-face meetings (one-on-one and staff/department), and the telephone—all of which might today be considered "old school."

LS3.1

Communications plans/staff officers:
- More than three-quarters of arts organizations do not have a formal communications plan for internal organizational communication.
- Sixty-five percent of arts organizations do not have a staff communications officer.
- Nearly 60 percent of arts organizations do not have a formal plan for external communications.

These figures suggest that a large bloc of arts organizations may not be dealing directly with communication issues within their organizations. One can speculate on the reasons for the lack of communications plans: 1) a lack of resources—time, money; 2) the difficulty in creating organization-wide plans due to differences in staff/generational preferences for the use of various communication tools; 3) a belief that such a plan is/would not be of sufficient value to justify its creation; 4) the possibility that such a plan would be outdated on creation; and 5) unawareness of the challenges administrators are having in this area.

External Communications

Effectiveness of various external communication tools: In order of perceived effectiveness, the respondents' top five communication tools are:
- Email
- Websites
- Convenings/Events
- Facebook
- Telephone

Again, with the possible exception of Facebook, these tools are basically "traditional."

Of the surveyed organizations that use Facebook, 34 percent post a few times a week, 22 percent post daily, 23 percent post two to four times per day, and 10 percent post once per week.

Preferred sources of incoming information: Of the communications received from sources outside of the surveyed organizations, the ones most often read/reviewed are from, in order:
- Colleagues/Peers
- Constituents
- Community leaders
- Foundations
- Other arts organizations within the discipline

Effectiveness of various communications: The most effective tools for external communications for the organizations surveyed are, in order:

- Email
- Convenings/events
- Websites
- Facebook
- Meetings

Managing Communication and Information:

Coping with the increase:
- Sixty-three percent of the arts organizations surveyed indicated that the volume of information and communication is growing, making it increasingly more difficult to keep pace.
- Fifteen percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of information is out of hand and they are feeling overwhelmed.
- Twenty-one percent of respondents indicated that the amount of communication they receive is reasonable and they have no trouble handling it.

Perhaps the single most important finding from the survey is the number of arts administrators who view the increase in the volume of communication—to and from others—as a real or potential problem; one that is a threat/drain to their most important resource—time.

Perception of the value of the information available:
- Thirty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they believe about 25 percent of available information/received communication is of value to them.
- Twenty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they believe about half of the available information/received communication is of value to them.
- Eighteen percent of respondents indicated that they believe less than 10 percent of the available information/received communication is of value to them.

Challenges to managing communication:
- Nearly 80 percent of respondents indicated that they believe a lack of time is the biggest challenge in staying abreast of all the information available.
- Nearly 40 percent of respondents indicated that they believe that their biggest challenge in staying abreast of incoming communication is relating the available information to their needs.

Hours spent per week dealing with various communication tools:
Email:
- Twenty-three percent of respondents spent seven to ten hours per week reading and responding to email.

- Twenty-two percent of respondents spent 11 to 15 hours per week reading and responding to email.
- Eighteen percent of respondents spent 16 to 20 hours per week reading and responding to email.
- Sixteen percent of respondents spent more than 20 hours per week reading and responding to email.

More than half of the respondents spent 11 or more hours dealing with email each week—or one-quarter of a traditional 40-hour work week.

Conferring one-to-one with coworkers within the organization:
- Thirty-three percent of respondents spent four to six hours per week conferring one-on-one.
- Twenty-two percent of respondents spent seven to ten hours per week conferring one-on-one.
- Thirteen percent of respondents spent 11 to 15 hours per week conferring one-on-one.

Other major time-consuming activities:
- Twenty-eight percent of respondents spent four to six hours per week talking on the telephone.
- Thirty-one percent of respondents spent four to six hours per week searching the internet.
- Twenty-eight percent of respondents spent four to six hours per week attending staff/department meetings.
- Twenty-three percent of respondents spent four to six hours per week on social networking sites.

Impact of the increased volume of communication:
- Thirty-six percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of communication/information *positively* impacts their productivity. Twenty-seven percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of communication/information *negatively* impacts their productivity.
- Forty-four percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of communication/information *negatively* impacts their time to reflect and brainstorm. Twenty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of communication/information *positively* impacts their time to reflect and brainstorm.
- Forty-three percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of communication/information *negatively* impacts their ability to effectively manage their time.
- Forty-six percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of communication/information *positively* impacts their organization's success.

- Fifty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of communication/information *positively* impacts innovation.
- Forty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they believe the volume of communication/information *positively* impacts organizational adaptability.

Other Findings

Reports and Studies
Volume of reports received:
- Nearly 40 percent of respondents reported that they receive three to five studies and/or reports per month.
- Eighteen percent of respondents reported that they receive six to ten studies and/or reports per month.
- Ten percent of respondents reported that they receive ten or more reports per month.

Reports reviewed:
- Nearly 60 percent of respondents reported that they read or scan one to two reports per month.
- Thirty percent of respondents reported that they review three to five reports per month.
- Less than 5 percent of respondents reported that they review more than ten ports per month.

Preferred method of review:
- Forty-one percent of respondents reported that they read selected sections of the reports and studies they receive.
- Twenty-eight percent of respondents reported that they scan the whole report.
- Twenty-five percent of respondents reported that they read or scan the executive summary.

Crowdfunding:
- Nineteen percent of respondents reported having been engaged in a crowdfunding campaign in the past year. Of that number, 18 percent reported having been engaged in more than one such campaign.
- Twenty percent of respondents that engaged in a crowdfunding campaign reported raising $5,000 to $10,000. Another 20 percent reported raising $10,000 to $20,000.

Introduction: Evaluating the Communication of the Nonprofit Arts Sector

About This Survey

This survey was designed to explore how nonprofit arts organizations and their leaders are navigating and adapting to a changing technological communication landscape, including the Internet, social platforms, and digital applications. The survey also seeks to measure the impact of perceptions, preferences, and behavior on the operations and missions of these organizations, as well as the challenges and opportunities these organizations face in the management of their future communication strategies.

The survey results reported here are based on a non-probability sample of 1,601 arts organizations.

Using the grantee and constituent lists of the sponsoring organizations as a baseline, national service provider organizations and widely distributed bloggers were solicited to extend the survey invitation to their lists. Individual leaders from 1,601 arts organizations responded to an invitation to take the survey; 1,332 completed the entire survey, which was available online from September 17, 2015 to October 16, 2015.

Several respondents from the same organization may have completed the survey. In order to increase the response rate to the survey invitation, the survey omitted an open-ended narrative response option, except for one question at the end inviting respondents to share additional thoughts.

The final sample includes a representation of arts organizations located across the country--of all sizes, ages, budgets, geographical locations, communities served, and disciplines. Individual respondents included a sampling of job positions, years in current position, age, and gender.

Complete survey profiles of both organizations and individual respondents from those organizations are included in the report.

Organizational Respondent Profile

Organizational Classification: Survey respondents predominantly identified their organizations as nonprofit (75.45 percent), followed by respondents that categorized their organizations as government agencies (10.06 percent). The percentage of respondents that identified their organizations as associated with a university was 7.25 percent, and 4.12 percent of the respondents classified their organizations as for-profit.

Q1 **Which designation best describes your organization?**

Answered: 1,601   Skipped: 0
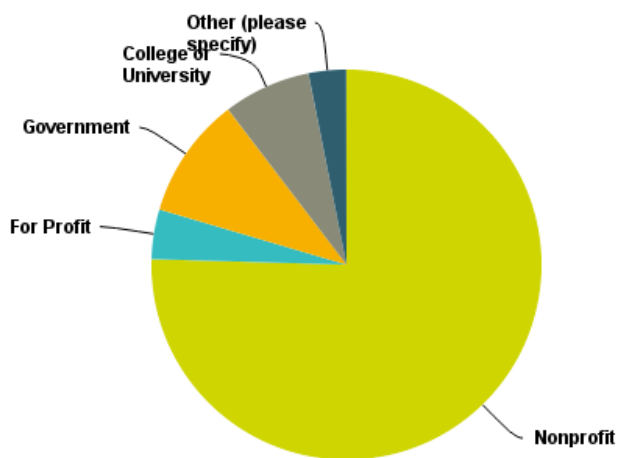
Organizational Type: There was a representative breakdown as to the types of arts organizations included in the survey. Of the types of organizations represented in the survey, 23.74 percent are performing arts organizations, 11.74 percent are presenting organizations, 10 percent are government agencies (federal, regional, state or local (city/county)), 6.06 percent are arts education organizations, 3.12 percent are museums, 2 percent are foundations, 5.06 percent are service provider organizations, and 6.12 percent are performing arts facilities.

|	
Arts Council/Agency – Federal	0.19%
Arts Council/Agency – Regional	2.87%
Arts Council/Agency – State	3.06%
Arts Council/Agency – Local	12.49%
Arts Education	6.06%
Art Museum	3.12%
Presenter	11.74%
Advocacy Organization	1.81%
Foundation or Grantmaker	2.00%
Academic/University Program	2.25%
Arts Service Provider Organization	5.06%
Fair/Festival	1.37%
Performing Arts Group	23.74%
Performance Facility	6.12%
Research	0.31%
Consultant	2.31%
Media – Radio/TV	0.62%
Literary Magazine	0.06%
Private Sector	0.12%
Artist Services/Support	1.94%
Multicultural Arts	1.37%
Youth Arts	1.19%
Other (please specify)	10.18%

LS3.1

Organizational Function:

Q2 Which of the following best describes your organization's primary function?

Answered: 1,601   Skipped: 0
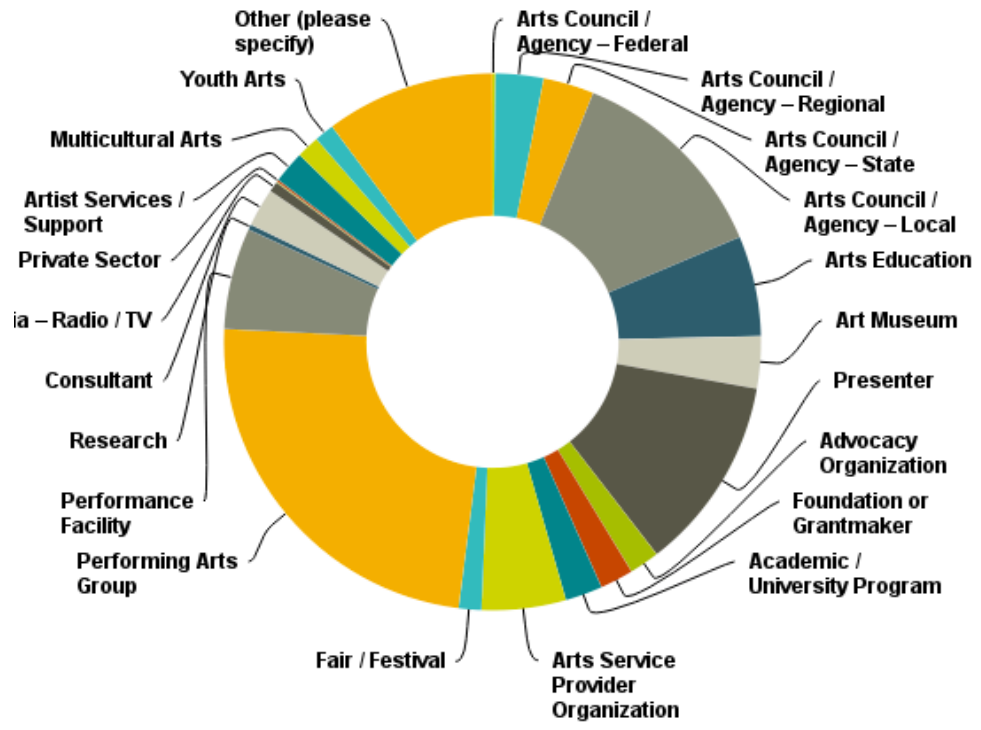
Discipline/Focus: The principal focus of the respondent organizations was spread across the various arts disciplines, with 18.68 percent categorized as theaters, 7.18 percent categorized as dance organizations, 13.37 percent categorized as music organizations, and 23.74 percent categorized as cross- or multi-disciplinary organizations, and 18.9 percent of the organizations indicating that they served all of the disciplines.
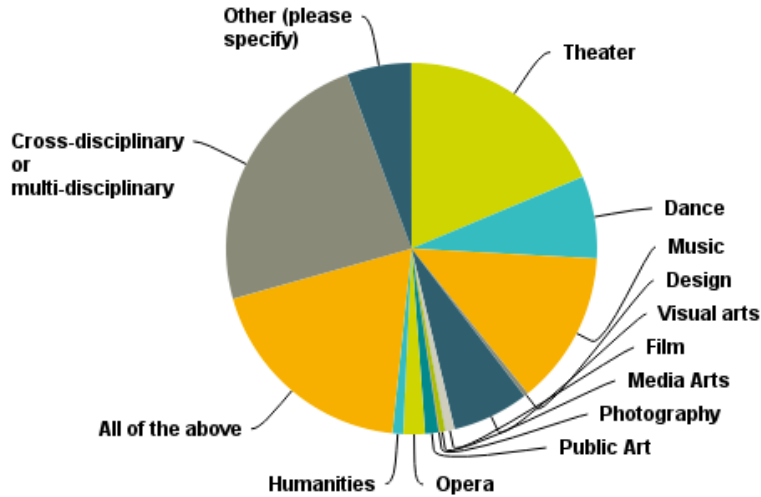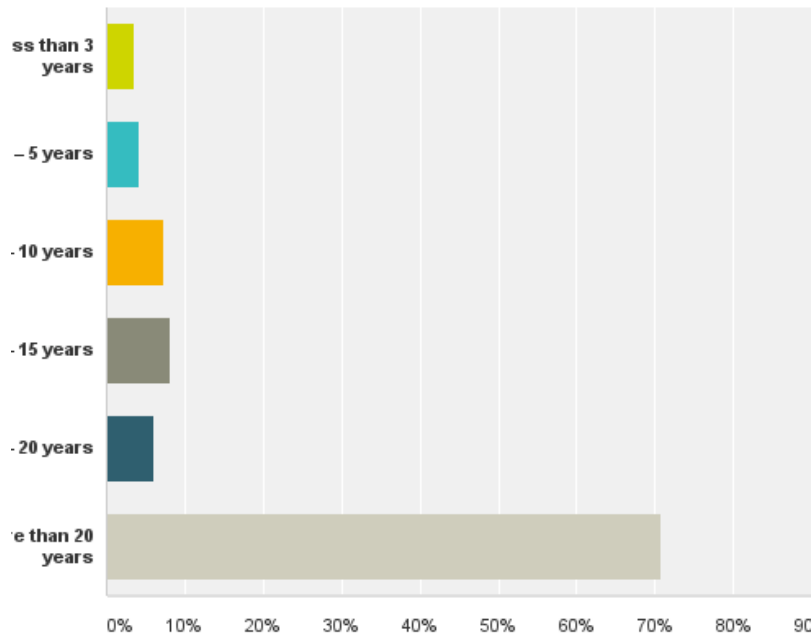
Answer Choices	Responses	
Theater	18.68%	299
Dance	7.18%	115
Music	13.37%	214
Design	0.37%	6
Visual arts	6.68%	107
Film	0.81%	13
Folk Arts	0.00%	0
Media Arts	0.50%	8
Photography	0.06%	1
Public Art	1.19%	19
Opera	1.87%	30
Humanities	0.94%	15
All of the above	18.99%	304
Cross-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary	23.74%	380
Other (please specify)	5.62%	90
Total		1,601

Age of Organization: The majority of the respondent organizations have existed for more than 20 years (70.71 percent), 6 percent have existed for 15 to 20 years, and 8.07 percent have existed for fewer than 5 years.

Q4 How many years has your organization been in existence?

Answered: 1,601   Skipped: 0

| Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 3 years	3.62%	58
3 – 5 years	4.25%	68
6 – 10 years	7.37%	118
10 – 15 years	8.06%	129
15 – 20 years	6.00%	96
More than 20 years	70.71%	1,132
Total		1,601

Organizational Budgets: The budgets of the organizations surveyed ranged from less than $50,000 (8.06 percent) to more than $10 million (16.11 percent).

Nearly one-quarter of the responding museums had budgets of more than $10 million. Nearly 44 percent of responding foundations also had budgets of more than $10 million, as did one-third of the academic programs, and nearly one-quarter of the performance facilities that responded to the survey. Eighteen percent of the local arts councils, 14 percent of the advocacy organizations, 10 percent of the performing arts groups, and 16 percent of the consultants that responded had annual budgets under $50,000.

Q5 What is your organization's most recent budget?

Answered: 1,601   Skipped: 0
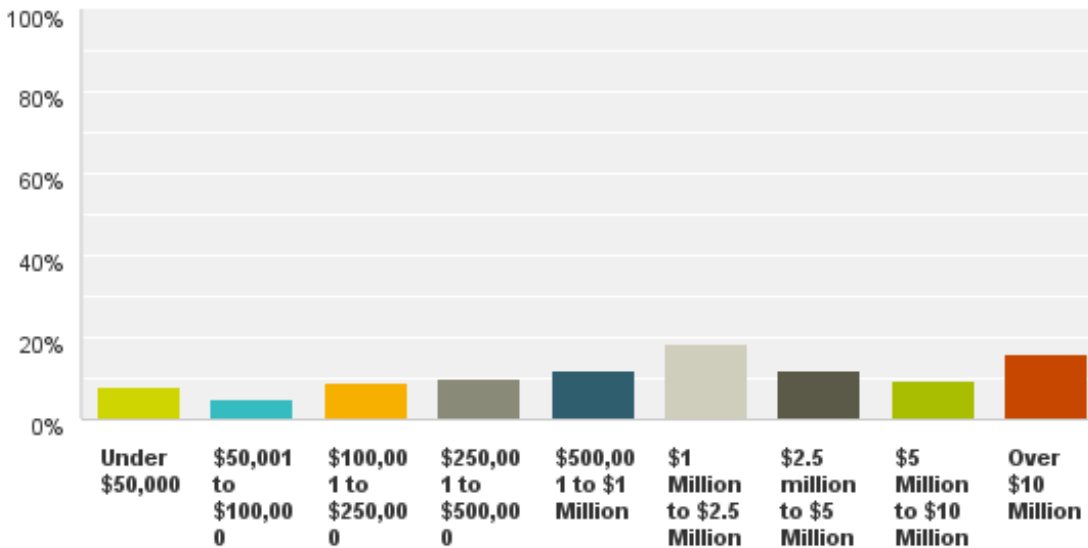
Based on the survey results, the longer a respondent organization has been in existence, generally, the larger its budget.

	Less than 3 years	3 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	10 – 15 years	15 – 20 years	More than 20 years	Total
Q5: Under $50,000	24.03% 31	15.50% 20	14.73% 19	12.40% 16	6.98% 9	26.36% 34	8.06% 129
Q5: $50,001 to $100,000	7.59% 6	10.13% 8	20.25% 16	11.39% 9	6.33% 5	44.30% 35	4.93% 79
Q5: $100,001 to $250,000	4.23% 6	6.34% 9	16.90% 24	14.08% 20	8.45% 12	50.00% 71	8.87% 142
Q5: $250,001 to $500,000	3.16% 5	7.59% 12	12.03% 19	10.76% 17	6.33% 10	60.13% 95	9.87% 158
Q5: $500,001 to $1 Million	0.52% 1	4.64% 9	5.67% 11	9.79% 19	7.73% 15	71.65% 139	12.12% 194
Q5: $1 Million to $2.5 Million	1.37% 4	1.37% 4	4.10% 12	7.17% 21	8.87% 26	77.13% 226	18.30% 293
Q5: $2.5 million to $5 Million	1.56% 3	1.04% 2	4.17% 8	8.33% 16	5.73% 11	79.17% 152	11.99% 192
Q5: $5 Million to $10 Million	0.64% 1	1.92% 3	2.56% 4	4.49% 7	0.64% 1	89.74% 140	9.74% 156
Q5: Over $10 Million	0.39% 1	0.39% 1	1.94% 5	1.55% 4	2.71% 7	93.02% 240	16.11% 258
Total Respondents	58	68	118	129	96	1,132	1,601

Staff Size: Staff sizes (full- and part-time) of the organizations surveyed ranged from volunteer-only (5.18 percent) to more than 50 staff members (22.74 percent).

Q9 **What is the total number of staff at your organization (both full and part time)?**

Answered: 1,601   Skipped: 0
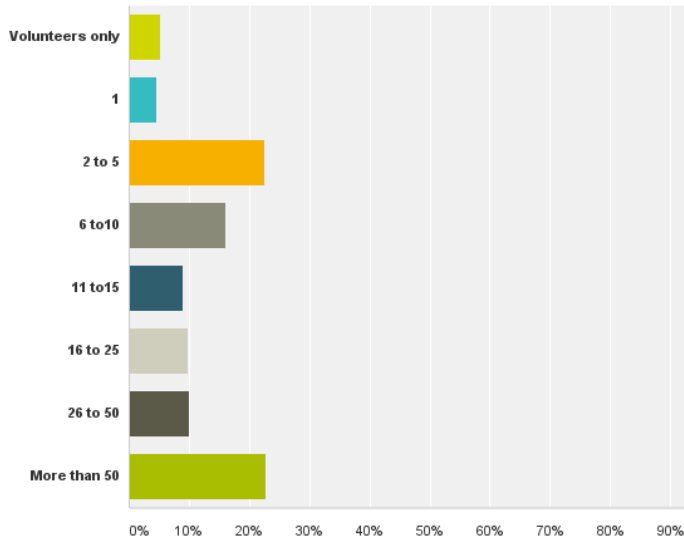
Statistical variation of staff size of organizational budgets.

	Volunteers only	1	2 to 5	6 to10	11 to15	16 to 25	26 to 50	More than 50	Total
Q5: Under $50,000	52.71% 68	17.83% 23	19.38% 25	7.75% 10	2.33% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.06% 129
Q5: $50,001 to $100,000	11.39% 9	27.85% 22	44.30% 35	8.86% 7	6.33% 5	1.27% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.93% 79
Q5: $100,001 to $250,000	3.52% 5	11.97% 17	71.83% 102	7.04% 10	2.82% 4	1.41% 2	0.00% 0	1.41% 2	8.87% 142
Q5: $250,001 to $500,000	0.63% 1	4.43% 7	59.49% 94	18.35% 29	7.59% 12	5.70% 9	2.53% 4	1.27% 2	9.87% 158
Q5: $500,001 to $1 Million	0.00% 0	1.03% 2	32.47% 63	38.14% 74	11.34% 22	6.70% 13	6.19% 12	4.12% 8	12.12% 194
Q5: $1 Million to $2.5 Million	0.00% 0	0.34% 1	9.90% 29	30.38% 89	22.18% 65	19.80% 58	9.56% 28	7.85% 23	18.30% 293
Q5: $2.5 million to $5 Million	0.00% 0	1.04% 2	2.60% 5	14.58% 28	14.06% 27	20.31% 39	28.65% 55	18.75% 36	11.99% 192
Q5: $5 Million to $10 Million	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	1.28% 2	2.56% 4	3.21% 5	15.38% 24	26.92% 42	50.64% 79	9.74% 156
Q5: Over $10 Million	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2.33% 6	1.94% 5	0.39% 1	4.26% 11	8.14% 21	82.95% 214	16.11% 258
Total Respondents	83	74	361	256	144	157	162	364	1,601

Geographic representation was closely aligned with the general U.S. arts organization population distribution. Every state was represented by respondents:

West: 30.66% 491   (AK, AZ, CA, CO,HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA WY)

Upper Mid-West: 8.1% 130 (MI, MN, ND, NE, SD, WI)

Mid-West: 10.36% 166 (IA, IL, IN, KS, MO, OK, OH)

South: 20.92% 335   (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV)
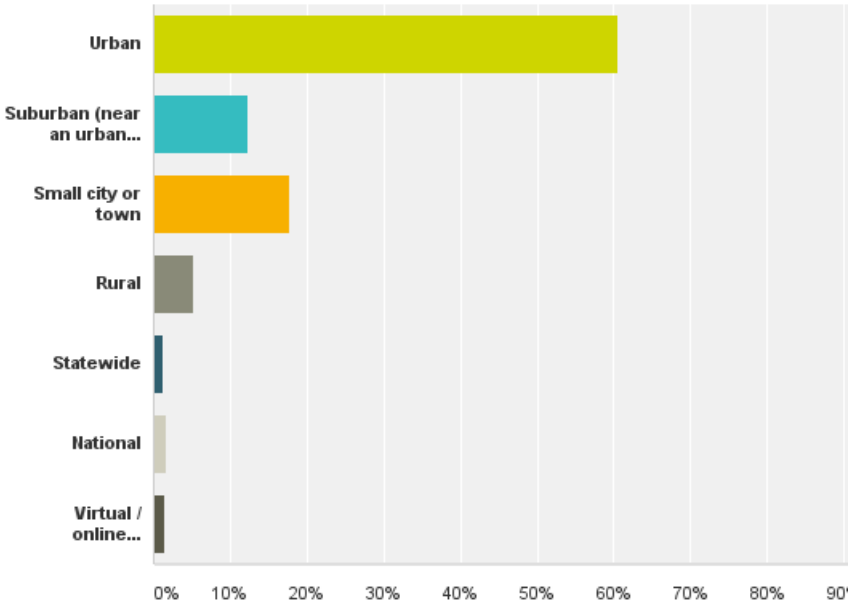
Atlantic: 23.73% 380 (DC, MD, NJ, NY, PA)

New England: 6.01% 99 (CT, DE, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)

Operational Territory: Sixty percent of respondents identified their operational territory as predominantly urban, 12.29 percent as suburban, and 5.14 percent as rural.

Q7 Which of the following best describes where your organization is physically located?

Answered: 1,595   Skipped: 6

In terms of **Communities of Service**, the respondent pool included all arts disciplines in relative representative percentages, with most serving urban constituencies, followed by national, suburban, small cities or towns, states, rural areas, and virtual/online communities.

Q8 Which of the following best describes the community that your organization serves?

Answered: 1,601   Skipped: 0
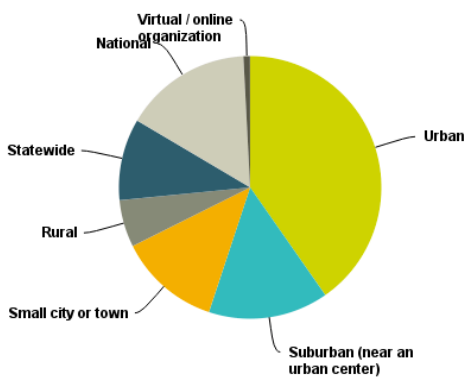
Individual Respondents Profile

Job Profile: The majority of the individuals who responded to the survey identified themselves as the executive director/president/CEO of the organization (35.25 percent) or program director/middle management/program officer (11.43 percent).

Q10: Which of the following best describes your role in your organization?

Title	%	#
Executive Director/President/CEO	35.25%	558
Deputy Director/Vice-President/COO	4.74%	75
Development Director or Officer	8.09%	128
Marketing Director of Officer	0.45%	118
Programming Director or Middle-Management Program Officer	11.43%	181
Finance Director or Middle-Management Finance Officer	1.71%	27
Communications/PR Director or Middle-Management Officer	4.67%	74
Artistic Director or Assistant Artistic Director	4.80%	76
Artistic support (e.g. staging, technical)	1.01%	16
Technical (IT)	0.32%	5
Grantmaking Officer	1.71%	27
Government Affairs Director or Officer	0.32%	5
Research Director or Officer	0.51%	8
Board Member	2.78%	44
Clerical Staff	0.82%	13
Executive Assistant	1.45%	23
Other (please specify)	12.95%	20

Q11 How long have you been in your current position?

Answered: 1,583   Skipped: 18
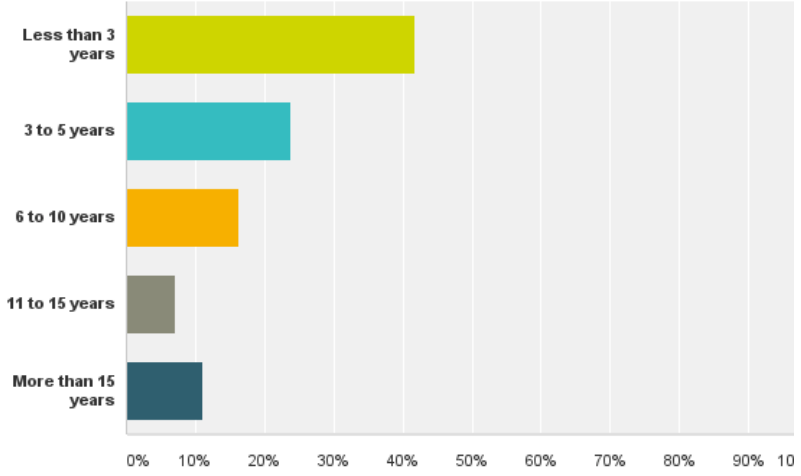
Length of Time in Position: Forty-one percent of respondents have been in their current positions for fewer than three years, while 10.99 percent have been at their current jobs for more than fifteen years. More than 50 percent of all respondents have been at their jobs for fewer than five years, irrespective of the size of the organization's budget.

Age: The percentage of respondents over the age of 60 was 17.25 percent. The percentage of respondents between the ages of 50 and 60 was 20.91 percent, and 17.56 percent of the respondents were under the age of 30.

Q12 What is your age?

Answered: 1,583   Skipped: 18
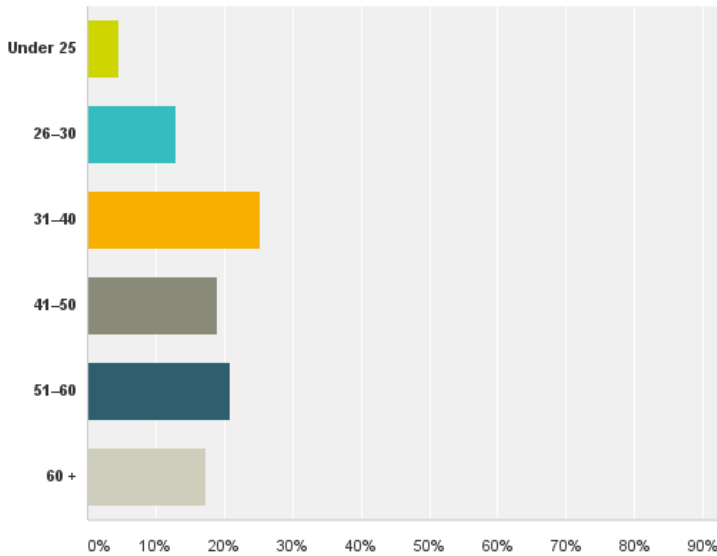
Most of the respondents were between the ages of 31 and 40, followed by respondents between 51 and 60, between 41 and 50, over 60, between 26 and 30, and under 25. Thirty-eight percent of respondents were over 50, and 45 percent were between the ages of 30 and 50.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 25	4.67%	74
26–30	12.89%	204
31–40	25.21%	399
41–50	19.08%	302
51–60	20.91%	331
60 +	17.25%	273
Total		1,583

Gender: Nearly 70 percent of the survey respondents were female, and 30 percent were male.

Q13 What is your gender?

Answered: 1,583   Skipped: 18
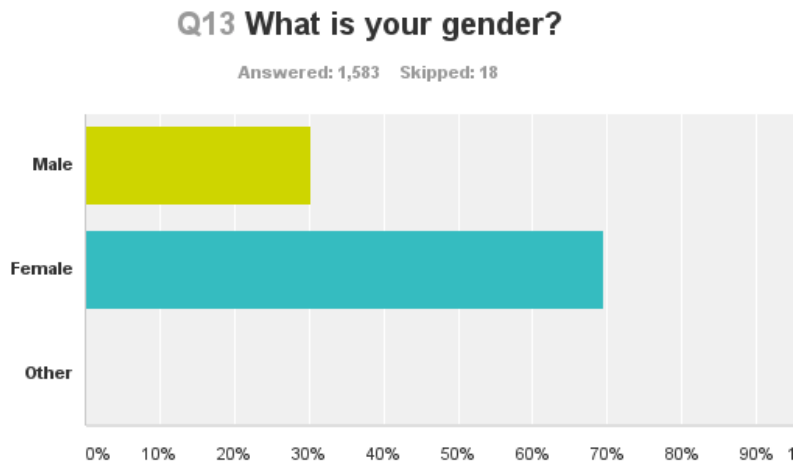
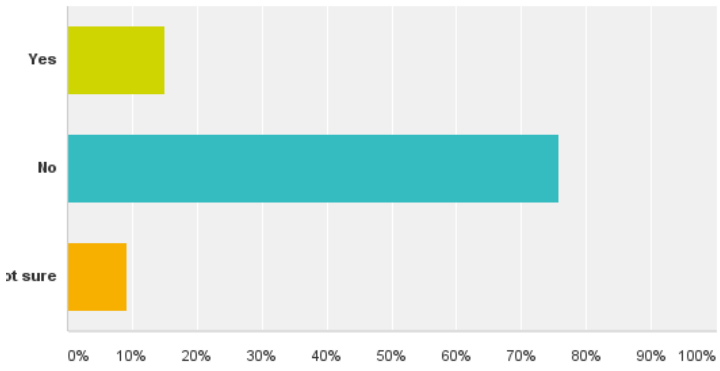# Internal Communications Within the Arts Organization

"The single biggest problem in communication
is the illusion that it has taken place."

George Bernard Shaw

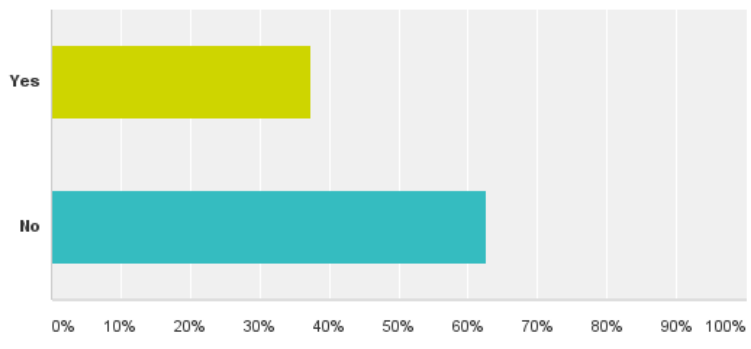Most of the arts organizations that responded to the survey do not have a formal, written communication plan for internal communication.

Slightly over one-third of the organizations that responded to the survey have a full-time communications director/officer.

LS3.1

AGE: The age of the organization seems to have little bearing on whether or not it has an internal communications plan. Only 15.8 percent of the organizations surveyed that have been in existence for 20 years or more have such a plan, while 11% of those in existence for three years or fewer have such a plan. However, organizations in existence for 20 years or more were twice as likely to have an external communications plan (36 percent) than organizations under three years old (18 percent). Of the older arts organizations surveyed, 84 percent have no internal communications plan and 64 percent had no external communications plan.

Regardless of years in existence, the majority of the organizations surveyed do not have a communications staffer. Of the surveyed organizations that are 20 years or older, 44 percent have a communications staffer, compared to only 13 percent of the organizations under three years old.

BUDGET SIZE: Based on the results of the survey, the bigger the budget, the more likely the organization is to have a communication plan and/or a communications officer.

Communication Tools Most Frequently Used: The most commonly used means of internal communication within the arts organizations surveyed is email, with 91.25 percent of respondents indicating that they use it regularly. The in-person staff meeting was the next most common means of internal communication (69 percent), followed by one-on-one meetings between staff members (64 percent). Forty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they regularly pick up the telephone and call their internal colleagues, with another 30 percent reporting that they often use the phone.

At the other end of the spectrum, 72 percent of respondents indicated that they never use blogging for internal communications, 50 percent never use Twitter internally, 47 percent never send out internal memos, and 40 percent never use video conferencing.

Twenty-two percent of respondents regularly use text messaging, whereas 26 percent never do. Thirty-one percent of the survey respondents use Facebook to communicate internally, while 31 percent never do. Twenty-seven percent of survey respondents use an internal newsletter, while 36 percent never do.

Organizational Age: In terms of the ages of the organizations surveyed, little difference was found regarding which methods they use to communicate, except for the use of newsletters, in which case organizations six years or older are three times more likely to use newsletters than newer organizations.

Of the organizations surveyed, older organizations use the telephone twice as much as newer organizations. Older organizations also use one-on-one meetings more regularly than newer organizations.

All of the organizations surveyed use emails, social platforms, and Twitter for internal communications to relatively the same extent.

On average, 40 percent of the various types of arts organizations surveyed use Twitter. More than 90 percent of the organizations surveyed use email.

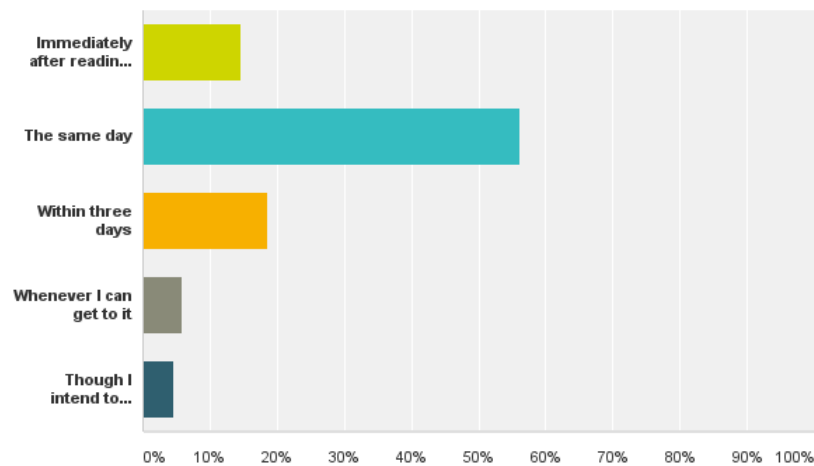|	Use Regularly	Use Often	Use Occasionally	Never Use	Total
Blog	6.80% 95	5.29% 74	16.17% 226	71.75% 1,003	1,398
Facebook	31.79% 461	14.83% 215	21.72% 315	31.66% 459	1,450
Website	38.50% 556	15.03% 217	18.77% 271	27.70% 400	1,444
Newsletter	26.89% 381	15.10% 214	22.44% 318	35.57% 504	1,417
Email	91.26% 1,378	6.89% 104	1.26% 19	0.60% 9	1,510
Twitter	15.90% 224	11.21% 158	23.28% 328	49.61% 699	1,409
Text message	22.41% 323	21.30% 307	30.19% 435	26.09% 376	1,441
Memo	11.31% 157	10.52% 146	31.20% 433	46.97% 652	1,388
Telephone	48.08% 713	30.55% 453	18.07% 268	3.30% 49	1,483
In-person meeting (department / staff / committee)	69.03% 1,034	21.09% 316	8.81% 132	1.07% 16	1,498
In-person meeting (one-on-one)	64.14% 955	24.92% 371	9.94% 148	1.01% 15	1,489
Report	18.45% 264	22.57% 323	40.81% 584	18.17% 260	1,431
Videoconference (Skype or similar platform)	7.46% 107	11.16% 160	41.21% 591	40.17% 576	1,434

- On average, over 60 percent of the arts organizations surveyed have regular staff or department meetings and one-on-one meetings with staff.

- Most (more than 50 percent) of the organizations surveyed never use video conferencing.

- Without question, email is the most used communication tool, with 91 percent of the organizations surveyed using email regularly.

The majority of respondents indicated they respond to emails within one day.

Q35 **On average, about how long does it take you to respond to email?**

Answered: 1,332   Skipped: 269

Most organizations regularly use in-person/staff/department meetings to communicate internally.

In-person meeting (department / staff / committee)					
	Use Regularly	Use Often	Use Occasionally	Never Use	Total
Q5: Under $50,000	40.00% 48	30.00% 36	24.17% 29	5.83% 7	7.92% 120
Q5: $50,001 to $100,000	41.67% 30	31.94% 23	19.44% 14	6.94% 5	4.75% 72
Q5: $100,001 to $250,000	50.74% 69	32.35% 44	14.71% 20	2.21% 3	8.97% 136
Q5: $250,001 to $500,000	67.11% 102	21.71% 33	11.18% 17	0.00% 0	10.03% 152
Q5: $500,001 to $1 Million	68.68% 125	21.98% 40	8.79% 16	0.55% 1	12.01% 182
Q5: $1 Million to $2.5 Million	71.79% 201	23.57% 66	4.64% 13	0.00% 0	18.47% 280
Q5: $2.5 million to $5 Million	83.98% 152	12.15% 22	3.87% 7	0.00% 0	11.94% 181
Q5: $5 Million to $10 Million	82.27% 116	12.06% 17	5.67% 8	0.00% 0	9.30% 141
Q5: Over $10 Million	81.62% 191	14.96% 35	3.42% 8	0.00% 0	15.44% 234

Most of the organizations surveyed regularly or often use the telephone for internal communications.

Telephone

	Use Regularly	Use Often	Use Occasionally	Never Use	Total
Q4: Less than 3 years	24.53% 13	39.62% 21	26.42% 14	9.43% 5	3.50% 53
Q4: 3 – 5 years	34.38% 22	37.50% 24	25.00% 16	3.13% 2	4.22% 64
Q4: 6 – 10 years	45.19% 47	31.73% 33	20.19% 21	2.88% 3	6.86% 104
Q4: 10 – 15 years	42.62% 52	31.15% 38	23.77% 29	2.46% 3	8.05% 122
Q4: 15 – 20 years	41.11% 37	38.89% 35	16.67% 15	3.33% 3	5.94% 90
Q4: More than 20 years	51.62% 542	28.76% 302	16.48% 173	3.14% 33	69.26% 1,050

Informational Source Preferences: Of the sources of information read and reviewed by the survey respondents, information from colleagues and peers is read the most. Next were communications from constituents and community leaders, followed by communications from other arts organizations within their discipline, and then communications from foundations. Communications from consultants, researchers, universities, and general nonprofits (other than arts organizations) ranked low. Nearly 12 percent of the survey respondents never read blogs.

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Infrequently	Never	Total
Foundations	30.97% 449	37.72% 547	19.45% 282	8.55% 124	3.31% 48	1,450
Government Agencies	26.73% 387	37.29% 540	21.89% 317	10.08% 146	4.01% 58	1,448
Service Provider Organizations	14.53% 207	38.81% 553	30.46% 434	12.14% 173	4.07% 58	1,425
Other Arts Organizations (within your discipline)	27.47% 398	53.55% 776	16.84% 244	1.79% 26	0.35% 5	1,449
Other Arts Organizations (outside your discipline)	11.65% 168	38.63% 557	38.21% 551	10.54% 152	0.97% 14	1,442
Consultants	5.30% 76	19.09% 274	39.02% 560	29.69% 426	6.90% 99	1,435
Researchers	7.30% 104	27.65% 394	35.65% 508	23.65% 337	5.75% 82	1,425
Colleges or Universities	6.54% 94	21.42% 308	35.67% 513	28.30% 407	8.07% 116	1,438
Bloggers	4.13% 59	23.09% 330	35.97% 514	25.19% 360	11.62% 166	1,429
General Nonprofits (non-arts specific)	3.89% 56	18.32% 264	40.67% 586	31.78% 458	5.34% 77	1,441
Professional Development Organizations	8.33% 120	29.93% 431	37.78% 544	19.93% 287	4.03% 58	1,440
Constituents	55.32% 796	25.02% 360	11.12% 160	5.84% 84	2.71% 39	1,439
Community Leaders	38.65% 557	36.09% 520	16.79% 242	6.38% 92	2.08% 30	1,441
Colleagues or Peers	59.06% 851	31.44% 453	7.56% 109	1.67% 24	0.28% 4	1,441

LS3.1

External Communication By and Between Arts Organizations and Others Within the Nonprofit Arts Sector

"Many attempts to communicate are nullified by saying too much."
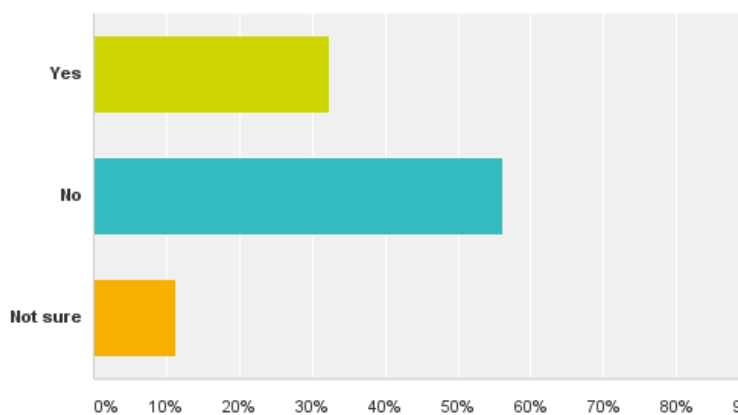
Robert Greenleaf

*"The most important thing in communication is hearing
what isn't said."*

Peter Drucker

Fifty-six percent of the respondent arts organizations do not have a formal, written plan for their external communications.

Q17 Does your organization have a formal, written communications plan for external communications?

Answered: 1,453   Skipped: 148

Although the respondent organizations with larger budgets are more likely to have a communications plan, 70 percent of them do not.

Regarding the largest of the social networking platforms used for communication, Facebook and Twitter, of those that use Facebook to communicate externally, 23% post, on average, once per day, while 10% post once per week.

Q18 **If your organization uses Facebook, about how often do you post?**

Answered: 1,453   Skipped: 148
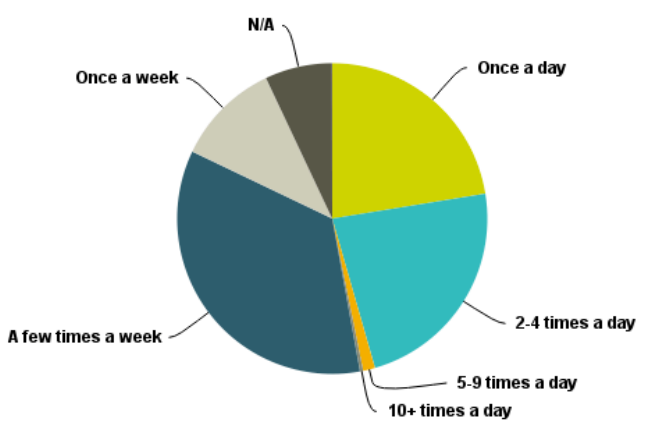
Answer Choices	Responses	
Once a day	22.44%	326
2-4 times a day	23.12%	336
5-9 times a day	1.24%	18
10+ times a day	0.34%	5
A few times a week	34.96%	508
Once a week	10.87%	158
N/A	7.02%	102
Total		1,453

Based on the results of the survey, the smaller an organization's budget, the more likely it is to use Facebook on a regular basis for its communications.

Facebook

	Use Regularly	Use Often	Use Occasionally	Never Use	Total
Q5: Under $50,000	36.97% 44	21.01% 25	26.89% 32	15.13% 18	7.85% 119
Q5: $50,001 to $100,000	29.69% 19	28.13% 18	20.31% 13	21.88% 14	4.22% 64
Q5: $100,001 to $250,000	37.12% 49	14.39% 19	22.73% 30	25.76% 34	8.71% 132
Q5: $250,001 to $500,000	36.73% 54	14.97% 22	21.77% 32	26.53% 39	9.70% 147
Q5: $500,001 to $1 Million	39.43% 69	15.43% 27	17.71% 31	27.43% 48	11.54% 175
Q5: $1 Million to $2.5 Million	34.43% 94	13.55% 37	26.37% 72	25.64% 70	18.01% 273
Q5: $2.5 million to $5 Million	25.14% 44	13.14% 23	21.14% 37	40.57% 71	11.54% 175
Q5: $5 Million to $10 Million	23.91% 33	15.94% 22	23.19% 32	36.96% 51	9.10% 138
Q5: Over $10 Million	24.23% 55	9.69% 22	15.86% 36	50.22% 114	14.97% 227

Facebook Posting Frequency: There is little difference in the frequency of Facebook postings based on the age of the organizations surveyed, but the oldest organizations tweet two times more frequently than the organizations that have been in existence for six years or fewer.

LS3.1

Regarding the organizations that use Twitter to communicate, 12 percent tweet only once per day, 20 percent tweet two to four times per day, and 26 percent tweet only a few times per week. Only 4 percent tweet more than five times per day.

Q19 If your organization uses Twitter, about how often does your organization Tweet?

Answered: 1,453   Skipped: 148
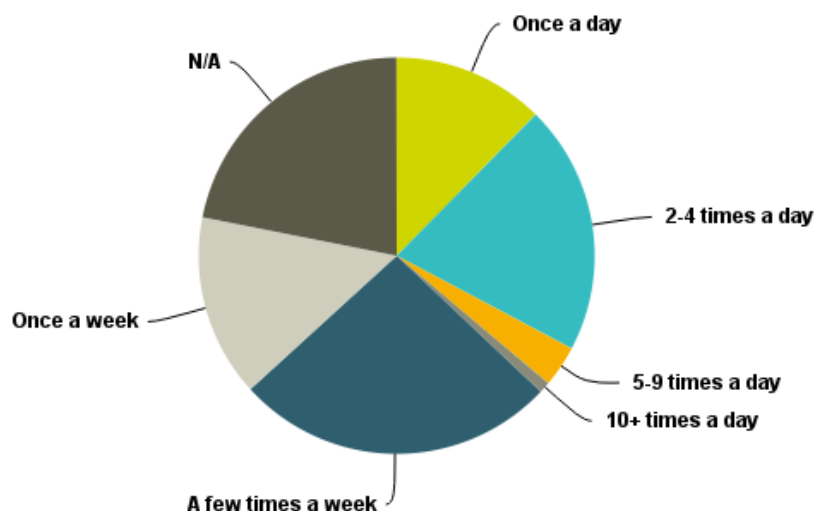
Use of Social Media: There are two kinds of social networking communication platforms that are outside of the normal kinds of communications in which nonprofit arts organizations usually engage: 1) messaging to attract audiences/visitors/donors, and 2) crowdfunding campaigns to raise funds.

In response to the question: "How frequently does your organization use social media to attract audiences/visitor/donors?", 47 percent of respondents indicated that they use social media daily. Nineteen percent use social media "as needed." One-quarter of the arts organizations that responded to this survey indicated that they do not use social media at all.

**For a study on Arts Organizations and Digital Technologies for the Pew Research Center (Kristin Thompson, Kristen Purcell and Lee Raine—2013), see: http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/01/04/arts-organizations-and-digital-technologies/

## Q21 How frequently does your organization use social media to attract audiences / visitors / donors?

Answered: 1,453   Skipped: 148
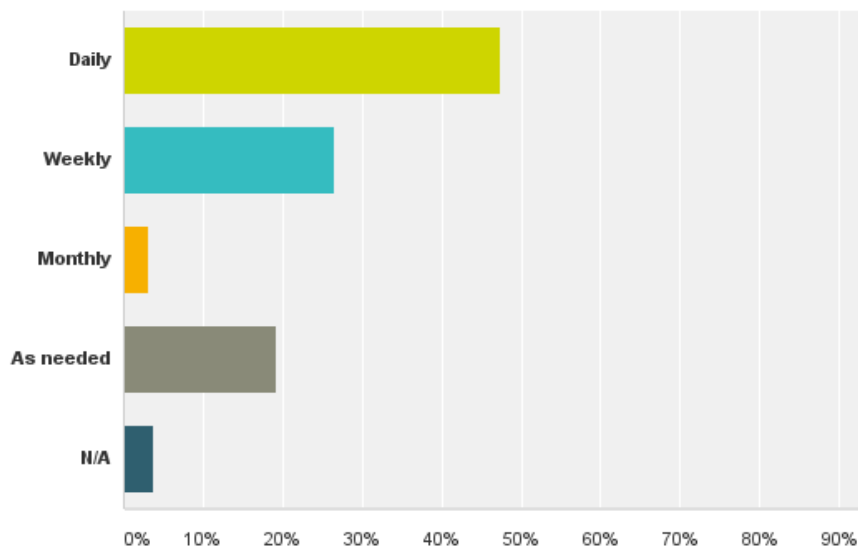
Crowdfunding: Only 19 percent of respondents indicated that they had engaged in a crowdfunding campaign in the past year, and of those organizations, only 18 percent had engaged in more than one such campaign. Twenty percent of the organizations that had engaged in a crowdfunding campaign reported raising $5,000 to $10,000, and 20 percent of the organizations reported raising $10,000 to $20,000.
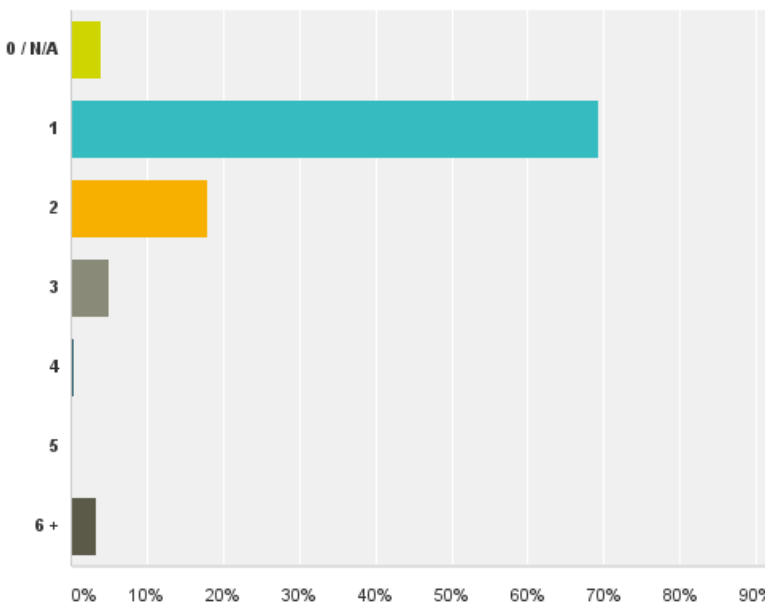
Q23 Has your organization engaged in an crowdfunding campaigns in the past year?

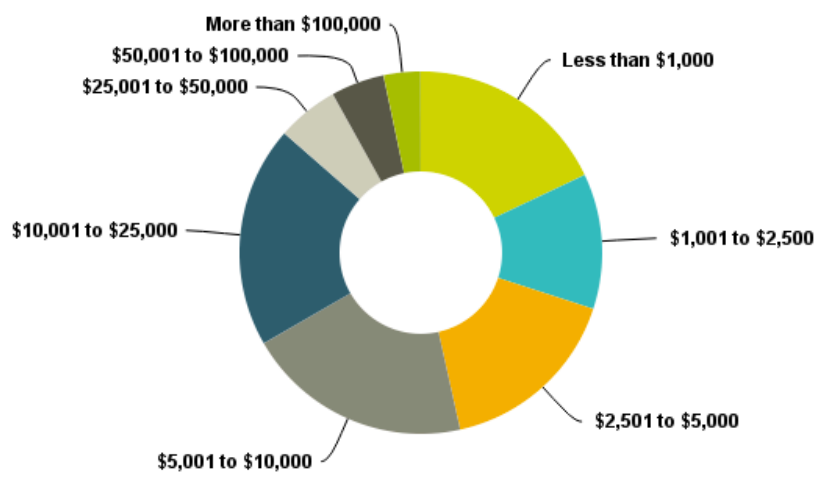Answered: 1,453   Skipped: 148

LS3.1
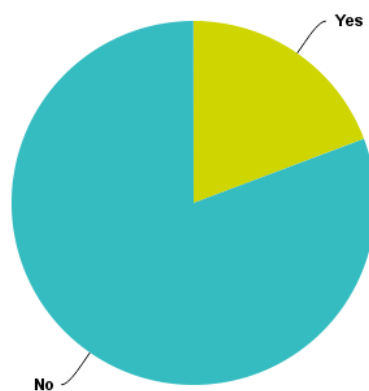
Q24 How may crowdfunding campaigns has your organization run in the last 12 months?

Answered: 277   Skipped: 1,324

Q25 How much money (aggregate total dollars) has your organization raised in the last year from crowdfunding campaigns:?

Answered: 273   Skipped: 1,328

Money raised from Kickstarter-type campaigns based on age of the organization.

	Less than $1,000	$1,001 to $2,500	$2,501 to $5,000	$5,001 to $10,000	$10,001 to $25,000	$25,001 to $50,000	$50,001 to $100,000	More than $100,000	Total
Q4: Less than 3 years	15.38% 2	46.15% 6	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.76% 13
Q4: 3 – 5 years	18.75% 3	12.50% 2	31.25% 5	6.25% 1	25.00% 4	6.25% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.86% 16
Q4: 6 – 10 years	16.67% 4	8.33% 2	16.67% 4	29.17% 7	12.50% 3	12.50% 3	0.00% 0	4.17% 1	8.79% 24
Q4: 10 – 15 years	20.69% 6	6.90% 2	10.34% 3	41.38% 12	10.34% 3	3.45% 1	6.90% 2	0.00% 0	10.62% 29
Q4: 15 – 20 years	10.53% 2	5.26% 1	26.32% 5	5.26% 1	26.32% 5	5.26% 1	15.79% 3	5.26% 1	6.96% 19
Q4: More than 20 years	18.60% 32	11.63% 20	15.12% 26	19.19% 33	21.51% 37	5.23% 9	4.65% 8	4.07% 7	63.00% 172
Total Respondents	49	33	45	55	54	15	13	9	273

Regarding experimenting with using digital technology to deliver a product or service, 47% of the organizations surveyed indicated that they had, and 53 percent indicated they had not.

LS3.1

Effectiveness of Communication Tools: The survey asked respondents to rank various means of communication as to their effectiveness in reaching target audiences.

Respondents selected email as the most effective means of communication (68 percent rated email "very effective"), followed by "convenings or events" (52 percent rated them very effective), followed by websites (51 percent), and Facebook (42 percent). Texting, LinkedIn, podcasts, and reports were ranked among the least effective means of communication.

Very Effective   Somewhat Effective   Ineffective   Do Not Use

	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective	Do Not Use	Total
Facebook	42.48% 616	50.00% 725	4.41% 64	3.10% 45	1,450
Twitter	15.04% 217	53.01% 765	14.97% 216	16.98% 245	1,443
Instagram	10.84% 155	38.25% 547	14.27% 204	36.64% 524	1,430
Other social media	5.26% 73	39.91% 554	11.31% 157	43.52% 604	1,388
LinkedIn	2.24% 32	20.50% 293	31.14% 445	46.12% 659	1,429
Email	68.45% 985	29.95% 431	1.18% 17	0.42% 6	1,439
Text message	10.22% 146	17.63% 252	8.89% 127	63.26% 904	1,429
Blog	5.52% 79	30.89% 442	14.88% 213	48.71% 697	1,431
YouTube	15.34% 219	45.17% 645	12.39% 177	27.10% 387	1,428
Newsletter	33.85% 485	41.59% 596	5.30% 76	19.26% 276	1,433
Telephone	40.14% 574	36.57% 523	7.55% 108	15.73% 225	1,430
Convenings / Events	51.71% 739	37.79% 540	3.85% 55	6.65% 95	1,429
At a Conference (organizational presence)	20.18% 289	42.11% 603	14.11% 202	23.60% 338	1,432
At a Conference (personal exchange)	35.54% 510	39.16% 562	8.43% 121	16.86% 242	1,435
Meetings	40.38% 579	42.75% 613	7.46% 107	9.41% 135	1,434
Website	50.69% 731	42.65% 615	5.48% 79	1.18% 17	1,442
Reports	9.24% 131	38.74% 549	22.09% 313	29.92% 424	1,417
Advertising	25.35% 364	49.44% 710	10.52% 151	14.69% 211	1,436
Podcasts	2.11% 30	11.95% 170	8.36% 119	77.58% 1,104	1,423

Managing Communication and Information

"As a general rule, the most successful man in life
is the man who has the best information"

Benjamin Disraeli

"The result of information overload is usually distraction,
and it dilutes your focus and takes you off your
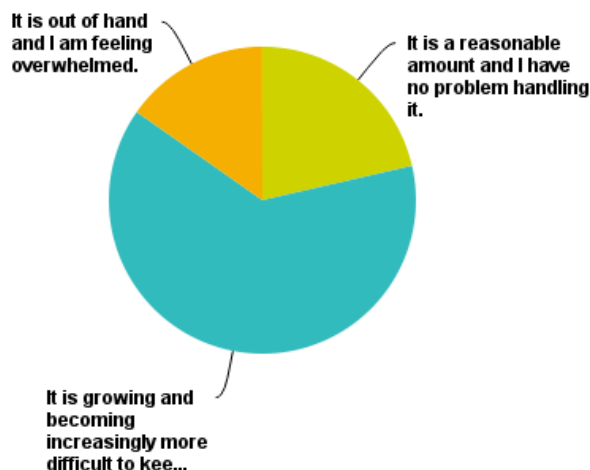*game."*

Zig Ziglar

There is considerable evidence suggesting that the onslaught of information is overwhelming to a percentage of today's workers. The survey asked respondents if they agreed or disagreed with five statements about whether the level of information/communication is manageable.

Only 8 percent of respondents indicated that they "highly agreed" that they "usually get everything they need to get done during the workday." An additional 22 percent indicated that they "agreed" with that statement, while 40 percent indicated that they "highly agreed" that "there aren't enough hours in the day to get everything done that I need to get done," and another 24 percent indicated that they "agreed." Thirty-six percent of respondents indicated that they "highly agreed," and another 26 percent indicated that they "agreed" that they had to work nights and on weekends to keep up. Ten percent, plus an additional 14 percent "highly agreed" or "agreed" that they worked "24/7."

These findings suggest that arts organizations may need to address the issue of the impact on increased communication and information on time and productivity.

Q28 Which statement best describes your ability to keep pace with the current volume of communication that you experience – both as a communicator and as the target of other's desire to communicate with you?

Answered: 1,332   Skipped: 269

It is out of hand and I am feeling overwhelmed.

It is a reasonable amount and I have no problem handling it.

It is growing and becoming increasingly more difficult to kee...

When asked to select the statement that best described their ability to keep pace with the current volume of communication/information, the majority of respondents (63 percent) agreed that it is growing and becoming increasingly difficult to keep up. Fifteen percent of respondents indicated that they believed the volume of communication/information was out of hand already, and only 21 percent indicated that they believed the volume is reasonable and experience no problem in handling it.

LS3.1

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
I usually get everything I need to get done during the workday.	7.97% 106	23.16% 308	24.66% 328	23.23% 309	20.98% 279	1,330
I often put in work at night or on the weekends to keep up.	36.60% 486	25.53% 339	18.00% 239	11.97% 159	7.91% 105	1,328
There aren't enough hours in the day to get everything done that I need to.	39.86% 529	24.79% 329	16.05% 213	12.06% 160	7.23% 96	1,327
I refuse to devote personal time to work.	6.11% 81	11.46% 152	20.06% 266	22.93% 304	39.44% 523	1,326
I work 24/7.	10.05% 133	14.44% 191	21.77% 288	19.35% 256	34.39% 455	1,323

	It is a reasonable amount and I have no problem handling it.	It is growing and becoming increasingly more difficult to keep up.	It is out of hand and I am feeling overwhelmed.	Total
Q4: Less than 3 years	27.27% 12	50.00% 22	22.73% 10	3.30% 44
Q4: 3 – 5 years	16.67% 10	71.67% 43	11.67% 7	4.50% 60
Q4: 6 – 10 years	19.59% 19	65.98% 64	14.43% 14	7.28% 97
Q4: 10 – 15 years	31.19% 34	55.05% 60	13.76% 15	8.18% 109
Q4: 15 – 20 years	19.75% 16	62.96% 51	17.28% 14	6.08% 81
Q4: More than 20 years	20.62% 194	64.19% 604	15.20% 143	70.65% 941
Total Respondents	285	844	203	1,332

LS3.1

	It is a reasonable amount and I have no problem handling it.	It is growing and becoming increasingly more difficult to keep up.	It is out of hand and I am feeling overwhelmed.	Total
Q9: Volunteers only	35.21% 25	53.52% 38	11.27% 8	5.33% 71
Q9: 1	33.85% 22	50.77% 33	15.38% 10	4.88% 65
Q9: 2 to 5	22.56% 74	65.24% 214	12.20% 40	24.62% 328
Q9: 6 to10	17.81% 39	63.01% 138	19.18% 42	16.44% 219
Q9: 11 to15	16.39% 20	68.85% 84	14.75% 18	9.16% 122
Q9: 16 to 25	15.63% 20	71.09% 91	13.28% 17	9.61% 128
Q9: 26 to 50	17.89% 22	64.23% 79	17.89% 22	9.23% 123
Q9: More than 50	22.83% 63	60.51% 167	16.67% 46	20.72% 276
Total Respondents	285	844	203	1,332

Keeping Pace with Information: The responses indicate that the increase in the volume of information and access to that information, plus the onus of communicating, have resulted in an overload that arts workers are coping with, but barely.

"*Keeping up with email and the responses needed, which entails reading, analyzing, and strategizing, is part of my #1 challenge.*"

"*In my experience, it now often takes two or three emails to get a response from many colleagues/vendors/presenters*".

"*There is no way I could keep up with email if I didn't put in significantly more time over 40-50 hours a week. In my department we use email to collaborate on active projects, so I constantly have to tune out the majority of email to keep up with the collaboration on multiple projects. Then I try to weed through all the other email later so I don't miss something.*"

"*Email, while useful, can become a time suck for internal organizational communication. I wonder if there are better solutions for our sector, like project management software, i.e. Asana. But then someone needs to prototype this and share best practices.*"

LS3.1

> *"Email is big time killer, but my solution has been to schedule it three times a day: beginning, middle, and end."*

Hours Spent Per Communication Tool Per Week: When asked how many hours per work week respondents spent on various means of communication or information access, reading and responding to emails was the runaway leader, with 18 percent spending 16 to 20 hours per work week, and 16 percent spending 21 or more hours per work week dealing with emails. That's an average of 3.5 to 5 hours per day dealing with emails. No other activity measured in this survey captures as much of the respondents' time per week as managing emails.

Clearly, that time expenditure comes at the cost of other important activities. Twenty-seven percent of respondents spend four to six hours per week talking on the telephone and 12 percent spend seven to ten hours on the phone (an average of one to two hours per day). Forty-five percent of respondents spend one to three hours per week in staff or department meetings, 41 percent spend an equal amount of time surfing the web, 41 percent spend the same amount of time conferring with colleagues outside of their organizations.

Fifty percent of respondents spend one to three hours reading internal memos/communications, another 20 percent spent four to six hours on internal memos/communications. Fifteen percent of respondents reported spending no time reading internal memos/communications.

One-third of respondents spend no time reading blogs, 21 percent spend no time reading newsletters, and 14 percent spend no time reading studies, research, or reports.

Forty-seven percent of respondents reported spending one to three hours per week on social networks, and 23 percent reported spending four to six hours on social networks.

The findings, taken together, suggest that all means of communication account for the majority of work time.

	0	1–3	4–6	7–10	11–15	16–20	21 +	Total
Reading studies, research, or reports	13.85% 183	69.80% 922	11.88% 157	2.88% 38	1.14% 15	0.30% 4	0.15% 2	1,321
Reading and responding to emails	0.00% 0	5.51% 73	15.92% 211	22.79% 302	21.96% 291	17.74% 235	16.08% 213	1,325
Social networking	12.11% 160	47.16% 623	23.01% 304	10.52% 139	4.24% 56	2.20% 29	0.76% 10	1,321
Reading blogs	32.33% 428	56.72% 751	8.08% 107	1.81% 24	0.91% 12	0.15% 2	0.00% 0	1,324
Talking on the telephone	4.86% 64	46.59% 614	26.93% 355	11.84% 156	6.22% 82	2.43% 32	1.14% 15	1,318
Reading newsletters	20.43% 268	68.83% 903	7.93% 104	1.60% 21	0.69% 9	0.46% 6	0.08% 1	1,312
Reading internal memos or communications	15.40% 203	49.70% 655	20.79% 274	7.21% 95	3.26% 43	2.50% 33	1.14% 15	1,318
Conferring with colleagues outside my organization (by telephone or in person, one-on-one)	9.04% 120	49.96% 663	25.02% 332	9.34% 124	3.92% 52	2.03% 27	0.68% 9	1,327
Conferring one-on-one with coworkers within my organization	2.34% 31	18.59% 246	33.41% 442	21.84% 289	13.15% 174	6.42% 85	4.23% 56	1,323
Attending department or staff meetings	9.28% 123	45.40% 602	28.21% 374	10.48% 139	4.00% 53	1.66% 22	0.98% 13	1,326
Searching / surfing the web	3.85% 51	41.39% 548	31.12% 412	16.01% 212	4.76% 63	1.89% 25	0.98% 13	1,324

A rough averaging of hours per week spent on all of the categories in the above chart suggests that arts administrators spend an average of two hours per week on each activity, except for conferring one-on-one with coworkers (4 hours) and dealing with emails (10 hours), totaling 32 hours per week. In a theoretical 40-hour work week, that leaves just eight hours for every other kind of work activity.

Based on the results of the survey, the larger the staff, the more time spent reading emails. Conversely, the smaller the staff, the more time spent on social networks.

When coupled with the response that over 50 percent of arts workers feel they must work nights and on weekends to catch up, it is clear that some of the above activities are done outside the workplace and the normal business hours of 9 to 5.

The question becomes: Could the above categories of work be reduced in order to free up time for other work and allow workers to complete their business tasks within regular working hours?

Reading and responding to emails

	0	1–3	4–6	7–10	11–15	16–20	21 +	Total
Q9: Volunteers only	0.00% 0	29.58% 21	21.13% 15	26.76% 19	12.68% 9	7.04% 5	2.82% 2	5.33% 71
Q9: 1	0.00% 0	15.38% 10	29.23% 19	9.23% 6	26.15% 17	9.23% 6	10.77% 7	4.88% 65
Q9: 2 to 5	0.00% 0	6.15% 20	16.92% 55	24.92% 81	23.08% 75	14.77% 48	14.15% 46	24.40% 325
Q9: 6 to10	0.00% 0	2.28% 5	13.70% 30	25.11% 55	24.66% 54	18.26% 40	15.98% 35	16.44% 219
Q9: 11 to15	0.00% 0	3.33% 4	12.50% 15	24.17% 29	17.50% 21	23.33% 28	19.17% 23	9.01% 120
Q9: 16 to 25	0.00% 0	3.91% 5	11.72% 15	27.34% 35	26.56% 34	19.53% 25	10.94% 14	9.61% 128
Q9: 26 to 50	0.00% 0	1.63% 2	13.01% 16	21.14% 26	24.39% 30	23.58% 29	16.26% 20	9.23% 123
Q9: More than 50	0.00% 0	2.19% 6	16.79% 46	18.61% 51	18.61% 51	19.71% 54	24.09% 66	20.57% 274

Studies, Reports, and Research Review: We were interested in the sector's response to the increasing number of studies, surveys, research, and reports crossing respondents' desks. We asked how many such documents they received, on average, in a given month. Fifty-four percent received between three and ten. Twelve percent received more than ten.
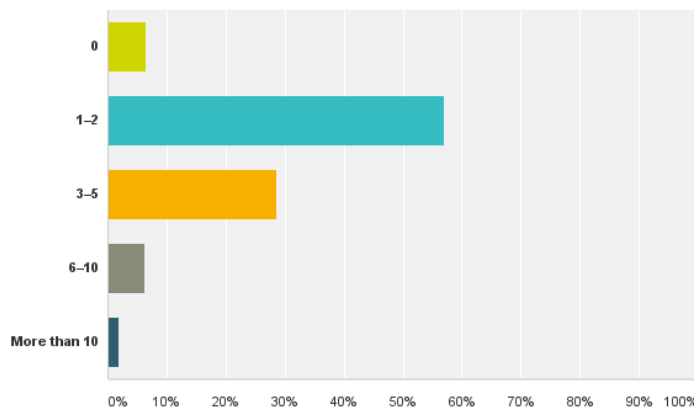
Q30 On average, how many reports, studies, and surveys do you receive per month?

Answered: 1,332   Skipped: 269
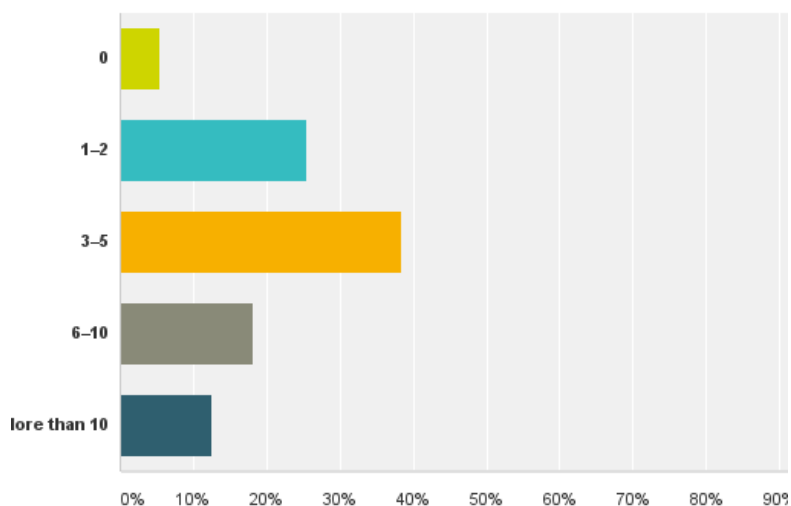
Q31 Of the reports, studies, and surveys that you receive, how many do you actually read (at least in part)?

Answered: 1,332   Skipped: 269

Of the reports the respondents received, we asked how many they actually read (at least in part). Fifty-six percent read one to two, 6 percent do not read any, and less than 2 percent read ten or more.

Q32 **Of the reports, studies, and surveys that you read during any given week, which best describes your usual review?**

Answered: 1,332   Skipped: 269
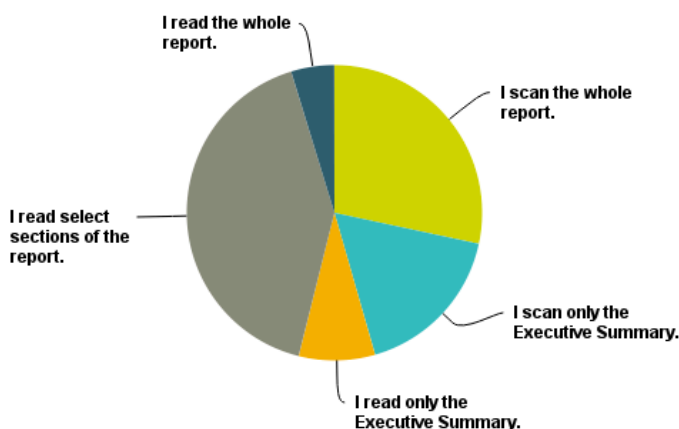
Of the reports they receive in a given week, 41 percent of respondents indicated that they usually read select sections, and that was true irrespective of the age of the organization. Twenty-eight percent scan the whole report. Only 25 percent scan or read the entire executive summary--flying in the face of the conventional wisdom that an executive summary is the best way to get people familiar with a report or study.

"So often the information I receive is so broad that a direct application to my organization requires reflective time, which I don't have. Then new information arrives and the good ideas from a previous report are overshadowed by the next before any implementation can actually be done."

"Sometimes the hardest part about increased volumes of communication is understanding at a glance which are the priorities and which can be bookmarked for later."

"Much of the external information I receive from foundations, consultants, etc. isn't very nuanced, particularly when it attempts to generalize about the nonprofit arts industry. So I read it and understand it, but am left thinking, "Wow, they put in a lot of effort for not a lot of insight."

"I feel sometimes like we are constantly barraged with information meant to help us, but a lot of times, I see it regurgitated among consultants/foundations and spit back out again in a different format. It's as if we are taking the same 500 words and mixing them up with more adjectives as per platform/audience. Sometimes I get good information, but lately I am feeling like we are all talking at once just to assure ourselves that 'change' is happening."

"The most overwhelming thing for me is the number of digests/reports/blogs/etc. that I feel I need to keep up with in order to know what is going on in my field(s). I filter the majority of them into a separate folder so as not to lose emails from staff and constituents, but then I rarely manage to go back and review the information. I've found that I have to be very selective about which things I open daily and even then tend to only scan the headlines. On the flip side, we struggle with how to make sure that our emails to donors and constituents don't get filtered out in the same way."

|	I scan the whole report.	I scan only the Executive Summary.	I read only the Executive Summary.	I read select sections of the report.	I read the whole report.	Total
Q4: Less than 3 years	29.55% 13	27.27% 12	9.09% 4	34.09% 15	0.00% 0	3.30% 44
Q4: 3 – 5 years	38.33% 23	10.00% 6	11.67% 7	36.67% 22	3.33% 2	4.50% 60
Q4: 6 – 10 years	40.21% 39	14.43% 14	8.25% 8	27.84% 27	9.28% 9	7.28% 97
Q4: 10 – 15 years	31.19% 34	20.18% 22	3.67% 4	40.37% 44	4.59% 5	8.18% 109
Q4: 15 – 20 years	34.57% 28	13.58% 11	3.70% 3	40.74% 33	7.41% 6	6.08% 81
Q4: More than 20 years	25.61% 241	17.43% 164	9.03% 85	43.57% 410	4.36% 41	70.65% 941
Total Respondents	378	229	111	551	63	1,332

LS3.1

Perceived Value of Increased Access to Information
We were interested in how those in the arts nonprofit sector viewed the increased available information in terms of its usefulness.

Twenty-six percent of respondents indicated that they believe about 25 percent of all the information they access in a given month is useful. Seventeen percent of respondents feel that less than 10 percent of it is useful. Only 3 percent feel 75 percent or more of the information available is useful.

Q33 In terms of all the news, information, reports, studies, and data that you access in a given month, what percentage do you feel is useful or worth the time you invest in it?

Answered: 1,332   Skipped: 269
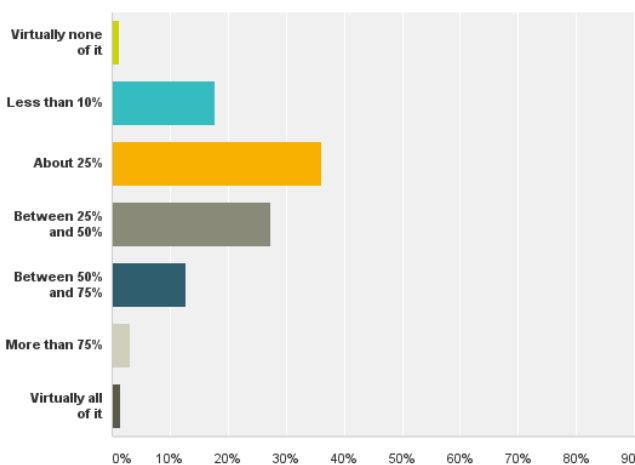
Challenges to Staying Abreast of the Increase in Information

Q36 What are the biggest challenges to staying abreast of all the information available? (select all that apply)

Answered: 1,332   Skipped: 269
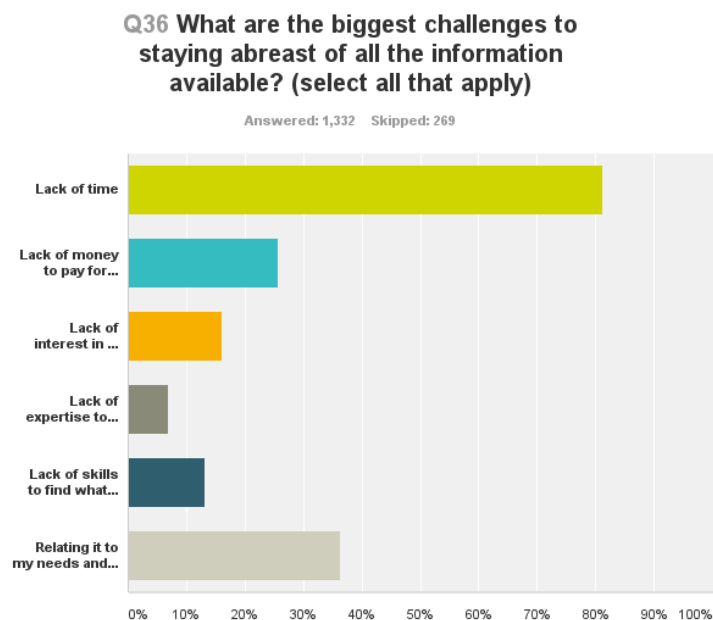
We asked respondents what their biggest challenges are in staying abreast of all the information to which they now have access. Lack of time is the number one challenge (81 percent), followed by "relating it to my needs and work" (36 percent). Only 7% feel they lack the requisite skill sets to understand the information, 35 percent feel that relating the information to their needs is a big challenge.

These results suggest that the sector needs to reframe its priorities and its modus operandi for addressing those challenges. The sector might benefit from time management development training and from each organization establishing policies about where limited time ought to first be applied.

> *"My biggest challenge in staying abreast of all the information available is sorting through it all to determine what is actually useful and what is just fluff, badly informed/researched, not actually relevant to me, etc. I try to follow trusted resources exclusively, but that can be limiting. On the other hand, there's too much to try new resources often."*

> *"If we had more staff, which means more money to have folks full-time, some of the overwhelming amount of info could be processed in a shared way...none of us are paid enough to cover the time it takes to analyze it all. . .as if that were possible."*

> *"Our organization has Fear of Missing Out Syndrome and it has a negative affect on our success and productivity."*

Impact of Increased Information on Organizations and Administrators

We also wanted to know how the increased amount of available information impacts various aspects of the arts administrator respondents' organizational and personal lives.

There is a wide range in the feelings of the respondents on the impact of increased information when comparing the impact on the organization and on the individual administrator. A substantial percentage of respondents indicated that they think the increase in available information positively impact their organizational productivity (35 percent) and their organization's success (46 percent), innovation (58 percent), and adaptability (47 percent). On the other side of the coin, a substantial number of respondents think the increase in information negatively impacts their stress level (47 percent), time for personal and family relationships (36 percent), time to reflect and brainstorm (44 percent), and ability to effectively manage their time (43 percent). There was a split as to whether or not the increased information positively impacts their personal productivity (36 percent think it does, while 27 percent think the impact is negative).

> *"The growing amount of information/communication platforms--and improvements in the ability to measure the impact of communications--is beneficial but takes significant amounts of time to process and analyze. The impact on the organization can be positive, but for the staff it becomes more work with the same amount of staff."*
>
> *"Too much information can cause paralysis and delay decision-making. What a company has the resources to accomplish is often very different than the 'best practices.'"*
>
> *"It is not communication itself that has had such a negative impact--but this persistent notion that data and communication trump intuition and experience. There's a balance to be struck. We often think of data, communication, etc. as something more than what it is--a tool to be used as we see fit. As for its impact on time, making time (and, subsequently, not making time) for various things is a choice we make. We forget that art was made--successfully and to the same degree of quality--in the days when we weren't bombarded by studies, data, instant communication, etc."*
>
> *"I am constantly in a process of information triage. What to read, what to save, what to share, and what to act on. While an important part of my job, it is also time consuming and stressful."*

■ Impacts Positively   ■ Has Little to No Impact   ■ Impacts Negatively

	Impacts Positively	Has Little to No Impact	Impacts Negatively	Total
Your productivity	35.97% 477	37.25% 494	26.77% 355	1,326
Organizational productivity	35.36% 466	45.07% 594	19.58% 258	1,318
Your stress level	6.32% 83	47.03% 618	46.65% 613	1,314
Time for relationships within the workplace	7.95% 105	66.44% 877	25.61% 338	1,320
Time for personal and family relationships	3.25% 43	61.07% 808	35.68% 472	1,323
Time to reflect and brainstorm	27.75% 368	28.51% 378	43.74% 580	1,326
Ability to effectively manage your time	9.15% 121	48.18% 637	42.66% 564	1,322
Personal and staff morale	16.87% 223	65.58% 867	17.55% 232	1,322
Job satisfaction	25.04% 330	59.33% 782	15.63% 206	1,318
Feelings of being empowered and in control	31.39% 415	48.41% 640	20.20% 267	1,322
Organizational success	46.43% 612	46.36% 611	7.21% 95	1,318
Innovation	58.07% 766	33.51% 442	8.42% 111	1,319
Organizational adaptability	47.08% 620	46.39% 611	6.53% 86	1,317

LS3.1

Recommendations

*"The art of communication
is the language of leadership."*

James Humes

1. Conduct research (via in-depth interviews, focus groups, and otherwise) to drill deeper into the impacts of current arts administrator/organizational communication behaviors, habits, and perceptions. Look for specific recommendations as to how to identify and address the impact of increased communication and available information on the field. Specifically:

   - How can arts organizations more efficiently and effectively use communication tools?
   - How can arts organizations' management of their communication and information balance the positive impacts on organizational productivity, innovation, and adaptability with the downside to arts administrators' work lives?
   - How can arts administrators reduce time wasted on communication?

 Specific questions raised by the survey responses that need addressing include:
   - Why don't more organizations have communications plans (internal/external)?
   - Why don't more organizations employ a communications staff member?
   - Is there any correlation between organizations that have an on-staff communications officer and those not as stressed out by the information onslaught?
   - If 37 percent of respondents indicate they do not feel overburdened by the increase communications/information flow, why not?
   - Is there an aversion to the use of certain types of communications tools (e.g., social network platforms) based on specific characteristics of staffers (e.g., age)?
   - What can those who send out reports do to increase their review by their target audiences?

2. Identify currently available tools, including trainings and software, to help arts administrators manage communications and information.

   - Develop assessment tools to help organizations review their own communication habits and their management of information.

3. Increase organizational awareness of the challenges of managing communication and information and the impacts of that management through education. Encourage organizations to conduct internal audits of their own habits, procedures, behaviors, and policies. Funders may also be advised to include communication support in their grant awards.

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- Invest in the pedagogy of communication skills.

4. Develop policies regarding communication and information management that might help individual organizations and administrators in that management, including hiring a communications staffer or assigning communications duties to an existing staff member.

Acknowledgements