

Foreword

This booklet is a compendium of ideas obtained from two sessions held the weekend prior to Harmony College in 1991 and 1992.

Those in attendance at these sessions included Society members with a broad range of backgrounds. They included advertising and public relations people, people with media experience, business executives, and ordinary Joe Barbershoppers who wanted to know how to promote their chapters, be better known, gain members and make money.

There were men from large, metropolitan chapters, who must compete with other chapters and other performing arts groups for media exposure. There were also members of medium-sized and smaller chapters.

Panelists for both sessions consisted of Bob Arnold from the Dallas Metropolitan Chapter (The Vocal Majority); Royall Geis from the Alexandria, Virginia, Chapter (The Harmonizers); and Dick Studstill of the Jacksonville, Florida, Chapter (Big Orange Chorus). The panel was moderated by John Krizek, public relations officer for Far Western District and chairman of the Public Relations Committee.

Because of the makeup of the panel, many of the references in this publication come from the Dallas Metro, Alexandria and Jacksonville chapters. This is not an indication that these chapters have all the answers, or that the information is applicable only to championship chapters such as these. These chapters have, however, encountered marketing problems earlier and more frequently than perhaps others have, and so their experience is of value. The information contained herein has been selected to be of value to any chapter that has good music, performance and administrative programs. You may agree with much of the information and you may not agree with some. Remember, it represents ideas that worked for certain chapters. It is not policy or even totally accredited by the International Office.

Most of the work of gathering and editing this booklet was done by Ray Heller and Dick Nyikos. We thank them for their work and dedication.

Interestingly, many of those who attended the 1992 session held the title of marketing vice president, or something similar, in their chapters. In the 1991 group, few outside of the panelists, held such titles. This may indicate a growing recognition of the need for marketing among our chapters.

The second session was greatly enhanced by the presence of Tom Gherardi as a panelist and resource person. Gherardi is an attorney and a producer of PBS television programming with a number of successful shows to his credit. Programs he has produced include "A Salute to Victor Borge," a show that has received much national exposure, and which features opening and closing performances by the Alexandria Harmonizers chorus.

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I Definition and role of marketing in a barbershop chapter

I.1 Marketing vs. advertising vs. public relations

In general, if public relations is seen as creating awareness, then marketing involves doing something about it, or selling something to somebody.

In the Alexandria Chapter, the vice president for marketing, in coordination with vice presidents for public relations and community service, oversees all promotion to the public of the art form that is performed by the Harmonizers. The Marketing Vice President has two subcommittee chairmen; one covers grants and fund raising, the other covers package shows (non-annual shows).

In Jacksonville, Florida, marketing is seen as creating and maintaining public awareness of the chapter in the community. At Dallas Metro, marketing includes making money for the chapter, and gaining a positive reputation.

I.2 Defining the barbershop product

The first consideration in marketing barbershop is the product. Before a chapter can be successful, over the long haul, in obtaining paid performances, selling show tickets or gaining members, it has to have a good product to sell.

This means there must be a good music program; the chapter's chorus and quartets must sing well. There should also be a good performance package; the chapter's performing groups must do a good job of entertaining their audiences.

Finally, a good barbershop product depends upon a good administrative team leading the chapter; there must be planning that establishes realistic goals for the chapter and the officers must follow through to lead the membership toward those goals.

If your chapter does not have expertise within its membership to put a good music and performance package together, ask for help. There is lots of it around, just waiting to be asked. Your district's director of music education (DME) will see that help is provided; you can even ask for assistance from the international staff.

If your chorus cannot do a good job musically and does not entertain its audiences, no amount of selling will bring in either money or new members. When these attributes are present, you can begin to put your promotional program into action.

Awareness of your chapter in your community is also very important. This awareness should be built even as you are developing your musical product.

1.2.1 It has to be fun

Above all, barbershopping is a hobby and, as such, it should be fun. At the same time, we should recognize that "fun" means different things to different people. To some, the epitome of fun is woodshedding until the wee hours. To others, striving for perfection through competition is fun. Whatever the definition, each chapter must be sure that its members are getting enough of it.

Having fun at the chapter level is simply "doing it right." If your chapter is weak musically and administratively, then there is not fun around.

In keeping with the "lifeblood" concept that has been endorsed by the Society Board, our chapters have to see that "every member, in his own way, experiences the joy of hearing his own voice contributing to the sound of barbershop harmony."

We need to keep the fun in barbershop. If it's not fun, it's too much work.

1.3 Paradigms

Part of the definition of barbershop depends upon what people already think it is. We are all influenced by paradigms—sets of rules and regulations that establish boundaries. Paradigms are also our impressions, which screen data so that we see things that we expect to see but miss those that we don't anticipate. We ignore or distort unexpected data until it becomes invisible. Paradigms may cause us to reject new ideas. But if we can develop an awareness of these obstacles, we can look around them and discover things as they really are.

One example of overcoming the influence of paradigms is the phrase, "made in Japan." This phrase currently has a very different connotation than it once did. By the same token, "barbershop" can mean different things to different people. If members of the general public have heard barbershop sung badly, that becomes their definition of what barbershop is, and it can prevent them from wanting to hear more of it, or even of liking it when they hear it. This may be part of the reason why it is often difficult to get barbershop on television.

We have to get around other people's paradigms regarding what they think barbershop is.

1.3.1 The importance of knowing what the product is

In order to sell barbershop, we as Society members, must have confidence in our product. In order to have confidence, we have to know what our product is, and believe that the product is first class.

We have to realize that barbershop is a serious musical specialty. Some outsiders may tend to look down on barbershoppers because we are not "professionals." But when we do a good job of singing and performing barbershop, we are not amateurs at what we do. Tom Gherardi defines barbershopping as "volunteer excellence in the performing arts."

Your chapter has to be respected in your community. To achieve that end, chapter members must be committed to constantly improving their musical craft.

Barbershop is a unique form of entertainment: in many cases, there is nothing like us in town. If we do a good job of entertaining, we are a legitimate art form and we can take advantage of that in promoting our chapters.

1.3.2 Should we call it barbershop (the "B" word)?

There may be problems in acceptance of barbershop by performing arts groups, or the general public, until they know what it is.

Dallas Metro Chapter does not use the word "barbershop" in its promotional materials. They refer to the music that they sing as an "all-American style of choral music." However, the term "barbershop" is used once the audience is in the theater and has had an opportunity to enjoy the art form. Their audiences like harmony; Dallas Metro promotes quality performance of close-harmony music.

Use of the "B" word depends upon who they are talking to. Although barbershop may be popular in other places--it is widely accepted in Louisville, for instance--the Dallas group wants to be certain that they don't turn people off before they get them indoors to see and hear the music.

If we are to entertain our audiences, at least some of our music has to be familiar to them; but that means different things to different age groups. To some, the "good old songs" may have been sung by Peter, Paul & Mary, or the Beatles.

Jacksonville's Big Orange Chorus, therefore, promotes itself as a men's chorus that sings a variety of music styles, including barbershop, Broadway show songs, gospel music, Beach Boys music, and others. They feel a need to incorporate various styles of music into their performances.

When they are trying to get people or organizations who don't know them to hire the Big Orange Chorus for performances, they refer to themselves as a "men's performing chorus." they keep the "B" word out of their marketing efforts until the audience is seated and into one of their performances. Then barbershop, of the type that wins chorus contests, does sell well to the public.

We must entertain. Members of the audience at barbershop performances spend a considerable amount of money in order to attend. That includes hiring a baby sitter, going out to dinner, and travel expense, in addition to the cost of show tickets for all members of their party. We must be certain to leave them smiling at the close of the performance, humming a tune and tapping their toes.

Jacksonville never uses the "S" word (singout), either. Singout sounds too insignificant to a customer. We always say, "We have a concert, or performance, coming up."

Whenever a customer pays for a ticket, or pays for a private performance, we become "paid performers." We should never lose sight of that fact. The customer is entitled to 100%+ of our effort.

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Developing performance opportunities

2.1 Clear expectations

Work with your chapter board to arrive at a decision about how active your chorus wants to be during the coming year. How many paid performances will be required in order to pay the chapter's bills? How much community involvement do the chapter members want?

Keep lines of communication open when scheduling performance dates to avoid conflicts within the chapter. It will do no good to schedule a paid performance if your director can't be available on that date.

All members should be made aware that they are expected to participate in performances once the chorus has agreed to accept them.

The Alexandria Harmonizers try to do two performances per month, although for some major performances, they may plan a year and a half in advance. Performing on a regular basis helps make competition easier; they sing their contest songs in their performance package.

2.2 Where do performances come from?

We must educate all publics about barbershop: arts, business, government, and media. Good barbershop is a part of the quality of life in your community.

2.2.1 Previous audiences

Most jobs come from people who have already seen the chorus perform. Many come from contacts that members have---their businesses and friends.

2.2.2 Booking agents

The Big Orange Chorus uses a booking agent to provide 30% of their performances; another 15% result from membership in the convention & visitors bureau. Booking agents can broaden exposure to a variety of publics and can help the chorus make more money.

The chapter tells an agent that it wants to net \$2,000, or \$4,000, or whatever, from local performances. The agent sets the fee so that he can make his 12% and he does the legwork.

2.2.3 Convention & visitors bureau

The chapter should be a member of the local convention and visitors bureau. They produce a calendar of local conventions that is a good source for identifying potential performances. One show can repay the cost of four years of membership.

Bob Arnold of the Vocal Majority believes that he can do a better job of contacting people about potential convention jobs than a booking agent can. Using information obtained through the convention & visitors bureau, he contacts groups three years before their convention date in Dallas.

Then, during the year, he goes through a list of about 500 of these organizations, and sends out as many as 60 letters to those he considers to be top prospects. He selects groups that will most likely be able to afford the Vocal Majority. His letters include a list of references and an offer to send a video tape.

He looks over prospects carefully. A convention of grade-school teachers may not have a budget for a Vocal Majority program, but thoracic surgeons have a sizeable budget and they meet at one of the higher-priced hotels.

From his sixty letters, Arnold may receive five responses. To these, he sends a video and a follow-up letter that includes letters of reference. He believes that a video is more effective in selling performances than brochures are.

He may contact these five groups again, six months later. In the end, one or two of them will buy a \$10,000 show, making the whole process worthwhile.

2.2.4 Chamber of commerce

Bring representatives from the chamber of commerce, convention and visitors bureau and booking agents to your shows.

Chamber dues may be \$200 or more; you may be able to do a free show for a chamber of commerce installation dinner in exchange for chamber membership. But even if you have to pay the full price, it's worth it, because that's where your city's movers and shakers are.

The chamber of commerce generates leads for performances and can contribute greatly to the community's awareness of your chorus. Be sure your chapter is included in their list of organizations.

2.2.5 The barbershop community

Perform for other chapters. These performances build fellowship that will be repaid in improved reputation among barbershoppers, and in sale of show tickets to members of other chapters.

You will need to begin making arrangements two years ahead of time. Charge a modest performance fee to the host chapter and stay in members' homes to keep cost low. Your members admission to the afterglow should be paid, but wives should pay for show and afterglow tickets.

A small chapter that is having trouble putting on a successful show can benefit from enlisting the aid of a nearby large chapter. Appearance of the larger chorus and its chapter quartets on the smaller chapter's show can help provide needed revenue, and can attract new members who will help move the small chapter ahead.

2.2.6 Hotel convention staff

Get to know these people very well. They can help you and you can provide a service for them, if you have a good package to sell. Bring hotel catering managers to your show.

Perform at a hotel in exchange for free space for your next chapter banquet. Trade an ad in your show program for part of the lodging for your guest quartet. Give a hotel an ad in exchange for housing your headliner quartet.

2.2.7 Government entities

Do free shows for city government. This will pay off in increased recognition, in opportunities to perform, and in support for your case when you apply for grants or permission to use municipal property.

2.2.8 Others

Other organizations will work for you once they believe in you:

- ▶ Hotel Sales Management Association (HSMA)
- ▶ State subsidiary of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)
- ▶ State chapter of Meeting Planners International (MPI)

2.2.9 Community support groups

There is probably an organization that supports the performing arts in your community. Your chapter should be an active member. Support groups can help the chapter manage itself better and can offer training in writing grant proposals, or help in development of computerized mailing lists.

Good barbershop should be considered part of the performing arts in the community, in the same way that the symphony and ballet are.

The Vocal Majority does joint shows with the symphony, classical guitarists, theater groups, choirs and other performing groups. We need their support and they can provide exposure for barbershop to new audiences. They are also usually involved in fund-raising activities and we can benefit from their experience.

We have to prove to them that we are a legitimate, quality musical group. It may take a little time to establish credibility because we have no full-time administrator for our chapter, and we don't have degrees in fine arts. If your chapter has a good music program, however, you can gain their acceptance.

The cultural alliance group, sometimes called the arts council, usually has a publication that you can use to promote your shows. For these newsletters, you may have to contact the organization as much as six months ahead of time.

You may be able to get involved in joint shows with other performing arts groups that draw large audiences. Try putting on a show with a brass band and a celebrity vocalist or instrumentalist.

Belonging to an arts council can be of help when your chapter tries to obtain grants. To find your local arts council, look in the yellow pages under "arts," or ask your chamber of commerce.

Arts assemblies, or whatever they are called in your community, and organizations such as the convention & visitors bureau, or the chamber of commerce, are continuing sources of contacts that are needed for a chapter's growth at all social and cultural levels.

Put on a show with a black gospel group. An arts council, or anyone to whom you apply for a grant, will want you to recruit minorities; you need to provide evidence that you are trying. Man the phones at your local public broadcast fundraiser. It may pick you up some shows.

2.2.10 Media

You can make influential friends among the members of the mass communications media by doing a free show for the newspaper guild picnic.

Give a newspaper a block of tickets in exchange for a show ad. Be careful however, some reporters and editors are not allowed to accept tickets. Do not compromise them.

2.2.11 Charity performances

If you perform for a hospital, or any other charitable organization, inform them that part of your payment will consist of a mention of the performance in their newsletter. This will help you gain influential friends. Sing at the wrap-up banquet of your United Way campaign. That's where community leaders are.

2.2.12 Service clubs

Performing at local service clubs is a good way to gain members, pick up performances, boost potential ticket sales.

2.3 Performance is the key

Above all, perform. We must constantly strive to improve our performances, and most chapters would benefit from appearing in public more frequently. If your annual show sells out, add another evening or matinee performance. Add a Christmas show to your regular activities. Being seen and recognized will lead to other performance opportunities.

2.3.1 Name talent needed

Try to appear as a supporting group with name talent at fairs, conventions and other events. The association gives prestige and legitimacy to barbershop and can result in more engagements. Even if you have to perform at a reduced rate, this may be a way to gain important exposure.

The Vocal Majority has performed with the Four Freshmen quartet and, as a result, were able to get a member of that recognized, professional group to write liner notes for a CD recording. Similarly, Jimmy Dean has donated his services to promote the Vocal Majority on a demo video tape. You can obtain the same sort of endorsement from professionals with whom you perform at your county fair and similar venues.

The Alexandria Harmonizers have assisted the King's Singers by partially sponsoring the group and selling tickets to their shows. In return, the British group has given the Harmonizers favorable mention at various times.

Big Orange Chorus volunteered to do a Christmas show at a local television station to obtain exposure. Do anything that will get your chapter exposure on television.

Since television production is costly, stations cannot afford to take chances with unknown outsiders, such as barbershoppers. They require top-name performers who will attract audiences; we have not created an awareness that will bring viewers in.

Therefore, it is to our advantage to work with name talent, then find a station who will produce a joint show. Name talent doesn't always have to be someone of national stature. If you are working with a local station, a local name may do just as well. The Vocal Majority does a benefit for the Dallas Police Officers Choir in order to gain exposure and add new names to their mailing list.

We must get good barbershop on television. One useful strategy is to get a barbershopper on the board of a local PBS station.

2.4 You still gotta sell!

Advertising and promoting performances through the media are necessary aspects of the marketing function, but advertising, alone, won't sell out an auditorium. Show tickets still have to be sold, either by the members' efforts directly, or through use of a mailing list.

2.4.1 Trades you can make; advantages you can take

Trade a restaurant a program ad for a free meal to give away to a show patron as a door prize. While you're at it, see if the restaurant will allow you to put a poster, a tent card, or placemats advertising your show in their establishment.

- ▶ Give away blocks of tickets in return for an ad in the high school newspaper, the church bulletin, or a service club newsletter.
- ▶ Give away a scholarship and perform at the presentation.
- ▶ Perform at local festivals.
- ▶ Perform at building dedications. They receive media exposure.

2.4.2 Award of Harmony

Plan an event that will attract the attention of key people and make them want to attend. One good program that will do that for you is the Society's Award of Harmony. Of course, this takes some planning, and planning must start months ahead of time. Order the Award of Harmony kit from the Society's catalog. It's free.

The Award of Harmony should be presented to a deserving individual in the community, a person whom the members of the above list of key people will know and respect. It's an excellent program to cement relations between your chapter and your community.

When you make your presentation, have information available that tells people about your chapter. Be sure to include a card that the audience can fill out to let you know that they may be interested in buying tickets to your show or, possibly, joining your chapter.

2.4.3 Heigh, ho, come to the fair!

Plan to take part in local community, county or state fairs, festivals and performing arts events. Entertain at a fair. Buy a booth and have quartets perform, while you hand out information about your chapter and order forms people can fill out to obtain show tickets. When quartets can't be available, play a video tape of your quartets and chorus.

Give away a chapter or Society audio tape every day your booth is open. This will attract attention; most people who sign up to win a tape will be interested in barbershop music. Get their names and addresses on a card so that you can contact them later about show tickets or membership.

2.5 Chapter shows

The chapter show is a point in the year at which excitement is the highest. Hold guest nights immediately following the show.

2.5.1 Christmas shows

A good Christmas show can outsell the annual show. Barbershop produces a warm, fuzzy feeling that people crave during the holiday season. Hold Christmas shows during the first two weeks of December.

In Louisville, the holiday season doesn't officially begin until the Thoroughbreds hold their annual Christmas show.

People love to hear men sing Christmas music. A joint Christmas show with a symphony orchestra can be a very entertaining event; it can also open doors and provide recognition for the chorus.

The Big Orange Chorus has found that Tuesday nights are a good time to hold Christmas shows. If there are children's homes in your area, bring the kids free.

2.5.2 Matinees

An afternoon show should generate enough revenue to pay all costs for the weekend's shows. The evening show should, therefore, be all profit. Discount matinee tickets to senior centers. A suggestion: Give seniors 50% off for matinee tickets.

2.5.3 Ticket prices

In general, chapters will make more money if they raise their prices for better seats, and give balcony seats away to seniors, the handicapped, nursing homes, children's homes, or high-school choral groups. Ticket prices charged by chapters attending the Marketing Forum ranged from a high of \$50 for patrons and \$40 for front-of-the house seats at Carnegie Hall, to \$6 for general admission in Kearney, Nebraska.

Among chapters that have a two-price range for tickets, the top price is usually \$15 and the second price is \$10. Many chapters charge \$25 for the first ten rows in a large auditorium, and find that these seats are the first to be sold.

Some charge \$5.00 for seats at the back of the house at a matinee. Other variations:

- ▶ Sell a season ticket to three shows for \$25.
- ▶ The Vocal Majority sells season tickets to three annual shows for \$100 each; they sold 800 of these in 1992. Buyers don't get a discount, but they do get the best seats.
- ▶ For \$25 include a show ticket and a champagne party prior to the show. \$20 includes dinner at a cabaret.

2.5.4 Promotion tips

- ▶ Above all, use a mailing list to sell tickets.
- ▶ If you sell out 90% of the house for your Saturday night show this year, add another performance to next year's show. But, remember, Friday night shows can be difficult to sell.
- ▶ Hand out cards promoting the show everywhere the chorus performs prior to the show.
- ▶ Set up a table in the lobby at the show to sell tickets to next year's show; some patrons will buy as they are leaving the auditorium. Remember, people will buy the most expensive seats first.
- ▶ Provide radio stations with tickets to give away to people who call in. Each call amounts to an advertisement for your show. Work in an interview with a knowledgeable chapter member, or a quartet performance, in conjunction with the give-away. List the station as a sponsor in the show program.
- ▶ Use the Society's Award of Harmony program as a show promotion. Hold it prior to your show and try to select a recipient who is newsworthy, so that you will receive media coverage. You can mention the show in publicity the award generates.
- ▶ Man the phones for the local public broadcast television station's fund drive and, while you're on the air, mention your upcoming show.
- ▶ Be creative in selling ads in your show program. Give an ad to an airline in exchange for airfare to bring in a coach.
- ▶ Survey your audiences. Find out who they are and what their interests are. How old are they? Answers to these questions may help you do a better job of targeting your potential audience and selling your show.
- ▶ Use the same person as ticket chairman for each show. Be sure he has a co-chairman as a backup, who can move into the chairman's slot in the future.

2.5.5 Ticket sales

- The ticket chairman should have an answering machine with a hotline number. Enable buyers to charge tickets to their credit cards. Your chapter pays the 3-5% service charge.
- Members who take tickets to sell should pay for them by giving the ticket chairman a check dated 20 days before the show. If money or tickets is not turned in, the check is cashed.
- Provide recognition for top ticket sellers. Give them two registrations to the next district or international convention.
- Use a ticket agency, such as Ticketron or Ticketmaster, and give them a full range of tickets. It helps to have tickets available at several locations in town. These locations don't usually sell many tickets, but having tickets there is good advertising and will reach people you won't contact any other way. You may want to consider raising the prices for tickets handled by agencies and outside locations.
- Contact tour agencies in the region; they may want to include your show in a tour. Many of these agencies cater to senior groups.

2.6 Performance fees

Fees should be set according to what the market will bear; you have to evaluate the ability of the host group to pay. If you are in a large city, talk to booking agents and get their input regarding appropriate talent fees. Of course, if you are going to expect large performance fees, you have to have a very good product.

The Vocal Majority charges \$10,000 for a 45-minute show at a national convention. Statewide conventions don't have as large a budget, so for these, they scale the fee down to \$7,500. For non-profit organizations, they may go down to \$5,000 and for someone doing a fund-raiser for a special charity, they ask for a \$2,500 honorarium.

The Vocal Majority, as is the case with any major chapter chorus, has fixed costs. They have to transport uniforms, risers and makeup. It costs them \$1,500 just to have their uniforms cleaned. Then there are transportation costs that need to be considered; even for a local event, their members have to buy gas to get to the show.

People who hire them understand that. If the group putting on a benefit show can get the VM's \$10,000 package for \$2,500, they think they are getting a real deal.

Ask questions. When considering a benefit show, ask if there are other acts and find out if they are donating their services. If other acts are not performing free of charge, then you should charge a performance fee. Your host will understand that you have to cover expenses.

Only do a freebie if it will lead to a good show later. There may be an opportunity to be paid in kind. For instance, you may be able to do a benefit show in exchange for an ad in a charity organization's newsletter.

The Big Orange agrees that a chapter should price itself for the market in which it belongs. This depends upon the ability of the chorus as a performer, the local economy, and other factors.

Try to avoid performing in awkward situations, such as at a shopping mall, or during dinner, or at a cocktail party where people are talking and moving around. If you can't avoid these types of performances, increase the price. Be sure to have a signed contract for every performance, even if it's a freebie.

2.7 Prospect development

No one, especially no one in the entertainment business, knows who we are.

Each chapter must promote itself in its own market. That promotion should be supplemented by a program of national exposure emanating from the Society office.

2.7.1 Promotional tools

Look through the Society catalog and become familiar with public relations materials that are available to you, many of them free of charge, from the international office. Many of these items can be used in developing a set of chorus promotional materials.

Develop a promotional kit, using materials available from the catalog, plus a fact sheet about your chapter and its chorus and quartets. An example of information that should be included in a fact sheet can be found in the Public Relations Officer Manual. Add 8 x 10 photographs of your chorus, a small photo of your chorus director, and photos of chapter quartets that will be participating in your performance package.

Make the kit simple and inexpensive to start with, by using materials that you already have on hand. You can add to it as your marketing plan begins to generate revenue.

Video vs. brochures.

The Vocal Majority relies primarily on video tape to sell the chorus. They feel it is a better medium for our art form than printed materials, or even audio tape. They think that a brochure is too static.

Letters of recommendation are included with their marketing package, however. They prefer the use of testimonial letters to a brochure; they are cheaper, and more effective. After a successful show, Bob Arnold thanks the host organization for inviting the Vocal Majority and asks them for a letter of recommendation.

Beg, borrow or steal videos wherever you can get them. You can have a local cable station tape your show. Obtain a copy of your contest video from the district. You have to pay royalties and fees for producing or duping a tape, but they are minimal as compared with the cost of shooting specifically for a video production. For \$3,000, the Vocal Majority made a video tape from materials they had available.

The Alexandria Harmonizers obtained permission to use footage from CBS for nothing. They added it to other tapes and produced a 12-minute video that includes Walter Cronkite introducing them at Kennedy Center. It also shows the chorus performing with Victor Borge at Wolf Trap Farm. Total production costs were \$50.

The Harmonizers do use brochures with their press kits. They give them to boosters and use them in general promotion. They produced 4,000 copies of a recent brochure for \$3,000. Because of the cost, they only distribute it where it is apt to pay a return.

The Harmonizers use the brochure as a backup for a video presentation. The brochure has a limited useful life and must be updated regularly; they re-do theirs every five years.

When producing a brochure, try to find a printer who will donate production cost in return for a package show. Get professional help with design.

The performance brochure has nothing to do with membership recruitment; they have another brochure for that.

Mailing lists

Taking care of a list of potential members and ticket buyers is an important job for someone in your chapter. The list should be put on a computer file and organized so that you can print out a list of names or mailing labels.

The list should contain information about when the person's name was added, and what event attracted him or her to give you his/her name and address. As your list grows, each name should contain information about what recordings or show tickets that person has purchased, and whether the purchase was paid for in cash, by check, or by credit card. You should also indicate whether the purchaser responded to a personal solicitation, a mailing, a ticket agent, or tickets sold at a business counter in town.

You might also want to know whether the person on your list has ever attended a chapter meeting. Keep guests and former members on your mailing list. Add people who fill out cards at your shows and those who call in to order tickets or recordings on your hotline. Clean out the list each year, to get rid of lost addresses for those who have moved, and those who have been inactive for a number of years. Share mailing lists with the symphony and choral groups.

2.7.2 Performance Contracts

Always have a signed contract for every performance. The contract should include information about your fee, and such things as parking, lighting for the performance, and the sound system.

The hotel or hiring group really should provide the lighting for your performance, but you may want to provide your own sound system, especially if the house system is not adequate.

Your contract should tell you if there is an MC available. You must provide a scripted introduction, especially if the MC is not a barbershopper. Put it on a 3 x 5 card and send it ahead of time, but bring along an extra copy on show night.

Other information on the contract includes what time you will perform, the size of the room in which you will be performing, the size of the audience, and any special transportation that will be needed.

Be sure the host or the hotel or auditorium at which you will be performing knows that they will have to provide risers, or that you will have to bring risers in, set them up and take them down again. The contract should spell out where your riser truck will park.

Your contract should provide an alternate date, in case the show is postponed due to inclement weather or other reasons. You should know who is on before and after your act. You will need dressing rooms and a warmup room and they should be available from two hours prior to the performance to an hour afterward. One room can serve both purposes if it is large enough; it should be out of hearing distance from the auditorium. This should be in the contract.

Your contract should guarantee the number of men you will have on stage, but keep it on the low side. It should also include the size of stage needed. A hotel will want to know how much space you need, so they can tell where they can put tables so they won't be in the way. You may want to include a sketch of the hall in your contract.

Make sure you know what kind of microphones are available on stage and where they will be located. Your contract might include a wish list of things that can be negotiated if they are not included. This list might include free parking for members, and juice, coffee, water, and sandwiches, if needed, backstage.

All performances must be approved by the board. But, the board does not approve contracts. It approves doing a show on a certain date for a certain fee. Any changes in the basic contract must be signed by both parties.

3

Media relations

3.1 The Media Landscape

Mass communications media are useful for institution-building and are an effective means by which we can deliver our product to an audience. Media include newspapers, magazines, special-interest publications, radio, commercial tv, and cable.

Tom Gherardi advises that in order to avoid dying out, we have to be seen in print and on electronic media. It takes media to create support for an art form.

For example, rap performers did not create the media phenomenon that rap now is. Media created rap after media people decided they could make money by promoting it.

For best results with news media, start your promotion campaign well ahead of time. Make your initial media contact two or three months before the date of your show; give the newspaper and the television and radio stations a call and find out what they will use and what their deadlines are.

A photo for the cover of the weekend entertainment section, for instance, may have to be in the hands of the section editor a month prior to the date that it will appear. Prior to that time, a photographer must be scheduled, at a time when the subjects to be photographed can be available.

Radio talk-show hosts don't wake up in the morning wondering what they are going to talk about that day. They have their formats set months ahead of time. Contacting them early will allow them time to do the best possible job for you.

Give everyone who helps you a couple of complimentary show tickets.

3.1.1 Print media

News releases

About 60% of our news releases go into the round file, largely because they are poorly written or do not contain material that is newsworthy. Become familiar with editors at newspapers and find out what sorts of things they are looking for.

There are many departments at the newspaper, and each may be looking for a different thing. Talk to the city desk, the weekend editor, and editors of lifestyle, arts, and feature sections.

Suburban newspapers will use news releases, particularly if they are personalized with names of chapter members who live in the paper's coverage area.

Make use of clippings

Having an arts critic review your show is chancy; get to know him and find out if he likes barbershop. He may never have heard good barbershop; take him to a show that you know is going to be a very good one. If you get a good review, use the clipping as promotional material for next year's show.

Audio and video tapes are also useful as promos for your next show, or to generate performances.

Calendar listings

Most newspapers have a listing of events taking place in your community. Be sure you know and meet their deadlines; a deadline could be as much as two weeks prior to the day you want your event listed.

Regional and special-interest magazines also have calendar listings. Here, the deadline could be three months ahead of the date of issue.

3.1.2 Television

Provide television stations with a video to use as background for your show promotion announcement.

For television exposure, take advantage of local cable channels. Run a 5-minute barbershop spot on the weather channel, for example.

Cable stations can be found in almost every community. Many cable stations are required to provide training in television production and can assist the barbershop chapter in creating programming that other channels can use.

Find out who else in town is utilizing the access channel and work with them, just to gain experience, or to produce a joint program.

3.1.3 Radio

Find middle-of-the-road stations that will play barbershop music. There are some stations that specialize in offbeat styles of music that will play barbershop regularly.

Radio is useful in promoting barbershop, not only because it projects the sound of four-part harmony, but also because it offers the advantage of "narrow-casting." Radio stations no longer try to be all things to all people, they specialize, serving a narrow segment of the potential listening audience. Because of this factor, radio offers many opportunities for us to reach specific audiences who will enjoy our music.

The local radio station is an excellent medium for chapters to use in informing our publics that we are active and interested in our community and that we make good music. One way to obtain radio time is to participate in a station's community relations and charity activities. Find out what segments of the community the station already supports and show them how barbershoppers can help them.

We have to find an inexpensive way to provide media with a product they can use. For instance,

provide a radio station with a tape of your chorus singing the national anthem. Or do a station break and sign-off ID.

Work with advertising agencies; get them to use barbershop on automobile dealer commercials. Provide a demo tape that is short (10 - 20 seconds) and directed at the agency; take an agency rep to a show—but first, make sure the performance is a good one.

The Society has two volumes of cassette tapes and compact disks called "Barbershop Harmony Favorites" that would be ideal to give to radio stations for use as background or easy-listening music. Society recordings can be provided to radio stations at a special reduced rate.

3.2 Other Outlets

3.2.1 Directories and services

Every large city has a local directory, listing talent that is available to entertain. "Musical America" is a national directory, produced annually, that has regional subdirectories. Look up one of these directories at your local library and list your chorus in it.

Another opportunity to be explored is location services. These municipal and state-supported organizations find settings and provide services for motion picture companies. Give them a demo tape; who knows, you may wind up in a motion picture.

3.2.2 News wires

These organizations are similar to national wire services, but are organized on a regional basis. They can be used to disseminate news relating to barbershopping in a metropolitan area.

3.2.3 Networking

Networking gets results. Talk about barbershop to everyone.

3.3 Where can we get help?

This discussion has offered some tips and general information, but is not intended as an in-depth coverage of media relations for a barbershop chapter. For more information on this subject, attend your district COTS class in the fall, read the Public Relations Officer Manual, or consult your district communications officer. Help is also available from the PROBE vice president for public relations officers, the International Public Relations Committee, or from the Communications Department at the international office.

Intermediate-level classes on the subject of media relations are needed at district HEP schools and other regional weekend events. Work to get such events scheduled in your district.

3.4 Just for the record: Making a CD/cassette

3.4.1 Why & how

After your chorus members have become seasoned performers, consider producing an audio cassette of your chorus. A tape made during a show may be ok, but you will have much better success from a taping session at a studio.

Do the taping immediately following a show or contest. That's when you are most familiar with the music. Of course, details of the taping session have to be planned well in advance; don't wait until your show is over to begin thinking about it.

Be sure you obtain clearances and licenses, and pay the required fees for the songs you sing on a tape. Contact the Old Songs Library to find out the clearances you will need. The cost is nominal.

While you are in the studio, tape the chorus singing your national anthem. That's part of your repertoire, anyway, isn't it? Put that on a separate tape for use by radio stations or at sporting events.

3.4.2 Selling your recordings

Selling cassettes every time you have a performance will bring in some extra funds. Having a cassette makes chorus members proud to be a member of your chapter.

Be sure that libraries---downtown and branch libraries, and libraries at high schools and colleges---all have a copy of your cassette and other Society recordings. Have labels printed to attach to recordings at the library that indicate the name and phone number of someone to contact in your chapter. Make return visits to change the labels whenever the name or phone number of the contact person changes.

Cassettes are a good souvenir of your show. Having tapes for sale gives you legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

Cassettes are good advertising; if people see your tapes in friends' homes or automobiles, they may become acquainted with your group and may respond when they next see an ad for one of your shows.

Cost of producing tapes is not prohibitive; an outlay of \$2,500 should set you up in business.

You have to have point-of-sale materials if you are to be successful in selling recordings. These include such things as posters, a large chapter logo, an enlarged picture of the cassette, and appropriate lighting. You should have large reproductions of your chorus name and logo anyway, and have them displayed on an easel at all performances, especially if television is present.

Video tapes are also very useful. Collect video tapes from performances and contests and assemble these segments into a demo video tape that you can show when prospecting for performances. You can have 50 copies made for about \$5 each.

When you have enough tape collected from a number of shows, produce an audio tape, a video, or a CD. A video tape produced during a show performance is not as good as one produced in a studio, but it will be better than having no tape at all.

4

Marketing and Membership

4.1 Defining the product

Even the best products have to be sold. In order to obtain new members, you have to go out and get them. A good time to put on a membership drive is immediately after your show. Use any of the Society's membership programs; they will work if they are applied as spelled out in the manuals.

Guests must be attracted and invited. There must be an administrative program that nurtures guests, turning acceptable ones into chapter members. Every guest's name should appear in the chapter bulletin and he should receive a copy of the bulletin in the mail.

Every chapter must constantly seek new members to replace those who move away, die, or just simply become involved in some other activity. Chapters that do not obtain new members will get progressively older and smaller.

Another part of the marketing process is finding out what the customer wants, and then providing it. Customers include members and non-members; both are important to the success of the chapter. We must conduct surveys, both inside and outside the chapter to obtain information that will guide us in meeting those customers' needs.

Competition is usually a minor part of a successful chapter's operation. If the chapter has good music, performance and administrative programs, competition will take care of itself. Members can get as much satisfaction from producing a chorus CD as they can from competing.

The Pathfinders Chorus in Fremont Nebraska finds that fun, socializing and performance are what its members want, and they are the benefits that the chapter has to sell. The chapter used to be contest-oriented until it began to survey its members and ask them what they want from their hobby of barbershopping.

When they realized what their members wanted and provided it for them, they went from 30 to 80 members. They got the chorus singing, not just rehearsing. They learned Polecat songs and provided a variety of activities. Their average age dropped from 56 to 45 in seven years.

4.2 Market Segments

4.2.1 "Friends"

People want a variety of levels of activity. Consider an associate class of membership for those who don't want to be fully active. There are those who just want to get your chapter bulletin or a newsletter, announcing show dates and how to obtain tickets.

4.2.2 Minorities

Our membership must become multi-racial if we are to improve our chances for favorable television coverage or support from community organizations and arts councils. Having members of minority groups in our chapters could be an advantage if we want to use civic facilities in which to rehearse and perform, or obtain grants from private or public agencies.

We should present ourselves as an equal opportunity organization that performs in the local community.

4.2.3 Young Singers

As with any other segment of the population, you have to have a good product if you are to be successful in marketing barbershop to young people. Younger members can add a vitality to your chapter that is needed if your it is to survive.

Contact high school and college choir alumni. Again, identify customers' needs; find out what young men want. Use service club youth groups to promote barbershop. Hire a bus and bring a boys' choir to the chapter meeting.

We can help music educators in our schools by being role models. Show young people that it's ok to sing and maintain a G rating.

Hire a vocal ensemble from a local school to appear on the chapter show and give their performance fee to the school music program. Do a song together with them. Or, do a joint show with a school music department.

You will attract parents and friends of the school group to your show, many of whom may not be familiar with barbershop. Offer a prize, by means of a coupon in your show program, so you can add the names of the audience to your mailing list.

Sell barbershop tapes after the show. Get your audience listening to barbershop all the time.

4.2.4 The in-betweens

We need a program for Baby Boomers. These adults are still fairly young and active. Attracting this age group as members will bring in other young, active members.

4.2.5 Service clubs

Do joint-venture shows with service clubs, such as the Kiwanis, and split the proceeds with them or with their favorite charity. Get the Kiwanians to sell tickets, while you supply the talent.

4.2.6 Seniors

We must not ignore the market that is easiest for us to reach—seniors. Senior expos are a growing phenomenon; we can sell recordings to seniors, and they will offer opportunities to perform.

Perform at senior centers. Many men who frequent these establishments are very active; invite them to your chapter meeting. Take advantage of the growing number of local senior media and cater to anything that has to do with the senior market. Seniors are willing to examine our product and they will buy tickets.

5

Financial support

Fundraising, marketing, public relations and advertising are intertwined. Active chapters are interested in marketing themselves, and in generating dollars for their operating budgets and special projects.

5.1 Why is there a need for fundraising?

For many chapters the only fundraising activity has been the annual show. However, there are other ways to raise money for the chapter, to support the general chapter operating fund, or for special needs, such as purchase of uniforms or risers.

The annual show, community performances, and chapter activities such as bake sales or other money-making projects, are probably the best sources of funds to meet a chapter's operating expenses. Other funds, from grants and endowments, must generally be used to benefit the local community and cannot be used for operating expenses.

The best way to go about raising funds depends upon what you want to raise money for.

5.2 Be sure you have a good product

Before you ask for dollars, be sure that your chapter has good music and administrative programs. Your chapter's administrative team should have commitment, discipline, energy and enthusiasm. The chorus must have a good performance package, backed by good quartets.

If your chapter is to be successful, everyone in your chapter must be committed to its goals. Everything must be in place, including your sound, stage presence, presentation, and solicitation strategy.

A businessman whom you are approaching to ask for performance opportunities, or for funding, does not want to be associated with a group that is not able and ready.

Once you have a good musical product and organization, the next thing you need is a supply of good marketing materials, such as a fact sheet, a brochure that tells your story, and perhaps a demo tape. Far Western District's Masters of Harmony, for example, use brochures and a video tape to inform the public about their organization.

5.3 Be active in your community

One way to become known as a community-spirited organization is to get involved in raising funds for other local charities. This opens many doors and lets you find out where funding sources are. It also gives you visibility; others will know that your chapter is a viable member of the performing arts in your community.

Every community has a heart association, cancer fund, organizations that support the homeless, support groups for battered women and children, funds to supply seeing-eye dogs. Support for school music or speech and hearing programs fits our image nicely and can provide a good base for your community-relations program. Match your chapter's needs with those of a worthy charity.

5.4 Help another organization raise funds

Put on a benefit show for a charity in cooperation with another service organization. As in the examples above, your chapter can provide the talent and organize the show, while others sell the tickets.

Northeastern District's benefit show for Paul Newman's Hole In the Wall Gang Camp is a good example of barbershoppers getting involved with an established charity. Chapters within a 75-mile radius collaborate in a performance that generates funds for a group of children with cancer and other serious conditions. The event generates a considerable amount of favorable publicity for the barbershoppers.

In conjunction with a benefit show, you may want to hold a wine and cheese party for leaders of the other sponsoring organization and for leaders of the charity. If there are corporate leaders whom you are trying to entice, invite them, too.

Even though you are involved in a charity show, it's not out of line to ask for a fee. Explain that you have expenses that you would like to cover. The show can turn into an annual event, in which the chapter gets a modest fee and the rest of the proceeds go to the charity.

5.5 Chapter support groups

5.5.1 Boosters

The Jacksonville Chapter owns a 12,000-sq. ft. building; monthly payments constitute a substantial overhead cost. To help meet these payments and other expenses, Jacksonville has organized the Big Orange Booster Club, which has 500 members who support the chapter in a variety of ways. The chapter auxiliary helps run the Booster program.

Each Booster receives a bimonthly newsletter. Minor contributors to the chapter receive tickets to the annual show. For \$500 a Booster can have a quartet perform for anyone he designates. For a contribution of \$1,500 they get a chorus performance for their organization or charity, plus eight tickets to preferred seats at the annual show and a wine-tasting party that includes a performance. The member who brings in the most boosters each year gets a weekend for two at Disneyland.

The goal of the 1991 Booster Drive was \$45,000. Its success was the result of a lot of effort and organization. Their first drive, ten years earlier, netted a little more than \$200.

The chapter runs a shop that sells barbershop memorabilia to Boosters at cost.

5.5.2 Advisory board

An outside advisory panel can help the chapter in a number of ways, by helping with fund raising or making community relations decisions. The panel is usually composed of chief

executive officers, or other high officials of companies. Select people for your advisory panel who like barbershop music and attend your shows.

It is often difficult for a major chapter to meet its annual budget. If the chorus travels to international competition for a number of years in succession, for example, the cost can be extremely high. The Vocal Majority's annual budget is \$225,000.

The advisory panel can help, either directly, or by helping the chapter to find contributors. Because of their status in the community, members of the panel are able to contact top officers of other companies.

Big Orange has a five-member advisory board. They help raise money, usually by finding donors and/or performances, and they help find other advisory board members. In return for their services, they receive a free concert for their charity or whoever they specify.

The advisory board meets once each year. Its members want to see a copy of the chapter's goals and budget before they are willing to make a commitment to the chapter.

Before you can attract people of the stature in your community that you need on an advisory board, you first have to be recognized as a good performing group. Your chorus should be as respected as the symphony or the ballet.

5.5.3 Chapter foundation

A chapter can create a foundation that can raise money, pay taxes and give the proceeds to the chapter. The Vocal Majority has such a profit-making subsidiary, called SOA Productions.

Alexandria has a Harmonizer foundation. One of its long-range goals is purchase of a building for the chapter. The foundation can accept gifts to the chapter and people can include the foundation in their wills or insurance policies. The Harmonizers also have an auxiliary, which runs raffles, and does other support activities.

5.5.4 Outside foundations

A number of foundations provide funds to support the arts. A corporate sponsor could directly underwrite your show, providing funds that can help your chapter with its general operation.

In order to obtain a grant from a foundation, the chapter must provide information about itself, including its annual budget, and what it does to support the community.

Some company foundations provide matching funds. A foundation is sometimes able to match the dues of a member who is a company employee. Other foundations match funds in turn for man-hours spent in community service by the chapter.

Municipal foundation grants can be obtained from a city arts assembly. In the application, the foundation may want to know the racial makeup of the chapter and efforts to recruit minorities.

Sometimes, state, or other government agencies, will put on grant-application workshops, telling non-profit groups how to apply for such things as touring grants, technical assistance, or aid for foreign travel.

If you ask a foundation for \$20,000 you may receive \$3,000. As a rule of thumb, you should ask for the maximum and expect to take what they'll give you. The asking amount is often governed by the size of the chapter's operating budget.

Do some research on the organization to whom you are applying. You can find out the range of grants that a specific foundation will give from your local library. Don't ask for \$20,000 from an organization that has never given a grant of more than \$1,000.

5.6 Obtaining grants from corporations and foundations

Foundations give money away because they are created to do so. Their charter requires them to give money for a specific purpose. Therefore, in order to obtain money from a foundation, you have to find one whose purpose matches yours. Or, you have to find a way to alter your purpose so that it matches theirs.

Corporate donors have a desire to help the local community because they want to be seen as good citizens. They seek recognition and want to see the corporate name before the community in return for their contributions. Reward them with a full page ad in your show program; mention them in your advertising and publicity, and at your performances.

To find out what a local corporation may be willing to do, start with a visit to their public relations office. Make an appointment and take an employee of that firm along if you have one as a member.

Find out which chapter members are employed by companies in your community. Find out who those chapter members know, and who they can talk to about the chapter. Use chapter members who are employees of a potential donor as an entry.

Some corporations give money to support the arts because of the media coverage it generates. Other corporations may give money to arts groups such as ours if they are convinced that we will help the community and make it a better place. Some corporations want to support worthy activities in which their employees are involved. Each firm has its own reasons; find out what they are.

Get acquainted with company officials; sing for their Christmas party or company picnic. In this case, let the potential donor determine how much you should charge for performing for them.

Your chapter will not be successful at fundraising overnight. You can't get money by sending out a letter, cold, to a list of prospects. You have to develop a relationship with prospective donors.

People (and businesses) don't give to causes, or even to projects or ideas. They give to people, whom they know and trust, and whom they believe to be worthy of their charity.

Once you have identified a good prospect, and know the people involved in that organization on a personal basis, find out what you can do for them. You might begin by asking representatives from the corporation to be the chapter's guests at a good barbershop show in which your chorus is performing. Let them see you at your best.

Utility companies may be good prospects. They may want to help the local community, and to have their name attached to a local "good effort." If so, they are most likely to contribute to causes that allow their money to remain in the community. For that reason, utilities, and, for that matter, most corporations, will probably not provide funds to get you to a convention.

5.6.1 Arts councils

Arts councils give money for different reasons than corporations and foundations do.

Arts councils have to give away all of their money every year. They get most of their funding from the state, and from the National Endowment for the Arts. Barbershop is a true American art form, so is eligible for their support. You have to contact them and find out what the procedures are for obtaining funds from them. Determine what types of entertainment they support and what restrictions there are regarding use of any money you might receive from them.

In order to obtain a grant, you have to show that you can't do all that you want to do without outside help. Grant funds may be used to purchase sound equipment, for instance, or risers or other needs.

The chapter board should create a wish list of things it could do to help the community if it had more money. Grant money can't be used to pay for trips, going to contests, or throwing parties. It can free up other funds that can benefit the chapter.

The application form

Arts councils are usually inundated with proposals, so they spend a lot of time looking for ways to reject them. One good reason for rejection is an application form that is not neatly typed and guidelines that are not followed.

Although the project summary may appear first on the application form, fill it out last. The narrative should tell what the project is; keep it down to one page if you can, but be sure to answer all questions. Don't ask for a grant, ask to be considered for a grant.

Things that you will want to mention include an indication of how your chapter is trying to improve, in order to do a better job of entertaining in the community. Explain how you develop new audiences. Also, show how the chapter helps the handicapped, promotes minorities, and helps senior citizens. Show how the chapter supports the arts.

If you provide tickets free, or at a reduced rate, to seniors, schools, or other groups, include that information in your application. This can be an indication of your support for those groups.

Obtaining a grant requires that you list all of your expenses, some of which we don't usually think about. They include such things as the rent on the rehearsal hall, the cost of uniforms, the cost of uniform repairs, and having uniforms cleaned.

Indicate who gets paid. Your chorus director probably falls into that category, as do guest quartets. Many performing arts groups consist of members who get paid for performing. You may be able to include payment of a performance fee to each member of the chorus, which is then donated by the member to the chapter.

Include the cost of hall rental, and minimum wage for all chorus members for rehearsal time. These can be included in the cost that the chapter puts into a performance. It indicates your base cost of operation and helps to determine what your total performance fee should be.

If you are looking for sponsorship for your annual show, try to indicate a loss, on paper, for the show, then ask the arts council to help share your loss.

Window dressing helps when working with arts councils. Put your completed application into a plastic folder, put the folder into a large envelope, and hand deliver it, if possible.

Include a transmittal letter. The letter should describe what you are applying for. If you have received a grant in the past, that should be mentioned in the letter. Also include a letter, a copy of which is in your chapter treasurer's manual, that indicates your 501(C)3 status.

Make use of Society materials, where appropriate. Show that your chapter, even if it is small, is a part of a larger, viable organization that supports worthy causes. If you are turned down by an arts council, find out why. This will help you to be successful in the future. If you are successful, mention the arts council in your publicity and brochures, and indicate that you are supported by them.

Once you receive a grant, you then have credibility and will probably be able to receive additional grants. After receiving a grant, some states require that you fill out a report, showing how the funds were used. You may be asked to show how you help minorities and support the community. In such a report, you would list who receives free tickets to your show, what discounts you provide to seniors, services you provide to other organizations, and what your chapter does to promote the arts.

A grant from Oklahoma City Community Foundation to help support a show put on by the OK Chorale required filling out 11 pages. It netted \$2,000.

State arts councils

Most states have arts councils, administered under the National Council for Performing Arts. These councils are usually found listed under the Secretary of State, and are known as the Bureau of Cultural Affairs, or some such title. These agencies frequently provide funds for performing groups who are willing and able to tour the state.

A touring program brings performing arts to smaller communities in the state. The presenter must be a local tax-free organization, such as a small chapter that wants help with their annual show. If the request is approved, the state arts council can pay half of your chorus fee for appearing on that small chapter's show.

The program should be co-sponsored by the arts council in the sponsoring chapter's home town. The requesting group will put on the show and sell tickets. These performances must be located outside your chapter's home county.

In order to qualify for these grants, you have to apply annually to be a part of the state arts council's touring performance program. The application will usually ask you to include a videotape; the chapter's brochures and its performances will also be evaluated.

Get media support

Talk to the editor of a corporate newsletter and try to get him to run a story about your chapter. See if he will feature an employee of the corporation who is a member of your chorus.

Volunteer to appear on a public broadcast television station's fundraising event or charity auction. Do it on your chapter's meeting night, if you can, so that as many of your members as possible can participate. While you're on camera, seek an opportunity to sing. But be sure you are capable of doing a good singing job before you try this.

Volunteering as a fundraiser gets you in the good graces of the television station. It also reaches community leaders, who are more apt to watch public-service TV than the general population.

If you are participating in a televised charity auction, let the viewers bid for the opportunity to host a chorus or quartet performance.

Talk to media and find out who to contact to obtain public service announcements.

5.6.2 Scoping out potential donors

Someone seeking funds for your chapter should have the freedom to travel during the day. He needs time to do some research and find out who gives money, and how much, and to whom. Especially, he should find out who gives money to the arts. Keep track of who is sponsoring programs on the local PBS station; they are listed on program credits. Go to a symphony concert and see who supports them. The local arts council can help you identify potential donors.

- Read annual reports. Corporations that are doing well are more likely to give than those who are not.
- Directories of foundations can be obtained at your library. These publications will tell you who local foundations give money to. If a foundation doesn't give to the performing arts, don't waste time applying to them for a grant. Do your homework.
- Talk to a college development officer; ask for advice and use of his resources.
- Apply for money for special projects, not for general operating expenses.
- Some donors prefer "bricks and mortar" and may want to supply something tangible, such as new risers. An arts council, however, usually won't support capital items. Some organizations would rather make donations in kind, such as newspaper ads, or printing, instead of cash.
- Meet foundations face to face, even before you apply for a grant. Introduce yourself to them; let them know about the Society and the hobby of barbershopping. It may pay off down the road.
- The personal approach is important. When you are ready to ask a corporation for a donation, make an appointment to meet the chief executive officer in person. If possible, bring along someone who is known to him, a personal friend, a company employee, or a person that is connected with the company's sponsored charity.

Use common sense; take a lawyer along if you are going to talk to a law firm. Take an engineer to talk to engineers, or a businessman to talk to a businessman. Find the best person to meet the prospective donor. The supporting person whom you bring along should be someone who has credibility---an executive, a local art director. Bring along your attractive literature, an accounting of your charitable work and a financial statement; bring a good quartet, if possible. If you use a video presentation, make it a short one.

Prepare your presentation, rehearse it and take notes. All of these things take time, but if raising funds is important, you'll take the time.

Be aware of budget periods. If a company's budget period begins with the start of the calendar year, you should begin talking to them in the summer. Apply early; do not wait until the end of the budget year.

You also need to be aware of deadlines. The deadline for application for a grant may be a year and a half ahead of the date you need the money. This may cause problems in making up your request form; use approximations in cases where you are not sure what your circumstances will be at the time you will actually need the money. You can make changes in your application later, but they should be minor. The purpose should remain the same.

5.6.3 Show your appreciation

If you are successful in obtaining a grant, say "thank you." In some cases, arts councils have a requirement that they receive credit from the recipient organization. Make sure you recognize everyone who helped your cause. Enclose tickets to your show so the donor can see his money at work.

Make sure to keep good records of how the money was spent, within the guidelines of the grant.

5.6.4 Endowments

You can start a chapter endowment fund and place a portion of show proceeds, private contributions and other funds into it. When the fund gets large enough, its earnings might send a chapter member to COTS or Harmony College. A chapter can set up an endowment with the Society that benefits the chapter. These have a \$10,000 minimum, but that amount can be accumulated over a period of time. Proceeds from a series of shows, for instance, could eventually add up to enough to start one of these endowments.