Top Ten Free Web Resources for Arts & Culture Leaders

Summer is here! Time for outdoor concerts, arts festivals, summer stock, and Arts Consulting Group's list of the top ten free web resources for arts and culture leaders! Here are ACG's recommendations to bookmark for your travel and leisure reading.

1. Americans for the Arts
Resources for Arts Advocacy and Economic Impact
Once again, Americans for the Arts (AFTA) appears on this list for its invaluable creative resources and its continued commitment to building recognition and support for the extraordinary and dynamic value of the arts. Its Arts Mobilization Center provides tools, resources, and information to help support the arts and arts education. Last year, AFTA released Arts & Economic Prosperity 5, its fifth national study of the economic impact of arts organizations on local communities. This report is a unique guide for how to best create effective advocacy and community engagement programs, focusing on the local economic benefits of arts and culture organizations.

2. Free Management Library
Nonprofit Management
Free Management Library is a collaborative effort by several entities that covers nearly every aspect of effective management. Its library of board governance resources is particularly comprehensive and well organized, providing an indispensable compendium of nuts-and-bolts information, including fact sheets, forms, sample policies, board manuals, and other tools. This website continues to be the best online source of free information on all aspects of nonprofit operations. Select from a wide variety of topics such career development, employee wellness, meeting management, and more.

3. GuideStar
New Tools for Diversity and Inclusion Efforts
GuideStar has long been the world's largest source of in-depth financial data for nonprofit organizations. Now, GuideStar is leading the way in diversity, equity and inclusion in the nonprofit sector. By collecting more accurate information on diversity, GuideStar can better understand the constituents they serve, evaluate the impact of their work, and monitor trends. Through its Nonprofit Profile Update Tool, GuideStar can collect demographic information in the areas of gender identity, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability status, and diversity strategies, and makes this data available to inform organizational diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and grantmaking efforts.

4. The Wallace Foundation
Effective Practices for Building Arts Engagement
The Wallace Foundation, which aims to foster the vitality of the arts for all, provides hundreds of free reports, videos, tools, and infographics about the arts, learning and enrichment, and other issues. Its report The Road to Results: Effective Practices for Building Arts Audiences identified and examined nine practices of arts organizations that successfully expanded their audiences. This publication can serve as a guide to all arts groups, providing success stories and challenges to reaching new audiences and deepening relationships with existing ones.

5. Content Marketing Institute
Tools to Improve Digital Marketing
Content Marketing Institute is the foremost content marketing education and training organization. Providing an abundance of helpful blogs, webinars, and research, arts and culture organizations can learn how to enhance storytelling and create stronger branding. Helping organizations enhance and improve their marketing efforts, CMI's resources cover a variety of topics, including social media, ROI, and search engine optimization.

6. National Center for Arts Research

National Benchmarking Data

Launched in 2012, Southern Methodist University's National Center for Arts Research (NCAR) offers evidence-based insights that enable arts and cultural leaders to overcome challenges and increase impact. Its robust website covers topics such as contributed and earned income, marketing impact, and managing the bottom line. The NCAR Dashboard, a free diagnostic tool, can provide organizations with financial and operating performance results in relation to other similar national organizations. Using additional key intangible performance indicators, the NCAR Dashboard can also assess an organization's health and sustainability and refine its strategic decisions.

7. Performing Arts Alliance

Resources for Artists and Arts Advocacy

Providing excellent advocacy tools for cultural organizations and individuals, the Performing Arts Alliance is the national policy advocate, leadership forum, and learning network for nonprofit performing arts organizations, artists, and allies. Its website includes detailed recommendations on arts policy and current updates on pending arts legislation. Its Arts Advocacy Issue Center provides overviews and analyses on topics ranging from federal funding for arts education to international artist visa processing. Additionally, the Take Action Now! button provides a quick and easy way to take a stand for a current policy affecting the arts industry.

8. VolunteerMatch

Volunteer Recruitment and Engagement

Now in its 20th year, VolunteerMatch is an effective source for recruiting highly qualified volunteers. The website pairs passionate and committed people to nonprofit organizations, placing them when and where they are needed. VolunteerMatch is packed with helpful advice for governance leaders and volunteer managers. Its Learning Center offers webinars on advanced topics such as developing a strategic plan for volunteer engagement and managing difficult volunteer transitions. The organization has paired more than 13 million people to more 120,000 organizations. Arts and culture leaders can register as a VolunteerMatch Member to find volunteers for their organization's cause.

9. BoardSource

An Essential Guide for Nonprofit Board Leadership

BoardSource is the leading organization focused on strengthening and supporting nonprofit board leadership. Its Fundamental Topics of Board Service & Resource Library provides well-considered and presented governance best practices, helpful to any executive director or board member. Last year, BoardSource released Leading with Intent: 2017 National Index of Nonprofit Board Practices, which includes the survey results from the board chairs and executives of more than 1,300 organizations. The report provides crucial information in four key areas: people, culture, work, and impact. BoardSource's website also provides numerous articles in topics such as board transparency, measuring fundraising effectiveness, and diversity, inclusion, and equity.

10. Nonprofit Tech for Good

Fundraiser's Guide to Technology

Nonprofit Tech for Good is a leading technology resource for nonprofit professionals, providing valuable, easy-to-understand information, news, and resources related to nonprofit technology, online communication, and mobile and social fundraising. Download Nonprofit Tech for Good's free 2018 Global NGO Technology Report, the only annual research project dedicated to studying global web and email communications, online fundraising tools, social media, mobile technology, data management, and security software. This is the sister report to the Global Trends in Giving Report, which shows the impact of technology, gender, generation, and ideology upon giving worldwide.

Additional Resources

Sign up to receive *Arts Insights*, ACG's free publication featuring articles on a variety of topics ranging from effective board summits to fundraising strategies. Visit ACG's website to review past issues.

Contact ACG for more information on how we can help your organization with hands-on interim management, executive search, revenue enhancement, facilities & program planning, and organizational development services.

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