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STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

FOR THE

EAST COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Prepared By
Heying & Associates

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I. Plan Objective

The purpose of this marketing plan is to provide the ECPAC staff and board of trustees with an analysis of the venue's current market position as well as recommendations on how the venue can most effectively market itself and its performance offerings to the communities and customers which it serves.

II. Methodology

Enjoying a long history with many different chapters since its inception in 1977, ECPAC has become an increasingly active and positive influence within the performing arts community throughout San Diego County. The venue, however, has reached a critical point in its development and many important questions need to be asked and answered before decisions are made as to its future viability. Most specifically, *how does the ECPAC mission statement and purpose need to be redefined in order to reach the desired goals and objectives set forth in the Draft Plan 2000-2001?*

Specific questions used to determine the focus of the report and conclusions included:

- What is the current purpose/mission of ECPAC?
- How and why has ECPAC changed its focus over the years?
- Who are the ECPAC target audiences?
- What is the perceived level of awareness of ECPAC within the general San Diego community?
- What changes can be made to further enhance the positive image and highlight the unique entertainment offerings provided by ECPAC to the San Diego community?
- What level of commitment/investment needs to be made in order for ECPAC to reach its desired goals?

Heying & Associates used a variety of methods to evaluate ECPAC's current market position including background information provided by staff by way of newsclip files, long-range plans for 1999-2001, collateral materials, competition analysis reports, general perspectives of current board members provided by staff, and a preliminary meeting with ECPAC staff in 1998 at the request of then board chair, Dan Grindle. Additionally, information on competition (i.e. Performing arts venues, community theaters, San Diego Sports Arena, etc.) in the San Diego County area as well as like-venues within California were researched and, where applicable, compared to ECPAC.

It must be noted here that while a variety of methods and strategies were used to analyze the venue's current position in the marketplace, this plan was designed to evaluate and recommend ways to improve ECPAC's marketing position via public relations, advertising and marketing strategies. Therefore, no recommendations have been made for example, regarding the best mix of revenue allocation relating to percentage of rental revenue verses ticketed shows, ticket pricing, number of shows on the annual schedule, etc.

III. The Plan Outline

The Plan has been divided into five sections:

A. Situational Analysis - ECPAC

Includes a brief chronological history of ECPAC, why it was formed, who was key in bringing the concept to reality and where it sits today in comparison to other competing entertainment venues in San Diego County.

B. Mission Statement - Focus

How does the current Mission Statement hold up to the reality of what ECPAC really is and is doing in the community? Review of board and staff perspectives on the future of ECPAC and how it does or does not fit with the current Mission Statement. Has ECPAC found the right “niche”?

C. Analysis of Current Marketing Strategies - Creating an Identity

A review of the current marketing strategies developed and implemented by ECPAC staff and outside vendors. The level and frequency of the communication and the general overall look and feel of the information to the targeted audiences will be reviewed. How staff is currently configured to develop and implement the various marketing strategies to ensure a positive effectiveness level will be reviewed. Is ECPAC sending the right message to the right audiences in the right ways? What branding strategies are needed?

D. Conclusions/Recommendations

Based on the analysis of current marketing strategies and implementation levels, recommendations will be made to more closely align marketing efforts with the goals of ECPAC and the goals of its board of trustees.

E. Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Suggestions for effective ways of implementing the suggested strategies and changes will be made. Timelines for staging the various strategies will also be outlined. While budgets will most likely dictate the actual timeframe for implementing the various suggested strategies for marketing change, the timeframe outlined will give a starting point from which to begin the process.

A. Situational Analysis - ECPAC

The initial concept for an East County Performing Arts Center was first envisioned by Colonel Edward Fletcher, one of the first developers in the East County. His wish was to make the East County a cultural center for the rest of the county to enjoy. Although he passed away prior to realizing his dream, his daughter, Virginia Fletcher (later Virginia Fletcher Hawk Church), Dr. Sidney Wiener, and La Mesa resident and community leader Henrietta Harelson, worked together to see that the dream would one day become a reality.

Both Hawk and Harelson served on the Women's Committee of the Grossmont Community Concert Association and soon learned that Grossmont College had earmarked \$800,000 to build an auditorium. After discussing the issue with other concerned citizens, Hawk concluded that the City of El Cajon and Grossmont College should work together to create a quality performance venue in the East County area. Eventually, the city agreed to make the venue a part of its "Super Block" project, which included a new City Hall and other public buildings.

With the Grossmont College Board voting 4-1 in favor of the project, the plans for a community auditorium went through, with ground-breaking taking place on July 19, 1975. Neilson Construction, a long-time San Diego contracting company, won the bid on the \$2.1 million project. However, the bid did not include the necessary furnishings for the interior of the venue including lighting, seating, public address system and the like.

A committee chaired by then El Cajon Mayor James Snapp and La Mesa Mayor Paul Fordem, worked closely with volunteers from the Women's Committee of the Grossmont Community Concert Association, local businesses, clubs and citizens to raise nearly \$400,000 to outfit the theater.

The official opening of ECPAC's 1,142-seat theater took place on March 30, 1977. Grossmont College assumed operations of the theater until 1993, having operated at a loss for most of that time. At one point, in 1990, Grossmont College hired a new manager for the theater who changed the venue's name to "Theater East," and focused primarily on educational presentations. That decision was met with much resistance from the theater's Advisory Board, which was primarily composed of community representatives who had envisioned the venue as an all-purpose theater.

With management under fire, the college relinquished management of the theater to the Christian Community Theater (CCT) in 1993, and the City of El Cajon ultimately assumed ownership of the building in 1995 following college district Chancellor Dr. Jean Atherton's admission that "we have not been able to do justice to the theater which is really peripheral to our mission." Though still under the management of CCT, the facility continued to operate at a loss and it soon became apparent that if something wasn't done quickly, ECPAC would close permanently.

In 1997, after much public debate, the city voted to put the venue under the management of the Arts Center Foundation, a non-profit corporation that had been established by local citizens, most notably then-Mayor Joan Shoemaker. A professional CEO was hired to run the theater's day-to-day operations in addition to booking a variety of quality, high-profile acts. The theater's was also re-named the East County Performing Arts Center.

A unique education program for East County schools was established in 1999. A combination of live performances, workshops and an interactive website are all part of the "Plug Into the Arts" program, designed specifically for students. Additionally, many aesthetic improvements were made to the theater during the past three years including the acoustics, which has given the venue a reputation as "the most acoustically sound theater" in all of San Diego County. Credit for the positive changes at ECPAC goes to the City of El Cajon, the ECPAC Board of Trustees, the Curtain Raisers, individual and corporate donations, as well as general development efforts by staff. Many improvements are still needed, however, such as facility renovations or equipment replacements before ECPAC becomes the best venue that it can be. Lighting, staging, the need for a conference center or meeting room, increasing the fly-space, a gift shop, etc. are some of the projects which are currently slated for renovation in the long-range plan for the theater.

The Arts Center Foundation Board of Trustees

Currently, ECPAC is overseen by the Arts Center Foundation, Inc., Board of Trustees which includes:

Chairperson:	E.M. "Bud" Hamilton
Vice Chairperson:	Joan Shoemaker
Secretary:	Judy Moore
Chief Financial Officer:	Ron Walker

Trustees:	
Gail Alsobrook	Jo Anne Knutson
Clayton Anderson	Patricia Lazard
Willie Baker	Hal A. Lenox, Jr.
Judy Burer	Mark Mann
Richard Cohen	James J. Meeker
Dorothy DeBolt	Larry Richman
Robert DeBolt	Barbara Selby
Charles Duddles	Nancye Splinter
Jerry Filiciotto	Jerry Turchin
Judith Friedel	Michael Turner
Judy Garrett	Charles Van Vechten
Dan Grindle	John Vreeburg
Chuck Hansen	

Honorary Trustees:
Henrietta Harelson
Virginia F. Hawk

Trustee Emeritus:
Daryl Priest

Advisory Council:
Belle Ann Baker Robin Renart
Patricia DeMarce Russ & Harriet Stockwell
Hon. Dianne Jacob B.W. "Stoney" & Bonnie Stone
Jay Mills Roy & Barbara Wieghorst
Patti Page

Fiscal Comparisons - California Center for the Performing Arts, Escondido and Poway Performing Arts Center

According to Fiscal Year 2001 projections, the City of El Cajon is the third biggest source of funding for ECPAC, making up 19% of total funding. Presentation income 46%, is the largest source of funding, followed by fundraising 24%.

For comparison purposes, ECPAC is one of three venues in the county that is city-owned, non-profit and of similar size and scope. The other similar venues to ECPAC include the California Center for the Arts, Escondido (CCAЕ), and the Poway Performing Center for the Performing Arts. Poway Center is also owned in part by the Poway Unified School District.

Comparisons of budgets based on 2001 projections are as follows:

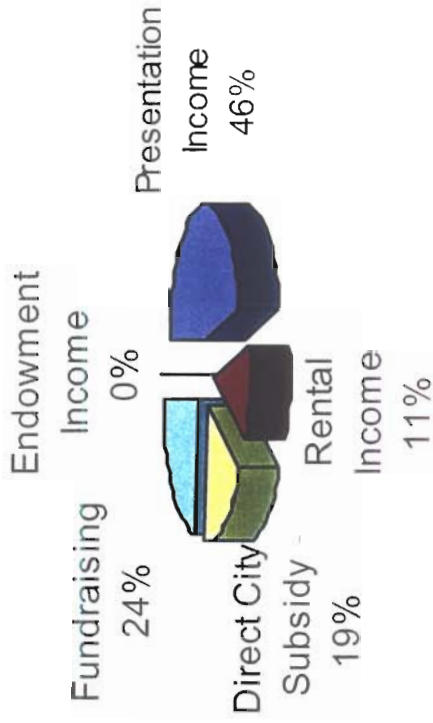
	<u>ECPAC</u>	<u>CCAЕ</u>	<u>Poway</u>
Annual Budget	\$1.8 million	\$7 million	\$540,000
Direct City Subsidy	\$350,000	\$1.5 million	\$207,000
Presentation Income	\$845,000	\$2.4 million	\$307,000
Annual Fundraising	\$432,500	\$1.3 million	\$26,000
Rental Income	\$209,000	\$1.6 million	\$0
Total Staff:	6	62	9
Marketing Department:	½	4	3

CCAЕ is the largest of the three venues in terms of size and offerings, i.e., in addition to the theater, it also offers a banquet hall, museum and gallery – all of which serve to heighten its efforts to be a center for *the arts*, and not just the *performing arts*.

Poway has a strong community/educational base, which is also by virtue of it being co-owned by the Poway Unified School District. Similar to ECPAC's education program,

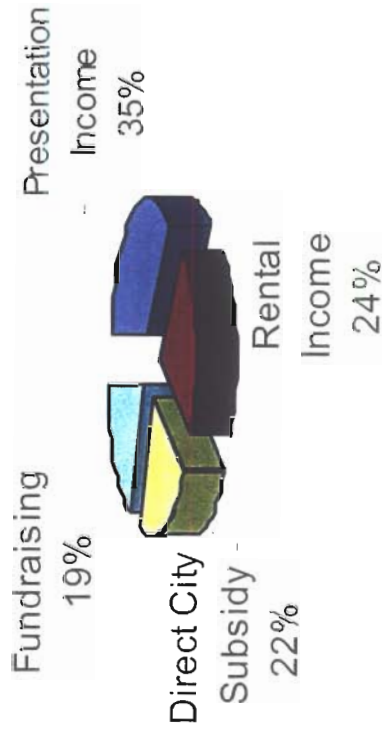
East County Performing Arts Center, FY 2001 Projected

- City Owned
- Non-Profit Organization Operated
- 1,142 Seat Theater
- \$1.8 million Annual Budget
- \$350,000 Direct City Subsidy
- \$ 845,000 Presentation Income
- \$209,000 Rental Income
- \$432,500 Annual Fundraising
- No Endowment



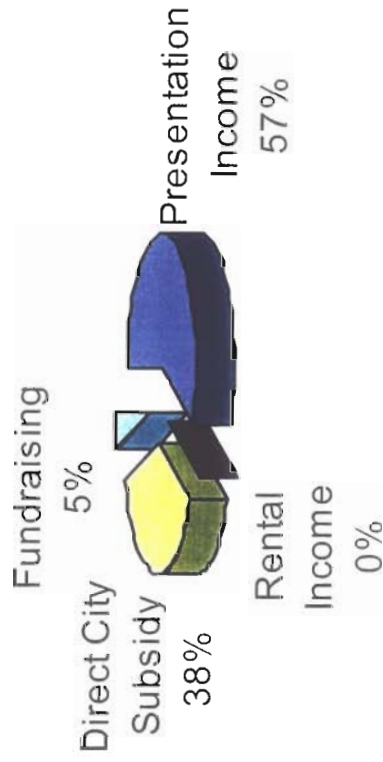
California Center for the Arts, Escondido

- City Owned
- Non-Profit Organization Operated
- 1,500 Seat Theater
- 400 Seat Theater
- Banquet Hall, Museum, Gallery
- \$7 million Annual Budget
- \$1.5 million Direct City Subsidy
- \$2.4 million Presentation Income
- \$1.3 million Annual Fundraising
- No endowment
- 70 Full-time Employees
- City Funding from General Fund



Poway Center for the Performing Arts

- City/School District Owned
- City/Private Non-Profit Organization Operated
- 815 Seat Theater
- \$540,000 Annual Budget*
- \$207,000 Direct City Subsidy
- \$307,000 Presentation Income
- \$26,000 Annual Fundraising
- No endowment
- City Funding from General Fund



Poway offers children's productions such as Cinderella and the Wiz at drastically reduced prices (i.e. \$10 for adults, \$5 for children) for many of the shows.

Both venues allow the public to purchase single tickets without having to purchase a series at the beginning of the season. Both agree that allowing the customer the freedom to choose their own schedule allows a wider audience. The financial commitment is not as great as requiring a 3-5 series package in order to purchase a main headliner show as ECPAC currently does.

Several other venues which were analyzed outside of the San Diego marketplace offered a variety of unique ticket pricing and discounts from "rush tickets" discounted by 50% two hours prior to curtain, percentage discounts on multiple ticket purchases, theater "memberships" similar to ECPAC's Charter Club (although at a much lower costs in most cases) which allow patrons to take advantage of the best seats available to shows, notice of last minute shows that are added to the schedule before going public, special newsletters, invitations to special events, etc. and sliding scale discounts on multi-ticket purchases to a single show.

ECPAC competition is not only limited to other similar-sized performance venues, it must also compete against the mild San Diego climate which offers residents the opportunity to participate in outdoor activities year-round as opposed to seasonally. Thus, the competition extends to Qualcomm Stadium, the beaches, SeaWorld, Legoland and casinos, to name a few.

SWOT Analysis

Based on general observations and research, the following is a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) as they relate to ECPAC:

Strengths:

- The location is easy to reach from almost anywhere in the county
- Parking is free and secure
- Acoustics are best in the county
- Size allows for intimate feel and exceptional viewing from all locations
- Offerings -- for those looking for a big list of diverse shows, this is it
- Cost varies based on offerings
- Can be used by the community for local productions as well as the production of headliner shows
- Budget is manageable with low overhead -- deficit continues to decline
- Partnership with the city of El Cajon
- Longevity - although past is "checkered," the venue does have a track record
- Curtain Raisers group is strong supporter group
- Tie to education is positive
- Can purchase tickets online via website through Ticketmaster or on-site

- Popular rental venue - little competition
- Dedicated staff
- Board has long range strategic plan developed with emphasis on fundraising and enhancement of venue
- Gala event has become signature event in East County

Weaknesses:

- East County location is still a negative for many with old perceptions of the region (i.e. El Cajon Speedway is flagship venue)
- There is some concern about safety in downtown El Cajon
- Venue is hard to find for first time visitors
- No ability to tie-in to restaurants for packages - although four restaurants are targeted for opening within the next year.
- Offerings - so many that it is hard to create a brand identity for venue
- Name - immediately calls to mind East County which has some negative connotations
- No signage on freeway - need better directional signage to freeway as well
- Theater flyspace prohibits larger Broadway productions
- No catering, community rooms, or other ancillary meeting facilities on site
- Corporate support and underwriting is not at the appropriate levels
- Need to improve sponsorship/underwriter packages with more professional designed information
- City of El Cajon needs to play bigger role financially with the venue
- Board of Trustees needs to continue attempt to broaden their base of membership both regionally and in the area of ethnic diversity
- Marketing/advertising budgets are out of sync
- No full-time public relations/marketing professional on staff
- No membership base - low subscription level
- Collateral materials are not at level they should be to put ECPAC at top
- No strategic fundraising program in place to meet goals and objectives
- No significant on-going corporate sponsorship
- While there is an endowment in place, it is extremely low and has not been promoted

Opportunities:

- Expanded partnership with city and other partner businesses, organizations and the media
- Ability to “recreate” itself through a comprehensive fundraising campaign
- Tie-in with recognizable name as spokesperson - local and national
- Take lead in redevelopment efforts with city - take more active role in political issues
- Position board members as leaders in community thus highlighting their role with ECPAC

- Develop a high-profile advisory board that becomes fundraising arm
- Develop a broader-based membership including categories for students, performers, subscribers, seniors, etc.
- Re-evaluate pricing structure for shows to offer added value for patrons
- Increase educational outreach by developing stronger corporate underwriting base
- Increase marketing and public relations outreach to create larger supporter base throughout the county
- Enlarge marketing/public relations staff in order to meet short and long term goals and objectives as outlined in the strategic plan
- Publicize rental availability in order to increase financial position
- Investigate a sliding scale for rental of venue to engage more community groups
- Investigate discontinuing the subscription sales and offering a “pick your own season” alternative to customers

Threats:

- City not supporting at levels it should or decision to cut funding
- Without strong marketing program, venue will not continue to be viable
- Can't pull big names due to low attendance
- Increased competition from other venues
- Lack of consensus from Board on direction of venue
- Fundraising efforts unsuccessful
- Rental is too high for some smaller groups
- Deferred maintenance and purchase/renovation projects put on hold for too long will cause the venue to be considered un-viable

B. Mission Statement - Analysis and Review

The current ECPAC Mission Statement:

The Arts Center Exists...

- **to professionally showcase local, national and international talent,**
- **to serve as a creative arts educational resource for area schools,**
- **to be a performance showplace of civic pride, and**
- **to promote and enhance the arts in El Cajon and all of East County,**
- **while operating within a sound financial framework that assures its continued existence and growth.**

The current mission statement has one critical flaw – it is attempting to be too many things to too many people. This in turn, strains resources as well as dilutes the message and image. With limited resources, the venue needs to focus its attention on one primary focus area with one or two sub-themes that also support the focus.

The mission statement should define *what ECPAC is*. In its current form, it is not totally clear to the target audiences exactly what ECPAC is. The mission statement must be revisited and redefined thus creating a brand – or identity – for ECPAC that is clearly definable.

While the intent of the venue upon its inception was to provide East County with its own local performing arts venue, an intent which is still reflected in the mission statement, clearly to stay viable, ECPAC must appeal to a larger audience base than just East County. The past three years of program offerings are moving toward the goal of geographic expansion in the right direction. Currently, nearly 60% of the audience base resides outside of the El Cajon area. Additionally, the type of shows offered must also more directly reflect the wants and needs of the communities ECPAC serves.

The education component is also important to the overall mission of ECPAC. It allows the community to become involved in a different way and also allows young members a chance to explore the world of the arts. These students will, hopefully, one day be active art patrons themselves and continue to support ECPAC. Partnerships with other school districts outside of East County should also be investigated as this lends a county-wide perspective for the venue and the public in which it serves.

The current revitalization of the downtown district puts ECPAC in the middle of the positive changes and thus, makes it a central player in the overall future and ultimate success of the region at all levels. ECPAC can, and should, become the catalyst for civic pride as well by taking a leading role in the positive changes that are happening.

Reassessment of Programming/Membership Opportunities

Bluegrass, classical, jazz, dance, world-beat, comedy, Broadway, kids and celebrities/stars are all offered in the upcoming season. When applicable, extended runs should be investigated in order to maximize advertising support, particularly for larger named-acts. Staff must always be the driving force behind the programming selections with input from the board and greater San Diego County community.

The current series packages that ECPAC offers prior to single tickets going on sale to the general public does create some order to the various genre offerings the theater has. However, the requirement that a customer must purchase a series in order to purchase other headliner acts, puts constraints on the potential buyer. This may be one reason that subscription sales are so low. Over the last three years, subscription sales have been extremely low, at 252 in 1998-99, 327 in 1999-2000 and last year 268, a 20 percent decrease from the prior year. With the one-time mailing to the ECPAC list, those who did not sign up the first time may not remember nearly two months later, that single tickets are now available. What's more, they may have already committed to other venues because they had the flexibility at the outset to pick and choose their shows.

Understanding the constraints of the venue for large theater productions, opportunities for bringing in smaller shows with high visibility and recognition should still be investigated. These would be the less set-intensive shows such as "Forever Plaid," for example.

As for revenue consideration, the number of shows should be reduced to reflect a number that is manageable and considered "stellar." Naturally, the financial outcomes must also be considered so as to create the best line-up with the greatest potential for positive revenue. This has already been incorporated for the 2001-2002 season.

On a longer-range plan front, with the possibility of a major renovation of the venue, the ability for ECPAC to stage Broadway productions should also be investigated as currently only the Civic Center downtown San Diego has the corner on the market.

The development of a true "membership" through ECPAC would also encourage continued communication with the target audiences. The venue has a good start at beginning to develop niche markets via information garnered through surveys at the box office level. Additional audience profiling should be conducted, however, in order to strategically expand the venue's reach. The potential audience base needs to be looked at as a total – both geographically and demographically. East County is one of the fastest growing populations with a very high economic base, particularly in the older neighborhoods of Mt. Helix and the newer ones in Alpine. Special attention should be made to find out what these particular audiences want and how best to reach them. Surveys, interviews, online newsletters and other communication vehicles should be incorporated into the audience profiling in order to develop audience data base lists for future marketing efforts.

Expanded “Experience” - ECPAC as a Destination

Opportunities to create pre- and post-events at the venue or in the surrounding area, need to be explored. Partnering with local restaurants, “meet the artist” discussions immediately following the performance and pre-show receptions for key contributors should be investigated when those opportunities are made available. Co-sponsorships with media outlets and corporations also assist with the marketing outreach as well. Art shows (not just local artists), car shows, etc. should be investigated for staging either when the theater is dark or when a tie-in makes sense as an added attraction.

The parking lot also lends itself to a more “festival” type of programming. In the summer, day or two-day long festivals with vendors and other local talent performing outside prior to the headliner or headliners inside could be developed. This “Summer Festival” concept can be expanded into other seasons, as the warmer weather in East County lends itself to the possibility of outdoor events almost year-round. Last year’s Brazil event, for example, was a good test for developing future schedules for outdoor events.

As with the majority of other major-like venues in the county, with the exception of Escondido and Poway, the theaters/arenas are aging. ECPAC is nearly 30 years old, and is in need of revitalization. Without a commitment to physically enhancing the facility, both from a visually and functional standpoint, the goal of creating a “world stage” can never be realized. Already, the venue is handicapped with regard to the size of the stage and its inability to host large scale productions.

The ability to include meeting space, food/catering facilities, a gift shop, office space and/or other important ancillary facilities is important to the venue as well. The ability to attract larger named-entertainment and additional rental business may also hinge on these auxiliary amenities. Additionally, with regard to the educational efforts, having a larger conference room with state-of-the-art audio/visual equipment would also be beneficial.

The additional enhancement efforts will also increase the possibility of having a corporate sponsor entertain the idea of name-sponsorship or series sponsorship.

Fundraising/Board Development

Although the face of the board is changing, more work needs to be done to recruit and secure board members who can effectively reach the goals and objectives of the organization. Including high-profile community members from outside the East County region is also suggested. This will broaden the outreach and communication about the venue to the greater San Diego community. As is currently being conducted, ways to increase the level of giving and fundraising among all current and potential donors must be developed in order to obtain the level of funding necessary to ensure ECPAC realizes its short and long term goals.

Once the fundraising goals are set, the plan needs to be folded into the branding program in order to maximize the efforts.

Grant development and other foundation funding opportunities should also be stepped up once the new direction is identified and implemented.

Partnerships - City and Corporate

The timing is excellent for ECPAC to forge a very close and financially productive relationship with the city of El Cajon. The recent commitment by the city to extend up to a 12-year relationship with the Foundation is a true testament to the confidence level it has with the organization and the Trustees. As the premier entertainment and culture venue in the east county, the city of El Cajon can, and should, take a larger role in supporting ECPAC financially. Other partnerships should also be investigated so as to maximize the visibility of the venue to as many potential customers as possible. This includes local businesses, regional companies and national corporations. These sponsorships allow more publicity opportunities for all partners throughout the year and create additional revenue sources to broaden the efforts of the Foundation and ECPAC.

If the 12-year long range plan is put into place with respect to capital improvements and expansion of the venue, the timeframe is long enough to allow particularly larger scale companies to commit to underwriting by naming the venue or purchasing a long term name-hold on a series such as the "Qualcomm Jazz Festival."

Educational Programming

As part of the community, bringing art and theater to area schools is a must for ECPAC. While these are not revenue generating programs, however, policies should be developed requiring a certain level of underwriting from corporations before investing large dollars to the project out of reserves. In order for a formalized program to take place, the ECPAC/School District program must be integrated into the school's arts curriculum.

ECPAC needs to work with all of the school districts to develop an on-going program that is part of the overall arts curriculum and also can establish funding from the schools and other foundations/grantors, etc.

C. Analysis of Current Marketing Strategies - Branding and Creating an Identity for ECPAC

Since the future focus and direction of ECPAC are currently under review, the analysis which follows is based on the current marketing strategies and collateral materials.

However, the basic assumptions and recommendations for changes and/or improvements, will hold true under any new scenario as they are based on the premise that ECPAC wishes to achieve the highest standards possible at all levels.

Name Change

Serious consideration should be given to renaming the venue. As a fundraising/underwriting opportunity, a sponsor/namesake should first be identified and approached for assigning their name in exchange for an annual underwriting contribution (to be determined) or a one-time significant gift. (i.e. Gateway Stage, Qualcomm Performing Arts Center, etc.) A high-profile East County family name could also be entertained such as Smith Stage at the Qualcomm Performing Arts Center. This creates two opportunities for potentially significant sources of underwriting. Additionally, with a corporate name as the focus rather than the region in which the venue is located, the emphasis is placed more directly on the *venue* itself, rather than on the *location* of the venue. It should be noted, however, that because the city of El Cajon is a partner in the venue, the community tie should be always part of the overall marketing focus.

Advertising/Collateral Materials

Overall, while the collateral materials are professionally produced, it is advised that a new updated look be developed. This could and should coincide with the renaming of the venue which would create “news” during the introduction of both the namesake and the new identity system.

Currently, the materials tend to have a conservative, community-oriented feel. The new identity campaign and materials should position the venue as “on the verge of something big” with respect to the 7-12-year long-range plan.

The Old Globe theatre materials should be seen as a standard to aspire to and/or surpass. With the potential of creating the series packages, the identity of the venue should have a central theme, with specially tailored materials for each of the series that best represents that specific genre of music/performance.

A better analysis needs to be made with regard to where advertising has been placed in the past and what the response has been. Only by closely analyzing these numbers can the budget be put to the best and most effective use.

Additionally, if a corporate sponsors are identified, it is important to include that name/logo into the overall design/identity program so that they two are complementary.

Website

A recent study reported in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, indicated that more than 57% of adults utilized the web last year. That means, that the website can and should, become one of the primary communications vehicles for the venue.

Once target audiences are more specifically defined, strategies for reaching those targets in the most direct and cost effective manner should be developed. The web can realize incredible cost savings replacing traditional printed and mailed materials when possible. This can include electronic newsletters, music alert updates, chat rooms with members and artists, etc. The House of Blues model should be investigated as a model for ECPAC.

A website that must be reviewed in order to see where ECPAC *could be* is the Taper-Ahmanson Theaters site at www.taperahmanson.com.

Spokesperson/Celebrity Tie-in

Opportunities to garner spokespersons for ECPAC for use in marketing materials and advertising, should be investigated immediately. This can be a tiered system – year-long endorsements as opposed to one-time event spokespersons. The spokespersons can be of local and/or national recognition.

Spokespersons can be developed for the overall venue as well as the specific series offerings.

By developing greater alliances with corporate partners and media outlets, the greater the potential for developing celebrity tie-ins and having the entree to them.

General Publicity Efforts

With a total full-time staff of six (although seven positions are currently funded), ECPAC has done an admirable job of maintaining a presence through the media. Stories have appeared in a variety of media outlets. Yet, these have been limited primarily to announcements or follow up of celebrity/high visibility named talent. There is little time available for the current staff to develop feature stories on ECPAC in general, on lesser-known talent or on trend stories.

Additionally, without a dedicated marketing/public relations specialist, ECPAC will never be able to develop the level of relationships that are needed to sustain a positive and effective, on-going communications effort. Additionally, if the new direction of ECPAC is approved by the board of trustees, it is critical that a marketing/public relations specialist be involved in implementing the program.

D. Conclusions/Recommendations

Overall, since 1996, under the direction of the new Foundation and its Trustees, ECPAC has done an admirable job of keeping programming at a professional level, and maintaining a positive identity within the San Diego County community.

Yet, ECPAC has now reached a critical point in its development with regard to planning for the future. With a long term renewed commitment from the City of El Cajon for the Foundation to operate the venue, now is the time to make critical decisions and take drastic action to take ECPAC to a higher and more productive level.

In order for ECPAC to move in the direction set forth in the Paradigm Shifts/Continuum Shifts Plan, very major decisions need to be made and an implementation plan developed to see them through.

The question that still needs to be answered is this:

Does ECPAC want to continue to be viewed as an East County community entertainment venue, or does it want to become a world class performing arts center?

Based on this analysis, it is imperative, in order for ECPAC to continue to be a viable entertainment venue and a benefit to the community in which it serves, that the answer be the latter.

A totally integrated plan, both short and long-term, will enable ECPAC to realize its goals for its new mission and identity.

In order to do so, a commitment of substantial resources, both time and money, must be approved by the board of trustees. Staff will subsequently play a major role in the development and implementation of the tasks necessary to achieve the desired results with additional support from volunteers, community leaders and corporate/business partners.

E. Implementation - Strategies and Timelines

Upon approval by the Board of Trustees to move forward on the new mission statement and identity and marketing program, the following is a suggested implementation strategy on both a short (2 year) and long (10-12-year) term timeline.

2-Year Implementation Program

<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible Party(s)</u>
Immediately (Following Approval by Board)	Development of Task Force for Long-Range Plan; Development of new Mission Statement	Board Chair President/CEO (Board Approved)
First 90 days	Selection of a Marketing/PR Director; analysis of current staff assignments - possible reassignments or additional hires needed to implement plan based on new Director's assessment.	President/CEO
First Six months	Development of overall fundraising plan and launch coordinated with marketing program.	President/CEO Fundraising Consult. Mkt./PR Director
	Work with outside design studio to develop new identity system	Mkt./PR Director
	Development of development/fundraising materials for short and long-term marketing programs	Mkt./PR Director
	Work with architect/contractors to develop vision of new performing arts center for use in marketing materials; includes actual renderings	Task Force
	Place key board member or staff member on City planning committees for downtown redevelopment	TBD

	On-going corporate sponsor/ underwriting program launched for naming of venue	Mkt/PR Director/ Staff
	Website upgrade	Staff
On-Going	Upgrading of target audience lists; surveys; stepped up publicity efforts and media relations	Staff Mkt./PR Director
Target: Fall 2001 On-going Year 1-2	Launch new identity system; fundraising campaign launched with long-range plan for new center debuted	Board/Staff Task Force
	Endowment Campaign launched	
	Kick-off gala event	Mkt./PR Director
	Continue subscription packages; upgrading of shows; work with City to develop true team effort and increase funding	Staff
	Securing spokesperson/celebrity supporter for campaign	Mkt./PR Director
	Development and implementation of membership program	Staff
	Staff increased as needed	
<u>March, 2002</u>	Celebration of the 25 th Anniversary of ECPAC (note: this could be the actual gala kick-off to the larger fundraising campaign if the timeframe is moved back)	Staff
	<u>3-10 Year Implementation Program</u>	
On-going	Fundraising efforts continued	Staff
	Updating and increased communications and project	Mkt./PR Director Staff

progression to all target audiences

Staff increased as needed

3-5 years

First Phase of capital improvement campaign completed

5-10 years

Second Phase of capital improvement campaign completed