

**The Communication Strategies of the Cultural Organisation Onassis Stegi and  
their Impact on Audiences' Perceptions and Behaviour**

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## DOCTORAL THESIS

Title	The Communication Strategies of the Cultural Organisation Onassis Stegi and their Impact on Audiences' Perceptions and Behaviour.
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# Abstract

## *English*

This is a case study research that investigates the communication strategies of a cultural space in Greece, Onassis Stegi, and their impact on its audiences' participation. The research is based on a theoretical framework that concerns arts marketing, communication in arts, the audience of performing arts, the decision-making process and factors that affect the audience and the attendance patterns. It also describes briefly the Greek picture. Onassis Stegi or OCC opened in Athens in 2010, it is exclusively funded by Onassis Foundation and hosts events and actions across the whole spectrum of arts (theatre, dance, music, cinema, visual arts, etc.). The first main objective of this research is to improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption. The second one is to study the attitudes and motivations of Onassis Stegi's audiences related to their cultural consumption, as well as their perceptions regarding the communication strategies of the cultural organisation. OCC has strong branding, promotes its competitive advantages, and it does constant market research. Additionally, it has contemporary and provocative cultural products, with reasonable and accessible prices, it acts as a producer, intermediary and distributor, and it uses integrated marketing communication. This research has used a qualitative approach. To explore the marketing strategies of the case study organisation used in-person and phone interviews with OCC's personnel, mostly semi-structured, email communication, and study of material that Onassis Stegi's people shared with the researcher (descriptive analysis of the object of study). Elaborating on the qualitative approach, to investigate the attitudes, motivations and perceptions of the consumers of OCC's products, five focus groups have been used, with the below criteria: sex, age, education, residency, frequency of cultural consumption, and level of familiarity with OCC. For the stakeholders' perceptions, who also constitute its audience, in-person interviews were used. In all occasions of interviews and oral communication, audio recording and transcribing followed. Among other interesting results, this research showed that the product of a cultural organisation plays a dominant role in audiences' consumption. Furthermore, the communication messages in general help consumers to form an opinion about a cultural organisation, while the advertising messages in particular act more as reminders to them. The main motivation of Stegi's consumers to attend a cultural spectacle is to get stimuli, socialise or entertain themselves, while the deciding factors can be the performance's content, the performance's contributors or the cultural organisation. Almost all the consumers identify the cultural agenda of Stegi with theatre and characterise its products as a pioneer, contemporary, diverse and risky. Consumers consider the radio and outdoor campaigns of the organisation very strong, with nice aesthetics and content that intrigues them. Nevertheless, some consider the content misleading or difficult to be understood. Stakeholders approve and appreciate

Stegi's product, emphasising its international character, as well as the fact it fills the gaps in the Greek cultural market. Additionally, they consider Stegi has built robust communication strategies during its years of function and strong branding. Both consumers and stakeholders agree on the cases where Stegi's communication messages are misleading, creating false expectations. Finally, both groups give positive feedback on the quantity and accuracy of information Stegi provides to audiences.

### *Spanish*

Este estudio de caso investiga las estrategias de comunicación de un espacio cultural en Grecia, Onassis Stegi, y su impacto en la participación de su audiencia. La investigación se basa en un marco teórico que aborda el marketing de las artes, la comunicación en las artes, la audiencia de las artes escénicas, el proceso de toma de decisiones y los factores que afectan a la audiencia y los patrones de asistencia. También describe brevemente el panorama griego. Onassis Stegi o OCC abrió en Atenas en 2010, es financiado exclusivamente por la Fundación Onassis y acoge eventos y acciones en todo el espectro de las artes (teatro, danza, música, cine, artes visuales, etc.). El primer objetivo principal de esta investigación es mejorar la comprensión del impacto del marketing de las artes en el consumo cultural. El segundo objetivo es estudiar las actitudes y motivaciones de la audiencia de Onassis Stegi en relación con su consumo cultural, así como sus percepciones sobre las estrategias de comunicación de la organización cultural. OCC tiene una fuerte identidad de marca, promociona sus ventajas competitivas y realiza constantemente investigaciones de mercado. Además, ofrece productos culturales contemporáneos y provocativos, con precios razonables y accesibles, actúa como productor, intermediario y distribuidor, y utiliza la comunicación de marketing integrada. Esta investigación ha utilizado un enfoque cualitativo. Para explorar las estrategias de marketing de la organización estudiada, se realizaron entrevistas personales y telefónicas con el personal de OCC, en su mayoría semiestructuradas, comunicación por correo electrónico y estudio del material que el personal de Onassis Stegi compartió con el investigador (análisis descriptivo del objeto de estudio). En cuanto al enfoque cualitativo, se utilizaron cinco grupos focales para investigar las actitudes, motivaciones y percepciones de los consumidores de los productos de OCC, considerando los siguientes criterios: sexo, edad, educación, lugar de residencia, frecuencia de consumo cultural y nivel de familiaridad con OCC. Para las percepciones de los interesados, que también constituyen su audiencia, se utilizaron entrevistas personales. En todas las ocasiones de entrevistas y comunicación oral se realizó grabación de audio y transcripción. Entre otros resultados interesantes, esta investigación demostró que el producto de una organización cultural desempeña un papel dominante en el consumo de la audiencia. Además, los mensajes de comunicación en general ayudan a los consumidores a formar una opinión sobre una organización cultural, mientras que los mensajes publicitarios actúan más como recordatorios para ellos. La principal motivación de los consumidores

de Stegi para asistir a un espectáculo cultural es recibir estímulos, socializar o entretenerse, mientras que los factores decisivos pueden ser el contenido del espectáculo, los colaboradores del mismo o la organización cultural. Casi todos los consumidores identifican la agenda cultural de Stegi con el teatro y caracterizan sus productos como pioneros, contemporáneos, diversos y arriesgados. Los consumidores consideran las campañas radiofónicas y publicitarias al aire libre de la organización como muy sólidas, con una estética agradable y un contenido que les intriga. Sin embargo, algunos consideran que el contenido es engañoso o difícil de entender. Los interesados aprueban y aprecian el producto de Stegi, haciendo hincapié en su carácter internacional y en el hecho de que cubre las lagunas del mercado cultural griego. Además, consideran que Stegi ha construido estrategias de comunicación sólidas durante sus años de funcionamiento y una identidad de marca fuerte. Tanto los consumidores como los interesados están de acuerdo en los casos en los que los mensajes de comunicación de Stegi son engañosos, creando expectativas falsas. Por último, ambos grupos dan comentarios positivos sobre la cantidad y precisión de la información que Stegi proporciona a la audiencia.

### *Catalan*

Aquesta recerca d'estudi de cas investiga les estratègies de comunicació d'un espai cultural a Grècia, Onassis Stegi, i el seu impacte en la participació de l'audiència. La recerca es basa en un marc teòric que aborda el màrqueting de les arts, la comunicació en les arts, l'audiència de les arts escèniques, el procés de presa de decisions i els factors que afecten l'audiència i els patrons d'assistència. També descriu breument el panorama grec. Onassis Stegi o OCC va obrir a Atenes el 2010, està finançat exclusivament per la Fundació Onassis i acull esdeveniments i accions en tot l'espectre de les arts (teatre, dansa, música, cinema, arts visuals, etc.). El primer objectiu principal d'aquesta recerca és millorar la comprensió de l'impacte del màrqueting de les arts en el consum cultural. El segon és estudiar les actituds i motivacions de l'audiència de Onassis Stegi relacionades amb el seu consum cultural, així com les seves percepcions sobre les estratègies de comunicació de l'organització cultural. OCC té una forta identitat de marca, promou els seus avantatges competitiu i realitza constantment investigació de mercat. A més, ofereix productes culturals contemporanis i provocadors, amb preus raonables i accessibles, actua com a productor, intermediari i distribuïdor, i utilitza la comunicació de màrqueting integrada. Aquesta recerca ha utilitzat un enfocament qualitatiu. Per explorar les estratègies de màrqueting de l'organització estudiada, s'han realitzat entrevistes en persona i per telèfon amb el personal de l'OCC, en la seva majoria semiestructurades. També s'ha utilitzat la comunicació per correu electrònic i s'ha estudiat el material que la gent d'Onassis Stegi ha compartit amb l'investigador (anàlisi descriptiva de l'objecte d'estudi). A més de l'enfocament qualitatiu, per investigar les actituds, motivacions i percepcions dels consumidors dels productes de l'OCC, s'han

utilitzat cinc grups de discussió, tenint en compte els següents criteris: sexe, edat, educació, residència, freqüència de consum cultural i nivell de familiaritat amb l'OCC. Per les percepcions dels interessats, que també constitueixen l'audiència, s'han utilitzat entrevistes en persona. En totes les ocasions d'entrevistes i comunicació oral, s'ha seguit la gravació d'àudio i la transcripció. Entre d'altres resultats interessants, aquesta recerca ha mostrat que el producte d'una organització cultural juga un paper dominant en el consum de l'audiència. A més, els missatges de comunicació en general ajuden els consumidors a formar una opinió sobre una organització cultural, mentre que els missatges publicitaris actuen més com a recordatoris. La principal motivació dels consumidors de Stegi per assistir a un espectacle cultural és rebre estímuls, socialitzar-se o entretenir-se, mentre que els factors decisius poden ser el contingut de l'espectacle, els col·laboradors de l'espectacle o l'organització cultural. Quasi tots els consumidors identifiquen l'agenda cultural de Stegi amb el teatre i caracteritzen els seus productes com a pioners, contemporanis, diversos i arriscats. Els consumidors consideren les campanyes de ràdio i exteriors de l'organització molt fortes, amb una estètica agradable i un contingut que els intriga. No obstant això, alguns consideren que el contingut és enganyós o difícil de comprendre. Els interessats aproven i aprecien el producte de Stegi, destacant el seu caràcter internacional i el fet que omple els buits en el mercat cultural grec. A més, consideren que Stegi ha construït estratègies de comunicació sòlides durant els seus anys de funcionament i té una identitat de marca forta. Tant els consumidors com els interessats coincideixen en els casos en què els missatges de comunicació de Stegi són enganyosos, creant expectatives falses. Finalment, tots dos grups donen una retroalimentació positiva sobre la quantitat i precisió de la informació que Stegi proporciona a l'audiència.

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## Introduction

### *Presentation of the research project*

Marketing's fundamental objective is to associate the organisation with its target market. The emphasis is given to exchange relationships. The organization creates values that meet customers' needs and customers reciprocate values that contribute to the main objectives of the organization. Marketing will help to create an advantage over competitors and increase profits, as well as market share. The exchange model can be applied to all organizations that have customers and products, as all are involved in one way or another in these exchange relationships (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2001; Boorsma & Chiaravalloti, 2009; François Colbert, 2003; Kotler & Mindak, 1978; Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Different markets (such as services and products or consumer and industrial/business-to-business goods) apply the marketing tools in different ways, depending on their different characteristics, but still, the differences in the tools they use are not major.

Although competition in culture does not exist with the traditional meaning, by the mid-'80s, when the reduction of government funding started being noticed, arts organisations should become less dependent on subsidies and around the '90s they were forced to self-stand and additionally face increasing competition in the leisure sector (decreasing leisure time of people and expanding leisure activities). This was the time they started adapting marketing as a tool for earning more and increasing audiences. Moreover, at that time funders became more demanding, and they preferred to sponsor accountable organisations that were effectively applying marketing strategies (Boorsma & Chiaravalloti, 2009; Kirchner, Markowski, & Ford, 2007; Rentschler, 1998; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Voss & Voss, 2000; Zaharie, 2014).

On top of that, the nature of the arts industry, which fits into the service industry, is demanding a different approach to the application of marketing tools. The inherently different characteristics that make arts unique are the high rates of intangible and artistic innovation, as well as the discontinuous innovation of arts, and the rising resource and operating costs. Their nature usually prevents them from being independent, surviving on their own income and achieving significant productivity gains. Moreover, the productivity inflexibility of the industry leads to inherent market failure. Given this atypical nature and the fact they depend on donations, many times the artistic standpoint or integrity is sacrificed on the altar of financial health. Arts marketing can be used to help arts organisations to achieve both commercial and artistic objectives (Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Hausmann, 2012; Kirchner, Markowski, & Ford, 2007; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Rentschler, 1998; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Voss & Voss, 2000). But, the lack of marketing strategies is less related to this atypical nature of the industry and more to factors such as poor training, poor funding and long history of using public relations and



advertising, neglecting to “leverage the full range of marketing strategies and tools” (Kirchner et al., 2007, p. 103).

This research will deal with performing arts organisations that share many qualities with non-profit organisations. Those serve a number and range of stakeholders, they provide credence or experience goods, and their audiences invest emotionally in these goods. Additionally, the product they offer includes the performers and the audiences as well. Culture and arts organisations today recognise the contribution of marketing to achieve business objectives. Nevertheless, this was achieved relatively recently -in the early 90s- as the customer-oriented nature of marketing originally contrasted with the noble motives of art and culture. The term arts marketing was established and the relevant departments were incorporated into cultural organizations (Coleman, Jain, Bahnan, & Chene, 2019; Lee, 2005; McDonald & Harrison, 2002). It is observed that while marketing initially was perceived as an operational tool in arts, evolved into business philosophy and strategy. The need for new and more socially diverse audiences, the required accountability towards the funders, the need for rational accounting and managerial criteria, the responsible and objective decision-making and the need to target audiences were pushing cultural managers to acquire marketing skills, recognise the applicability of marketing to non-profit organisations and led to the flourishing of arts marketing (Rentschler, 1998)

Much has been written about the advantages of customer-oriented marketing strategies (Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Voss & Voss, 2000); a better understanding of customers, leads to customer satisfaction and consequently firm’s performance (Blackwell et al., 2001; Voss & Voss, 2000). Scheff and Kotler (Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Scheff & Kotler, 1996) note that a customer-centred arts organisation is aware of the consumer needs and wants, tries to satisfy them protecting at the same time its artistic vision, markets the whole experience focusing on the customer, acting within the limits of the budget. The authors mention also that the targeted audience is always chosen by the organisation. Hence, even if for any reason the organisation is not willing to change the agenda/selected products, it can choose an audience that is keen on the selected artworks and should try to satisfy its needs and wants on other levels. It can be customer-centred on the description of the artwork, the packaging, pricing, and delivery.

Product, Price, Place and Promotion are the 4Ps of the marketing mix that can and should apply also in arts organisations<sup>1</sup>. This research focuses on the last P. For many decades effective communication has been linked to effective and successful organisations. Communication has the double role of

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<sup>1</sup> We should always consider that the characteristics of 4Ps in arts industry might slightly differ from the ones in business industry. For instance, the cultural product is not just a normal product, it has also artistic value. But all these will be analysed in the theoretical framework of this thesis.

informing potential customers and persuading them to buy. The most important means of communication (communication mix) are the following: personal selling, advertising, promotion, public relations, and direct marketing (Bernstein, 2007; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Jensen & Jepsen, 2006; Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012).

In this research, I support that arts communication consists of Mediated Communication in Arts and Arts Communication Services and Support (adapted by Pedersen et al. (2017). The arts organisations are called to decide what is the message, who is the receiver, and “determine the optimal way of reaching the target segments”(Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 239). The organisation should have enough information about their target audiences, information regarding their cultural consumption, their “arts attendance decisions, interests, needs and satisfaction levels” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 69). Consumers’ behaviour can be influenced by several factors, such as cultural, social, personal, psychological or macroenvironmental trends, all analysed in detail in the main body of this research (Assael, 2013; Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2001; Hill, O’Sullivan, & O’Sullivan, 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

Arts organisations, to spread the messages and approach the targets successfully, should be aware of the targets’ decision-making process, which consists of five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase or post-consumption evaluation (Ciceo, 2012; Hill et al., 1995; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). This research deals with a Greek case study, Onassis Cultural Centre in Athens (OCC) or else Onassis Stegi, hence information about the cultural sector in Greece, and the cultural and media consumption is mentioned briefly. The main selection criteria for this case study were the multifaceted involvement of this organization in arts, its position in the Athenian cultural scene, as well as the wide range of arts marketing tools it uses. Additionally, it has a very strong presence in the weekly agenda of some popular cultural or news e-magazines, compared to other cultural organisations. Its artistic agenda has a contemporary character and follows European but also Greek trends. It counts numerous collaborations with international groups and it hosts performances also for non-Greek-speaking audiences. OCC is an organisation with intrinsic value and it is regularly running research on audiences and performance of the organisation, hiring research companies. Given the fact that in Greece there is a scarcity of research on audiences’ cultural behaviour, it was considered very useful to examine a case study that has already invested in a better understanding of its audiences {e.g. MRB (2015)}, offering a secure environment for this kind of investigation.

The aim of this research is to focus its attention on two main issues, the communication strategies of cultural organisations and the consumers’ perceptions. Firstly, it analyses the marketing strategies and especially the communication ones of OCC, based on interviews with OCC’s personnel, content

analysis and observation. Secondly, it conducts qualitative research based on focus groups, on how consumers of Onassis Stegi perceive the communication strategies of the organisation, and how these perceptions affect consumers' cultural consumption. This particular design, which crosses information from varied sources, expects to find the effect of arts marketing on cultural consumption.

### *Objectives and Research Questions*

I am a person that loves travelling and has lived in many foreign countries, I have explored different cultures, and I always find it interesting to contribute to the increase of cultural consumption in different contexts. In my postgraduate thesis, this was done through the exploration of methods that cultural organisations could adopt to engage their audiences. In this PhD thesis, I found it extremely interesting to explore the boundaries of arts marketing strategies and their effect on cultural consumption.

Although the research in arts marketing started evolving in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (it was limited even at the beginning of 'the 90s), arts organisations even today neglect "the wider range of marketing tools and activities" (Kirchner et al., 2007, p. 105) and they focus on advertising and public relations. Both the scarcity of skills and their inexperience make arts organisations underdeveloped in the area of marketing (Fillis, 2011; Kirchner et al., 2007; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Rentschler, 1998). I believe that more and more examples of successful application of marketing strategies from cultural organisations can help new, newer or future organisations to evolve and meet the needs of today's reality. Onassis Stegi in Athens is one of the few organisations in Athens that applies such a wide spectrum of arts marketing tools. Besides, from a scientific point of view, it is always beneficial to conduct and present new-updated research on a specific field, in this case, the arts marketing field.

Furthermore, in the context where the research takes place, Greece, there is not enough research on cultural consumption; specifically, there are very few. People, academics, researchers, professionals and more would be interested to read such things. The cultural organizations in Greece are hidden, in a sense, they do not wish to participate in any research not to reveal their bad box office numbers, their bad ranking, or on the contrary their high ticket numbers. The ministry of culture or any other related ministry does not take action to create structures and bodies in order to force the cultural organizations to go through an audit, share data, and categorise its public (according to demographics, social criteria and so on).

This is a single case study of one cultural organisation. It investigates the marketing strategies of Onassis Stegi, how they are perceived by its audiences, and how audiences' perceptions affect their cultural consumption. Because it is a single case study, I will not be able to make generalisations from my evidence. Nevertheless, new data about the cultural consumption models in Athens will be added

to the research literature, cultural organisations will benefit from this analysis, which will help them create their own successful marketing strategies, emphasising some points and avoiding others.

The main objectives of this research, have been already pointed out briefly in the previous presentation of the research project, and can be summarised as follows:

**Main Research Objective A:** Improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption

**Main Research Objective B:** Study attitudes, motivations and perceptions of Onassis Stegi's audiences

Each of these main research objectives is divided into several research objectives that will lead to the research questions this study intends to answer.

Regarding the main research objective A, the secondary objectives and the research questions are:

**Secondary Objective A1:** Comprehend the marketing mix tools (4Ps) that Onassis Stegi applies

**Research question A1a:** What are the product, price and place strategies OCC uses?

**Research question A1b:** What are the communication strategies (4th P) OCC uses to promote its cultural programming and the brand of Onassis Stegi itself?

**Secondary Objective A2:** Improve knowledge on how the 4Ps of a cultural organisation affect audiences' cultural consumption, including the decision-making process that leads to it.

**Research question A2a:** Do the product, price and place influence audiences during their decision-making process to consume arts?

**Research question A2b:** How do the communication strategies (4th P) of a cultural organisation affect audiences' decision-making process for cultural consumption?

The secondary objectives and the research questions of the main research objective B are:

**Secondary Objective B1:** Comprehend the motivations of Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture in general

**Research question B1:** What motivates Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture?

**Secondary Objective B2:** Understand the opinion of OCC's consumers about the product, price and place strategies of Onassis Stegi

**Research question B2:** How the product, price and place of OCC are perceived by consumers?

**Secondary Objective B3:** Gain knowledge of the opinion of Onassis Stegi's consumers regarding the organisation's communication strategies

**Research question B3:** How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by consumers?

**Secondary Objective B4:** Comprehend the link between the perceptions of OCC’s consumers and their consumption of OCC’s products

**Research question B4:** How do consumers’ perceptions affect their consumption behaviour regarding Onassis Stegi’s products?

**Secondary Objective B5:** Explore the opinion of stakeholders regarding Onassis Stegi’s cultural product and communication strategies, and link it to consumers’ opinion

**Research question B5a:** How the product of Onassis Stegi is perceived by stakeholders?

**Research question B5b:** How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by stakeholders?

**Research question B5c:** What are the similarities and differences between consumers’ and stakeholders’ perceptions of Stegi’s products and communication strategies?

Below, the detailed conceptual map of research objectives and questions is presented.

MAIN RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	Secondary Objectives	Research Questions
A- Improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption	A1- Comprehend the marketing mix tools (4Ps) that Onassis Stegi applies	RQA1a- What are the product, price and place strategies OCC uses?
		RQA1b- What are the communication strategies (4 <sup>th</sup> P) OCC uses to promote its cultural programming and the brand of Onassis Stegi itself?
	A2- Improve knowledge on how the 4Ps of a cultural organisation affect audiences’ cultural consumption, including the decision-making process that leads to it.	RQA2a- Do the product, price and place influence audiences during their decision-making process to consume arts?
		RQA2b- How do the communication strategies (4 <sup>th</sup> P) of a cultural organisation affect audiences’ decision-making process for cultural consumption?
B-Study attitudes, motivations and	B1- Comprehend the motivations of Onassis Stegi’s consumers to consume culture in general	RQB1- What motivates Onassis Stegi’s consumers to consume culture?

perceptions of Onassis Stegi's audiences	B2- Understand the opinion of OCC's consumers about the product, price and place strategies of Onassis Stegi	RQB2- How the product, price and place of OCC are perceived by consumers?
	B3- Gain knowledge of the opinion of Onassis Stegi's consumers regarding the organisation's communication strategies	RQB3- How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by consumers?
	B4- Comprehend the link between the perceptions of OCC's consumers and their consumption of OCC's products	RQB4- How do consumers' perceptions affect their consumption behaviour regarding Onassis Stegi's products?
	B5- Explore the opinion of stakeholders regarding Onassis Stegi's cultural product and communication strategies, and link it to consumers' opinion	RQB5a- How the product of Onassis Stegi is perceived by stakeholders?
		RQB5b- How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by stakeholders?
		RQB5c- What are the similarities and differences between consumers' and stakeholders' perceptions of Stegi's products and communication strategies?

Table 1. Conceptual map of research objectives and questions

## Research Design

This research is divided into three sections: *Section I. Theoretical and Methodological Design*, *Section II. Results and Interpretation*, and *Section III. Conclusions and Perspectives Beyond*. Section I includes four chapters. It starts with Chapter 1, introducing the theoretical perspective of marketing, the current debates in academia regarding marketing and public relations, the emergence of arts marketing, and the reasons why its application from cultural organisations is even today incomplete or poorly implemented. The chapter ends by focusing on the decision-making stages of consumers when they want to consume culture. It is important to mention that in the debate between marketing and public relations theorists, this research is aligned with the marketing theory, which considers PR as part of it. Chapter 2 focuses on communication in arts, presenting some models that can describe in an explanatory way how the fourth element of the marketing mix, communication (or else promotion), applies and contributes to arts. Chapter 3 analyses the audiences of performing arts, as this research concentrates on this art category. It gives more information about the decision-making process of the consumers and the factors that affect it. It also presents the prevailing attendance patterns. Chapter 4 focuses on the context of the society the case study organisation belongs to, that

is Greece. It presents the Greek picture through the cultural sector and cultural and media consumption. Chapter 5, the last one of this section I, describes in a detailed way the methodological issues of this research. It starts with the overall design and continues with the descriptive analysis of the case study organisation, Onassis Stegi, and qualitative approaches used with the consumers of Stegi and its stakeholders.

*Section II. Results and Interpretation* consists of three chapters. Chapter 6 presents in detail the case study of this research, the cultural organisation Onassis Stegi, its marketing strategies, drawing evidence from the qualitative research (in the form of interviews) with Stegi's key personnel, and the content analysis of material mainly provided by Onassis Stegi. Chapter 7 focuses on Onassis Stegi's consumer research using focus groups and presents participants' perceptions about the organisation's marketing strategies, as well as the effects of these perceptions on their consumer behaviour. In the same way, but using personal interviews, Chapter 8 presents stakeholders' points of view. It is worthy to mention that both stakeholders and consumers are considered Stegi's audiences.

*Section III. Conclusions and Perspectives Beyond* is the last section of this research and includes Chapter 9. In this, I present the conclusions of this research, combined with theory, previous research, Onassis Stegi's practices, and the researcher's perspective. I identify and report the elements that link the organization's strategies, audiences' perceptions and cultural consumption. The conclusions cover all the main and secondary objectives, as well as the research questions. Finally, the conclusions of this research are approached in a holistic way that leads to a long-awaited discussion that presents the researcher's opinion combined with perspectives beyond. Every chapter of this doctoral thesis fulfils the purpose of the general research design.

# SECTION I - THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND



## 1. Chapter 1\_Marketing

This chapter, as part of the literature review, presents the theoretical perspective of marketing and the current debates in academia regarding marketing and public relations. It is worth mentioning that in the debate between marketing and public relations theorists, this research is aligned with the marketing theory, which considers PR as part of it. The main body of the chapter deals with the emergence of arts marketing and the adaptation of marketing tools for arts industry, based on the nature of the latter. It also refers to the reasons why the application of marketing from cultural organisations is even today incomplete or poorly implemented. The chapter ends with the decision-making process through which consumers pass when they want to consume culture.

### 1.1. Definition of Marketing

“Marketing is both a business philosophy and an action-oriented process” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 4). “Marketing is art and science at the same time (Hunt, 1991 & Bass, 1993 in Colbert, 2003). Its fundamental purpose is to connect the organisation with the market to which is addressed. Marketing tools are designed to find and implement the objectives of the organization and the consumer” (Colbert, 2003, p. 30). Simkin (2000) though disagrees, claiming that marketing cannot be considered a science, because “there is no single correct definition or approach to undertaking marketing” (p. 156).

Kotler and Scheff (1997) define marketing as “the process by which an organisation relates creatively, productively, and profitably to the marketplace, with the goal of creating and satisfying customers within the parameters of the organisation’s objectives” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 31). “Marketing involves answering deeper questions such as, Who is the customer? What does the customer value? and How can we create more value for the customer” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 32). Furthermore, Kotler and Scheff (1997) define marketing management [or market-driven or market-focused management as per Lambin & Schuiling (2012)] as “the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of programs designed to create, build, and maintain beneficial exchange relationships with target audiences for the purpose of achieving the marketer’s objectives” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p31). In the same concept, in 1973 the management guru Peter Drucker defined marketing as below: “The aim of marketing is to make selling superfluous. The aim is to know and to understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him/her and sells itself” (Simkin, 2000, p. 156) (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Blackwell et al., 2001; P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978; Simkin, 2000).

The key to these definitions is the emphasis on exchange relationships. The main idea is that the organization creates values that meet customers’ needs; while in return, customers reciprocate values that contribute to the main objectives of the organization. Marketing is not achieved simply through

the application of communication theory but through the combination of exchange and communication theory (P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978). Additionally, marketing will help to create an advantage over competitors and increase profits, as well as market share. The primary concern of marketing is to optimize the exchange relationships and its ultimate goal is to influence behaviour, so marketers might use the tools of other specialists, to succeed in it. Kotler & Scheff (1997) claimed that the exchange model can be applied to all organizations that have customers and products, as all are involved in one way or another in these exchange relationships (Boorsma & Chiaravalloti, 2009; P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Simkin (2000), agreed on that stating that “marketing is marketing, with common objectives processes and tools, irrespective of the market in question” (p. 157). But, the way that different markets apply the tools of marketing depends on the characteristics of each market. Services and products are good examples of different markets, with services being intangible and more complex, as there is a direct relationship between organisations and consumers, with the last ones participating in the production process. For services marketers, the difference is not limited to the way the marketing mix<sup>2</sup> is used, but they see a need for its extension (Simkin, 2000). Nevertheless, the majority of the academic and professional world claims that the differences between marketing consumer goods and industrial/business-to-business goods are not major.

Even if marketing exists as a discipline for more than 60 years there is still an ambiguity in its definition that creates issues both in the teaching and the implementation of marketing. Some professionals and organisations confuse or equate marketing with sales, branding, advertising or communication (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). As Lambin & Schuiling (2012) mention, this conceptual looseness is unworthy of an ambitious, scientific and academic, discipline.

The early evolution of marketing included the functions of selling, advertising, and marketing research. Later on, other functions such as the 4Ps and customer orientation were added and they all came under the umbrella of the marketing department (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). The early evolution of Public Relations (PR), included contact, publicity and research (Kotler & Mindak, 1978), and all these came under the public relations department. “Over time, the public relations department developed further subspecialties dealing with each public (stockholders, neighbours, employees, customers, government agencies) and each tool (conferences, publicity, graphics, etc.)”(P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978, p. 16).

“Perhaps the first work on the interaction between marketing and public relations was conducted by Kotler and Mindak (1978), who proposed five separate organizational orientations, including

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<sup>2</sup> Marketing mix “is the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 42) and will be analysed in the next chapter.

marketing dominant, public relations dominant, and equal and overlapping functions” (Smith, 2012, p. 601). Kotler and Mindak (1978, p. 17) supported that “marketing exists to sense, serve, and satisfy customer needs at a profit. Public relations exists to produce goodwill in the company's various publics so that these publics do not interfere with the firm's profit-making ability.

## 1.2. Marketing vs PR

It is considered important to present here the controversy that exists between marketing and PR, as this will make clearer the school that this research follows, which is marketing. For this purpose, it is necessary to mention how PR emerged.

At the beginning of the 20th century, public relations (PR) emerged as a formal occupation, although even from the previous century it was present in several aspects of life, such as entertainment. Consumerism along with capitalism created a fertile ground for PR that came to make people want things they didn't need, based on Freud's unconscious mind. One of the memorable campaigns in the US was that for women's smoking by Edward Bernays, who linked women's liberation with smoking. Tobacco companies started in that era producing more and they required a broader target; women were the missing target and liberation was the right message to make them want what they didn't need. The inspirer of this message was also the conceiver of the term 'public relations', coined in the US, with the country having “the largest PR industry in the world” while the UK comes second. “Most European public relations practitioners believe that European PR is broader, public-oriented rather than business-oriented, more long-term and less profit-oriented than that in the US or UK” (Ruler et al., 2001 cited in Gordon, 2011, p. 20). PR strategies though are changing depending on the nation and the specific characteristics and culture (Gordon, 2011).

PR might use also third parties, people who support the organisation without belonging to it, to influence opinions and behaviours. “PR has a great role in democracy” (Gordon, 2011, p. 12), giving space for dissenting voices to be expressed. Nevertheless, it is “considered that PR started as propaganda” (Gordon, 2011, p. 12), supporting the communicator's one and only message. But, formerly, propaganda's meaning was more closely to the propagation of the faith<sup>3</sup>. As postmodernism criticises the one single truth of modernism, likewise Neo-PR opposes the “one voice, one message” tactic. On the contrary, Neo-PR believes in diversity in messages and, by extension, diversity in publics/audiences (not conflicting messages, just diverse) (Caldiero, 2015).

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<sup>3</sup> “Propaganda overlaps with persuasion, as both describe how people are influenced”, but persuasion has been defined “as getting another person to do something through advice, reasoning or just plain arm twisting” (Seitel, 2011, p. 56 in Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 259). Persuasion “usually takes place when messages change the cognitive representations in the minds of publics—representations they typically call images, reputations, brands, impressions, perceptions, or similar names” (Grunic, 2009, p. 4).

Four public relations models<sup>4</sup> that represent the different ways public relations is used, were identified by Grunig and Hunt in 1984 (in Gordon, 2011). First on chronological order comes the press agency model (19<sup>th</sup> century) that reflects one-way communication, where the truth is exaggerated and the feedback from the public is not considered important. In this model, the organisation has no plans for change (Gordon, 2011). This model is considered by Grunig (2009) “the least effective” (p.2 para.2). The model of the early 20<sup>th</sup>, the public information model, is again one-way communication, with the difference that the truth is considered important, while the feedback remains unimportant. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup>, the two-way asymmetric (or asymmetrical) model was used to influence the public’s behaviour; that is why it was considering its views, to develop persuasive messages without changing the organisation’s behaviour. For this model, persuasion is a key tool (Gordon, 2011; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Pedersen, Laucella, Kian, & Geurin, 2017).

The last introduced (the 1960s-1970s) was the two-way symmetric (or symmetrical) model, which is considered the ideal and most ethical model for PR, where power is equally distributed (Gordon, 2011; Windahl, Signitzer, & Olson, 2009 in Gordon, 2011). Unlike the other models, this one invites dialogue between the organisation and its public, as well as mutual understanding from both parties. Adjustment of attitudes might need to manage conflicts (Gordon, 2011; Pedersen et al., 2017). Social media can be a great potential for this model of communication, according to Grunig (2009). He also includes this model of communication in his generic principles of PR and mentions that research, listening and dialogue are this model’s tools (Grunig, 2009).

Caldiero (2015) introduces the term Neo-PR to describe the new era of PR, considering all the drastic changes of the last decades. Neo-PR has a more important role inside the organisation, instead of the “just a function” role that traditional public relations had. It is considered something more complete and autonomous and can be a separate function. The organisation should be represented in several circumstances and individual situations with many voices (Caldiero, 2015; Grunig, 2009). Grunig (2009) and Gordon (2011) agree on this and support two-way symmetric (or else symmetrical) communication (Gordon, 2011; Grunig, 2009).

According to Gordon (2011) and her sources, reputation is an organisation’s greatest asset and public relations look after reputation, to communicate interactively with the organisation’s various publics. As Gordon uses the word “reputation”, likewise Grunig uses the same instead of the word “image”, which he dislikes. On the contrary, Kotler, coming from a marketing background, is fun of “image”.

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<sup>4</sup> Or communication models in a sense of communication between organisation and publics (Gordon, 2011).

Grunig (1993), wanting to give PR an earthly dimension, supports that “image suggests that PR deals with shadows and illusions rather than reality” (p. 264).

Although for marketing, PR is part of the communications/promotion mix and more specifically is a synonym for publicity, PR academics do not share the same point of view. For them, “PR is an umbrella discipline that spans advertising and marketing” (Gordon, 2011, p. 24). Grunig (2009) and Caldiero (2015) do not support the traditional paradigm, which wants PR as a marketing communication function and has the illusion that controls communication between organisations and audiences. Practitioners who follow this paradigm usually prefer using the word audiences instead of publics, as it shows more passiveness. Moreover, this paradigm believes in persuasion and therefore in the asymmetrical model (Grunig, 2009). Gordon (2011) mentions though that Grunig also believes that the symmetric model requires “persuasion and negotiation but also demands that both parties listen to each other and build understanding” (p.57). For Grunig (2009 & 2006), PR is equal to communication. His generic principles of PR consider the chief communication officer responsible for the PR. He holds the opinion that PR should not be considered as a supporting tool for other departments (e.g. marketing), but it should be an integrated communication function, involved in strategic management, as PR “develops programmes to communicate with strategic publics, both external and internal” (Grunig, 2009, p. 2). He supports that PR is a strategic management function that differs from messaging, publicity and media relations functions (Grunig, 2006, p. 1).

Additionally, there is a model that divides PR Management into four axes: business, journalistic, corporate and social area. The business or commercial area is related to the market and looks after sales. The journalistic area concerns media and all the actions taken to communicate everything to it, as well as creates relations with it. The corporate area is about managing the brand, communicating internally and doing public affairs. Finally, the social area concerns the society, the community, the social responsibility of the company and the sponsorship (Ginesta & Ordeix, 2012). Cutlip, Center and Broom (1994), in their attempt to differentiate marketing and PR function, claim that marketing “focuses on exchange relationships with customers” (p. 8), while PR “covers a broad range of relationships and goals with many publics” (p. 8). These publics come in convergence with the four axes of the model presented above and include “employees, investors, neighbours, special-interest groups, governments, and many more” (Cutlip et al., 1994, p. 8). Marketing identifies human needs, translates them into demand, offers products and services to satisfy demand and, after the consumer’s selection, marketers deliver them in exchange for something valuable. Marketing, through this transaction with customers, which differentiates it from PR, attempts to achieve the organisation’s economic goals (Cutlip et al., 1994).

Integrated Marketing Communication (from now on IMC), which emerged in the 1990s, also works on the consumer's decision-making journey and tries to figure out how communications work over this journey. It differs from traditionally programmed communications and it stretches on whatever consumers carry with them and the different ways they receive and interpret messages (Batra & Keller, 2016; Blackwell et al., 2001). Although traditional marketing focused on transactions, one-way communication and persuasion, IMC "is focused on relationship marketing approach based on communication" (Porcu, Barrio-Garcia, & Kitchen, 2012, p. 316), based on a consumer-oriented perspective (Porcu et al., 2012). But IMC paradigm is still "unclear in terms of definition and limits of application, since it is relatively new" (Porcu et al., 2012, p. 317). "Academics variously define IMC as a process, a philosophy, and a tactical and strategic tool within marketing and, more recently extended to corporate and organisational domains" (Muñoz-Leiva, Porcu, & Barrio-García, 2015, p. 678). Nowadays, IMC is generally accepted by academics as a practice in the marketing communications field (Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2015). The relationship between IMC and PR is very much controversial according to Kliatchko's research in 2008 (in Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2015). More recently, Integrated Communication (from now on IC) appeared and was defined as the "extension of IMC to a more corporate and organisational concept, dropping the 'marketing' term from its very name and definition" (Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2015, p. 690). According to the research in IMC literature from Muñoz-Leiva et al. (2015), there is a strong relationship between the topic PR and IC, which derived from "the historical debate between marketing and public relations disciplines regarding the locus of integration (public relations or marketing)" (Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2015, p. 690). The same research (Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2015) claimed that "IMC does not display a connection with PR" (p. 692) "and the linkage between Integrated Communications and Marketing is fairly weak" (p. 694). These findings reflect the IMC and PR controversies.

Since the emergence of IMC, PR academics "have criticized its theoretical value, arguing that IMC was another expression of 'the imperialism of marketing'. They didn't want marketing as the locus of integration and they preferred the term IC<sup>5</sup> "to respond to the expanded understanding that integration involves the communication as a whole" (Muñoz-Leiva et al., 2015, p. 695).

The aim of this research is not to solve the controversy between marketing and PR and define their "fuzzy boundaries" (P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978, p. 13), but to investigate the communication strategies that an arts organisation -OCC<sup>6</sup>- follows, to communicate with media and consumers. The research, based on the literature, will note down these strategies as well as how the organisation names them

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<sup>5</sup> Integration is initiated as a top-down management process but operates from the bottom up (Smith, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> Onassis Cultural Centre.

and where it classifies them. As non-profit organisations by definition do not have economic objectives as a priority (economic objectives are something that marketing could serve more successfully), this research will focus more on the building and maintaining of the relationships with media and consumers, hence-seeing it from this perspective-someone can claim it might suit better here the use of PR model. Nevertheless, the emergence of arts marketing happened when subsidies and governmental funds were drastically reduced and arts organisations had to find a way to survive. Hence, even this kind of organisation needs consumers and consumption. This research is also interested in the successful practices that marketing uses to attract consumers, and attract them to spread arts, but also to sell tickets; the main point though in arts, as cultural organisations do not survive from ticket sales, is the communication of the artistic projects. As Cutlip et al. (1994) mention, PR and marketing are two different functions that each contribute to an organisation’s survival and growth, but their cooperation and harmonic coexistence can have even better results. Grunig and Grunig (1998) agree on that noting that those functions should “remain distinct and coordinated yet not integrated” (p. 142). It is worth quoting below Kotler’s and Mindak’s (1978) classification scheme, which despite its age, “still provides the neatest comparison points” (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 110) and “remains the most widely used in literature on the topic” (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 109).<sup>7</sup>

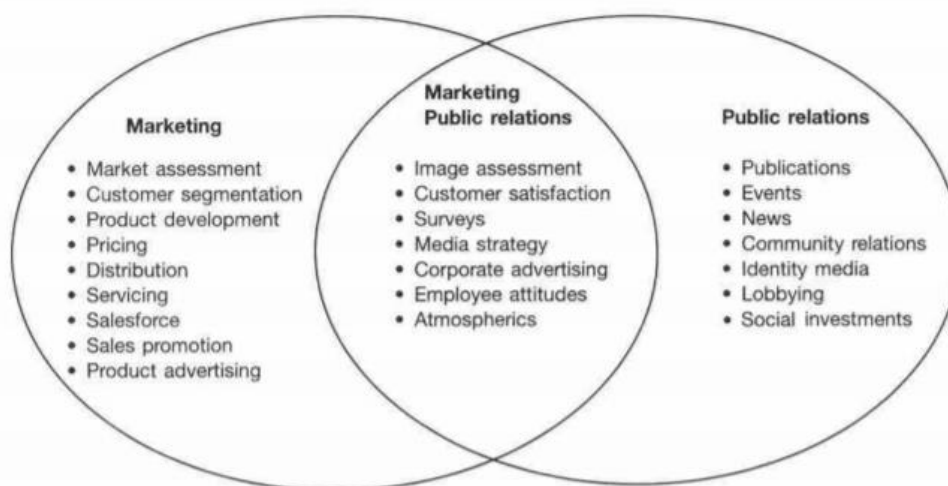


Figure 1. Marketing & Public Relations (Source: McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p.110)

Effective PR contributes to marketing “by maintaining a hospitable social and political environment. Likewise, successful marketing and satisfied customers make good relations with others easier to build

<sup>7</sup> Marketing researchers, wanting to separate PR, have previously cope up with Marketing Public Relations (MPR) and Corporate Public Relations (CPR). The term MPR though is not recognised by the PR supporters/advocates (P. J. Kitchen & Moss, 1995; Smith, 2012).

and maintain” (Cutlip et al., 1994, p. 8). Rationally speaking, if the PR of an organisation is successful creates the preconditions that a marketing department needs to attract customers, and if marketing is successful, providing products and services in such a way that keeps customers satisfied, makes the job of PR easier; both functions -being interdependent- should align and interrelate in specific ways, depending on the specific objectives and needs of each organisation (Cutlip et al., 1994; Hutton, 2010; P. J. Kitchen & Moss, 1995; P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978; Smith, 2012). Kitchen and Moss (1995) though dared to note that even if “both PR and Marketing are necessary in today's large multi-faceted organisations, Marketing is still charged with the responsibility to create exchanges” (p. 1).

### 1.3. The Nature of Arts Industry

The legal status of non-profit and for-profit organisations is different, mainly because non-profit (public or private) seek objectives other than “commercial benefits (profit) and are exempted from paying fees” (Zaharie, 2014, p. 70). Cultural organisations, in the past, were typically non-commercial institutions with non-profit goals. Nowadays this is changing and there are many private, commercial, and for-profit arts organisations. This research though will deal with those that share many qualities with non-profit organisations. Performing arts organisations “cannot be managed similarly to for-profit or non-artistic non-profit organisations with inherently different characteristics” (Kirchner et al., 2007, p. 96). They have rising resource and operating costs. Their nature usually prevents them from being independent, surviving on their own income and achieving significant productivity gains. Moreover, the productivity inflexibility of the industry leads to market failure that is inherent. Given this atypical nature and the fact they depend on donations, many times the artistic standpoint or integrity is sacrificed on the altar of financial health (Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Kirchner et al., 2007; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Rentschler, 1998; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Voss & Voss, 2000). In a research conducted by McDonald and Harrison (2002) among performing arts presenters in Australia, many organisations “recognised that they have conflicting goals with which to deal, such as artistic vision and government funding requirements” (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 112) or for them, “specific marketing activities {...} were perceived to be at odds with the creative goals of the organisation” (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 113). In other words it is observed a “dichotomy in commercial and artistic objectives” (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 114), but essentially we end up with that “marketing can be used to help them achieve both” (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 114). But, the lack of marketing strategies is less related to this atypical nature of the industry and more to factors such as poor training, poor funding and long history of using PR.

Although arts organisations share characteristics with other non-profit but also with for-profit organisations, they have some features that differentiate them. Firstly they fit in the service industry



(Rentschler, 1998; Voss & Voss, 2000) and serve a number and range of stakeholders<sup>8</sup>. Kirchner et al. (2007), following Rentschler, Radbourne, Carr, & Rickard (2002), mention that the goods they provide are credence or experience goods, “due to the inherently abstract and intangible nature of the experience offered by these organisations” (Coleman, Jain, Bahnan, & Chene, 2019, p. 24) and the audiences invest emotionally on these goods. “In most cases, attendees can only assess the quality of the performance after ‘consumption’ (experience attributes), and in some cases, even ex-post judgment of quality is difficult (credence attributes)” (Coleman et al., 2019, p. 24). Additionally, the product they offer includes the performers but the audience as well; focusing on performing arts<sup>9</sup>, performance without an audience is not theatre, it is just a rehearsal (Brook, 1972; Kirchner et al., 2007; Scheff & Kotler, 1996), and the exchange that takes place between performers and spectators involve them in a mutual communication (Grant, 2002; Kim & Tucker, 2016). Unlike the visual arts, where “the artistic product is directly perceived by the viewer” (Zaharie, 2014, p.74), the relationship between the artistic product and the consumer is “being mediated by the circumstances” (Botti, 2000, p. 19) (e.g. space, facilities, exhibition arrangement), in performing arts, “the artistic message is not directly experienced by the audience since it is ‘mediated’ by the performers” (Zaharie, 2014, p.74), “it is interpreted and represented” (Botti, 2000, p. 15); “there is a ‘dual mediation’ “ (Botti, 2000, p. 19), the way of performing influences the interpretation. In both arts though, the emotional reaction of the consumer is influenced by personal factors and the “circumstances in which the experience takes place” (Botti, 2000, p. 19)<sup>10</sup>, and audiences in both cases have different perceptions and “apply their own meanings to the artworks, based on the emotions they felt” (Zaharie, 2014, p. 74); arts is about subjectivity (Botti, 2000)<sup>11</sup>.

Other features that make arts unique are the high rates of intangible and artistic innovation, as well as the discontinuous innovation of arts (Hausmann, 2012; Kirchner et al., 2007; Voss & Voss, 2000), unlike the business sector, where innovation “leads to opportunities in increasing profits” (Fillis, 2011, p. 5) and the risks are commercial. In arts, the risks are “aligned to the creativity, ideas and design of the artwork” (Fillis, 2011, p. 5). The goals are also different. Arts aim at “the aesthetic growth of the

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<sup>8</sup>Kirchner et al. (2007), following Gainer (1989), states that these stakeholders are “audiences, corporate (public and private) donors, individual donors, performers, and governments” (p. 101).

<sup>9</sup> Feist (1998, p. 29) defined performing arts as “live performance of drama, mime, puppet theatre, comedy, all forms of music, and all forms of dance”, while Ciceo (2012), cites that “live performing arts category consists of: drama theatres, opera houses, musical comedy and variety theatres, philharmonic and symphonic orchestras, ballet and contemporary dance” (p. 1120).

<sup>10</sup> I believe that when Botti (2000) mentions circumstances he could mean all the Ps of marketing, which ensure the quality of the experience-the service provided.

<sup>11</sup> As Botti (2000) notes {but also other authors such as Zaharie (2014), Coleman et al. (2019), etc.} there is subjectivity between different individuals, but even the same individual can feel different emotions on different occasions, even if the artwork is the same. Hence, we reassure that the ‘one-off’ of artistic works does not depend on the ability of reproduction, but on the one-off emotion of each consumer each time he/she interacts with the artwork.

artist and the audience while business goals are economic, materialistic and growth-oriented” (Fillis, 2011, p. 5).

The motto “art for the sake of art” though cannot work, as art loses its essence without the audience. As Peter Brook writes (1972), the only thing that all forms of theatre have in common is the need for an audience. During a performance, performers and spectators “engage in a form of communication or a celebration” (Grant, 2002, p. 10). Hence, the needs of the audience should be taken into consideration and new ways should be discovered to support wider and broader audiences or support the needs of specific audiences. According to Kotler and Scheff (1997), arts organisations must shift their focus to communicating with audience members. The larger and more diverse the audiences are, the healthier and more sustainable the arts organisations are. This can be succeeded through better use of marketing procedures or improved approaches, relationship marketing, which is easier and more cost-effective (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008), and response to market forces, which can also lead to the attraction of sponsorships (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Kirchner et al., 2007; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Kirchner et al. (2007), following Scheff and Kotler (1996), mention that the goals of arts organisations should be artistic and fiscal and although to achieve this they should focus on marketing analyses, strategies and campaigns, literature shows that “performing arts organizations traditionally have concentrated on the advertising and public relations aspects of marketing and neglected to leverage the full range of marketing strategies and tools” (Kirchner et al., 2007, p. 103). For example, market orientation, which “implies customer focused segmentation and positioning” (Kirchner et al., 2013, p. 103), is underutilised by these organisations, although it can lead to increased resources, reputation and customer satisfaction. Consequently, audiences and marketing are the components of success for arts organisation; these two aspects with which this research is dealing.

#### 1.4. Arts Integrated Marketing

“From the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, there was an unprecedented proliferation of the number of performing arts organizations, the level of contributions, and the size of their audiences” (Scheff & Kotler, 1996, p. 28). But, from that point on, something like a countdown began, and the growth came to a halt, following the economic recession, the decline of leisure time and other factors. By the mid-'80s<sup>12</sup>, when the reduction of government funding started being noticed -one should not forget that even today “culture is the first when governments are forced to administer cuts” (Inkei, 2019, p. 9), especially in western Europe- arts organisations should become less dependent on subsidies and around '90s they were forced to self-stand and additionally face the increasing competition in the

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<sup>12</sup> Other authors (eg. N. Kotler et al., 2008, Gürel & Nielsen, 2019) place the beginning of cutbacks of public funding, as well as the increase of competition in leisure industry in 1970s.

leisure sector.<sup>13</sup> This was the time they started adapting marketing as a tool for earning more and increasing audiences. Moreover, at that time funders became more demanding, and they preferred to sponsor accountable organisations that were effectively applying marketing strategies (Boorsma & Chiaravalloti, 2009; Cacovean, Peluso, & Plăiaş, 2021; Goulding, 2000; Kirchner et al., 2007; N. Kotler, Kotler, & Kotler, 2008; Rentschler, 1998; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Voss & Voss, 2000; Zaharie, 2014). But, as business and arts differ a lot, including the characteristics of their markets, the way marketing strategies were applied by the business sector could not be the same for the arts industry (Simkin, 2000).

As mentioned in the previous section, well-known authors in the field of marketing have claimed that the exchange model of marketing can be applied to all organizations that have customers and products no matter what the market is (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Simkin, 2000). The cultural industries are not an exception. The audience rates, the income derived from customers and customers' engagement and loyalty are objectives that make arts organizations capable to survive and continue to create works of art in the future (Kotler & Scheff, 1997 & Boorsma, 2006).

Accordingly, marketing and consequently its benefits can be used by organizations of various kinds, regardless of their nature or their purpose (Ciceo, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lee, 2005; Simkin, 2000). However, the basic marketing toolkit is applied differently in different markets, as the characteristics of markets are different (McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Simkin, 2000). Culture and arts organisations today recognise the contribution of marketing to achieve business objectives. Nevertheless, this was achieved relatively recently -in the early 90s- as the customer-oriented nature of marketing originally contrasted with the noble motives of art and culture. The term arts marketing was established and the relevant departments were incorporated into cultural organizations (Coleman et al., 2019; Lee, 2005; McDonald & Harrison, 2002). However, the belief regarding the customer-oriented character mentioned above, continued to exist, giving rise to two conflicting tendencies and a gap between culture and marketing. McDonald and Harrison (2002) mention the argument of some authors [like Kotler & Mindak (1978), Kitchen & Pappasolomou (1997)] "for the adoption of 'marketing public relations' ", focusing "on the specific customer-related aspects of both marketing and public relations to be successful" (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 107).

According to Rentschler (1998) and her examination of 128 marketing articles from 1975 to 1994, the discussion about arts marketing began in 1975<sup>14</sup>. This need for cultural organisations, to change their

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<sup>13</sup> The years after the global financial crisis, culture was the loser of public expenses. The recent years, talking about 2014-2017, the GDP spent on culture has been increased to eastern countries -no more than 1,01% though-, while "fewer and fewer western countries reach the benchmark of half percent of the GDP on an annual basis" (Inkei, 2019, p. 11).

<sup>14</sup> She called the period from 1975 to 1984 *Foundation Period* and the one from 1985 to 1994 *Professionalization Period* (Rentschler, 1998).

approach towards marketing, became more imperative in the '80s, when it was seen through a more professional perspective. They showed great interest in the management practices applied in profit organizations. The continuous pressure for arts organizations to become more responsible and less dependent on government grants, to stimulate public participation and be competitive, led to the adoption of marketing principles. Arts marketing increasingly was spread and this was accompanied by a growing number of academic publications on the subject. It is observed that while marketing initially was perceived as an operational tool in arts, evolved into business philosophy and strategy (Boorsma & Chiaravalloti, 2009; Coleman et al., 2019; Rentschler, 1998; Rentschler et al., 2002).

Initially, during the first decade, marketing was seen as “a seller of culture” (Rentschler, 1998, p. 88) and audience studies emerged; these studies deal with audiences’ profiles, the experience of visitors and market behaviour. Moreover, the need for diversification of arts organisations and their repositioning were mentioned. Additionally, the importance of public relations and marketing mix was considered for the sake of arts consumption. According to Rentschler (1998), marketing is the dominant function<sup>15</sup> and “public relations is seen as socially acceptable marketing, but it is only one form of marketing communications and advertising” (p. 91). It is usually chosen by performing arts organisations due to its low cost, a historical preference for PR, the perceived simplicity of many of its activities and poor training of professionals; but it might need to be used along with other communication tools (McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Rentschler, 1998). For instance, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, McDonald’s and Harrison’s (2002) research showed that the marketing executed by the Australian performing arts presenters was “generally ad hoc and basic”, relying “mainly on public relations” (p. 105); this shows the level of confusion about the role of marketing. Moreover, many organisations in the same research “recognised that they have conflicting goals with which to deal, such as artistic vision and government funding requirements” (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 112) or that “specific marketing activities {...} were perceived to be at odds with the creative goals of the organisation” (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 113).

The fact that this research talks about non-profit arts organisations, doesn’t mean that they are also nonmarket institutions. They have a market to serve (DiMaggio, 1985, in Rentschler, 1998), and this market should be expanded. This was one of the reasons that led to the flourishing of arts marketing. The need for new and more socially diverse audiences, the required accountability towards the funders, the need for rational accounting and managerial criteria, the responsible and objective decision-making and the need to target audiences because of “the increased movement of artists and

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<sup>15</sup> During the foundation period, Kotler & Mindak (1978) had published an article in which they were explaining the evolution of marketing and public relations, juxtaposing the differences between marketing as a dominant function, public relation as dominant and both of them as the same function.

arts works" (Rentschler, 1998, p. 84), were pushing cultural managers to acquire marketing skills, recognise the applicability of marketing to non-profit organisations and embrace entrepreneurship (Rentschler, 1998). Marketing and entrepreneurship are essential for survival, considering always the dichotomy between commercial and non-profit goals, and the effective satisfaction of "both organisational and customer requirements" (McDonald & Harrison, 2002, p. 106).

When the academic world started writing about arts marketing, academics were mentioning the need to analyse and meet customer needs, segment fundraising, be competitive, improve market position, use the marketing mix and face the new reality<sup>16</sup>. During the period that Rentschler (1998) calls "professional" (1985-1994), cultural organisations begin to target and segment audiences and use different strategies for different audiences (Brida, Disegna, & Scuderi, 2013; Rentschler, 1998). Visitors' opinions started being taken into consideration. The new marketplace needs were leading to new strategic demands for arts organisations and the new economic reality demanded financial viability based more on a strong market position. Listen to the public's needs, adapt a popular agenda, reduce the cost, differentiate the product and segment the market, have a clear mission and protect it through subsidies, remain "small and focused, with low fixed costs and little institutionalisation" (Rentschler, 1998, p. 92) were the commonly practised strategies at that time, to meet the marketplace needs (Paul DiMaggio, 1985, in Rentschler, 1998). The professionalization period was also focused on promotion, the role of media and pricing tactics. During the foundation period (1975-1984), marketing implications were not acknowledged, but in professionalization they were, and various marketing models were offered, so the focus became more strategic. Marketing was seen as "a method of repositioning arts organisations in times of change" (Rentschler, 1998, p. 93).

Nevertheless, Fillis (2011) mentions that even at the beginning of the '90s the research in arts marketing was limited, and many aspects, such as high-involvement artistic consumption compared with low-involvement behaviour, were not explored. Everything was in its infancy regarding arts marketing and the efforts were limited or emphasizing a subset of marketing that was direct marketing, public relations, publicity and other promotional tools. Kirchner et al. (2007) agree with that, mentioning that arts organisations traditionally neglect "the wider range of marketing tools and activities" (p. 105) and focus on advertising and public relations. The scarcity of skills and their inexperience make arts organisations underdeveloped in the area of marketing (Kirchner et al., 2007; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Rentschler, 1998).

In the purely market philosophy, the priority of each organisation should be customer satisfaction. In arts, though, things are slightly changing. Arts organisations, to survive, should find the balance

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<sup>16</sup> The new reality refers to financial reality, marketplace reality, as well as environmental changes (Rentschler, 1998).

between satisfying their audiences and serving artistic vision (Cacovean et al., 2021; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Voss & Voss, 2000). “Neither a pure adherence to a market-centred approach nor to an art-centred approach could work in the context of the performing arts, where both the artist and the audience must be considered. {...} At its best, the market-centred decision is highly artistic” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 18; Scheff & Kotler, 1996, p. 38).

Marketing the arts is a complex process that is facing several challenges, especially compared to the commercial world. For the latter, it is easy to be customer-centred, but the purpose of arts organisations is to “expose an artist and his or her work to the widest possible audience”, instead of producing “the artist and the message that the largest audience demands” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p.20). Considering that, arts organisations should create needs according to their products, rather than just adjust their products to the market’s needs (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Voss & Voss, 2000). Consequently, the expansion of their limited size market, through the development and education of the audience, is a tough target to be achieved; it contains financial risk and takes time. Beyond that, it is also difficult to maintain the audience that they have successfully attracted (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). The financial problems and the deficits force arts organisations-especially the smaller ones-to become driven by financial concerns rather than artistic (Kirchner et al., 2007; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997), as mentioned also in the nature of arts.

The leisure time of people has decreased in the last decades (Martinez, Euzéby, & Lallement, 2018; Zaharie, 2014), leisure activities have expanded and the competition between the traditional and the new is taking place. Less expensive forms of entertainment are growing, arts audiences become limited and the share for each arts organisation shrinks. Each leisure industry can be considered a competitor under certain circumstances. Besides that, “the supply of cultural facilities and festivals has multiplied in recent years” (Martinez et al., 2018, p. 60), but the increase in the “supply of cultural offerings does not automatically lead to an increase in demand” (Zaharie, 2014, p. 74). Subsidies and funds that used to exist in the past will not come back soon, hence the audience is all arts organisations have to remain sustainable. Maintaining the current audience and attracting the potential one, is a role that marketing can play; some authors suggest that “whether marketing ‘cultural’ or ‘leisure’ activities, strategies that emphasise reaching the largest possible number of occasional customers are most likely to succeed” (Scriven, Yabar, Clemente, & Bennett, 2015, p. 1). The programming, the mission and the agenda should first be there and then should be marketed. The production of marketing plans will also lead to the obtainment of funds (Avdikos, 2014; Badimaroudis, 2011; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Kirchner et al., 2007; N. Kotler et al., 2008; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Martinez et al., 2018; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Scriven et al., 2015; Voss & Voss, 2000). “A harmonious balance between art-centred and market-centred

perspectives, is a mix that benefits both the suppliers and the consumers of the product” (Scheff & Kotler, 1996, p. 38).

The evolution of marketing orientation in the 20th century includes product, sales and customer orientation, with the latter to be considered the modern approach, according to Kotler and Mindak (1978), as well as Kotler and Scheff (1997). At the beginning of the century, marketers were holding that consumers are looking for quality products and are willing to pay more. During these earliest stages, the essence of marketing was based on what the organisation “wanted to offer”, the so-called “inside-outside marketing” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 34). In the middle of the century, the prevailing approach was that selling and promotion tools will coax consumers to buy more, which is why the role of advertising and personal selling was expanded (P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Although sales-oriented tactics contribute only to short-run results, they are still pervasive today. Since the end of the 20th century, consumers became “more sophisticated”, discerning, more selective, demanding more custom-tailored options (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 41; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 34), and hence less willing to go for anything the market was promoting. The customer-centred approach started gaining ground and the “needs, wants, perceptions, attitudes, preferences and satisfactions” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 34) of customers were placed in the centre of organisations’ marketing management, including performing arts organisations. This led to high satisfied customers/audiences. These customers and the word of mouth, were used as the best and most effective advertising tool, contributed to successful organisations (Blackwell et al., 2001; P. Kotler & Mindak, 1978; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

Much has been written about the advantages of customer-oriented marketing strategies and marketing literature tends to recommend this strategy (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Voss & Voss, 2000). The concept behind this marketing axiom is that a better understanding of customers leads to customer satisfaction-as mentioned above- and consequently the firm’s performance (Blackwell et al., 2001; Voss & Voss, 2000). But, at the stage of the new product research and development, it might be preferable not to listen to customers, as people resist change; hence their imagination will be self-limiting and they will be unable to give creative inputs. Moreover, customers do not have the experience to predict what will “sell” (what people will like). Nevertheless, they can contribute by expressing their opinion about performances/artistic products they have enjoyed in the past (Voss & Voss, 2000; Weir, 2015).

Although “the product development and marketing process for artistic innovations may be different from that of other contexts” (Voss & Voss, 2000, p. 67), the customer orientation concept is still there even for non-profit and artistic organisations. Fiscal viability, therefore firm’s performance, will come from customer orientation, instead of product orientation which is mainly addressed to the high-

culture audience (Andreasen, 1982; Holbrook & Robert, 1985; Voss & Voss, 2000). “Products are defined not on the basis of their objective attributes but on their perceived ability to satisfy the needs of specific market segments” (Botti, 2000, p. 17). Botti (2000) does not support the product-oriented approach of artistic products that is a high and popular art and is based on ‘inherent characteristics’. The supposedly inherent characteristics of the works of art that decide which products are allowed to be considered art and which are not (divide art into highbrow and lowbrow) serve no purpose. Besides, the product-oriented approach that neglects the consumer perspective will not work. “A true marketing approach {...} begins with an examination of the kind of benefits that are sought when art is consumed” (Botti, 2000, p. 17). According to Botti (2000), market-orientation is synonymous with customer orientation and “requires analysis of motivations that drive art consumption” (Botti, 2000, p. 17), in other words, analysis of the needs of consumers. Scheff and Kotler (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Scheff & Kotler, 1996) note that a customer-centred arts organisation is aware of the consumer needs and wants, tries to satisfy them protecting at the same time its artistic vision, markets the whole experience focusing on the customer, acting within the limits of the budget. The authors mention also that the targeted audience is always chosen by the organisation. Hence, even if for any reason the organisation is not willing to change the agenda/selected products, it can choose an audience that is keen on the selected art works and should try to satisfy its needs and wants on other levels. It can be customer-centred on the description of the artworks, the packaging, pricing, delivery. Moreover, the plan of the organisation to be customer-oriented must be communicated first internally, so that everyone is aware of the prevalent philosophy, and the front line people will treat audiences accordingly. Lambin and Schuiling (2012) writing about market-driven management, but not in the specific field of arts, note that supply should be market driven and the process of manufacturing should start with customers’ needs. They also mention that the market orientation concept has two definitions. One is cultural and the other instrumental. Cultural means that a market-oriented organisation puts customer satisfaction first, considering though the other market actors’/stakeholders’ roles in the market. The instrumental function of market orientation is the “set of capabilities, activities and behaviours” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 22), with two types of capabilities, those of strategic marketing and the others of operational.

But, according to Voss & Voss’s (2000) research in the theatre industry, customer orientation has no effect or has a negative effect on a firm’s performance (in terms of increased attendance, increased revenues or improved bottom lines). There are several explanations for why this happens, and they mostly focus on the particularities of arts. Voss & Voss (2000) though define customer orientation as the integration of “customer preferences into the product development and marketing process” (p. 77).



As Voss & Voss (2000) mention, “non-profit professional theatres typically receive a significant portion of their ticket sales and individual donations from a stable base of lead customers, who purchase season subscriptions each year” (p. 72) These frequent theatregoers mostly represent the innovators, early adopters and opinion leaders. They are looking for creative new products and they trust the expertise of the organisation to choose the best and keep them current. Hence, a product-driven strategy suits them better.

Except for these lead consumers, there is also the audience of single-ticket buyers, who generally embrace less -compared to the frequent goers- the values and mission of arts organisations and “attend productions on the basis of positive reviews and word of mouth” (Voss & Voss, 2000, p. 76). But, even in their case, Voss & Voss (2000) prove that “customer orientation has neither a positive nor an adverse effect” (p. 77).

As it was mentioned above in the reasons why the customers in all industries are not the best to contribute to new product development and research, similarly, in a non-profit arts context, you can never be sure how well informed the consumers are so they can creatively suggest a new input in terms of play, director and so forth (Voss & Voss, 2000). Moreover, even if the input is reliable, the artistic creation cannot be ordered, due to its special nature. Instead, directors and artists should be free to express themselves (Fillis, 2011; Voss & Voss, 2000). But even if an artistic creation can embody some good consumers’ inputs, “the implementation of the artistic design does not allow for customization for the different audience segments” (Voss & Voss, 2000, p. 72). Generally speaking, customer preferences in this sector are unpredictable. Hence, the development of season programming based on consumers’ preferences may lead to dissatisfaction among the frequent goers, who trust the expertise of the arts organisation to choose products that will intrigue them (Voss & Voss, 2000).

Voss & Voss (2000) suspect that “customer orientation-performance relation is likely nonpositive” (p. 78) in the non-profit arts context, because of some specific characteristics of the arts industry mentioned above; these are the unpredictable customer preferences, the non-profit goals, the high rates of intangible and artistic innovation and the relational behaviour by consumers. The latter means that loyal customers trust the organisation’s choices, regarding the art-works it presents.

Nevertheless, Kotler and Scheff (1997), considering customer orientation as the modern approach, attribute the below characteristics to the customer-centred arts organisations: they undertake consumer segmentation research and they rely heavily on their results, they segment subtly the audience into target groups other than the traditional ones, they define competition broadly and they enrich their strategies with all the elements of “marketing mix”. For Voss and Voss (2000) though, arts

marketing should primarily focus on the promotion, pricing, packaging and customer service. Its role is to push the product in the market and puts emphasis on “developing strong social relationships with loyal customers” (Voss & Voss, 2000, p. 79), as well as ensure “that customer oriented salespeople are in the box office” (Voss & Voss, 2000, p. 77, para. 3). Kirchner et al. (2007), making a literature review on cultural economics, government support and implications for marketing, and performing arts organisation marketing strategies/tools, agree to mention that relationship marketing is important for arts organisations. Hence, they should put an effort to convert the low relational customers (single ticket buyers) into high relational buyers (subscribers), given the trend in attendance patterns that shows consumers prefer transactional purchases instead of relational (Kirchner et al., 2007). To encourage relational purchases, arts organisations can adopt “Innovative performance packaging options, such as tailored season subscription packages, extended payment options, and ticket exchange options”; these “have proven to be particularly effective and relatively efficient to administer with current technological tools”(Kirchner et al., 2007, p. 104, following Scheff, 1999). Nevertheless, programming has been found to be more important than pricing in creating differentiation and increasing attendance.

Additionally, competitor orientation in relation to audience development tactics is recommended (Voss & Voss, 2000). Database marketing can be used for achieving competitive advantage and it is a practice that the arts industry follows. It is also a way to face the recent trend of single purchasers, encouraging repeat purchases. Credit cards are usually a preferable way of payment for marketers because it facilitates data-based marketing or data mining (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kirchner et al., 2007; Voss & Voss, 2000). “Smooth interfunctional coordination across creative, production, and marketing activities” (Voss & Voss, 2000, p. 79) for enhanced performance is also recommended. Kirchner et al. (2007) agree with this, mentioning that direct marketing, especially the interactive one, should be incorporated into the operations of the organisation to get better results; it is “a way to reach both existing and potential audiences and donors”, and it is enhanced when “incorporated throughout the operations of an organization” (Kirchner et al., 2007, p. 104). Finally, pricing management is also significant to differentiate an arts organisation and increase attendance, but programming seems to be more important than pricing (Kirchner et al., 2007).

#### 1.4.1. Strategic and Operational Marketing

Marketing is not only “the process of delivering to the market” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 5). Instead, it includes both the active and the analytic side of marketing, in other words, strategic and operational marketing, respectively. Strategic marketing is a process with a medium- to long-term horizon and its task is to identify clearly where the organisation wants to reach and how; what its mission, objectives, which development strategy it should follow and what the product/service

portfolio to be structured. On the other hand, operational marketing, a short- to medium-term process, involves the action the organisation takes to implement what strategic marketing has defined.

Strategic marketing analyses the needs of the market and the organisation; additionally identifies and evaluates existing or potential product markets or segments. The potential ones can be created by strategic marketing, based on the resources and know-how of the organisation. Strategic marketing follows the evolution of the reference markets, considering the different technologies and analysing the diversities of needs. It also researches the competition to be able to build a competitive advantage and have a better appeal in the market. "Strategic marketing has become significantly more important due to the increasing competition in the arts industry" (Coleman et al., 2019, p. 23). The process of strategic marketing should be followed "irrespective of whether a product is market-pull or company-push (or technology-push)" (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 6).

Operational marketing, as it acts on strategic marketing analysis, it targets the existing markets or segments. It uses tactical means related to the marketing mix to achieve a target market share. To avoid operational marketing to be degenerated into "a sales orientation and an exclusive concern for marketing communication" (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 5), it should be based on a well-defined and solid strategic plan; the strategic plan's goal is to identify the target market, understand how to reach it and engage it, and turn the potential customer into an ardent supporter.

Lambin & Schuiling (2012) state that the interface of strategic and operational marketing and R&D<sup>17</sup> is of crucial importance. In the case of cultural organisations though we could replace the R&D department with the Artistic Director and the corresponding team. When the new product/innovation/service is a result of market research, as a response to unfilled needs or wants (market-pull), strategic marketing has to communicate these results to the Artistic team and ask if it is feasible (response strategic marketing). In this case, operational marketing should promote the innovations to the identified prosper consumers (target segment), and "develop an existing demand or potential market" (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 8).

When the new product/service/innovation comes from the Artistic department's research to fulfil existing or latent needs (company or technology-push), the role of strategic marketing is more proactive, as it has to investigate if there is a need and a potentially profitable market segment, "asses the size of the target segment and the success factors of the innovation" (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 8) (the objective is to create new market opportunities). The task of operational marketing here is more complex, as it should prepare the market for a product/service that it has not asked for or it is

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<sup>17</sup> Research and Development department.

not expecting and “which may require from potential customers a change in their consuming or using habits” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 8).

In an arts organisation, the choice of the cultural products to be presented is usually done by the artistic directors and the related key personnel, as audiences do not have the ‘skills’ (e.g. creativity, knowledge, etc.) to choose cultural products; additionally, audiences are usually trusting organisations for their choices (Voss & Voss, 2000). Proactive strategic marketing suits a cultural environment, but response strategic marketing can be also very helpful to identify unfilled needs and wants in terms of services the organisation offers, or even in terms of the communication strategies the organisation uses.

Although strategic marketing listens and responds to customer needs and leads them also to the needs they do not know they have, operational marketing generates sales revenues, using the techniques of the marketing mix, emphasizing distribution, pricing, advertising and promotion (Price-Place-Promotion). Strategic and operational marketing are complementary and none of them can perform well without the other.

Operational marketing is divided into transactional and relationship marketing. With transaction marketing, the relationships end once the sale is completed, while it tries to meet the contradictory needs of the buyer and the seller (good price and high profit respectively), focusing almost exclusively on price (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Coleman et al., 2019; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). On the contrary, relationship marketing works on building strong, lasting and mutually profitable relationships with customers and aims at their retention, focusing on “non-economic benefits, such as services, delivery time and the certainty of continued supply” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 10).

To put it on a practical basis, strategic marketing, as the backbone of operational marketing, defines the reference market, applies the target marketing strategy with macro- and micro-segmentation, evaluates the attractiveness of each segment, identifies the competitive advantage to be proposed to each segment, decides the type of market coverage to be adopted, decides the positioning strategy for each segment, analyses product portfolio, relating attractiveness and competitiveness indicators and allocating resources among the target segments. Once the strategic decision has been taken, then the marketing mix becomes relevant, as the operational marketing is following.

#### 1.4.2. Market, Segmentation & Positioning

In marketing terminology terms like market, segmentation and positioning are very popular and all interconnected. As mentioned above, “a market orientation implies customer focused segmentation and positioning, which have been largely underutilised by performing arts organisations” (Kirchner et al., 2007, p. 103).

#### *1.4.2.a. Market*

According to Blackwell et al. (2001), “market analysis is the process of analysing changing consumer trends; current and potential competitors; company strengths and resources; and the technological, legal, and economic environments” (p.37). The market though is defined by Colbert (2012) as “a group of economic agents expressing desires and needs for products, services, or ideas” (p. 16) and adds that the needs and desires are the pillars of marketing that shape the marketing strategy.

The difference between business and culture is that in business, the needs of the customers are studied also before the design of a product. On the contrary, in culture, the product pre-exists and the organisations seek out consumers “with needs likely to be met by the works produced” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 17).

The integral part of the market is the demand that is created by the number of goods or services that consumers, government, the private sector, or partners buy in a certain market. A market can be divided into segments shaped by tastes, needs and desires, which have a subjective nature. Once the segmentation has been done, cultural organisations find out the segments that fit the organisation; that is the individuals likely to appreciate their products. Once they find the right segments, organisations may try to differentiate themselves from competitors, promoting their assets and making clear their market position (Francois Colbert, 2012; Martinez et al., 2018; Zaharie, 2014).

A cultural organisation may address four different markets: “the end consumer (or the consumer market), the partners, the governments and the private sector. Each of these markets is driven by different motivations and expects different benefits” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 68). As this research is interested in the consumer market, in the following chapters, the profile of this market will be analysed. Below, the needful steps in creating a market strategy will be analysed.

#### *1.4.2.b. Segmentation*

In the case of cultural products, purchase and consumption go hand in hand, as individuals, while making the purchase, commit themselves to when consumption will occur. In the case of loyalty programs though, the users might have the chance to purchase without committing to the precise consumption time. For instance, loyal members can buy open tickets for the whole season at a special price. “It is beneficial to segment the market based on when consumption occurs” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 161). In the case of performing arts (for specific organisations), does the consumption happen for example on casual Saturdays, on the occasion of celebration, or when the product is special? Where consumption is usually taking place is equally important. Is it mainly at the permanent location of the organisation or the alternative locations it might use occasionally? If online streaming is available, is it popular? How is it consumed? For instance, is it for personal use or it is purchased as a

gift, so it will be consumed by someone else? Is it purchased by groups? How a product is consumed can change the product that will be purchased, and how it is purchased can uncover new business opportunities, such as the introduction of group tickets or gift tickets. The amount of consumption divides consumers into three categories (segments), the heavy, the moderate and the light users (usage volume segmentation). The heavy ones consume the most and they might be, for example, loyal customers. They are typically a primary target market and the profit gained from these consumers exceeds that realised from the others. Light consumers consume small amounts, while moderate consumers fall in between heavy and light. "Changing the amount of consumption is often an important business objective" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 164). Segmentation can be also based on different spending and saving behaviours of the consumers, as well as on the motivational intensity; the latter depends on the need's importance and the consumer's involvement (how much the need is personally relevant) (Blackwell et al., 2001). For instance, consumers with high intensity and involvement, "try harder to fulfil their needs" and "become more attentive to relevant information" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 248).

The several markets that cultural enterprises target "are all composed of consumption units with similar although not identical needs" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 146). In other words, segmentation is to divide a heterogeneous market into segments according to the tastes, needs and behaviours of potential consumers (Blackwell et al., 2001; Brida et al., 2013; Francois Colbert, 2012; N. Kotler et al., 2008; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Segmentation should not be done by genres or any other division that serves the organisation. When the needs, desires and objectives of groups of people differ, then these groups fit into different segments that each require a unique marketing strategy (Blackwell et al., 2001; Brida et al., 2013; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). "The ultimate goal of segmentation is increased customer satisfaction and profitability" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 43). The latter can be increased "by decreasing marketing expenses" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 43).

Segmentation is an analytical concept and through this process the market structure should be well understood. Afterwards, positioning, which is a strategic concept, should be decided (Francois Colbert, 2012). Although Colbert (2012) claims that segmentation is "the result of a serious, in-depth market analysis, and not a strategy itself" (p. 162), Kotler & Scheff (1997) point out that strategic marketing means segmenting, targeting and positioning. They describe the procedure as below: identification of dimensions that will help in the segmentation of the market, development of profiles of market segments, selection of the most suitable segments, design of marketing strategies and positioning.

Market segmentation leads organisations to analyse the needs of their markets and their degree of homogeneity; this analysis contributes to deciding the right product positioning strategy, which is about differentiation from the competitor and effort to meet consumers' needs (Blackwell et al., 2001;

Francois Colbert, 2012). Segmentation is not compulsory. Should be done only if there are different types of needs. If that's the case, an accurate understanding of the market structure is needed and it will lead to the appropriate marketing strategy. For a segment to be able to be defined as such should be quantifiable (large enough potential to be considered worthy), profitable, relatively stable over time and able to guide corporate strategies (Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012). Moreover, the response to marketing pressures {...} must vary from one segment to the next" (responsiveness) (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 148). The general guidelines given by authors (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997) for segmentation are the below: separate conceptually each market segment from other segments (congruity), place every potential target member in some segment, choose segments that can be readily measured and be substantial (measurability and substantiality), and choose segments that can be effectively reached and served (reachability). It is important to decide whether such a segmentation is, except for conceptually, also managerially useful for the organisation, as many or all segments may respond in the same way to different strategies. "Responsiveness and reachability is often impossible to measure" (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 141), that's why managers use other criteria such as demographics, assuming that these characteristics will reveal data for likely responsiveness and reachability. Segments are consisted of "consumers with similar behaviour, not necessarily similar characteristics" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 41). The consumer characteristics are used for segmentation because they are correlates "for behaviour and not because the characteristics are determinants of why people buy" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 41). Most probably, based on that, Colbert (2009) mentions that market segments in marketing are considered the "subgroups of consumers sharing similar characteristics" (p. 16).

To segment its markets, organisations should take into consideration five determinants, which are the "elements that characterise a market segment" (Colbert, 2012, p. 148). These are the purchaser and non-purchaser that have a different response to market pressures, the frequency of consumption (single ticket consumer and subscriber), the degree of loyalty and by extension their sensitivity to marketing pressures (impulsive or consistent purchasing behaviour), the level of satisfaction (high or low) that is related to the first three, and the variations in preference (and consequently in demand, even for a hypothetical product). All these different categories of consumers need different strategies to be approached because something attractive for one segment might be unattractive for the other (Francois Colbert, 2012; Guillon, 2011).

The market for cultural goods comprises two distinct groups of products: what has come to be called "popular art," and, for want of a better term, "high art" or "learned culture." The findings of 40 years of research across the industrialized world all point to the same conclusion: Consumers of art can be

seen as on a continuum, with high art at one end and popular art at the other (François Colbert, 2009). “As far as the market for cultural goods is concerned, a fundamental difference can be established between two groups of artistic works” (François Colbert, 2009, p. 3), the ‘popular’ art and the ‘high art’. “Consumers can be seen on a continuum” with these two groups at the two ends<sup>18</sup>. According to Colbert (2009), the cultural consumer does not distinguish between high art and popular art, but she/he is looking for temporary entertainment. I personally disagree with that, as we will see later on that by the choice of each cultural experience, the consumer covers a different need, and there is a wide range of needs. Nevertheless, Hand (2011), claimed that “there is little segmentation in the arts audience” (p. 12), and he supported his opinion with an imaginary shape, where art events with substantial overlap among them are in the ‘core’, while in the ‘periphery’ exist the art events with loose connections with others. As Hand (2011) says, “whether an art event is at the core or the periphery has less to do with whether it is a ‘highbrow’ or ‘lowbrow’ art form, but more on its penetration rate” (p. 12); the increase of the latter can lead to increased attendance levels (Hand, 2011). The audiences might have loyalty or polygamous loyalty, which refers to loyalty to several art forms (Guillon, 2011; Hand, 2011; Scriven et al., 2015). However, Hand (2011) claims that the overlaps of the audiences of different art events “are not sufficiently large to imply that there are distinct attendance based audience segments” (p. 14).

To characterise and quantify segments, descriptors are essential. The most popular and effective are: geographic, psychographic and sociodemographic according to Colbert (2012), or demographic according to Kotler & Scheff (1997). The latter authors though mention geocustering too, as a segmentation tool, which classifies inhabitants taking into consideration the socioeconomic situation and lifestyle of people. Colbert (2012) adds also the category of descriptors based on the benefits sought by consumers. Although Kotler & Scheff (1997) do not name it as a special category, they also mention benefits, as a category of segmentation. They actually describe segmentation in a different way than Colbert (2012), creating the categories of geocustering, gender, lifestyle, usage, aesthetics, benefits, occasions, loyalty status and buyers’ readiness stage segmentation. In a nutshell, they might divide and describe determinants and descriptors in different ways, ultimately although they mention the same.

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<sup>18</sup> ‘High art’ “represents arts in its purest and most original form. The artist pursues art as an end in itself, with no explicit intent to accommodate market needs” (Botti, 2000, p. 14). ‘Popular art’ (or liberal) {...} is produced by profit-seeking entrepreneurs and professionals (Botti, 2000; Scheff & Kotler, 1996), reproducing the artistic creation and targeting a much wider audience. Nevertheless, after the spread of mass media (mid 20<sup>th</sup> century) the reproducibility and the uniqueness are called into question (Botti, 2000). “The difference between high art and popular culture are often greatest in the perceptions of their enthusiasts {...} rather than in the intrinsic nature of the art itself” (Scheff & Kotler, 1996, p. 34,35). The high culture enthusiasts consider pop art ‘kitsch’, and that it “debases high culture, produces spurious gratification” (p. 33) and creates a passive audience. For “popular culture fans, the product of high culture is overly intellectual, effeminate, snobbish, and superficial” (p.33).



The geographic “grouping” (as Kotler & Scheff (1997) refer to Colbert’s (2012) descriptors) may include the “distance from the theatre and the neighbourhoods of most-likely attenders” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 94). Psychographics, which combines psychological with demographic measurements, includes “lifestyle measures such as activities, interests and opinions; social class; family life cycle” and the demographic “age, education, income, gender, family status” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 94). For Colbert (2012), the sociodemographic grouping includes additionally ethnic background, language, religion, type of dwelling and profession and he claims that these descriptors, although they are the most frequently used, for some of its criticsers are considered “inadequate for describing segments” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 150). He gives the example of the highbrow culture consumers; the findings show that, regardless of ethnic background, these consumers have better education and they are wealthier than the average consumer. “Thus, for a company operating in this market (meaning art market), segmentation based on sociodemographic descriptors is not very helpful” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 150).

Nevertheless, Kotler & Scheff (1997) and Andreasen & Kotler (2008) mention that for many decades the most commonly used segmentation variables by arts organisations, and the non-profit market in general, are demographic, including geographical factors. Usually, “an organisation segments a market by combining two or more demographic variables” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 96), and for arts organisations, the prime indicators are education and income (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Kirchner et al., 2007). According to Kotler & Scheff (1997), “demographic characteristics play a significant role in identifying current and potential performing arts attendees” and any change in these can affect, in the long-term, the arts organisations’ audience base. Moreover, they describe the people who frequent the performing arts, without mentioning highbrow or lowbrow culture, as college-educated, wealthy, “white, live in or near a metropolitan area, and do not have young children to care for” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 95). The profile of the performing arts audience though will be described in detail in a later chapter.

Colbert (2012) supports that “sociodemographic descriptors are useful for “personifying” the targeted segments” and mentions their inadequacy to provide “all the information needed to develop a proper corporate marketing strategy” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 150). He refers to psychographic descriptors as the ones that may fill the gaps. Kotler & Scheff (1997) also attribute to lifestyle segmentation many assets, characterising it “as a better explanatory variable for arts attendance than any traditional socioeconomic characteristic, such as income or education, {...} and more dynamic than segmentation by personality” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 100); Pedersen et al. (2017) seems to agree, referring that lifestyle marketing has become more pertinent. Kotler and Scheff (1997) also mention that lifestyle is more transient than personality and it is “likely to change many times throughout one’s lifetime”,

converging in a way with more complex sociological approaches that analyse upward or downward mobility, the "stops" of the individuals in life and their effect on their cultural preferences [example of French sociologist B. Lahire (Emmanuel, Kaftantzoglou, & Souliotis, 2015)] or the hidden motivations behind cultural consumption [example of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Gordon, 2011; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Wilcox & Nolte, 1995)]. As the authors point out "we do what we do because it fits into the kind of life we are living or want to live" (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 100). The above-mentioned approaches will be analysed in the later chapter of Communication in Arts (2).

The descriptors based on benefits are the best in describing buying patterns and explaining the different levels of demand in the same market, grouping consumers who want the same benefits (one dominant benefit or a bundle of benefits) from the same type of product (consumers do not buy the same type of product for the same reason) (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012). Marketers should develop offers that will make consumers perceive them as more beneficial than those of the competitors. This is also in part the aim of advertising campaigns that should support the consumer in deciding to purchase a specific product whose benefits outweigh comparing to the competitive ones. Benefits segmentation, to be more efficient, should be correlated with demographic and media characteristics (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Pedersen et al., 2017).

But, although sometimes consumers might fit into two or three categories (descriptors) each time marketers should examine and decide which descriptor or the combination of descriptors should be taken seriously into consideration. These descriptor-based segments sometimes overlap "yielding a better-defined segment" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 41). The choice of the right descriptors each time is the most important decision for market segmentation (Francois Colbert, 2012).

Each organisation should take decisions according to its needs, choosing the most attractive segment or segments to target. Initially, marketers evaluate the segments with the criteria mentioned above, deciding also about the resources (financial, human and mental) of the organisation to be devoted to each segment, which approach suits each segment regarding product and place of offerings, communications and the like, and the right timing to direct specific segments (quantity, quality and timing decisions) (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Blackwell et al., 2001; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The segmentation techniques are divided into two broad categories, the "a priori" and the "cluster-based". The first one is analytically simple and it tests the hypotheses the marketing manager does for the possible descriptors that affect the different levels of demand. If the levels of demand and the descriptors do not match, the marketing manager should make new hypotheses. Once demand and descriptors match, the manager can choose the segments to be targeted (Francois Colbert, 2012).

The cluster-based technique demands market structure knowledge, either based on research or intuition. It is a multidimensional technique that asks for an analytical market study considering most of the determinants and descriptors, to define homogeneous groups in terms of levels of demand. Compared to the “a priori” segmentation, “cluster-based” can help in discovering “innovative ways to define segments” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 153), instead of walking on the predetermined patterns of managers’ hypotheses. But, it is longer and more costly than the “a priori”. “Nevertheless, it is particularly useful when applied to segmentation according to psychographic descriptors or descriptors related to benefits or usage” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 153).

However, the cultural sector has its own rules, as, instead of embodying the segments’ needs in an artistic work, marketers choose the segments that suit the already finished cultural product. Each organisation chooses according to what segment it can serve effectively. Except for the artistic product though, a cultural organisation can offer also related services<sup>19</sup>, hence it can develop new or adjust the existing offerings according to the market’s needs (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The segmentation aims at knowing the segment better, and understanding needs and preferences. One of the preferences that interest the marketing department to decide about communication strategies, is media preferences. Different targets have different media exposure habits (McGuire, 1976); what the target segment prefers to read is translated to where best to reach them with publicity and promotions. But as McGuire (1976) mentions giving the example of beer advertising, although the audience of sports programs might be heavy beer drinkers, the one who makes the household decision-making about the beers (goes for grocery shopping) might be someone else. The same can apply to leisure activities like arts. Formerly, Kotler & Scheff (1997) were mentioning segmentation tools such as geoclustreing, lifestyle, etc. Although these tools could contribute to marketing to microsegments, nowadays the internet is considered the micro marketing tool. Sivadas, Grewal and Kellaris (1998) support that the internet facilitates marketers to identify and access very narrow, well-defined segments of potential consumers, with much focused sets of interests, without implying that demographics do not predict consumption or do not help identify which media best reach potential customers. They claim though that it would be ideal to select which media to use in a communication campaign, based on the purchasing behaviour of the people who consume these media (Sivadas et al., 1998). Moreover, nowadays, the power has been shifted to consumers, who are

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<sup>19</sup> Services associated with the product (e.g. free or discounted parking, restaurants inside or outside the organisation with special price etc.).

the ones seeking marketers online. Marketers, to be able to direct consumers to their websites, should observe the online behaviour of the users (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Sivadas et al., 1998).

“The ability to target one’s marketing and communication efforts has long been accepted as the key to marketing efficiency and competitive advantage. This process of identifying and reaching the right audience has become more complex and grown in importance” (Sivadas et al., 1998, p. 179), because of the globalisation of the market and the shift from mass marketing to micro marketing. The developments in information technology have changed the picture. The Internet has become a micro-marketing tool, as marketers, through it, can understand better consumers’ needs and wants, collecting much easily information about them and their Internet usage (Assael, 2013; Sivadas et al., 1998). “Moreover the demographics of internet users are of the type many marketers find desirable to target” (Sivadas et al., 1998, p. 180, citing Gupta, 1995). Additionally, the Internet helps marketers to apply mass customisation (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008).

For Kotler & Scheff (1997) strategic marketing is: segmenting, targeting and positioning. Hence, after the evaluation of segments, the organisation develops the profiles of the resulting target segments, which include a description of the targets and ways to be approached. After that, it is ready to find one or more market segments worth entering. The choice among them (target market selection) should be done considering whether the needs, interests and desires of these sets of buyers (targets) can be met and how this will be done. The homogeneity or not of the market, the resources of the organisation, its strengths and weaknesses, its aspirations for its market role, as well as the target segments of the competitors play an important role in the selection of the target market (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

To select a target market, the organisation should consider the below patterns and choose accordingly: single-segment concentration (concentrated marketing), product specialisation and selective specialisation (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). According to Andreasen & Kotler (2008) and Armstrong & Kotler (2013) though, these are called market segmentation strategies or approaches to targeting and they are presented slightly differently: undifferentiated (mass) marketing, differentiated marketing (going after several market segments), concentrated marketing-often referred to as “niche marketing” (approach only one segment), mass customisation (with the help of technology and particularly internet, customisation of offerings to the individuals). For Lathrop 2003, the terms for the mass audience are market aggregation and undifferentiated marketing. For a portion of the mass audience, he uses market segmentation and target marketing. By “portion”, he means people from a particular region, or people of similar economic status or lifestyle etc. (Lathrop, 2003). Blackwell et al. (2001) mention also the intermarket segmentation which is “the identification of groups of customers who transcend traditional market or geographic boundaries. Intermarket segments consist of people

who have similar patterns of behaviour regardless of where they live” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 56). The next step after the selection of the segments is to serve the targets, but firstly “to promote the aspects of the organisation’s offerings that appeal more strongly” to each target market, that means to develop a “focused positioning strategy” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 115).

#### *1.4.2.c. Positioning*

Positioning is how to best differentiate each brand from competitive brands; it can be done in three different ways: differentiation by product, by price and by image. It is “one of the most critical steps in the implementation of strategic marketing” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 14) because the firm decides how to differentiate from competitors. “Selection of the positioning strategy provides the unifying concept for the development of the marketing mix program” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 14).

Although non-profit managers like to think or state that competition is not nice in a non-profit environment, the reality is that it exists even here about funds, grants, volunteers, corporate support and/or campaigns. As there are always alternatives in target audiences’ minds, “it is in the mind where the marketer must compete” (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 158, citing Ries & Trout, 2001).

The basic approach of positioning is to influence what already exists in the prospect’s mind. Communication is successful when it communicates the right things to the right people at the right time and under the right circumstance. Positioning is based on this concept and it is “an organised system for finding windows in the mind” (Ries & Trout, 2001, p. 21); that is, finding the right place in potential consumers’ minds. It got started in the 1970s, it became a trend in the advertising and marketing world and it “has changed the way the advertising game is played today” (Ries & Trout, 2001, p. 4).

The definition of positioning may vary from marketer to marketer; some perceive it as a segmentation decision, others as an image question or as the product attributes to be emphasized. But for some, the positioning includes all of the above (Kotler & Scheff, p. 205). “The positioning decision is central to influencing customers’ perceptions and choice decisions” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 206). It is about which impressions the marketer wants to create; the same product can attract a different audience, depending on the positioning. The attributes of the product that will be highlighted are upon the marketer, either they are associated with the organisation, an individual production, or a combination of these. The common practice is to choose the attributes that “appear to be the most attractive to the target audience to create a strong positioning statement” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 206).

The positioning can be built on the reputation of the artistic director, the programming, the star performers or the reputation and the image of the performers, the location and the facilities of the

organisation, the venue itself and its atmospherics, the price and the quality of the product, the use of the attendance (like as special celebration occasion), the product user, the product class, the competitor or finally the multiple attributes of the product (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Martinez et al., 2018). Bronner and de Hoog (2019) mention for example that an important factor for consumers is the potential of the cultural product to signal status and identity to relevant others (social visibility). To Lathrop (2003), marketers should identify and enhance the product's selling points; these are "the matrix of qualities that the audience will find valuable and appealing" (p. 30). "Why someone in the target audience would want to spend their hard-earned money" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 30) or their precious time on this product? Marketers should look beyond the performance and handle all selling points, overt and hidden, to be successful. This could be from the lifestyle or personality of the performer, up to the powerful symbols (e.g. avant-garde) behind a play, a performing art or an artist, which appeal to the customer's social identification, self-image, self-perception, ideas and fashions embraced by targeted customers etc. The signalling function of a cultural event by marketers is not enough; the facilitation of this signalling is the key (making it easy for consumers to share their experiences and promote social visibility) (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019). Additionally, the differences between an organisation and its competitors (whether they are in a local market or a global one) are also selling points. Lathrop (2003) advises marketers to define and communicate the sales points to the maximum, to market the product accurately to the correct audience. Some points though of one organisation, such as programming or venue characteristics, might not be "sufficient to distinguish it from the competition" (Martinez et al., 2018, p. 69); hence, each organisation should discover its strong points to sale.

Colbert (2012) defines positioning as "the place occupied by the company or its product in the consumer's mind or the place that it intends to occupy" (p. 153), while Kotler & Scheff (1997) add that "positioning involves creating a real differentiation and making it known to others" (p. 115). The perceived positioning might differ from the desired company positioning. Hence the company should understand why consumers have these perceptions and try to change them if need be (Colbert, 2012). Knowing the selling points of a performing art product and its creators and/or performers, the marketer knows also the unique characteristics that can differentiate it from the competition; but this should be done by presenting some evidence for the differentiation or superiority, otherwise, it might cost credibility and sales. The points that can attract consumers should be emphasized in the packaging<sup>20</sup> (if any) and promotional campaign (Lathrop, 2003).

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<sup>20</sup>As Lathrop (2003) claims: "the package is the image that the product presents to the outside world" (p. 47). What packaging does firstly is to visually attract the right consumers. It communicates information and emphasizes appealing aspects of the products. But Lathrop (2003), in his book, deals with music marketing and promotion; that is why he mentions packaging. In contrast though with other cultural products (e.g. CDs, books etc.), performing arts do not have a packaging. The only way

Although Colbert (2012) presents the below three strategies, as positioning strategies, Kotler & Scheff (1997) mention them as patterns of target market selection and Andreasen & Kotler (2008) as market segmentation strategies (referred above). The strategies of positioning as per Colbert (2012) are the below: The concentration strategy (or concentrated marketing strategy) that focuses on the needs of one segment only and it is the most common strategy for small cultural organisations. Usually, the segments used for the positioning are defined by the benefits sought. The diversification strategy that is based on two or more segments can be applied once the organisation has already a sufficient size, and the positioning should be done for each of the products. It also gives the chance to the organisation to be competitive. “This is the strategy adopted by large cultural conglomerates” (Colbert, 2012, p. 156). Competitive positioning (or “product differentiation”) is applied when there are other cultural products that serve the same targets and offer the same benefits. This strategy comes to offer additional benefits, to be set apart from the competition. Although the price might work well as a competitive advantage for other products, cultural products are not the same, as consumers are often interested in different things, like artists or experiences. Nevertheless, Kotler & Scheff (1997) refer to the above as patterns of target market selection and mention as positioning strategies or “alternative bases for constructing a positioning strategy” (p. 117) the below: positioning on specific product features, on benefits/problem solutions/needs, positioning for specific usage occasions, for user category, positioning against or associating with another product, positioning as number one.

A positioning strategy should coordinate “all the attributes of the marketing mix to support the chosen position” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 116) and “ positioning must be done with a particular target group in mind” (p. 118). Ries & trout (2001) talk about successful positioning and they point out that the easiest way to get into prospects’ minds is to be first (p. 21), build loyalty and not give them a reason to switch but this is not always possible; there are only few that can be first. Organisations should choose another path to get a place in consumers’ minds. Repositioning is the strategy to face the inability to be first; in other words to find a way to position the organisation or its offerings against those that got there first. Repositioning the competition is a marketing strategy to overcome the difficulty of not being first. To weaken the competitive product/service or organisation is the way to create some free space in prospects’ minds. To hit the competition, marketers should say something about it that will change the perception of consumers about competition, without making failed

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for performing arts products to be visually attractive and differentiated is the visual and/or audio-visual promotional material, which should capture the soul and the spirit of the performance. Advertising, which will be analysed in detail in the next chapter, includes prints and broadcast ads, packaging, mailings, catalogues, posters etc. Hence, performing arts can use all the rest tools of advertising to be visually attractive, except for packaging, as they don’t have one.

comparative advertising. Although in the positioning era advertising rules have changed, this change has provoked controversy and many advertising people are against tactics such as denigration (Ries & Trout, 2001). In culture though, comparative advertising usually doesn't happen. And if it does, it is gentler and concerns private, for-profit organisations, such as Broadway theatres.

To decide on positioning, managers should have the full picture of market segmentation, which will show consumers' perceptions of competitors and their desired characteristics of a product. To face a different positioning in consumers' mind compared to the desired one, organisations can either reposition the product or launch a new one that will cover the needs of a large segment or a segment where no competition exist or where the organisation is not present yet, but it can be competitive (Colbert, 2012). Reposition might be needed in two cases: when there is a problem with reality or perception of reality. The first means that changes are necessary for the organisation and/or its offerings. The latter means that the organisation needs only to change the perception the prospects have about it. Especially in the non-profit sector, this problem can happen, as most organisations and their campaigns look alike (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008).

Segmentation is absolutely necessary for market success and it is "an important strategic element of positioning" (Colbert, 2012, p. 161). Ries & Trout (2001) agree with that, pointing out that in our communication era, the only way to succeed is to segment, focus on narrow targets, and position. In an overcommunicated society people are too exposed to information and advertising, and what the mind finally keeps is a very small percentage, compared to the volume of exposure. Moreover, "once a mind is made up, it's almost impossible to change it" (Ries & Trout, 2001, p. 7). Since so little information is going to get through prospects' minds anyway, the message should be oversimplified and the focus should be on prospects' perceptions because no matter what the offerings or organisation are, the reality is what the potential consumers think they are.

Moreover, people tend to see what they expect to see and the human mind accepts information that matches a human's current state of mind, prior knowledge or experience. People categorise brand names in their minds, but a maximum of seven in each category. Hence, marketers, to place their product higher in these mind ladders, should either dislodge the brand above or "relate their brand to the other company's position" (Ries & Trout, 2001, p. 37) or introduce new ladders (new product category). The first and the last are not considered easy tasks though. The first could even be characterised as impossible, and the latter faces the difficulty of no room in prospects' minds if the new is not connected to the old. It is very crucial for marketers to understand competitors' positioning, recognise their power and know when to stop trying if they cannot reach the desired point. The recommended strategy is to take advantage of the existing established position and relate it to a new position within the same industry.



The steps to a successful positioning are to first research the position the organisation has already in the marketplace. Then decide the best position for the organisation to own, from a long-term perspective; but considering that positioning should not express ambitions and that organisations, like people, cannot be all things to everybody. Choose a position that is not already owned by someone else. Study well the competitors, from the position they hold, up to their point of view. Money is also necessary to establish a position and to hold it as well. The main point is to get above the noise level, to distinguish between the so many “me-too” products/organisations. The basic positioning strategy should rarely change. It can always be improved, or presented in new ways. The strategy should be planned and executed by people with similar visions and mentality, using careful and solid plans, instead of creativity; creativity can help positioning only if it is subordinated to it. People or groups of people outside the organisation can be the right ones to trust when it comes to positioning, as they can have a clearer view of prospects’ minds; in this way, marketers can succeed objectivity (Ries & Trout, 2001). For a good positioning impact, organisations should build upon their present strengths, search for a niche and reposition the competition (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Ries & Trout, 2001).

The essence of Segmentation-Targeting-Positioning is to choose carefully what the organisation wants to be in which prospects’ minds, as well as what are the desired behaviours by them. Then, investigate what competitors are doing, consider the organisation’s strengths and choose compelling value propositions (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008).

For Andreasen & Kotler (2008, p. 162) “one of the ways organisations effectively position themselves is through branding”. Hand (2011), with no intention to equalise arts with other products and services, claims that in terms of consumption- audiences and levels of loyalty- “at the macro level, arts appear to behave in the same way that brands do” (p. 12), and the decision-making process in both cases is similar; Scriven et al. (2015) agree on that. Although private sector marketers are strong supporters of branding, in the non-profit sector they are still learning how to use branding, despite the objections related to if this concept should be used in the non-profit sector. The successful brand must have distinctiveness, in other words, be unique and have a personality, which derives from its mission, offerings and values. The creation of a non-profit brand includes the steps that should be taken for positioning. What the brand is intended to do, who are the target audiences and who are the major competitors, how the market perceives the organisation and the competition, what prospects evaluate higher, what is the organisation’s current position and what is the desired one. Branding includes the brand name (generic names are not suggested), the logo (represents the aesthetics of the organisation), the slogan (should be a compelling one), the look (need for consistency), the brand promise (make clear what it stands for), the spokesperson, the symbols and the good internal understanding of what the brand stands for (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Lathrop, 2003). Brand building

influences the decision-making process of consumers of cultural products, and “the marketing message can fit in well with” (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 444) branding in arts and culture. Potentially, physical building attributes<sup>21</sup> and the architecture of the building are part of the brand image. Elevators, lighting, temperature, ventilation, comfortable seats, size of venues, aisles and seats, convenient and visible washrooms, layout, parking facilities, design, decoration and architecture affect store image and consumers’ choice. {“The physical properties of the retail environment designed to create an effect on consumer purchases are often referred to as store atmospherics” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 139)}. The environment expresses the character and the image of the organisation. Atmospherics<sup>22</sup> can create particular emotions (e.g. pleasure/hedonism, arousal, aesthetics’ satisfaction) in consumers, which contribute to the creation of the experience. “Atmospherics can involve multiple senses to attract consumer purchase behaviour” Blackwell p. 139 but atmospherics also contribute to the overall experience of the consumer (e.g. music at a low volume creates a specific atmosphere); the performance of the facility, the performance of the staff and the show quality are pieces of the puzzle of ‘patrons’ satisfaction’ (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016). Some authors (Bernstein, 2007; Martinez et al., 2018) suggest seeing the venue as a brand, highlighting what makes it special or unique, or even what is its symbolic meaning. The venue offers an experience based on “hedonic, cognitive, discovery and emotional dimensions” (Martinez et al., 2018, p. 68) and a successful brand can represent values as such (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Martinez et al., 2018). The brand is associated with what the prospective consumers think the arts organisation and/or its products and/or services are, what is involved with the purchase or consumption of these products and services, how the consumers will be benefited from them, what do they represent more broadly and what is the consumer’s overall evaluation of the brand (Pedersen et al., 2017).

#### 1.4.3. Product, Price, Place and Promotion

Marketing mix “is the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 42). McCarthy classified these tools and his classification is known as the four Ps<sup>23</sup>. But, it has slightly changed in the last decades, as more “Ps”

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<sup>21</sup> Physical evidence, is one of the 7Ps and includes all the elements that give the first impressions when customers step inside. The physical environment, the layout of the premises, the aesthetics of the store/building, a Facebook page or the website, the ambience, the cleanliness etc., they all contribute to create a competitive advantage on the aspect of physical evidence (“Busidate – Warringal Publications,” n.d.; “Physical Evidence: Elements, Types and Role of Physical Evidence in Service Marketing,” n.d.; “Physical Evidence – Marketing Mix,” n.d.; “What is Physical Evidence? | Red Bike Marketing,” n.d.; Enache, 2011).

<sup>22</sup>“Atmosphere includes elements of the physical environment: aesthetic design (architecture, materials, colours); function (comfort, access, services); and social environment(characteristics of patrons, dress of reception staff” ( Boudier-Pailler and Damak 2005, quoted in Martinez et al., 2018, p. 69).

<sup>23</sup> When the concept of IMC was introduced in 1993 by Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn, these scholars “suggested that it is time to abandon the McCarthy’s 4Ps and to replace them with the 4Cs model: consumer, cost, convenience, communication” (Porcu, Barrio-Garcia, & Kitchen, 2012, p. 318), adopting a consumer-oriented perspective (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Porcu et al., 2012).

has been added. Formerly, it was including Product, Price, Place and Promotion; but nowadays the factors of People and Persistence, or the factors of People, Processes and Physical evidence, mainly for service industries, have been added. Persistence concerns the management of the interaction between the organisation and the customer, which influences income. The People factor concerns the staff of arts organisations, which contacts the audience and the people related to the organisation and it can affect the image of the organisation, as well as the cultural experience. However, it can also mean that, as arts organisations fit in the service industry, people -meaning audiences- and their needs become their priority. The additional factors shift the focus from the selling orientation and put it on the relationship between the organisation and the market (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Rafiq & Ahmed, 1995; Rentschler, 1998).

The components of the marketing mix, also called “controllable variables” (Colbert, 2012, p. 20), that will be analysed below are the product, price, place and promotion (or else communication). The “skilful balance of these components” (Colbert, 2012, p. 19) leads to a successful marketing strategy. Nevertheless, the dimension of people who communicate with the customer is of crucial importance, as it can seriously affect a well-planned marketing strategy (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

A pre-preparation of a communication campaign, in other words, promotion, the fourth P, needs the knowledge of the other 3Ps, product, price and points of sale. At the initial stages, this sequence is followed; the product is the starting point and its knowledge is preceded by the decisions taken about price and distribution. In contrast, at later stages, experience gives the freedom to blend components (Francois Colbert, 2012).

Lathrop (2003) plays with the alphabet letters and replaces the four P’s with three W’s and one H, where the product is the *What*, the place is the *Where*, while promotion and distribution can be under the *How*. The last important aspect of marketing is the timing- the *When*- of each of the above-mentioned elements (Lathrop, 2003).

#### 1.4.3.a. Product

The product in general is composed of the product itself, the related services and the value that the consumers will attribute to it (artistic value<sup>24</sup>). “Sometimes this symbolic value becomes the main reason for buying a product”(Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 33) and a marketing specialist could “define a product as the set of benefits as they are perceived by the consumer” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 32). This set might be real or imaginary. Artistic value though is different from artistic potential; the value

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<sup>24</sup> The pure artistic value though is something different; it is found at the stage of artistic creation and is not the one that does or “represent the object of marketing strategies and policies” (Botti, 2000, p. 22) -except if the product is produced to please a specific target market-; this artistic value is “like a flow potential embedded by the artist in the art work and possibly remaining dormant” (Botti, 2000, p. 24). “Shifting from what is art to how is perceived” (Botti, 2000, p. 19), the artistic value is “the uniqueness of the emotional interaction” (Botti, 2000, p. 19).

is assigned by the consumer, but the artistic product should have potential artistic value, so it can be characterised as such (Botti, 2000). The artistic potential is the one “managed and transferred from the artists to different publics” (Botti, 2000, p. 21) through marketing. There are artistic products though, whose value “is assessed by its historical value and the social consensus that has been built around it” (Botti, 2000, p. 21). [The true value of art is to ‘fulfil its action over time’, to stimulate emotions (Holbrook, 1995, in Botti, 2000, p. 21)].

The cultural product though differs slightly as, except for the artistic product and the related services, has two more components, the spin-off products and the consumer’s experience of the product, which includes also the value the consumers will attribute to it. In arts, the artistic work is the central product and the other three aspects revolve around it. The central product is the one marketed by the organisation and it is the “starting point of any marketing activity” (Colbert, 2012, p. 20). For Lathrop (2003), who is analysing music marketing and promotion, “the core product has three components: (1) the performer, (2) the performance, (3) the music composition” (p. 34). Based on Lathrop (2003), I could claim that, in performing arts, the core product could be composed by the performer, the performance and the script and/or the choreography.

While Colbert (2012) points out that some people may attend a performance for the central product (artistic show) and others for the experience, Kotler & Scheff (1997) mention that in performing arts organisations, consumers seek experiences. They use a different separation, although they agree the product of arts organisations is not only the performance but the total offerings of the organisation. The core product though, that is artwork, may differ from the expected or the augmented one. This is because the expected product includes the expectations regarding the purchase and the consumption, which in their turn may include several elements: from the expected way of payment, the expected neighbourhood and its conveniences, the expected venue and its amenities, up to the expected customer service. Each customer has different expectations or prioritises them differently. The needs and expectations of performing arts audiences will be analysed in the following chapters. Finally, the augmented product is not related to the core product and is not expected by the consumer. It is something the organisation offers to enhance the experience or attract a new audience (e.g. post-performance lectures or free parking) (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The selection of the product is primarily done by the artistic director, but the marketer can complete a product with extra offerings, such as performance lectures and flex plans. In some organisations, the artistic director may decide to consider all the components of the product (product orientation) (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The cultural product is complex in terms of whether the consumer will have the knowledge and the ability to appreciate it, such as an avant-garde production. Nevertheless, a cultural product can be also popular, which means it is addressed to a wider audience and is not composed of abstract notions; instead, it draws on stereotypes and it is easier for people to follow it (Francois Colbert, 2012). A work of art that is a one-off is characterised by uniqueness (Botti, 2000)<sup>25</sup>. Nevertheless, to make it more complex, the subjectivity of the consumer that is captured in any cultural consumption, makes each work of art unique, even if it is high or popular, one-off or open to reproduction. Botti (2000) supports the uniqueness of any artistic work, opposing Hirschman (1983, in Botti, 2000). Although the cultural product is different from normal products, it can fit into one or two categories of normal products (mainly specialty products, but also shopping goods) and it also shares the four characteristics of the service industry, as performing arts organisations belong in it. Cultural product is intangible, perishable, inseparable from its producer and variable in its characteristics (circumstantial dimension) (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Pedersen et al., 2017; Simkin, 2000). As Coleman et al. (2019) mention “theatre and museums share the same product characteristic such as non-tangibility and non-standardization” (Coleman et al., 2019, p. 25).

Service, and similarly an artwork, is something intangible that people cannot do anything with it before they purchase it and start experiencing it and it does not end up in the ownership of anything; on the contrary, goods are characterised through their materiality. Nevertheless, we use the terms art-goods and cultural-goods loosely when we talk about performing arts. Cultural products such as performances cannot be stocked, experiences cannot be relived and by the time the show starts, the unoccupied seats are lost; live entertainment events’ supply “exists only in the moment” (Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 114). The cultural product as a service is “inseparable from the source that provides it” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 194), whether the source is the artist that gives the performance or a combination of the artist and the personnel that gets in touch with the customer; the presence and actions of the service personnel define the service, its success or failure (Kim & Tucker, 2016; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Consumption is simultaneous with purchase (Francois Colbert, 2012) and production (Bernstein, 2007; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Weir, 2015). As mentioned above one cannot store a performance; in the same way, he/she cannot acquire it and consume it later, like a normal product, “although it is possible to purchase a ticket in advance” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 37). In the same way, if the artist does not appear, the consumption cannot take place as there is no production, even

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<sup>25</sup> I would say at this point that if we are still allowed to use high and popular arts, I consider one-off works of art as high. That means a visual artwork that cannot be reproduced in identical copies (e.g. Andy Warhol’s silkscreen paintings like Campbell’s Soup or Shot Marylins), or a performing arts show that differs every time it is performed because it is affected by several factors (e.g. audiences, actors etc.).

if the ticket has been purchased in advance (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; Kim & Tucker, 2016; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Weir, 2015).

Finally, the variability of a cultural product as service concerns the fact that every performance is different and consequently, the quality varies depending on the circumstances, personal and external factors or even the chemistry between audience and performers; the proceedings and outcomes of a live entertainment event, and by extension performing arts, are “often uncertain and spontaneous”(Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 114) and they involve heightened perceived risk (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; Coleman et al., 2019; Kim & Tucker, 2016; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). The experience of attending a performance though can be affected by the audience’s involvement and expectations; these influence consumer’s experience and satisfaction. The same happens with customer service. Poor customer service will affect -and eventually, drive away- firstly the satisfaction of the amateur or novice audience and later, if it is repeated, the enlightened connoisseur or veteran of the arts (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The above characteristics can be also considered challenges for marketers. That is why they are trying to make the product more tangible with marketing, referring to concrete symbols of quality, having a quality of brochures and a character of facilities (“atmospherics”) and the like. To tackle perishability, they use advance publicity, offer discount pricing for previews and/or promote subscription. Moreover, marketers, to control inseparability, try to improve the experience by focusing on customer service (customer-oriented marketing), which is something more stable and can counterbalance a not-so-good day of performance. Internal marketing is very helpful for this purpose. Variability can be faced again through well-trained personnel and “routinizing as many parts of the service as possible” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 195). As mentioned, add-on variability is the customer’s involvement and expectations, which can also affect drastically the experience. To minimize this, marketers should either educate and inform the consumers, or make their expectations more realistic (market more accurately the plays and the services) or target better (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). As we will mention in a future chapter, marketers should not create higher expectations for customers, because finally the customers will be disappointed.

Because of the changing consumer trends and technological evolvments, each product has a lifecycle (PLC). Managing effectively the life-cycle of a product can contribute to an organisation's sustainability, given the high costs of cultural product development. As many cultural products are prototypical and/or of limited duration the more people attend them, the more revenues will be generated. The life cycle of a typical product illustrates the demand and passes through four stages: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline. Cultural products or organisations may also be subjected

to this analysis, but some with different cycle patterns. Popular performing arts products are more vulnerable to drastic changes in demand, compared to the classics that are usually more durable, although they also have a life cycle (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

When the classic product is introduced in the market is in the first phase (a potentially long-lasting one), where the expenses are more than the revenues and the consumer response is slow. On the contrary, the characteristics of the period of growth are quick market acceptance and improved revenues. Passing through the maturity stage that, compared to the previous, is generally the more long-lasting, financial return is stable or declined, while sales slow down. Finally, both sales and financial return move downwards and this is the decline phase, which is not easy to distinguish and might be considered a simple slump. The main indicator for diagnosing it is the launching of a superior substitute product (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The PLC concept though has been questioned by some authors and it seems it “is not very useful during the course of business” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 58). Moreover, for some cultural products, the typical life cycle does not apply; it is replaced by a preset life cycle as the duration of a performance or exhibition is pre-scheduled, with many actors involved that have already plans or contracts for their next artistic work. As Colbert (2012) mentions, “this product management is imposed by the restrictions inherent in the cultural sector” (p. 58). On the other hand, there are cultural products that follow the standard product life cycle circle, as they are pre-decided to last as long as they are welcomed by the audience. Good examples can be commercial productions or repertoire theatres (Francois Colbert, 2012).

The product adoption process [or diffusion of innovations process (Rogers, 1983 in Gordon, 2011)] illustrates the number of consumers that purchase it: early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards, as they will be analysed in a later chapter. These categories can be also connected to the life cycle, as for example during the introduction phase, the early adopters might be the only purchasers, or during the decline phase, the laggards will be the only ones to consume (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Francois Colbert, 2012; Gordon, 2011; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

Consumers keep a certain behaviour when they buy, and knowing their buying patterns facilitates the positioning process. People buy to satisfy needs and solve problems. They prioritize their needs and the resources available to them and they attach value to products. That is why it is important to position a product in a way that consumers will be convinced that it covers their needs and attribute it the required value (more than competitive products or services) to finally consume it. This applies to all products, including cultural ones. The cultural product has multiple clients, such as consumers,

sponsors, and the media. The needs of each one differ. For example, the sponsors might need a promotional vehicle, the media might need a wide audience, and consumers might seek to cover several needs (e.g. Maslow's hierarchy of needs) (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012). Whatever the needs of the targeted audiences are, the product, with all of its components, can cover them, as long as it is marketed well.

Nevertheless, Lathrop (2003), supports that when product development takes place (in some cases like in arts organisations that do not produce shows themselves, the product development could possibly be replaced by product choice that is mainly done by the artistic directors, performing arts curators and/or directors of culture) the decision makers should consider all the elements of the marketing program. As he notes: "Marketing begins at the product development stage" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 37) and "Product development involves all activities devoted to making sure the product is marketable" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 28). This process includes all the activities mentioned above (segmentation, positioning) and the ones will be mentioned below (price, place product). In detail, it consists of "identifying the target audience, identifying and enhancing the product selling points, differentiating the product from the competition, choosing appropriate delivery formats, packaging the product effectively, and setting the right price" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 28). From the above, it is clear that Lathrop (2003) considers product development as the base of a marketing program. To define the product category and style from the beginning is essential to communicate it correctly to all stakeholders (e.g. journalists, and advertising agencies).

#### *1.4.3.b. Price*

As mentioned above, the cultural product is composed of the artistic product, the spin-off products, the related services and the consumer's experience. Every product, the artistic included, "has a price, which is normally expressed as the monetary value attributed to it" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 20). Nevertheless, from the consumer's perspective, even if a product is free there is always a price to pay for it, as the price includes the peripheral expenses<sup>26</sup> related to the product's consumption, the effort to purchase a product (from the effort to buy it online, up to the physical effort of travelling to attend a performance or to find parking), the invested leisure time, the risk that needs or expectations will not be met (Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Kim & Tucker, 2016). The latter can be reduced if the consumers are very well informed about the product. But in some cases, consumers do not want to reduce it; instead, they prefer to be surprised (Francois Colbert, 2012). Kotler & Scheff (1997) mention the term "perceived costs" which includes peripheral expenses and some of the expenses related to the effort to purchase a product, such as reaching the venue.

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<sup>26</sup> An example can be the transportation expenses or the babysitter that will stay with kids while the consumer is attending a performance.



According to them, arts organisations should decide which perceived cost will reduce, considering the significance of each one and the organisation's monetary cost (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Baumol and Bowen (1966) note that "even if ticket prices were to remain constant, related costs would continue to make attendance even more expensive" (p. 264); but when they say 'related costs', they mean the costs that the organisation cannot control.

The location of the organisation is connected to the Place variable of the marketing mix. The "effort to purchase a product" that Colbert (2012) mentions, includes also the physical effort to reach the venue, and it is not cut off from invested leisure time and peripheral expenses. If the location of the organisation is good, more chances to be successful; the effort and the time spent by the consumers will be reduced, as well as the expenses for transportation in some cases. "Both functional (actual) distance and functional time are important" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 132) and it is critical to know consumers' perceptions of location. Additionally, if the parking is solved, then one more effort and time issue is solved for the consumer. Likewise, if the website is sufficiently user friendly can reduce the effort, or if through the website or other media the organisation provides consumers sufficient information, they can understand beforehand what the artistic product is about and limit the risk (Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012).

Colbert (2012) claims that consumers will consider a price fair, only if it is the one they are prepared to pay. Kotler & Scheff (1997) mention that the perceived value is the price that consumers feel the product is worth, no matter how much the production expenses are. The monetary value of a product does not necessarily match the cost price. In business, the price of a good might be as high as the value the consumers attribute to it (e.g. prestige). Similarly, in cultural products, the fame of the performers may increase the price. "In fact, the uniqueness, fame, and symbolic value of an object may increase the price consumers are willing to pay" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 20). Consumers will select the product that "provides them the best value {...} in terms of overall benefits, which might include" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 36) the esteem from the consumer's social circle. Nevertheless, there are segments/target markets that are highly price sensitive, such as the "faith and family seekers" - according to Kim's and Tucker's (2016) categorisation- and in this case, we talk about sheer numbers.

From an organisation's perspective, setting a price is similar to "sending a signal about product value in the marketplace" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 170). The price decision should be within the limits of the financial risk the organisation can take and consider whether the consumers will be satisfied, what is the competition out there and if any specific regulations for pricing in their field (e.g. theatre tickets). There is no magic formula for setting a successful price, but there are some suggested steps to be followed. The first one is to know the price objectives, which, as per Colbert (2012), are divided into profit/surplus objectives, sales-based objectives, competitive balance and corporate image objectives.

Kotler & Scheff (1997) and Andreasen & Kotler (2008) divide these objectives into two categories, the revenue maximisation objective (or cost recovery objective) and the audience size maximisation. If a company is “market-oriented” has high levels of profit as the main target. Arts organisations though, usually care about balancing their revenues and expenses, keeping pricing low. But there are also firms that position themselves somewhere in between, aiming at a slight surplus (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

As mentioned, price is used as a tool for the increase of sales or market share, development of new markets and building of customer loyalty. To succeed in the above, Colbert (2012) supports that arts organisations might choose to lower their prices or reduce any of the other components of pricing. But, the price reduction for the development of new markets and the maximising of audience size can work only if the target markets are price sensitive (e.g. Kim and Tucker’s (2016) ‘faith and family seekers’). Nevertheless, Kotler & Scheff (1997), juxtaposing studies’ results (p. 223) and examples (p. 229), support that lowering the prices is not the most effective strategy to stimulate demand. In the case of subscriptions, some studies have shown that the price reduction might have the opposite result because it can affect the perceived value of the regular subscribers. The price increase can be dissuasive for the target market of budget-conscious or medium- and lower-interest groups (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Kim & Tucker, 2016; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The price should be kept at the level that serves the objectives of the organisation. If the objective is revenue, the price that gives the highest profit must be chosen, no matter how much the fullness of the venue is. But if the objective is the maximisation of attendance for the generation of positive word of mouth, or for possible future donations, then the organisation should choose the price that will make the hall full (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). As Colbert (2012) mentions, depending on the life cycle stage, organisations choose different price strategies. The stage of establishing an organisation differs from its maturity stage, during which it might choose a competitive balance, aligning the prices, instead of a price war. At this stage, other variables of the marketing mix can get a starring role. Colbert (2012) states about performing arts organisations: “companies in this sector set ticket prices at the same level as others in the same category” (p. 172); of course, there are always the exceptions of prestigious shows or expensive productions. Usually, the biggest and most prestigious organization sets the highest price; this happens because pricing can also be a tool for building the corporate image. Depending on whether the organization wants to show a prestigious image or an accessible-to-everyone image or a combination of these two, will use the corresponding price strategy. Nevertheless, price strategies cannot work isolated from the rest variables of the marketing mix (Colbert, 2012).

To set a specific monetary price (price strategy), organisations depend on the target they want to approach, the image they want to project and/or their financial and market share objectives. To plan price strategies, arts organisations should take into consideration the intenders, the people who are really interested in attending a specific event. A segment of consumers associates high price with high quality, it has high expectations from the product and it is willing to pay for it, as it feels reassured it is worthy and its perceived risk is reduced. This association is based on subjective criteria as it depends on their past experience (e.g. buying expensive products with low quality will make them sceptical about the high price), “knowledge and awareness of the product and trust in the” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 174) arts organisation (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

Price doesn't address only consumers but different audiences, such as sponsors; to attract this audience, organisations may adopt the prestige pricing strategy. Prestige pricing, except for adding value to the perceived product, “generates a greater profit for the company” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 174). It attracts label- or design-conscious consumers or those who want to stand out of the crowd. If the price drops below a certain point the latter mentioned segment of the market will not be willing to buy it, as it doesn't want to be identified with this specific social class that consumes it. But, another important segment of consumers is that of price-sensitive or else budget-conscious<sup>27</sup>, and it is usually the biggest segment<sup>28</sup>. According to economists, “the lower the price, the higher the number of units sold” (Colbert, 2012, p. 176), and this happens because of price elasticity<sup>29</sup>: “the term used to describe the relationship between the price and the quantity purchased” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 177). To Colbert (2012), “the demand for cultural products is generally inelastic in terms of price” (p. 188); this means that even if the price increases, performing arts patrons' willingness to buy is not affected much (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

There are three methods to choose a price strategy, but one is never enough; all three should be kept in mind while taking a decision. Traditional marketing theory sets the price as high as the consumer is willing to pay. Lathrop (2003) though supports that nowadays internet has changed the above-mentioned price. The author focuses on music, hence, what he notes sounds reasonable if we consider the free download. But, this doesn't apply to performing arts. Nevertheless, the plethora of online

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<sup>27</sup> “Students and low-employees often cited as the rationale for low pricing strategies” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 221).

<sup>28</sup> Kotler & Scheff (1997) cite that “the general public is not willing to pay as much to attend artistic performances as for spectator sports and rock concerts, but the fact remains that some costly entertainment options are pursued by lower-income people” (p. 221). Nevertheless, according to Baumol's and Bowen's research (1966) “people who attend free concerts spend much less on other items; {...} this suggests that perhaps free concerts are attended by lower income groups” (Baumol & Bowen, 1966, p. 263).

<sup>29</sup> “Demand is considered elastic if, after a price change, the number of units or products consumed varies more than proportionally to this price change. Conversely, demand is considered inelastic if, in the case of a price change, consumption varies less than proportionally to the price” (Colbert, 2012, p. 177, 178).

promotions for performing arts, which are actually organisations' sales incentives, can affect the price the consumer is willing to pay, as consumers get used to the lower promotional prices and their ticket price limit might change. To identify how much the consumer is willing to pay, marketers are conducting marketing research. Even if the outcome of the research suggests a specific price, the limitation is competitors' pricing. The second method, cheaper and simpler than the first one, is to set prices according to the competition. The limitation here is that any speciality of the product is ignored and "any potential for positioning through price is lost" (Colbert, 2012, p. 180). This method is suggested "if consumers perceive competing products as similar and their perception cannot be changed" (Colbert, p. 180). This so-called going rate or imitative pricing is attractive because it will "yield a fair return and elicit a reasonable demand" as it "represents the collective wisdom of the industry" and it will be "least disruptive of industry harmony" (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 232) as competition is extensive. Finally, it is an attractive choice because the reactions of consumers and competitors to differentiated prices are unpredictable (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lathrop, 2003).

The third method depends on the cost of production; although it is a simple one, it ignores consumers' reactions and "it may be awkward to apply if unit costs vary in direct reaction to the product level or if it is difficult to spread out certain costs absorbed by the company through the manufacture of other products" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 184). Although Colbert (2012) defines costs as monetary, including fixed and variable costs, and mentions the cost-based method as a simple one, it cannot easily apply to arts organisations as the dimension of intangible costs, as mentioned by Kotler & Scheff (1997), should not be neglected. In most cases, the main concern of arts organisations is to attract the broadest possible audience, making the prices widely affordable (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). This is why they do not increase the price, even if the demand is in excess. Additionally, "production costs for works in the performing arts cannot be lowered by increasing productivity, which is essentially linked to labour costs that cannot be shrunk any further" (Colbert, 2012, p. 193)<sup>30</sup>. As Scheff and Kotler (1996) put it: "performing arts organisations do not benefit from the productivity gains" (p. 32). This is related to the phenomenon known as Baumol's cost disease (Baumol & Bowen, 1966, in Weir, 2015), as well as to the economies of scale (Silberston, 1972). "Within performing arts, the production process is characterised by a relatively fixed number of performers, rehearsal hours, performance length, and audience capacity" (Zaharie, 2014, p. 73) and cannot be increased without increasing revenues. Moreover, because of the nature of performing arts (e.g. set number of casts per artwork), productivity cannot be improved and it is actually decreasing compared to the rest of the economy. The price that must be charged to fully cover the cost of staging a show is the break-even price. If the

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<sup>30</sup> Based on Baumol's law (Baumol, 1967, in Colbert, 2012).

cost method is to be applied, this price, along with the total costs of the organisation (sum of fixed and variable costs), should be considered. But this is not enough. As mentioned above, intangible costs should be also considered. Usually, the money to cover all the costs and reach the break-even point will not come only from the tickets -the sold tickets to the cashier cover only 10-20% of income(Zaharie, 2014)<sup>31</sup>- but also from the other three sources of revenue: government, private sector, partners (grants or subsidies); this is the way to narrow the “ever-widening gap between productivity and costs” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 220). For arts organisations, the total earned income covers about 50 or 60 per cent of the expenses and several non-profit arts organisations “have historically charged less than their costs” (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 242).

Marketing managers usually choose one of the above-mentioned methods, considering though the other two methods. For Colbert (2012) this process is considered the fourth method that is called “dynamic pricing”. Therefore, he suggests for arts organisations, which want to maximise profits or surplus, the dynamic pricing policy, which allows them to set different prices for the same product, depending on the “consumer segment, consumer behaviour or time of consumption” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 185). This policy is what Kotler & Scheff (1997) call discriminatory pricing. It can be done through segmented pricing or negotiated pricing. Segmented means that the segments and the pricing for each one are pre-decided, while the negotiated involves the negotiation of the price with the consumer during the transaction (through scalpers, which had zero profit for the organisations or nowadays through auction sites, such as eBay, or auction software programs).

Organisations should segment their market and price accordingly, so as not to lose revenues neither from price-insensitive consumers nor from price-sensitive ones. The segmented pricing, except for revenues, can also improve attendance. It is needed because of the demand/price elasticity variation between segments and it is “far removed from the traditional ‘one price fits all’ approach” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 186). It should consider the parameters of consumers’ willingness or ability to pay (that can also be associated with the image pricing-uniqueness of an event), the seat locations, the time and date of the performance and the time of purchase (e.g. early birds, public rush). As Kotler & Scheff (1997) point out, “both buyers and sellers benefit when price is adjusted to meet demand” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 234). A scientific pricing technique that can facilitate segmented pricing is Yield Management or else called Revenue Management or Real-Time Pricing (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Equally important with the setting of price is the effective way to communicate the price (Blackwell et al., 2001).

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<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, Scheff and Kotler (1996) claim that “Typically, an arts organization earns 50 percent of its revenue from ticket sales and gains the other 50 percent from contributions” (p.44).

In a nutshell, price strategies can serve many objectives and different strategies can serve the same objective. Nevertheless, they should be applied considering the position of the organization in the market (leader or not, cost pressure), the market segments to be targeted, the special circumstances of launching new products and the psychological influence of the price strategies on the consumers' evaluation (Colbert, 2012). It is important to know what the objective is and who the target is. Well-planned segmentation and targeting will help organisations to act accordingly.

Nevertheless, consumers' perceptions of price are more important than actual prices and marketers should not confuse the "lowest price" with the acceptable range of prices. The latter can be combined with other salient attributes for consumers. Using the strategy of the lowest price might have opposite results than the desired ones. It might attract a minority that focuses on the lowest price, but lose the majority who consider other attributes more important.

#### *1.4.3.c. Place*

Kotler & Scheff (1997) describe Place as "the channels or access points through which the product is made available to the public", and they refer to variations in performing venues, ticket distribution and creative distribution concepts. For Colbert (2012) place includes several elements, with the main ones the "distribution channels, physical distribution, and commercial location" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 22). The distribution channels "include all those who play a role in the flow of goods from producer to consumer" (Colbert, 2012, p. 202) and should manage the relationship between artists, producers and distributors. "Physical distribution includes the logistics involved in distributing a product" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 22), such as the distribution of a film in theatres, and "guarantees the flow of a product" (Colbert, 2012, p. 202). The commercial location of an arts organisation, that is the physical site, plays a crucial role in its success or not, especially when it sells directly to the consumer (Francois Colbert, 2012). "Live performances are typically consumed in the physical facilities of the supplier" (Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 114) and as Martinez et al. (2018) mention the location of arts venues affect significantly the cultural experience.

The product's distribution can be classified according to consumer consumption and the form of consumption determines the mode of distribution. Performing arts products are usually under collective consumption, which means that they can be consumed at specific places for specific periods of time. If a visual work of art though is owned by a consumer, it falls into the category of individual consumption, such as books. Time, place, duration, and the possession of the technical dimension of the product play an important role in the above-mentioned classifications. For performing arts presented by arts organisations, the consumers are not free to decide on almost any of these aspects. Except if the same show is presented by another organisation during the same period. But this is something that applies more to movies instead of live theatrical or dance performances, which are

considered different products if the cast is different. With the use of modern technology though, if an organisation decides to broadcast live the artwork, then the consumer can decide the place or even the duration, choosing for example to attend half of it. Moreover, the consumers might be able to choose which day and time they will attend a live performance, as the organisation might give multiple options of attending; but even in this case, where there is an option, the time of consumption is imposed on the consumer. Finally, if the consumer possesses the technical dimension of a product, the consumption changes form and becomes individual, as mentioned above (Francois Colbert, 2012). The specific place and time of a show impose a well-planned marketing, as it is difficult to correct any possible mistakes after the show. Moreover, the risk is increased for live-performance products, as the consumption cannot be postponed (as in the case of individual consumption products) and “the customer must choose among the products offered at that time” (Colbert, 2012, p. 205).

The distribution channel in arts includes the intermediaries who make the artwork accessible to the consumer; the producer and the consumer are part of this channel. The choice of the channel and the involved agents is crucial, as it affects also the variable of price and promotion. In performing arts, “it is not always the producer who selects the intermediaries” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 205). Sometimes this is caused by the monopoly market (e.g. touring shows and local presenters). When fame though is involved, the strategic advantage goes to the star. Nevertheless, intermediaries are important players in performing arts, as direct distribution is not always feasible (Francois Colbert, 2012).

In a distribution channel, intermediaries usually take care of the logistic function, the commercial and the support. As Becker (1982, p. 116 in Botti, 2000, p. 23) writes, channel intermediaries-those who manage the services through which artistic value is diffused (Botti, 2000, p. 23) and the artwork becomes socially legitimate- know “how to translate aesthetic value into economic value” (Becker, 1982, p. 116). Logistics can include transportation, warehousing and adjustments to the quantity and variety of products. These functions might fit in the arts industry (products such as books, discs etc.), nevertheless performing arts normally will not require a warehousing function. From the commercial point of view, the producer comes to them, signs agreements and from that time the organisation handles the product promotion and deals with customers, in a sense of communicating and providing the services. Marketing intermediaries are usually chosen because of their superiority in efficiency and effectiveness. The arts organisation as an intermediary (presenter) has the “knowledge of the local market and corporate image” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 207). Then, the cultural organisation can use other intermediaries to support the producers and their commitments to them, such as risk-taking, financing and research. For instance, in viral marketing, customers, specifically those with a

high level of innovativeness<sup>32</sup>, are considered intermediaries (Hausmann, 2012). “The different functions carried out by intermediaries vary according to the type of distribution channel used” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 207). And in fact, the type of distribution channel selected affects the price and the promotion of the product. For example, “the more intermediaries the higher the price” (Colbert, 2012, p. 209) (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012). Channel intermediaries “together with the members of audience, all form the art world” (Botti, 2000, p. 23).

Cultural organisations though, except for intermediaries and producers, can be also distributors. Distributors “distribute the product to entities other than the final consumer-in other words to other businesses in the distribution channel” (Lathrop, 2013, p. 89). This might mean that an arts organisation located in Greece distributes one of its performances to a theatre in London; then the latter will deal with the final consumer. The same might happen when performances are touring nationally.

Distribution strategies can be either intensive (or mass), selective, exclusive or push and pull. Intensive strategy implies an intensive distribution and concerns products for which prospects will not go out of their comfort zone to get them; these products are called *convenience goods and services*. With intensive, the chances are more for the product to be accessible, but the distribution channel should be long. The selective one is usually linked to the corporate profile; a sense of uniqueness or rarity is created in the consumer and it concerns the referred as *shopping goods and services*, for which the prospect will “undertake some effort to find and evaluate” (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 257). The exclusive strategy excludes competing intermediaries (e.g. retailers, and arts organisations) and gives a monopoly to selected ones. It is mainly used for specialty goods and services, for which consumers are willing to try hard to get them, and “often at considerable cost” (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 257). The channel used in this strategy is a two-step (producer->to presenter->to consumer), as the distribution is not broad. The push strategy offers a “higher profit margin to retailers” to push (promote) and sell a specific product, while the pull strategy invests huge amounts in advertising “to generate such high demand that retailers want to carry the product in order to satisfy their customers” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 214) (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012).

Above, the first element of the distribution variable, distribution channels, was described. Next is the physical distribution that brings the product to the market and makes it accessible to the consumer. The wiser the physical distribution (involving the logistics), the less the marketing cost. But, the physical distribution’s objectives are contradictory. Because, to ensure and maximize customer

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<sup>32</sup> Innovativeness concerns people’s different levels of readiness to try new products, and it is analysed in chapter 3: Audience & Culture.



service, “a fundamental aspect of physical distribution” (Colbert, 2012, p. 216), arts organisations usually need more funds, so that everything will work efficiently (e.g. qualified staff, reliable inventory-control system) and the final product will reach the customer in a specific way and time; hence, the second objective, to minimize costs, cannot easily be succeeded. In performing arts, the decision of how the product will reach (be distributed to) the public includes the choice of cities or countries on a tour, “selection of venues, performance times, and ticket-sales techniques” (Colbert, 2012, p. 216). The decisions of physical distribution should be taken following distribution strategies.

Commercial location is the third element and it is “the physical site where the product is bought or consumed” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 216). Location means the points of sale or the showrooms. But except for the existing venues, location refers also to all the possible places an organisation can perform (e.g. brownfield sites, hospitals, museums, streets) (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). The alternative performance locations can be low-cost, touring opportunities (also international), out-of-town residencies (hosted by schools, universities etc.) or joint ventures that can reduce the risks. Touring can add extra prestige to the organisation, raise its public profile and build loyalty. It has also an economic motive. But, it requires a financial commitment and extensive preparation. The physical setting where the experience takes place affects the satisfaction levels of attendees, as it creates functional and emotional value for them. The elements that consumers consider important in this case are the ambient conditions, the space and its functionality, and the “signs, symbols and artifacts” (Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 116). Specifically, from the ambient conditions, the sound quality is very important, and from the space/function, the “seating facilities, view of the performance, venue size, and parking facilities” (Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 116).

Ticket distribution consists of how and where tickets will be available. The decisions about ticket distribution are linked to the distribution strategies. If the chosen strategy is the intensive one, ticket distribution should be also intensive, with “many physical facilities and long hours for phone orders” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 254). If it is selective, selected outlets will be chosen to sell tickets and if exclusive, “tickets will be available at only one location, usually the box office” (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 254). Ticket distribution can be done also online, using a computer, laptop or even a mobile phone. Arts organisations should be able to provide a smooth online ticket purchase journey, to enhance audience engagement and revenue generation, especially since the coronavirus pandemic. The Insights Report published by Spektrix (the leading CRM, ticketing, fundraising and marketing software) in 2019 shows that arts audiences make 60% of their transactions online, while 46% of visits to Spektrix online purchase path are on mobile phones (Spektrix, 2019). The number of tickets for arts sold online is increasing every year. A good website and the right tools can boost the booking experience.

The location is also linked to how much effort the consumer will expend to attend the performance or buy the tickets. And as the competition in leisure is growing, the greater the effort, the lower the chances of being selected by the consumer; except for unique or rare events, where competition is shrinking. The commercial location (venues and ticket distribution) can be linked with this effort and affect the choice of the consumer, or even, along with other factors<sup>33</sup>, determine the success of the organisation. Some of the factors (as mentioned in Price) that can affect are the easy access to the place by public transportation (geographic proximity), and/or the effort and time that will be spent to park the car and the related expenses that derive from the location of the organisation. Regarding the latter, the area where the organisation is located might have no options for restaurants or they might all be very expensive, or the area might be considered dangerous at night. Of course, there are always ways to improve these factors, but it is always an asset if the location itself is advantageous (Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

Place comprises all the elements mentioned above, which are interconnected with the rest players in the marketing mix. Nevertheless, the type of distribution channel, the bringing of a product to market, as well as its commercial location play a crucial role in the map of marketing strategies.

#### *1.4.3.d. Promotion (Communication)*

The main factor of the marketing mix that concerns this research is Promotion that “consists of all efforts that communicate to the public including advertising, public relations, direct mail, telemarketing, and personal selling. Promotion is the final step in the marketing process. It is the communication of the strategies and tactics developed through the other aspects of the marketing mix” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 43). Promotion is fundamentally the procedure during which the message of the organisation will be conveyed to the public through selected channels, depending on the message and the circumstances (Fitzhugh, 1983b in Rentschler, 1998). It is needful to be mentioned here that for this research, People are included in the fourth P, Promotion, which has the broader sense of communication; people are the personnel of the organisation, the personal communicators.

To make it clearer, according to Kotler and Scheff (1997), the main tools of communications mix that is also called promotion mix, are four: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and publicity (or public relations) (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, Colbert, 2012). Each tool has unique qualities and it is used for different purposes. In the next chapter communication in arts will be analysed. Before that, it would be useful to check the summary table (Table 2) of key concepts below.

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<sup>33</sup> The determinants are: location, nature and quality of products, price, advertising and promotion, personnel, services offered, physical building attributes, nature of regular audiences, building atmosphere, post-transaction services and satisfaction (Blackwell et al., 2001).

<b>Product</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Communication (or Promotion)</b>	<b>Branding</b>
Artistic product (or else central product)	Peripheral expenses related to product consumption	Distribution channels	Advertising	Brand name
Related services	Efforts to purchase a product	Physical distribution	Sales Promotion	Logo
Spin-off products	Invested leisure time	Commercial location	Personal Selling and People (the personnel of the organisation)	Slogan
Consumer's experience of the product (including the value the consumers will attribute to it)	The risk that needs or expectations will not be met		Public Relations (PR)	Consistent look
				Brand promise
				Spokesperson
				Symbols
				Internal understanding of what the brand stands for

Table 2. Summary table of key concepts

## 2. Chapter 2\_Communication in Arts

This chapter focuses on communication in arts, presenting an arts communication model adapted from the sports communication model of Pedersen, Laucella, Kian & Geurin (2017). The model shapes the content of the chapter and describes in an explanatory way how the fourth element of the marketing mix, communication (or else promotion), applies and contributes to arts. The first section is about media at the service of arts communication; mass media, which helps to communicate news about arts, and new media (or Digital, Mobile and Social Media), which helps to market arts. The second section regards Arts Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), which aims to send coherent and consistent messages to audiences, using various means of communication, such as advertising, people, PR and so on. For this research, Arts IMC is the final step in the marketing process of an arts organisation; it includes “the communication of the strategies and tactics developed through the other aspects of marketing mix” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 43), which were analysed in the previous chapter. The messages that are sent at this stage should be coherent and consistent, co-ordinating and integrating all the elements of the communication mix. If music terms could be used, it could be said

that IMC is similar to orchestration. In the next chapter, the analysis of the communication strategies of the case study organisation of this research is based on the description of the above-mentioned arts communication model.

## 2.1. Arts Communication

For many decades effective communication has been linked to effective and successful organisations. Communication though is quite complex as it can include many aspects, from media communication to the conditions under which communication takes place. Except for the practical part, communication as a science is also complex, as it encompasses various groups of theories such as structural, functional, cognitive and behavioural, interactional and conventional, interpretive, and critical theories (Pedersen et al., 2017; Thomas & Stephens, 2015).

Lambin & Schuiling (2012) note that “marketing communication refers to all the signals or messages” (p. 471) an organisation sends to its various audiences. Communication has the double role of informing potential customers and persuading them to buy. The most important means of communication (communication mix) are: personal selling, advertising, promotion, public relations, and direct marketing; the latter, also known as below-the-line marketing, includes direct mail, telemarketing, online communication, e-mail marketing (including the so-called spam/junk mail), and efforts to build word-of-mouth marketing (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Bernstein, 2007; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Jensen & Jepsen, 2006; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). Blackwell et al. (2001) add also direct selling. For Lathrop (2003), direct marketing includes direct mail and direct-response advertising, and it is “a combination of distribution and promotion” (p. 107); promotion because it is “providing information about the product along with persuasion and incentives to buy” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 107), and distribution because the customer’s request to buy is fulfilled. Any effort of direct mail (or any direct response piece) should have at its heart the time-tested formula (AIDA) that contains the elements of grabbing Attention, sparking Interest, creating Desire and calling to Action (Lathrop, 2003).

Pedersen et al. (2017) referring to another sector of the leisure industry, sports, support that “at its basic level, sports communication could be defined as the exchange of information by or through sport” (p. 82). The same can apply to arts. The authors choose a definition for sports communication that “integrates the communication aspects involved in and through sport” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 82). “Sport communication is a process by which people – in sport, in a sport setting, or through a sport endeavour –share symbols as they create meaning through interaction” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 82). Respectively, the definition of arts communication can be that broad to include anything that involves communication in and through arts.

As Pedersen et al. (2017, p. 86) claim, sports communication is a “process of producing and delivering messages to an audience of one person, a couple of colleagues, or a massive group”. Likewise and based on this, arts communication can be conceptualised as a similar process. The art products are produced and delivered (along with their messages) whether to one person, small groups or massive groups (e.g. live streaming performances). The arts communication process similar to sports can be “intentional, unintentional, complex, circular, irreversible, transactional, unrepeatable, dynamic, interactive”(Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 86). A communication process can be characterised widely differently depending on the communication objectives. These are decided through strategic marketing and depend on several factors, such as who are the target audiences, at which decision stage they are or what type of response they want to get.

In this chapter, based on Pedersen’s et al. (2017) sports communication model, I will support that arts communication that interests this research consists of Mediated Communication in Arts and Arts Communication Services and Support (Figure 2). Mediated Communication is consisted of a) Arts Mass Media and b) Emerging and Social Media (or else Online, Social and Other Emerging or Digital, Mobile and Social). Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that many of the realms of mediated communication have converged. Arts Communication Services and Support will be described below, but Figure 2 shows its components.

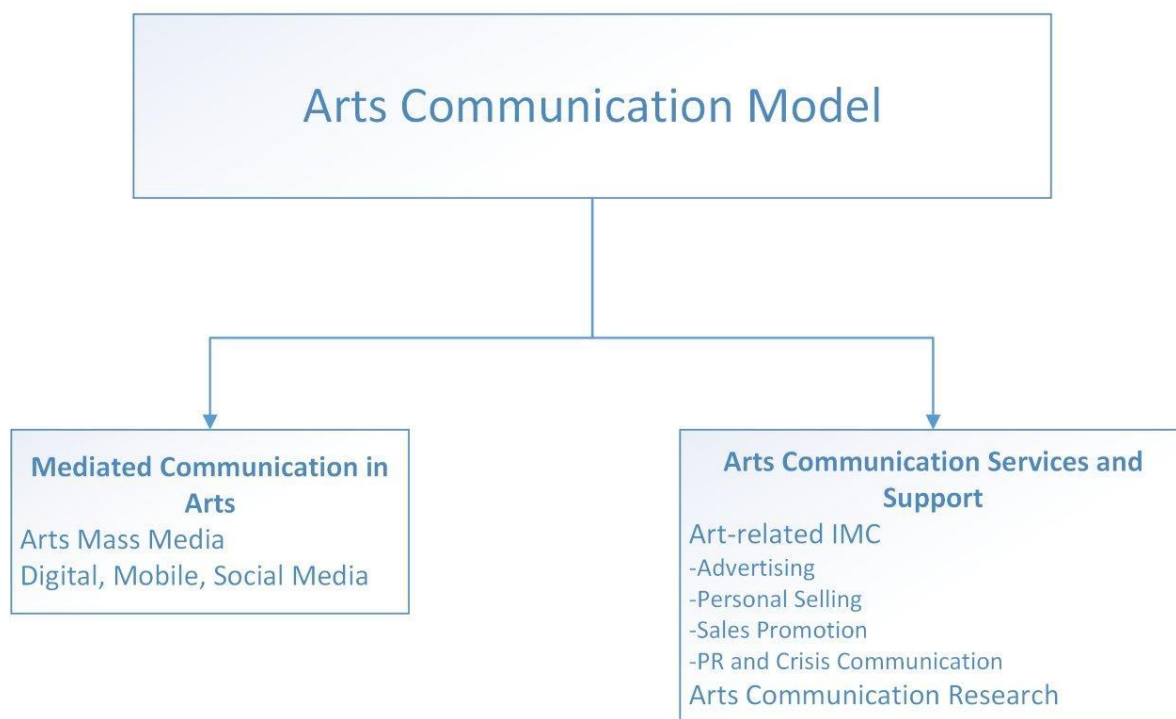


Figure 2. Arts Communication Model (Adapted by Pedersen et al.,2017)

Before starting the description of the model, it is worth mentioning the stages of a communication plan. Firstly an arts organisation should analyse the current situation. Having already set the objectives of the organisation and the target segments to be reached, the marketing manager will develop the strategy. Before the development of the strategy though, the organisation should have enough information about the audiences and should answer many questions. The perception of consumers about the organisation, its accordance with the desired organisation perception, and the position of the organisation compared to the competitors, are good to start with. Then the marketers should decide the kind of messages to be sent. But, to reach there they should know what the advantages of the product are, what motivates the consumer to buy the product and what the company's intentions in terms of communication are. Additionally, they should know if the image they project is the right one, whether or not and how it can change, and if it is enough to make a product known in order to be purchased. As mentioned, the organisation firstly sets its objectives, segments the market and decides the target segments to receive the message; it should identify the decision-makers and make the profile of the target market (Francois Colbert, 2012).

Until now the organisation has decided what is the message, and who is the receiver, and afterwards, it is called to "determine the optimal way of reaching the target segments" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 239). The profile market that was mentioned above can help in this phase to answer questions regarding the media preferences of the target audiences and help marketers to decide what kind of media they will use to reach them (traditional or online), the promotional tools that can be proved more effective, the unique features to be highlighted and which codes (colour, symbol etc.) to use to communicate effectively. The next decision regards the right timing to transmit the message, considering though the nature of the chosen media, the best moment to launch a subscription campaign, and the best timing for advertising (which day, what time etc.). In this case, knowledge about the purchasing habits of the target market can be very helpful. The organisation should have measurable objectives so it can judge if a communication plan has been effective or not if it managed to increase sales or change attitudes or reach the target groups who did not know the product (Francois Colbert, 2012).

An organisation has already set communication objectives and target segments before it starts creating the communication plan. After the above analysis, the marketing team "must draft a budget and create the overall promotional strategy with specific strategies for each component of the marketing mix. Three key decisions must be made for each component: determine the concept, determine the means or tools, and determine the budget. Lastly, the strategies must be implemented and monitored" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 241). Although communication objectives must comply with the marketing ones, they are also somehow different in nature; marketing objectives concern

the market share or sales volume, while “communication objectives are related to changes that a company wishes to make in the customer’s consumption process. Communication objectives may include increasing awareness, maintaining the current rate of intention to buy, or modifying the consumer’s preference” (Colbert, 2012, p. 241).

The budget decision requires careful handling, as no handbook advises the optimal amount to invest in communication; but, any small or big investment should either not create any economic issues, or –to be considered worthwhile- contribute to the profit or surplus. Finally, “the cost of a sale must be less than the revenue generated by that sale” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 242).

## 2.2. Mediated Communication in Arts

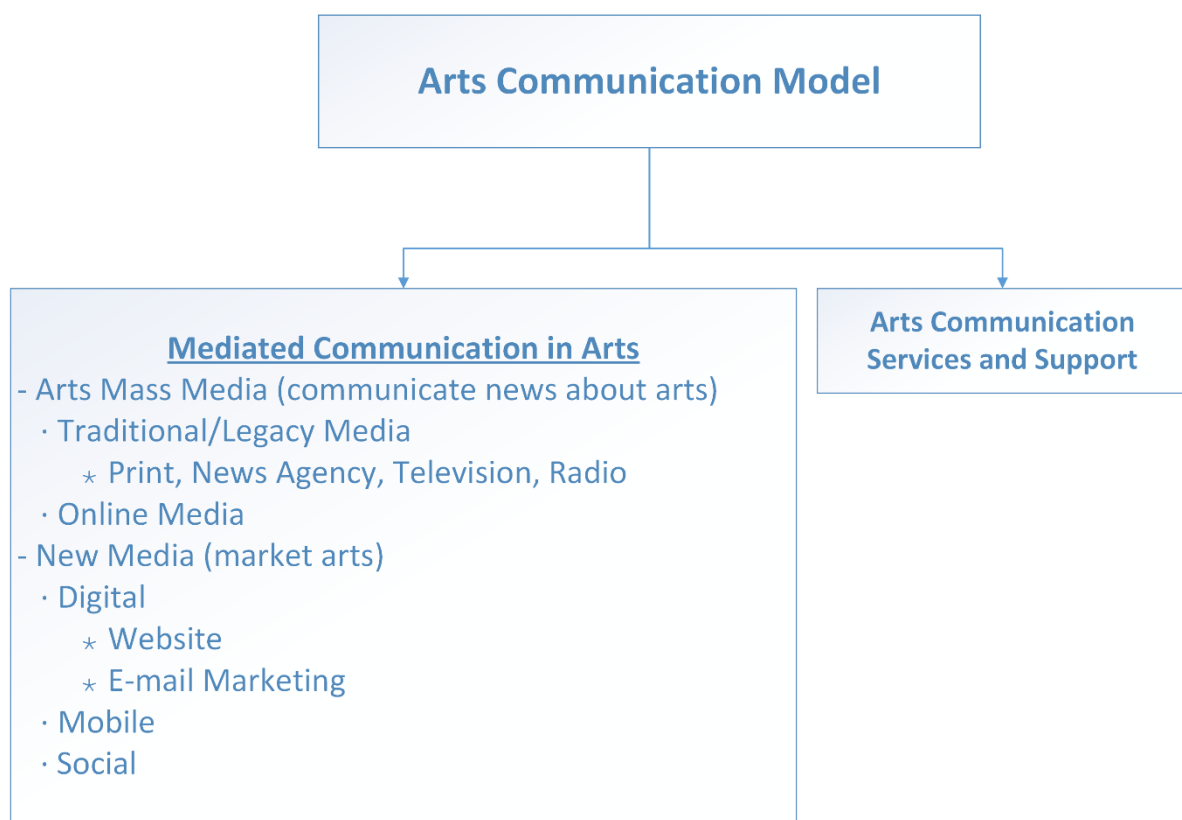


Figure 3. Mediated Communication in Arts (Adapted by Pedersen et al., 2017)

### 2.2.1. Arts Mass media

Arts Mass Media is defined as mass media at the service of arts communication; it is not limited to media specialised in arts, but in media that communicate arts. Mass media, which is by definition the media that focus on reaching the masses, have a symbiotic relationship with arts (symbiotic relationship with anything that offers them content and income from advertising, arts included). Media depend partially on arts- and exclusively on arts if they are media dedicated to arts- to fill the agenda, “to sell advertising, to increase profits through higher ratings, to improve circulation figures, and to increase web traffic” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 170). Media also benefit, “since cultural activities

attract a sizeable audience” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 231). At the same time, arts rely on media for visibility, promotion and marketing, credibility, information, advertising, publicity and revenue. The selection and suggestion of an artistic event from a popular newspaper have been always influential to the publics and cultural organisations benefit from the coverage that the media offers (Francois Colbert, 2012; Pedersen et al., 2017). Lately, a growth in mass media devoted to arts has been noted, and it is accompanied by a growth in their influence as well.

Adjusting the definition of Pedersen et al. (2017, p. 170) for sports mass media, arts mass media encompasses reporting and commentary on arts and the various associated activities that surround and influence the arts, reinforce and reflect the institution of arts and help shape art. An example could be a performance that created big noise and turbulence in society because it was dealing with religious issues. Whatever happens in the context of this performance, like protests, talks etc., and has been covered by media, is considered arts mass media.

Arts Mass media includes traditional or legacy media: a) Publishing and Print communication (or just Print) b) News agency/News wires and c) Television and Radio (or Broadcast) and online media. Art publishing and print arts communication are not the same. The definition of publishing is broad enough to include most of the forms of art-related publishing, such as art books, newspapers, art sections, art magazines, art websites, annuals, “newsletters, fan magazines, [and] media guides” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 174). But print arts communication “involves any medium that disseminates printed matter related to” arts (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 174). Hence, all print arts communication is art publishing, but not all art publishing is print. Electronic art publishing, as it includes both publishing and the internet, will be discussed in the digital, mobile and social media section or new media section.

Before the description of the key components of arts mass media, it is worth mentioning that relationships between arts organisations and arts media (media that have cultural sections or media dedicated to arts) are mutually beneficial (Lathrop, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2017). Marketers of organisations are benefited as they get the organisation and its products promoted. But on the other hand, arts media and its people are benefited too, as they constantly need new content, and arts marketers are their source of information, as they feed them with story ideas. The easiest the marketers make it for arts media people to create a story, the better and more published material they will get, and this are also related to media relations that will be analysed below (Lathrop, 2003).

#### *2.2.1.a. Traditional and Online Media*

Print arts communication is composed of newspapers, magazines and books, all related to arts. The digital age has brought many challenges for newspapers, like competition, different media consumption patterns, layoffs and downsizing (Pedersen et al., 2017). This has resulted in the



newspapers' continuous shifting of more resources online. Indeed many newspapers are "asking their reporters and columnists to both promote their work and engage readers through social media" (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 175). Hence, except for the traditional art coverage in newspapers, there is also their online version.

Wire services distribute art news "to both print and nonprint media organisations and customers" (such as "print publications, websites, and multimedia companies") (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 176). The most popular internationally are Reuters, Associated Press, and United Press International; while in Greece, the only one is APE-MPE.

Online media specialised in arts, although non-print, have an effect on print. Art reporters might use the internet as a source, to make their job faster and more qualitative. Journalists, sometimes, might even create an article based on social media like Facebook and Twitter (e.g. what was prevailing there or even what social media users post). Moreover, as also mentioned above, many print newspapers have moved part of their content online; this is because of the readership and consumption patterns that have changed, and it is linked to the challenges of the digital age. Hence, some newspapers reduce their print circulation and enrich theirs online. Moreover, nowadays, web-only art journalists have emerged. Additionally, the new art media has opened up the field to everyone (Pedersen et al., 2017).

The magazines that are relevant to this research are those that cover arts, but not necessarily exclusively (those that have arts as part of their material or those that exclusively cover arts). Magazines faced the same challenges as newspapers. The changing media consumption patterns and the increased competition have reduced the subscription or circulation, some have moved also online, some exclusively online, and new web-only arts magazines have emerged (Pedersen et al., 2017). The last part of print media is art books, which cover a wide variety of topics on the arts. Nowadays, e-books and audiobooks are also available.

Radio had a powerful and immediate effect with its advent in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Except for programs, political messages, sports and music, radio was broadcasting also drama. The advantages of radio are the low costs and the simple technology. Although when television emerged, it "took advertising revenues away from radio" (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 182), nowadays radio has managed to keep up with the new era. Introducing high-definition (HD) and satellite radio, making listening available through mobile devices and web-based devices in cars, adapted to the technological changes and addressed competition, although it doesn't offer visuals. Nowadays, audiences can even listen to live broadcasting of concerts through the radio. Pedersen et al. (2017) support that radio's "reach and power are infinite" (p. 182).

Pedersen et al. (2017) describe television as “the most powerful and significant of all media” (p. 182). Television could be seen as print media (newspapers and magazines) with sound and image. As newspapers and magazines host a variety of subjects, such as news, and sports, but even comics and short novels- especially in previous decades-, similarly television includes different programs. From the film, fiction, documentaries for arts or people involved in arts, shows devoted to art or TV programs with sections of arts or comments on arts, or even the showing of theatrical performances on TV in the last years, up to the people involved in arts that are on TV as interviewees (artists, actors, musicians), it is obvious that art is an integral part of television, and it can also be a source for television. Moreover, television is a very powerful medium for advertising and public relations. That is why there is a mutually beneficial relationship between arts and television. In some countries, except for broadcast television, there is also cable television.

### 2.2.2. Digital, Mobile and Social Media

The other component of Mediated communication is the New Media or Digital/Web, Mobile and Social media. New media has drastically changed the way arts exist in audiences’ lives. From the fiction section of newspapers as mentioned above to the drama broadcasting on radio or TV, nowadays, the contact that audiences can have with arts is way different, as they can do virtual tours in museums, attend live stream theatrical performances or other arts events, engage with cultural organisations, other fans, and artists via social media etc. The advances in the internet and new media “continue to enable increasingly sophisticated levels of communication and affect the manner in which” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 204) arts organisations disseminate information. “Whether it be e-mail, live video streaming, {...} podcasting, web logs (blogs), or social media interactions, technology provides the foundation for the growth” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 204) of new art media, which incorporates arts communication and new media. For successful IMC programs though, organisations have to engage both traditional and new media (Coleman et al., 2019; Pedersen et al., 2017). It is interesting to mention here that the fastest growing area within marketing is interactive marketing, which includes all the above mentioned and some more: “Internet advertising, permission e-mail, marketing Web sites, and mobile and other new media” (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 261)<sup>34</sup>.

#### 2.2.2.a. Digital Communication

As mentioned in Arts Communication Model above, Mediated Communication in Arts includes Arts Mass Media, which helps to communicate news about arts, and New Media (or Digital, Mobile and Social Media), which helps to market arts.

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<sup>34</sup> Interactive marketing though has been criticised by many authors, mainly because it can occasionally ruin advertising effectiveness (Stafford & Faber, 2005).

Internet, although it has been already broadly used for more than two decades, it is still considered new, because it “dramatically affects communication at all levels” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 206). It is immediate, and instantaneous and allows for connectivity and interaction, “from anywhere in the world with internet access” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 207). It is a “unique communication channel” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 207) that except for allowing organisations to provide information, strengthen and enhance customer relations, gives also the chance to “dramatically improve business and organisational performance” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 222).

The affordability and availability of the Internet and the advent of technologies of the Web (Web 1.0, Web 2.0, Web 3.0, Web 4.0) have changed communication and have made arts organisations “rely on the Internet to communicate their key messages” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 207). The nature of the web and social media changes the way messages are disseminated and the disseminators themselves, eliminating gatekeepers’ power and giving arts organisations the chance to shape their own agenda- instead of waiting for the media agenda- and to have more control over their messages. Arts organisations become the gatekeepers through their web pages and social media and in turn, audiences can also be secondary gatekeepers, interacting in social media (Caldiero, 2015; Lathrop, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2017). As “two thirds of the people worldwide who surf the Internet” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 173) use web-based applications, the latter can facilitate arts institutions’ viral marketing -also called ‘buzz marketing’- and raise the levels of word-of-mouth; nevertheless the con/disadvantage of viral marketing is that has non-directly-measurable effects (Hausmann, 2012; “Social NetworksBlogs Now Account for One in Every Four and a Half Minutes Online – Nielsen,” n.d.). According to Hausmann (2012), there is a disagreement about viral marketing’s definition, with some authors narrowing it down to “word-of-mouth advertising” (p. 175), while others define it through a broader spectrum.

#### *2.2.2.b. Website*

Arts organisations that use the Internet effectively have a competitive advantage over those who do not, and “effective Web site and e-mail marketing can be highly valuable for developing new audiences and for improving interaction with current customers” (Bernstein, 2007, p. 168). Websites are very beneficial both for organisations and customers. Among other advantages, they are easily updateable, cost-effective and very convenient for the customers, who use it at their ease<sup>35</sup>, without the time and spatial restrictions, enjoying features that do not exist in traditional media (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003; Stafford & Faber, 2005). A good arts organisation’s website, except for having the highest possible standards, should reflect the mission and values of the organisation, “provide a

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<sup>35</sup> The most popular timing for purchasing tickets for arts events or checking arts organisations’ websites is between 9 p.m. and 2 a.m., making obsolete the traditional box office purchasing (Bernstein, 2007).

high-quality online atmosphere and experience for key publics, {...} serve the organisation's business objectives {...}, while promoting, reinforcing, and maintaining a favourable image of the organisation" (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 210). The website should address both casual and heavy consumers, be easy to navigate, grasp the attention, communicate the message and encourage individuals to visit it again (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2017).

It is suggested by Bernstein (2007), if possible, to have as web address the name of the organisation or have multiple URL addresses that drive to the same site, so it will be easier for visitors to find the organisation. Additionally, authors (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003) suggest link partners, which are relevant organisations- "other performing arts, arts councils, tourist information agencies, and corporate sponsors" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 171), as well as "lifestyle" sites- that set up a link to the concerned organisation, which in exchange sets up links for them or offers something else in return. Moreover, the "website address should be on other publicity and sales materials" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 162).

Based on Pedersen et al. (2017, p. 210) Model for Online Sport Communication (MOSC), I will describe the Model for Online Arts communication (MOAC), which focuses on aspects of arts organisations' websites. Similarly to MOSC, MOAC is influenced by various factors, but the most pertinent ones are the following: the individual's level of involvement with the respective art entity, the individual's motives for Internet use, the content of the art's entity website, the design of the website, performance, usability and commerce on the website. The first two are very important, as, depending on them, the individual prioritises the rest of the components, which will affect the individual's communication with the organisation. If someone wants to book tickets online, the performance, usability and commerce components are more relevant. Hence, when at the final step of the transaction, the procedure is cancelled, and the organisation will have not managed to communicate effectively with the potential consumers.

Although in the following chapter on the audience of performing arts, the motives of audiences to select a cultural organisation or to attend a performance will be described in detail, along with the decision process, here, it is worthy to mention the motives of online users. Why people are looking for art-related information online? Their level of involvement with the respective arts organisation "affects their motivations, perceived needs, and desires when using the Internet" (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 211). This brings us to the theory of uses and gratifications, according to which "individuals use the media to satisfy certain needs and wants" (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 211). Therefore, when individuals visit the website of a cultural organisation, they usually have "a specific goal in mind, and this goal varies based on their involvement" with the organisation (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 211). People with different involvement have different online needs and desires, and motives influence

needs. This can be more obvious if we think about the reasons why a subscriber of an arts organisation visits the website, and respectively the reasons of the one-time visitor, as well as the amount of information they are looking for (the highly involved consumers ask for much more information). Bernstein (2007) translates involvement into loyalty and supports that a website should consider and appeal to people at different levels on the loyalty ladder, such as suspects, prospects, customers, best customers (clients), and advocates, as they all have different needs. Pedersen et al. (2017) add that their goals and motives differ, and they are very crucial for arts organisations to communicate effectively their messages online to their key publics. The understanding of the motives and the methods by which individuals seek to obtain information (searching and browsing), in combination with the effective use of the unique capabilities of internet by the arts organisation, can lead to effective communication (Pedersen et al., 2017).

As mentioned above a website should reflect the mission and the values of an organisation, and this can be done through the component of content. The latter should be valuable and appealing to the key publics (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003). "An effective performing arts Web site generates interest and excitement" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 170). Preferably, the content of the website should not be just a reproduction of information in other mediums, but "offers added value they can't find anywhere else" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 157). It should be updated frequently (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003)- except for the "basic, rarely changing information" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 172), such as mission, history, people, season's schedule, location etc.- and include quality and detailed information, as "arts patrons are willing {...} to read more than the standard seventy-five- to one-hundred-word descriptions about productions" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 170). The inclusion of photos and videos is highly recommended, as well as interviews of artists, interactive educative activities to engage people, links to useful resources about the works it presents and/or produces and sites for purchasing further reading, watching or listening material related to the performances. Bernstein (2007) also suggests arts managers or even other key personnel "stimulate people's interest in the organisation and enhance their experience with the performances and their understanding of the art form" (p. 170) by enriching the website with posts from their personal blogs. He cites the example of the general director of Chicago Opera theatre who is blogging on a wide range of topics, such as backstage of performances, auditions, personal experiences etc. Moreover, the author suggests arts organisations to post entire reviews on their websites or short extracts from them or provide a link to the reviews.

The design of the website can influence the interaction of the user, which is the primary unique characteristic of online communication (Lathrop, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2017; Stafford & Faber, 2005) (Lathrop p.154). E-marketers' goal, to retain visitors or to make them have their website as a bookmark, should be approached by giving visitors on the main website page what they are looking

for. If the attention is not grasped, if the webpage is not eye-catching, visitors will navigate away. The website management should be under the marketing department to protect the organisation's image and relationship-building efforts, but always with the support of "techies" that have the know-how (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2017).

The performance of a website refers to the decent access and download of features by the users. It is related to the above content, design and usability and a good performance presupposes a fast and interactive website. A website should be able to perform on all browsers. Moreover, the needs of visitors should be addressed even if the effort from the individuals' side is pursued through a personal computer, laptop or mobile device (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2017).

The usability concerns how much user-friendly the website is. If the visitors get the information they need easily and quickly, and if the messages are transmitted clearly and concisely to the publics, this is a success. Usability is defined by five quality components: learnability, efficiency, memorability, errors, and satisfaction (Bernstein, 2007; Nielsen, 2012). As Bernstein (2007) characteristically says, schedules, ticket purchase pages and special promotions should be accessible with one click, while "everything else on the site should be no more than two or three clicks away" (p. 170). Websites should be as uncomplicated as possible, as online users vary per their technical sophistication. They should also be able to accommodate different speeds of internet, as well as different computers in terms of power. A user-friendly website should not frustrate visitors or let them get lost. On the contrary, it should not use problematic descriptions or jargon, have common-sense hot buttons, easy navigation and a clear way to the home page. The usability of the website should be evaluated by arts marketers (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003). Bernstein (2007) citing professionals' suggestions notes that if the visitors of the webpage visit fewer than three pages, then the organisation should wonder if the homepage is confusing. On the other hand, if visitors stay longer, visiting more pages, the organisation should check if they are spending their time effectively.

Finally, commerce does the "business part" of the procedure, positioning also the product and affirming that the web can be used differently than just a PR tool. E-Commercial transactions must be possible either through a desktop or mobile devices. The design and content of a website can affect consumers' sensory shopping experience; both elements should motivate the customers to buy. The website needs to provide multiple opportunities for the purchase option, without being pushy though, respecting the art-comes-first audience (Lathrop, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2017). E-commerce eliminates the need for printed event tickets, and it can be also combined for example with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs that protect the planet, saving paper. Online ticket purchasers, according to Bernstein (2007), "are significantly younger than the average audience member" (p. 173). Clearly, nowadays, arts organisations should offer online ticket sales, and ideally real-time ones.

Optionally, these sales can be provided through a third-party ticketing service (e.g. Ticketmaster), but sometimes the fees are so high that decrease buyers' satisfaction; additionally, among a few other drawbacks, they do not provide the organisation with comprehensive data on customers'. Bernstein (2007) supports that it is preferable for arts organisations to invest in ticketing services "that are designed to coordinate with the organisation's own software" (p. 175), in a way that buyers are "unaware they are going to another site when they click on 'Buy tickets'" (p. 175). Through this service, an organisation can access all the information about purchasers. Nevertheless, a handling fee for the patrons is still there, but with better control by the organisation. The more features a website has, the more enhanced the customer experience and the number of tickets sold.

The above-mentioned interrelated components, if applied, can lead an arts organisation to develop an effective online presence. Like all marketers, e-marketers should always "think from the perspective of the customer, not the product {...} and adhere to a consistent style" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 169); constant research and investigation are the keys to predicting audiences' needs and wants.

To introduce the next section, it is worth mentioning that to foster interaction through the website, visitors should be able to e-mail the organisation directly from the website; the organisation can program an automatic reply that acknowledges receipt if it cannot reply directly. To further build involvement, websites can include forms and questionnaires; this unofficial audience research will help marketers to learn about what visitors want (Lathrop, 2003).

#### *2.2.2.c. E-mail marketing*

Nowadays, e-mail is a must communication tool with many benefits for the organisation and the audiences, and although it cannot replace other marketing methods, it "can eliminate the need for certain costly marketing efforts", such as printed and mailed marketing materials, "and greatly enhance the marketing department's total communication plan" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 182). "The essential purpose of e-mail marketing is to widely disseminate a promotional message or series of messages" (Lathrop, 2003) and give the chance to the marketer to contact the customer. Except for motivating ticket sales among various markets, it enriches "the experience of people who already have tickets", and shares "all kinds of information in a timely and nearly cost-free manner" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 180). People though do not react well when they receive e-mails (or even mobile promotions) to which they have not opted-in, so marketers should be careful whom they are contacting. Research shows that a big number of people who receive emails for which they have given permission read them as carefully as personal emails (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003; Stafford & Faber, 2005).

E-mail marketing is more advantageous compared to other forms of direct marketing. It is an immediate, low-cost or cost-free vehicle that forwards customised messages to many people (mass

customisation) at the same time. Nevertheless, the amount of e-mails people receive daily is too big, so marketers should find a way to get their e-mails noticed; they should have a good subject line, “avoid obvious hype or ad-speak” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 164) and make it easy to the recipients to respond, when necessary. E-mail is the ideal medium for viral marketing, as surveys show that the majority of people forward art-related e-mails to their friends, who often forward to other friends, etc., spreading the news fast; in other words, the recipients know each other personally. The e-mail lists of non-profit organisations, in general, are growing fast, although non faster than the reliance on social media (the ratio is approximately 1 to 3), but there is not much evidence “on the use and effectiveness of Social media” (Coleman et al., 2019, p. 24) for marketing the arts. The effectiveness of e-mail marketing can be rapidly evaluated (by web analysts but also by the organisation itself) and the response rates are high (Bernstein, 2007; Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012; Lathrop, 2003; Stafford & Faber, 2005). Moreover, e-mail campaigns can offer more detailed information than other tools, “early notice of events or offers, timely reminders of special programs, and private offers or discounts”(Bernstein, 2007, p. 185).

E-mail lists should be built and maintained by the arts organisation. As mentioned above, the loyalty level of consumers differ. It is suggested to build profiles of the best customers, so the organisation can contact the clients by sending relevant, timely and personal updates and offering some privileges, such as advance notice of performances or sales. But, this does mean that less loyal consumers value less; in fact, all should be included in these lists and categorised. Except for loyalty level, they can also be categorised according to their interests; the more information marketers know about consumers, the better the segmentation of mailings. Sometimes, to encourage people to subscribe to the e-mail list, marketers should offer some benefits, like a ticket giveaway or something that the customer will value. Audiences should be encouraged steadily to join the mailing list, but they should also be provided with the opportunity to opt out. Sign-up pop-up screens for first-time visitors are usually effective (Bernstein, 2007; Lathrop, 2003). The gathering of e-mails or other important information about consumers can be done during direct transactions with the customers, or they can be bought or rented from third parties (e.g. media outlets, commercial mailing-list brokers) or be “borrowed” from an organisation that targets the same audience (in exchange of similar information) (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 245; Lathrop, 2003). Respecting individuals’ privacy, many organisations have adopted the ethical practice of prohibiting the sale or trade of e-mail lists (Bernstein, 2007). Additionally, the “response rate to targeted mailings follows relatively predictable patterns, running between 1 and 10 percent” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 108), so it is better to overthink how worthy renting, buying or borrowing mailing lists can be.



The two primary types of messages used by arts organisations are “information-oriented e-newsletters and action-oriented e-postcards” (Bernstein, 2007, p. 188)<sup>36</sup>, or else promotional and informative messages (Galloway, 2017)<sup>37</sup>. Lathrop (2003) though calls Bernstein’s (2007) “action-oriented e-post cards” as “interactive newsletter”. The timing of the messages varies depending on the length of the organisation’s season, but e-newsletters should be “regularly scheduled and consistent in look and type of content” (Bernstein, 2007, p. 188). The right time to send a newsletter can be proved as important as the content/message itself.<sup>38</sup> For instance, Reuters research (2019) “identified four key moments of news consumption<sup>39</sup> for young people<sup>40</sup>: i) dedicated moments where they give time to news (usually on evenings and weekends), ii) a moment of update (usually in the mornings), iii) time fillers (commuting or in a queue), and iv) intercepted moments where they receive alerts from news organisations or messages from friends with news” (Reuters, 2019, p. 55). Many organisations produce several versions of their newsletters to address better different targets. E-postcards (or else interactive newsletters) are supplementary to newsletters and motivate action; through them, marketers can ask for feedback (for a performance or the newsletter itself), conduct market research, or announce something that asks for action, such as a nearly sold out performance or an almost expiring deadline for renewals. Subject lines are very important for promotional e-mail, and the good ones are short, and “preferably under fifty characters” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 165). Body mail should also be brief, managing to make its point; it should mention the reason it was sent, the offer or the announcement, and include a call to action (if any) with a quick click. As mentioned above, the option of opting out should be always there. Lathrop (2003) though suggests that marketers should also give the opportunity to recipients to confirm if they are still interested with an opt-in click<sup>41</sup>. E-mail marketing should be planned strategically and consider always the recipient’s perspective, who (the recipients) want to feel special (Bernstein, 2007; Galloway, 2017; Lathrop, 2003).

#### *2.2.2.d. Mobile Communication*

Smartphones and tablets are part of the way people communicate today. The combination of mobile and wireless technology allows audiences to do whatever they were doing on their personal computer

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<sup>36</sup> Instead of e-postcards, many arts organizations have shifted their focus to email marketing campaigns. But even if they may still be used by some arts organizations, they are likely just one part of a larger marketing strategy that includes other digital marketing channels.

<sup>37</sup> Promotional messages to persuade people to attend, and informative messages to build awareness and understanding.

<sup>38</sup> Nowadays, there is a plethora of analysis regarding the right timings to forward messages to online audiences (e.g. which time of the day the individuals are more open to messages, and which messages are appropriate for which time).

<sup>39</sup> Apart from newsletters, news consumption can also mean cultural news consumption, whether this happens via the arts organisations’ websites, the cultural websites or even news media with cultural sections.

<sup>40</sup> Young people in this research is defined as Generation Y (or millennials) and Generation Z (born after the mid-1990s). Worthy to be mentioned that people aged 25-34 is the biggest in size audience of Onassis Stegi. The 35-44 comes second, and the 18-24 third (MRB, 2015).

<sup>41</sup> Follow-up autoresponse e-mails that confirm an opt-in, acknowledge an opt-out and ask for feedback are necessary (Lathrop, 2003).

or laptop but through their mobile device. Communication with the arts organisations, the use of social media to seek information, the interaction with the organisation and the other fans, the watching of live video streams, the ticket purchase and many other functions can be easily done through mobiles. The online communication of an organisation should address the needs of the visitors, no matter what device they use to access the website of the organisation. As mentioned above, this presupposes a website designed to perform well in environments other than personal computers/laptops (Bernstein, 2007; Pedersen et al., 2017). Besides, according to Reuters (2019), “young people<sup>42</sup> are highly reliant on their phones” (p.54) and the smartphone is the main device they use to access news; although the Reuters research focuses on general news consumption, cultural news can be considered as part of the news.

If television fiction (TV series) is considered part of arts, then the second-screen usage-also called social TV-should be mentioned; this term describes the emerging trend/habit of fans who are watching a series on TV (cable/broadcast) and simultaneously comment on that on social media, using a mobile device (e.g. Comment on Game of Thrones in Twitter using the relevant hashtag).

Mobile devices, except for communication strategies for attracting audiences, are also used to enhance the experiences of visitors in arts organisations (e.g. museums that boast apps for smartphones with interactive maps of the exhibitions and information related to the artworks), or even enhance the communication with those who are already consuming the product (e.g. arts organisation that supply tablets through which audiences can ask questions to the cast of the performance, during the discussion that follows the show). Moreover, in some performances, audiences can choose the end, voting during the performance, using a mobile app. Innovative mobile communication options are important, as mobile has become the main screen to seek information, book tickets, etc.

#### *2.2.2.e. Social media*

Although there is a controversy among academics, “most authors acknowledge a high potential for Web 2.0 in the future, especially for social media”, which are understood to be one of several Web 2.0 applications “that enable and support the communication, interaction and the creation of relationships between users” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 174), and can be used for viral marketing and word-of-mouth marketing. Social networking sites provide the opportunity for arts organisations to visualise/materialise the intangible experiences they offer “and to emotionally activate the user before actually using a cultural service and to support their decision in favour of a ‘real’ visit” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 174). However, the effectiveness of social media (and viral effects), which are

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<sup>42</sup> Under 35s.

based on the attributes of boundary-free, instant, with broad and deep reach, and fast information dissemination (Coleman et al., 2019), cannot be measured directly (Hausmann, 2012).

“The use of social media for marketing has thoroughly been studied by academics, applied by practitioners, and adopted by organisations” (Lin, Swarna, & Bruning, 2017, p. 1), as it is the new reality. Social media is an integral part of new media, or “is a form of new media” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 224), “characterised by up-to-dateness, spontaneity and interactivity” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 179). And “include social networks (e.g. Facebook), Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia), video portals (e.g. Youtube.com), photo collections (e.g. MySpace), weblogs (blogs), microblogs<sup>43</sup> (e.g. Twitter) and bookmark collections (e.g. Mister Wong)” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 175). Individuals but also organisations have rapidly adapted to this new technology that involves interaction. Many arts organisations have a presence on social media, and even though some of them have no website, they pursue their online communication with audiences through social media outlets (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube). Social media helps gain the attention and engagement of audiences (Lin et al., 2017). Facebook offers the ability to create a page with business-specific information (e.g. performance, location, and hours of operation), monitor the page traffic, the engagement levels and collect demographic information about page visitors. The fact that some arts organisations might have no web page, but they actively use social media, might be linked to one of the advantages of social media that is cost-effectiveness. Moreover, social media offers “enhanced identification among fans” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 225). Twitter though, “an asynchronous form of social communication” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 177), cannot be used instead of a webpage; it is more a communication and PR tool and it can be used to comment on performances, share thoughts or “engage in conversation with others who are also consuming the event” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 225). It is an instant, interactive communication, through text messages restricted to 140 to 200 characters, and for an organisation “to be successful on Twitter, it is necessary to gain a critical mass of followers” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 178) and post valuable content (Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012; Pedersen et al., 2017).

As mentioned above, new media offered the chance to organisations to get control over their communication with the key publics and weaken traditional gatekeepers. Through social, arts organisations communicate directly to audiences the messages they want. But the advantage of communication control through social has a double face; it can potentially be a disadvantage, as the organisation cannot control inappropriate or negative comments about its posts. Moreover, in order for an organisation to have a decent presence on social media, it should have an employee or employees (depending on the size of the organisation) dedicated to updating and monitoring these

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<sup>43</sup> “Microblogs such as Twitter are seen as a hybrid blogging, instant messaging and status notifications” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 178).

accounts, and this is one of the limitations of the use of social media from arts organisations. Except for the shortage of economic and by extension human resources, the inability to measure precisely the cost-benefit ratio of social media use, as well as the success of social media itself<sup>44</sup>, and the top-down hierarchy that still use some arts organisations, complete the puzzle of limitations for social media use<sup>45</sup>. However, “social media emerges as a viable marketing channel” (Hausmann, 2012; Pedersen et al., 2017).

Each country has its own habits regarding the use of digital media and mobile devices. To take an example in Europe, according to Reuters Institute Digital News Report (2018), “websites and social media remain the most frequently accessed source of news in Greece, though television remains popular with older groups. Smartphones have become a more popular way to access news over the last three years (up 8 percentage points) approaching reach from computers and laptops” (p. 83). Moreover, the top social media and messaging for news are Facebook (60%) and Youtube (36%), Messenger (22%), Viber (14%), Twitter (13%), and Instagram (10%) while for all the uses is Youtube (79%), Facebook (78%), Messenger (58%), Viber (49%), Instagram (33%) and Twitter (24%). Additionally, 49% of the users share news via social and e-mail.

Likewise, for each culture different practices should be applied to social media posts, to make them effective and impact their popularity in terms of likes, shares and fans. Vividness and practicality in the content of posts can be used for all cultures. However, how a post can be interesting, personalised or interactive, depends on the characteristics of the specific target markets (Lin et al., 2017). In any case, the popularity of the posts can impact consumers’ perceptions of the brand, as well as purchase behaviours (Lin et al., 2017).

There are five cultural dimensions (or else cultural perspectives on social media) that affect social media and social media managers should consider when they plan their strategy (local or global): collectivist/individualism, (less/more) long-term orientation, (high/low) uncertainty avoidance, (high/low) power distance, and high-/low-context culture. For each dimension, there are respective social media strategies/practices, which can facilitate/strengthen the brand post popularity. At this point we will not analyse all possible scenarios of these cultural dimensions (for instance collectivist versus/and individualism, less versus/and more long-term orientation etc.), but, as the case study of this research is a cultural organisation (Stegi) in Greece, it is wise to elaborate a little bit on the Greek culture and audience, concerning social media. This will happen in chapter 4, “The Greek Picture”, which describes the societal, and not only, conditions in Greece.

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<sup>44</sup> Figures such as visits, page impressions, clicks etc. “do not allow organisations to draw any direct conclusion as to the actual effectiveness of viral measures, which means that their usefulness is limited” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 179).

<sup>45</sup> As mentioned above, nowadays mediated messages is a bottom-up process (Caldiero, 2015).

### 2.3. Arts Communication Services and Support

The second component of the model that this research uses for arts communication is the Arts Communication Services and Support that includes the below segments: Art-related integrated marketing communication, which includes Public Relations and Crisis Communication, and Arts Communication Research (Figure 4).

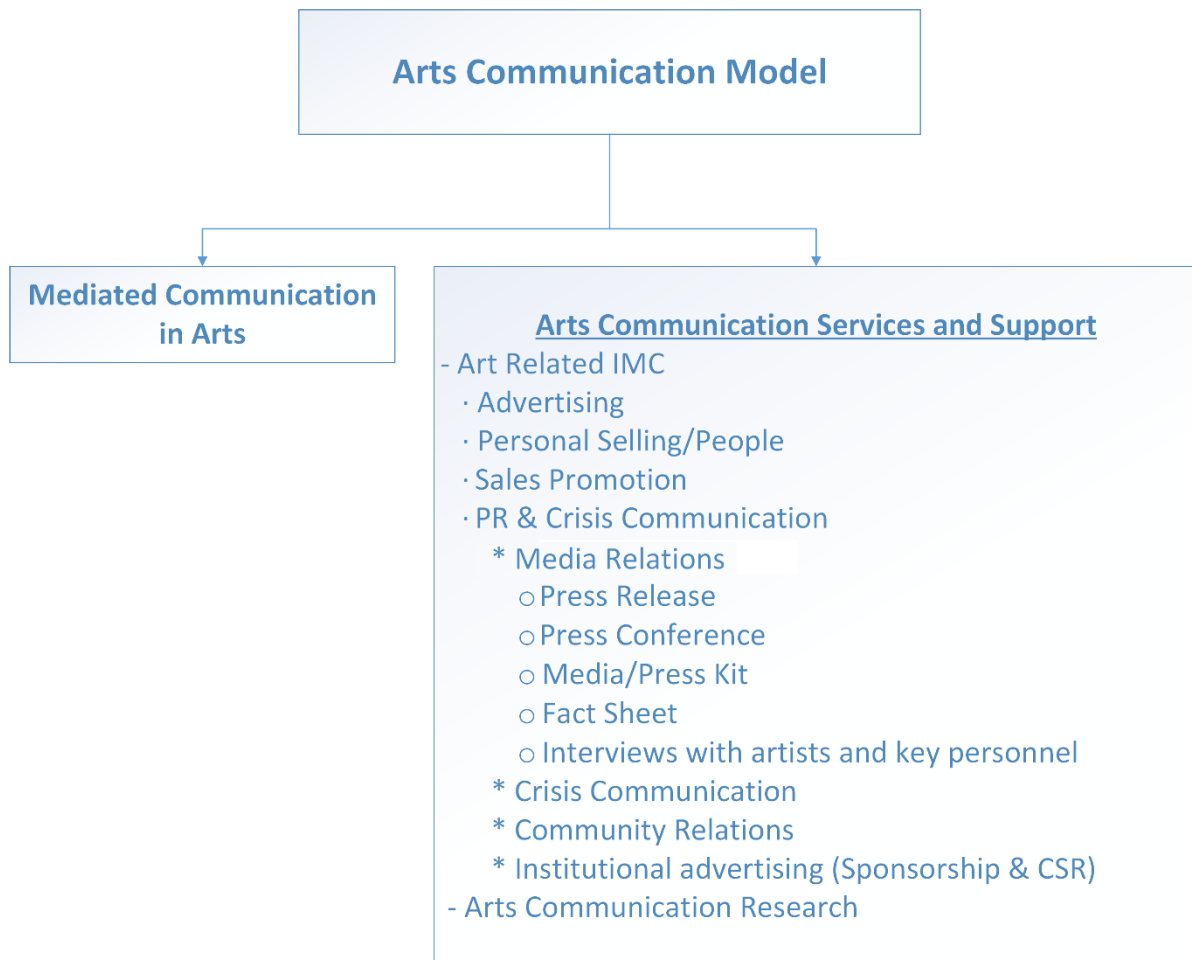


Figure 4. Arts Communication Model (Adapted by Pedersen et al., 2017)

#### 2.3.1. Arts Integrated Marketing Communication

The objective of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is to send coherent and consistent messages to the consumers effectively, coordinating and integrating all the elements of the communication mix (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Pedersen et al., 2017). Bernstein (2007) notes that IMC uses a campaign that is multiple-vehicle (increased awareness and impact) and multiple-stage (timeline for each media).

In more detail, Pedersen et al. (2017) support that IMC “refers to the integration of the various marketing and communication methods into a cohesive, consistent message conveyed by an

organisation to its consumers, fans, and other stakeholder groups” (p. 232). In these various methods the below are included: “advertising, branding, graphic design, publicity and public relations” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 232)

What Pedersen et al. (2017) call marketing and communication methods, Lambin & Schuiling (2012) call them various means of communication, mentioning as most important: personal selling, advertising, promotion, public relations and the Internet. Whatever elements an arts organisation uses in a marketing and communication strategy, they should present a cohesive image of the organisation, and this is the essence of IMC. The latter uses the tools of the marketing communication mix, but in a more coordinated way, focusing on communicating the same message everywhere. Unlike traditional marketing, where communication tools are used relatively independently, with specific objectives, IMC empowers the effectiveness of communication programs, setting the same objective for all communication tools (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Pedersen et al., 2017).

PR academics have criticised IMC as essentially another name for marketing or the «imperialism of marketing» (Munoz-Leiva et al., 2015, p. 695). For this research, IMC is what is widely called today “marketing”. It is the improved version of marketing, which has enhanced its practices and has seen the whole procedure in a more spherical way, aiming at optimal and integrated communication with the target audiences. Below, some of the tools IMC uses will be described.

Bernstein in 2007 made an interesting addition to the components of the communication mix<sup>46</sup>, of word-of-mouth marketing (from now on WOM). He calls it “the most influential factor in most people’s ticket purchasing decisions” (p. 112), although it is not a common practice among arts marketers. Internet users do not rely only on search engines anymore, but recommendations and links shared by friends in social networks influence them more effectively (Chieffi, Pichierri, Peluso, Collu, & Guido, 2021; Perez Dasilva et al., 2013). Bernstein (2007) argues that word-of-mouth marketing “addresses the problem of the distracting ‘noise’ in the media” (p. 112) and the scepticism of the audiences about advertising. Lambin & Schuiling (2012) include viral and buzz marketing in online communication tools, and Bernstein (2007) in the WOM, while Hausmann (2012) claims that social media “can facilitate viral marketing”- which he clearly equates it with buzz marketing- “and stimulate word-of-mouth” (p. 173). Buzz marketing is a kind of wild advertising spread to and by consumers online and offline though and it is the same idea as viral marketing. The quality of the product, the levels of involvement it creates, the emotional response it provokes, and the excitement and delight, determine whether people buzz about it. Marketers should question themselves if their products and/or services offer the above-mentioned and at which level. They should invest time and money to

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<sup>46</sup> It is worthy to mention though that Bernstein (2007) does not include personal selling in his communication mix.

reach their product/service at this high level and then build a strong network with people who can spread the word. To create the environment where the desired idea will be spread, marketers should listen to the (visitor's) networks with the objective to maximise positive comments and accelerate contagion. Contagion is connected with viral marketing- also classified as WOM-, which starts with a spread of information that follows a snowball effect. The success of viral marketing though presupposes the credibility and trustworthiness of the source, the embracement of a similar point of view for the sender (of feedback) and the recipient, as well as the absence of any financial benefit from the sender's part. WOM can happen both offline (with a limited reach) and online, but it works better online and it uses the "word of mouse" to widely inform consumers, using tools such as "social media applications such as Facebook or Twitter" (Hausmann, 2012, p. 175), "e-mail, streaming video and audio, games, programs, websites, pictures or simple documents" (Jensen & Jepsen, 2006, p. 31) (Bernstein, 2007; Hausmann, 2012; Jensen & Jepsen, 2006; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Perez Dasilva et al., 2013). According to R. van der Lans et al. (2010), viral marketing concerns the encouragement of customers to share the organisation's message which means it stimulates word-of-mouth. This kind of campaign has the potential to reach a large number of people and is considered a powerful marketing communication tool, due to its efficiency in diffusing information –instantly, boundary-free and with a broad reach- and the value for money if one considers the high level of awareness they offer; especially for arts sector that usually faces financial strains and offers intangible services it is an important tool (Bernstein, 2007; Chieffi, Pichierri, Peluso, Collu, & Guido, 2022; Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Perez Dasilva et al., 2013; Van der Lans, Van Bruggen, Eliashberg, & Wierenga, 2010).

Bernstein (2007) suggests marketers, in order to get the buzz, be close to their customers, talk to them on an informal basis, check-out blogs, be aware of what people think about the organisation and the competitors, identify hubs, keep good records of contacts, with data for each important person (type of influence etc.), update the hubs, reward customer loyalty, offer unique backstage experiences, be responsive to feedback and be authentic. Customers' satisfaction shapes word-of-mouth communication (Blackwell et al., 2001). Considering conspicuous consumption<sup>47</sup>, marketers, except for product quality should also focus on the signalling function of a cultural event and the facilitation of this signalling/social visibility. The marketing department should make a quality product to

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<sup>47</sup> When the consumption happens not only for the personal utility of the consumer (consumer group), but also to send a message to the social environment (signal group), is called conspicuous consumption (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Sintas & Álvarez, 2004).

“generate a ‘wow’ effect upon significant others” (Bronner & de Hoog, 2018 in Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 444), encouraging viral marketing<sup>48</sup>.

### *2.3.1.a. Advertising*

Advertising is publicly presented and can reach several audiences/buyers with the intention to persuade. It “should also be developed to either create or reinforce a specific brand image” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 238) (branding). The more advertising an organisation uses, the more popular and successful is considered. But, the extensive use of advertising doesn’t mean necessarily that this organisation is successful. As Andreasen & Kotler (2008) support, advertising doesn’t solve performance problems. It is quite convenient for audiences, as they are not obliged to react, by responding or paying attention (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Moreover, art-related advertising is not only the advertising of arts, but it is also the use of arts as a vehicle for nonart entities to advertise (either via pure advertisement or sponsorship). A very clear example is the ads before the cinema movies or the sponsorship of alcohol for a concert.

“Advertising can be used to build up a long-term image for an organisation and to trigger quick sales” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 301). Additionally, it has a wide range of pricing depending on the channel that will be used, so it is appropriate for all budgets. Advertising can be both mass and targeted (Colbert, 2012). It includes prints and broadcast ads, or even product placement in movies and TV programs, “packaging, mailings, catalogues (Internet and hard-copy), newsletters, brochures and booklets, posters and leaflets, directories, reprints of ads, billboards, and display signs, point of purchase displays, audio-visual materials, symbols and logos” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 303). But, as we are going through the digital era, the way that people used to communicate has drastically changed. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is broadly used and has a major role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Additionally, the rise of Social Network Sites (SNSs) is significant (Drosos et al., 2015). “Internet has attracted an enormous amount of advertising revenues {...} (and ) offers all the elements of other media and much more” (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 201). Therefore, except for offline, online advertising, which can be used “to increase awareness and image, and to drive traffic” (Jensen & Jepsen, p. 31, 2006), should be mentioned. However, in terms of cost, traditional marketing media such as those mentioned above (print mail, brochures etc.), is the most expensive (Coleman et al., 2019).

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<sup>48</sup> “Individuals who pass along favourable for the arts organisation content, in a hypermedia environment” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 176).



In online advertising<sup>49</sup>, we find different types and forms. The types are the following: display advertising, paid search engine optimisation (SEO), microsites (Jensen & Jepsen, 2006), native advertising, search engine marketing (SEM), mobile advertising, social ads, retargeting and remarketing, email marketing, digital signage, video marketing (“9 of the Most Popular Types of Online Advertising,” n.d.). Every type has different forms. Native advertising is using non-conventional forms, to win users’ trust, such as a blog with interesting content. It is using SEO, email marketing and lead nurturing, formats that are not intrusive and are highly valued by the publics. SEM is a type of campaign that pursues increased brand awareness in a short time. The ad's appearance on a website depends on the site's quality and the established cost-per-click (CPC). It consists of a title, description, and call to action, and is triggered when users search for preselected keywords on a search engine. Display ads are visually engaging and placed on designated spots within websites. The cost is estimated through CPC (Cost Per Click) or CPM (Cost Per Mille) models. As in the last years, according to Google, mobile traffic has surpassed that of desktop computers, all advertising campaigns should follow a responsive typology, so they can fit any given screen. Social ads, prevalent on social media platforms, are effective for brand awareness and acquiring new customers due to their wide segmentation possibilities. E-mail marketing is considered as advertising from some academic schools and as marketing from others. It is ideal for highly profitable conversion goals and for maintaining current customers. Digital signage is an advanced form of traditional outdoor advertising, displayed on billboards, MUPIs, window displays, and other screens to catch potential clients' attention during routine moments. Leveraging videos as an advertising strategy is highly effective because users find video content entertaining, and it is estimated that 80% of internet content will be video-based. Creating original videos can improve SEO rankings and drive more organic web traffic, while partnerships with YouTubers discussing products/services can yield positive outcomes. Social media can facilitate viral marketing. Pop-ups<sup>50</sup>, web banner ads, text links, interstitials, direct email and advergaming (ads embedded in a game) are a few of the online tools (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012; Jensen & Jepsen, 2006; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Lathrop, 2003; Liu-Thompkins, 2019; Stafford & Faber, 2005). Mobile ads also belong in this era and they share characteristics with Internet advertising, such as interactivity, intrusiveness, privacy and security issues. On the other hand, mobile devices differ “physically, functionally and psychologically” (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 261) from personal computers or laptops. Mobile devices are considered superb

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<sup>49</sup> “In 2017, global online advertising spending reached \$209 billion and accounted for 41% of all advertising spending”(Liu-Thompkins, 2019, p. 1).

<sup>50</sup> Lathrop (2003) supports they are considered “the most disruptive feature of the Web, causing annoyance, outright anger, and a resistance to their messages”, hence they can “generate negative impressions among audiences” (p. 119). The author suggests “display ad embedded into a popular Web page” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 119).

promotional tools and “mobile promotion gives marketers the potential to reach their prospective customers on the go” (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 281).

Web advertising is considered to have great potential, mainly because “it makes messages available to audiences who intentionally come to a site” (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 310) and it can also be displayed “according to user profiles and interests” (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 201) (e.g. banners). Sponsored searching is a growing type of Internet advertising, “where the advertiser ‘buys’ relevant keywords or phrases on a search engine such as Google” (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 265). “Google and other search engines only charge advertisers when someone actually clicks on the advertiser’s site” (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 310)<sup>51</sup> (CPC), or they use cost per lead (CPL)<sup>52</sup>, or cost per thousand impressions (CPM)<sup>53</sup>, or hybrid campaign settlement models. Moreover, web advertising stands out for four additional advantages, important to non-profit organisations: they can track performance minute by minute, they can quickly replace underperforming ads, they give the option of prime marketing approach (ex. customised ads to “segments of one”), and they keep campaigns fresh, rotating messages on a random schedule (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Rzemieniak, 2015; Stafford & Faber, 2005).

Direct marketing and direct-response advertising overlap, as the first offers “purchasing opportunities to core and prospective customers directly”, and the second aims at igniting “a purchasing decision and providing {...} an easy way for the customer to place the order” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 117). This is why elements of direct mail, such as postcards, flyers, brochures, newsletters, and catalogues, are also elements of advertising.

To develop an advertising program, any organisation should set objectives. These objectives are interconnected with the previously mentioned steps of segmentation, and positioning, as well as the price, place and product. The objectives start with the target audiences and those who might influence them; both determine the next steps of advertising (message, media etc.). For instance, the advertising plan of performance for teens will be different if the organisation decides to address it to the teenagers directly, and different if to address it to the educators.

After the target audience, the marketer should consider the desired target response. The best achievable response is the behaviour the organisation aims at. In this case the attendance of the

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<sup>51</sup> Although some support this practice of charging per clicks, others do not, arguing that “the role of the media has traditionally been to offer access to an audience, not to share the responsibility for the quality of the advertisement itself” (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 202). In print- advertising though, although the per-inquiry approach exists, is not the standard one, and customers usually pay depending on the ad size (Lathrop, 2003).

<sup>52</sup> Both CPC and CPL belong to the campaign settling effectiveness models (Rzemieniak, 2015).

<sup>53</sup> Flat fee (FF) model and CPM are impression models, with the first one to considered the oldest and simplest (Rzemieniak, 2015).

performance. But, the response always depends on “the current stage of the decision process of the target” (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 304) or else the stages of the involvement or readiness of target audiences. For Andreasen & Kotler (2008) these stages are: a) precontemplation, where members of the target audiences “are not thinking about the behaviour in which the non-profit marketer is interested” (p. 97) b) contemplation, the most “fertile ground” for marketing as target audiences are thinking about the behaviour, “weighing the costs and benefits in the exchange” (p. 98) c) preparation and action stage, where target audiences are ready to act d) maintenance stage that wants people to continue the desired behaviour. Each group should be approached differently, whether it is a group in a different stage of change (e.g. advertising of informing in precontemplation stage, persuading in contemplation, spurring action in the preparation stage etc.) or a group with different demographics. The third objective concerns the segments the organisation will finally choose to reach (because usually, it is not possible to reach all the target audiences) and their exposure frequency. The quantity of exposure is connected also to the achievement of the desired response (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008). Nevertheless, Pedersen et al. (2017) claim that “it is increasingly unprofitable to advertise and market to a mass audience due to the number of marketing messages consumers are exposed to every day<sup>54</sup>” (p. 238). That is why they support that “lifestyle marketing has become more prominent” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 238).

Another decision that the marketing management should take when it comes to advertising is the budget and how it will be allocated (depending on segments’ population or past response levels or market potential). The advertising budget should be determined, considering, besides the objectives, several other factors, such as the economic power of the organisation, the expected response/sales, and the competitor’s presence (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008).

Like in any communication, the message in advertising is very important and the third major decision for marketers. A message should be appealing and serve the advertisement’s objectives. There are several ways to make a message appealing and overcome selective attention or perceptual distortion, but this research will not go deeper into the message execution for advertisement. It will only be mentioned here that the messages in any communication can be generated in many different ways, such as talking with members of the target audience and understanding their perceptions about the product/service and/or organisation, brainstorming with the key personnel or use a formal deductive framework such as the rational, emotional and moral framework (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008). As has been mentioned before in this research, many factors influence audiences to pay attention, understand, believe, remember or act upon a message. Nevertheless, at the stage of the attraction of

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<sup>54</sup> “Some experts estimate to be as high as 5,000 messages per day” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 238).

attention, besides socio-psychological analysis of audiences or analysis of their decision-making process etc., sometimes the key to the success or failure of a message lies in simple factors, such as timing. The right time to send a message (e.g. newsletters) can be proved as important as the message itself.<sup>55</sup>

Advertising can be paid or unpaid. In paid advertising, the control of the organisation is total, while in unpaid is little. The next step for the development of an advertising program is to select the paid media and allocate the budget. Definitely, considering the target audiences, the media they are exposed to, the size of the budget based on whether it will be print, broadcast, online or outdoor advertising, the nature of the message, as well as its design according to the medium will be used, there is already an idea of what kind of media the organisation wants to use. But, at this stage, the final decision is taken regarding the media category, the media vehicle and the timing. The major media categories are good to start with. The marketers will choose the most suitable media considering the media habits of the targets, the product, service or behaviour to be marketed, the message to be announced and the suitable media category for it, as well as the cost of each media and the alignment with the budget. The pros and cons of the media categories are also taken into account (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008). Decisions like “whether to advertise in a publication with a small but very targeted readership or a mass-market publication with a larger but less definable group of readers” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 117) are taken at this stage. As mentioned above, the budget determination and the media selection stages seem complementary. But, in fact, the budget precedes the media. After the media category, marketers should select specific media vehicles in these categories. The final objective is to select the media that will best reach the target, in a good frequency, and in a cost-effective way (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008).

The job of a media planner differs from country to country or continent to continent. For example, a planner in the United States can access many data for the circulation of media, the costs of different ads in them and data on the demographics and psychographics of audiences (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008). On the contrary, in Greece, media planners’ job looks harder, as they might have access to the circulation, but the process of getting the pricing of ads can be more complex while getting the demographics and psychographics of audiences sounds very hard. As the market is smaller in Greece, planners usually evaluate media based on their professional experience (or by instinct).

Finally, media planners should choose the best timing for the advertising, considering the issues such as the different times of the year when audiences are more interested in their product/services and

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<sup>55</sup> Nowadays, there is a plethora of analysis regarding the right timings to forward messages to online audiences (e.g. which time of the day the individuals are more open to messages, and which messages are appropriate for which time).

receptive to their messages (seasonal timing), as well as the short-run timing when planners should decide how to space the advertising in a short period (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008).

The final step in the development of an advertising program is evaluation. This can be done before the ad is executed or after. The pretesting can include readability formulas to check comprehension, formal questionnaires to evaluate the ad's strength, portfolio recall tests<sup>56</sup> (to check whether the ad stands out and its messages are understood), physiological tests (to measure the attention rate and the arousing power of an ad) and the focus group interviews (to see how the message is perceived). These are more conventional measures and have been used in the past also for traditional media. There are also Internet measures for pretesting that include "click-throughs, outcomes/actions, banner exposures, ad-viewing duration<sup>57</sup>" (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 205). But the internet measures can be also used as post-testing methods, which aim at assessing the achieved impact after the transmission. Additionally, methods such as recall tests (recall advertisers they have been exposed to, via a specific media vehicle), recognition tests (if they recognise what they've seen before in a media vehicle), and direct response (track behavioural outcomes- e.g. web tracking) can be used (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Stafford & Faber, 2005; Wilcox, Cameron, & Reber, 2015).

Another part of advertising is the use of celebrities as endorsers (Pedersen et al., 2017). For example, with the initiative of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) department, an arts organisation organises an event to support homeless people. For this purpose, it might use celebrities in a video to say "We will all be there", to endorse implicitly and imperatively event. Coleman et al. (2019) suggest that CSR can also reduce the perceived risk of consumers by biasing them in favour of the quality/character of the products/services and the arts organisations themselves.

Finally, sponsorship is also part of integrated marketing communication, it involves a marketing exchange between the art entity and the sponsoring company and it has been "the fastest growing promotion medium in the market" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 129) for more than two decades (Francois Colbert, 2012; Pedersen et al., 2017). Although the biggest amount of sponsorship is spent on sports (68%), arts can also be a vehicle for companies or other organisations to advertise and reach a broader audience (5% goes to the arts and another 5% to festivals, fairs etc.)(Francois Colbert, 2012; Pedersen et al., 2017). "Corporate sponsorship or sports, charity, arts and community events and activities" is a recognised marketing tool for more than thirty years (Drennan & Cornwell, 2004, p. 2).

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<sup>56</sup> "Because recall is a cognitive and not a behavioural measure, the measure is suitable for accessing brand awareness" (Stafford & Faber, 2005, p. 301).

<sup>57</sup> According to F. Shen's research (Stafford & Faber, 2005) banner ad viewing duration is the least used measure by interactive advertising agencies, including other measures that are not mentioned here. The first three measures are presented hierarchically, according to their popularity.

Because sponsors contribute as revenue generators for the organisation and they offset expenses and help in promotion, they ask in return to differentiate their products from competitors' through the sponsorships; that is why arts organisations should design customised sponsorship packages. Except for differentiation, companies/organisations become sponsors for many reasons, such as to heighten visibility, shape consumer attitudes, associate their product with a particular lifestyle, entertain corporate team etc. (Francois Colbert, 2012; Drennan & Cornwell, 2004; Pedersen et al., 2017). For Colbert (2012), citing the study of IEG/Performance Research in 2011, the most popular benefits sought by companies in a sponsorship program are to create awareness/visibility (68%), increase brand loyalty (65%), change/reinforce image (53%), drive retail/dealer traffic (53%), simulate sales/trial/usage (43%); although he mentions that corporations view sponsorship as a marketing promotion tool (that includes advertising and public relations), he does not make clear if he classifies it in advertising or PR. Although Pedersen et al. (2017) classify sponsorship in advertising, Lambin & Schuiling (2012) and Jensen & Jepsen (2006) consider it as a PR tool, while Drennan & Cornwell (2004) mention that "the objectives of sponsorship often revolve around community assistance" (p. 1), and as community relations is part of PR, I can suppose they also consider it as a PR tool. For Lambin & Schuiling (2012), sponsorship, along with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), belongs to what is called institutional patronage. Indeed, sponsorship can belong to both categories; on the one hand, it aims to advertise the organisation, using not only a fraction of the expense of advertising, as PR does, and on the other hand aims to build a good image for the organisation. Indeed companies and organisations consider sponsorship as a tool for creating positive impressions on customers, and as an important form of communication impact (Gantzias, 2010).

"A special form of sponsorship which is growing in popularity is cause-related marketing which is gradually replacing philanthropy or charity" (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 495). "Unlike philanthropy, money spent on sponsorship and cause-related marketing is a business expense, not a donation, and is expected to contribute to the company's marketing communication and show a return on investment" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 129). A good example can be cause-related concerts; marketers and event organisers commit publicly that the revenues from the tickets or part of them will be disposed to a good cause or a non-profit organisation. Sometimes, these kinds of events might have no entrance fee, but instead, ask the audiences to bring food or medicines to support vulnerable groups, such as refugees. There are chances that in these kinds of events, the artists have agreed to play without getting paid; therefore, in this case, the cause-related marketing does not become a business expense and uses only a fraction of the expense of advertising, as PR does, and it can be considered as PR.

It is worth mentioning here that except for traditional sponsorship, nowadays online sponsorship also exists and deals with “events created purposely for an on-line environment” (e.g. Grand Turismo auto racing series) (Drennan & Cornwell, 2004, p. 1). Except for the event itself, companies can also sponsor websites related to the event, to access the desired target market.

### *2.3.1.b. Personal selling*

Kotler & Scheff (1997) mention it as personal selling, Andreasen & Kotler (2008) as personal marketing and Lambin & Schuiling (2012) as personal selling or personal communication. It seems like for Andreasen & Kotler (2008), personal selling is included in personal marketing, which can achieve more goals based on personal communication. Whatever the word that is following is, personal has to do with personal contact. Personal marketing refers to “attempts by an organisation staff member or volunteer to use personal influence to affect target audience behaviour” (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008, p. 316). As Colbert (2012) describes it, “personal selling consists of transmitting a message from one person to the next through direct contact” (p. 230). Personal selling maybe be face to face or over the telephone and the “technique enables the seller to deal with the customer’s reasons for not buying” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 230). In contrast with advertising which is very potent when the message is simple, personal selling is more effective for more complicated messages and it “is the preferred variable for selling an idea” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 230). A good example of personal selling can be considered a funding or sponsorship request, where the applicant tries to sell an idea with benefits for the customer. Additionally, in performing arts organisations, “the box office agents and the person who contacts existing or potential customers to propose subscription, a performance or any other service, are all engaged in personal selling” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 230). “Any form of face-to-face contact between a salesperson and a customer away from a fixed (retail) location” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 146) is defined as direct selling, while the telephone calls that promote products and trigger direct response orders are defined as outbound telemarketing. Inbound telemarketing happens when the customers call the organisation. “Telemarketing works much better with present customers (where a customer database indicates prospects’ interests and preferences) rather than cold calls” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 146).

Personal selling can be seen as a tool of distinctive quality, as it is the most effective for building up preference and conviction. But it is also effective in the other stages of the consumer decision process, as it can influence action and even praise the continuation of behaviours at the maintenance stage of change. Nevertheless, it can end up being the most expensive tool, but if they are well planned, “sales presentations, telemarketing, incentive programs<sup>58</sup> and special sales events” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997,

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<sup>58</sup> Most probably the authors here mean ‘sell incentive programs over the phone’, as the incentive programs do not belong in personal selling, but in sales promotion.

p. 303), can compensate the organisation (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). This research though will not focus on personal selling

The selection of the personal communicators (even if they are fundraisers, lobbyists, volunteers, telemarketers or security clerks) should be very careful, as their personal communication style can influence negatively or positively the target audiences. Although the search for the ideal personal communicator profile continues, for Andreasen & Kotler (2008) a good number of the successful ones are likely “introverted, mild-mannered and far from energetic” (p. 318). But the same authors mention also that for researchers like Mayer and Greenberg, the effective ones are those with empathy with the audiences and ego drive for sales.

It seems like, the evolution of the role of the sales force/personal communicators has added to their operational marketing functions a few strategic ones. This has happened because some of the typical functions of the sales force, “such as winning acceptance for new products, developing new customers and gathering information” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 478) are connected to strategic marketing.

#### *2.3.1.c. Sales Promotion*

Sales promotion, despite its short-run effects, can give back a strong and quick response from the audiences. Incentives such as premiums, contests, coupons, rebates, exchange privileges, giveaways, loyalty programs, e-learning services etc., provided “often locally and in a non-permanent way” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 484), can gain the attention of the consumers, induce them and engage them in a transaction, educate them online (e.g. conferences or talks in live streaming), with a final target to drive sales (Bernstein, 2007; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Jensen & Jepsen, 2006; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). They function complementary to advertising and personal selling (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). “Sales promotion encompasses all of the efforts deployed to keep the name of the company or the product in the consumer’s mind beyond the consumption experience” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 231).

Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, sales promotion is facing rapid growth, for factors such as the declined purchasing power of consumers, the increased competition, the rising costs of media advertising and its declined effectiveness, the need for short-term results for some organisations and the flexibility of disguised and transient price reduction. Moreover, the development of direct marketing, which often has promotional content, also helped in this growth (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). Additionally, many promotional online companies have been created, with webpages that include promotions for all kinds of leisure and not only. Nevertheless, premiums may be used as an



incentive, but in an intelligent way that will consider factors likely to increase the effectiveness (Te'eni-Harari, 2008).

The objectives of sales promotion vary depending on the sender of the promotion and the target audience. Common objectives are the stimulation of purchase, the loyalty and retention of consumers, the increase of quantity purchased and frequency of purchase and the advertising. As mentioned above, the promotion tools used for these objectives are varied incentives. The main four categories of sales promotion tools are price reductions, selling with premiums or gifts, samples and trials, and games and contests (Blackwell et al., 2001; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). But, the samples and trials cannot apply to performing arts, as consumers usually do not re-purchase the same product/service and performances are not tangible like books for example, for which a sample could be the publishing of the first chapter on the Internet (Colbert, 2012). Nevertheless, organisations could give a sample of something related to the performance, such as attending a rehearsal or giving a sample of the soundtrack (music of the performance), although copyright might make it a bit complicated.

Over the last years, with the development of the internet, companies, depending on the purchase preferences of the audiences, promote performances that fit their tastes<sup>59</sup>. Most of the time though these suggestions will be for competitive organisations of the initially online purchased performance ticket. Moreover, coupons for performances (e.g. offer one plus one) can be distributed anywhere, from the streets up to the cashier of supermarkets (e.g. if you buy this product, you will get coupons for this performance); this usually happens though for more commercial performances (Jensen & Jepsen, 2006; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012).

The effects of sales promotion can be immediate and have a desirable increase in sales, but they can also be long-term, with negative consequences for the brand image and buying behaviour. Some of the effects are described below: a) loyal consumers that would purchase a ticket for a performance anyway, take advantage of the promotion and the organisation loses money (internal transfer effect) b) consumers postpone their purchase until the next promotion comes, especially when an organisation uses promotions regularly. Hence, sales go down before the promotion period (anticipation effect) c) consumers change their minds, and instead of their initial choice, they purchase the product under promotion, because of the promotion. The motivation of consumers to attend a performance determines if this switch can happen or not (brand switching effect) d) the positive effects of the promotion period can keep the product and/or the organisation at high levels, even after the end of the promotion (retention effect) (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012).

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<sup>59</sup> Web personalisation uses recommender systems that give recommendations according to users' preferences, and along with direct e-mail, online communities and online games, they compose Online Relationship Communication (Jensen & Jepsen, 2006).

Finally, the negative side effects of excess use of promotion can be brand confusion, as “the brand image is weakened and the promotions can conflict with the brand positioning strategy” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 489). Moreover, consumers, after excess exposure to promotions, have difficulties evaluating a “fair price” and comparing prices (Blackwell et al., 2001; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012). Onassis Stegi is using the “overcoming price barriers” practice that Blackwell et al. (2001) suggest. Because the need to attend culture might exist but it might not be affordable for some. Stegi does not do it though blatantly, simply helping those who want to access culture but cannot support it financially. “Price reductions and other types of incentives-perhaps packaged in the form of a loyalty program- are important motivators for many” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 255).

The brand strategy completes the marketing strategy and it is affected by it, or they have a two-way effect. “The more consumers equate a brand with their personal preferences”(Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 48), the more of the organisation’s cultural products will be consumed. According to Blackwell et al. (2001), “brands are sometimes defined as promise- a promise to consumers that the attributes they desire most will be obtained when they buy the preferred brand” (p.48). Respectively, if the cultural organisation’s benefit is conveyed in its brand name, such as “The non-conventional art” or “The high art” or “Art for the family”, the consumers will link the organisation with the advertised benefit. However, even if no benefit like this accompanies a brand name, it might be implied from the branding of the organisation (Blackwell et al., 2001). Definitely, the equation of the brand with their personal preferences for some consumers will also mean for others its equation with their non-preferences. Additionally, a brand created with the necessary functions (product representation of values, close relationship with the consumer, facilitates evaluation and purchase behaviour, symbolic function), can be used by marketing departments to communicate effectively the symbolic function of the cultural product. In other words, conspicuous consumption of cultural products should be considered in branding and marketing (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019). Brand building influences the decision-making process of consumers of cultural products, and “the marketing message can fit in well with” (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 444) branding in arts and culture.

### 2.3.2. Public Relations and Crisis Communication

Public relations, apart from media relations, crisis communication and community relations, includes also institutional advertising that is achieved through sponsorship and CSR. Lambin and Schuiling (2012) call PR institutional advertising, “where the company tries to position itself in public opinion as a good corporate citizen” (p. 492), without mentioning its products and/or services. Its purpose is to “communicate differently in a saturated advertising world and to fight against the fatigues of product advertising with a softer approach” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 491). The effectiveness of PR “can

only be evaluated in long term and can essentially work on attitudes” (Lambin & Schuiling, 2012, p. 491). In McDonald’s and Harrison’s (2002) words, “public relations can be simplistically regarded as ‘the company’s efforts to foster better relations with the various publics or shareholders’ “ (p. 107, citing Rossiter & Percy, 1996).

Public relations is a synonym for the image of the organisation and its offerings, which is very important for leisure industries. Although marketing’s main function is “to influence behaviour, the primary task of public relations is to form, maintain, or change public attitudes towards the organisations or its products” (Bernstein, 2007, p. 109). Publicity, as PR used to be called, is the unpaid advertising mentioned above; indeed, Lathrop (2003) notes that publicity is free. It might not be free in the strict sense of the term but it is definitely low-cost. It takes care of all the unpaid coverage in the media, trying to gain exposure and increase public awareness of the product and/or the organisation. PR practitioners should try to get the most coverage in a wide range of the most appropriate media, and control as much as they can the content of the coverage<sup>60</sup>. The way to target the right media for publicity passes mainly through the targeted audience that marketers/publicists try to reach (Lathrop, 2003).

The relatively low cost of PR -“the organisation does not pay for the space or time obtained in the media” (Bernstein, 2007, p. 109) but only for the PR staff (develop and circulate stories, manage events etc.)- in combination with its high credibility and dramatic appeal -PR messages are perceived by the audiences as news, instead of “sales-directed communications, so people are more likely to pay attention” (Bernstein, 2007, p. 109)- can make this tool extremely effective (Bernstein, 2007; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Lathrop, 2003; McDonald & Harrison, 2002). “Public relations is a communicative, systematic and measurable process”<sup>61</sup> (Badimaroudis, 2011, p. 87). Tools that fall within the PR category are the below: “press kits, speeches, seminars, annual reports, sponsorships, publications, community relations, lobbying and media relations” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 303). But, in the current digital age, PR tools have expanded. Internet, social media and Google give opportunities for broader communication and counting of results (Smith, 2012, in Waddington (Ed.), 2012), as well as direct communication with the publics (Pedersen et al., 2017). Indeed, as Pedersen et al. (2017) mention, influenced by Tucker and Wrench (2016), nowadays the main PR tool is social media. Traditional (offline) and newer online media (search ads, display ads, websites, e-mail, social media, mobile) need to be mixed and matched and interact for better results, depending on the stage of the consumer’s decision journey (Batra & Keller, 2016). The “clear understanding of the communication process”

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<sup>60</sup> One method could be the writing of very well presented press releases. As journalists work usually in stressful and fast-paced environments and their job is to feed the audiences with info, a well-written press release with interesting content might be published as it is in their material.

<sup>61</sup> Translated from the original book in Greek.

(Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 303) will lead the organisation to choose which of the above will use, when and how. It is important to include always in the public relations strategies the management of the unexpected crisis, such as negative coverage by the media (Badimaroudis, 2011), but this will be analysed below.

As was described in the first chapter (1.2), there is a controversy between marketing and PR scholars, as the borders between the fields of marketing, advertising and public relations are not clear and they can overlap. According to traditional theory (e.g. Kotler & Scheff, 1997 or Hill et al., 1995), promotion (or promotional)/communication mix<sup>62</sup>, as part of marketing, includes advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and publicity. Cutlip et al. (1994) support that the confusion between marketing and public relations would be less if people would distinguish the concepts of publicity and PR. PR departments though, as more experienced, can help marketing departments in writing publicity stories or dealing with media. But, there is, except for some confusion, even rivalry between public relations and marketing with each trying to defend its own territory, while frequently public relations for products is called marketing communications (Gordon, 2011). Other titles used for PR include “public affairs, corporate communication, marketing, or customer relations” (CIPR 2010, in Gordon, 2011 p. 26).

For the communication model used in this research PR is presented as part of marketing; it is not the umbrella of advertising and marketing, as some PR academics (e.g. Gordon (2011), Grunig (2009)) would like. Some PR scholars love to refer to PR as a “management function” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 255). PR exists to protect the image of the organisation and communicate effectively. The way to reach there is to “understand the organisation’s key publics, develop appropriate messages and deliver them in a way that is effective for each of the identified publics” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 252). PR is not limited to the external key publics, but includes also the internal ones.

These days, PR professionals are called to address complex issues, respond to any crises, keep up with emerging new-media trends, support the arts organisation’s overall objectives, and build and maintain the desired brand image in the publics’ minds (Pedersen et al., 2017). What individuals’ image of the organisation is, is the so-called publics’ perceptions and can influence many aspects of the organisation (such as ticket sales, media coverage, etc.). The perceptions should be assessed and managed if the organisation want to be successful. There are four models to manage these perceptions that have been already mentioned in the Marketing chapter (Chapter 1). In short, these are: the press agency model, the public information model, the two-way asymmetric (or asymmetrical) model and the two-way symmetric (or symmetrical) model. The last one is considered

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<sup>62</sup> These are the terms are used in literature to explain the 4<sup>th</sup> P.

the most appropriate model for successful PR, which is building positive relationships between organisations and the publics (Gordon, 2011; Grunig, 2009; Pedersen et al., 2017).

But, either in one-way or two-way communication, persuasion techniques are used. Gordon (2011) says that persuasion is key to PR and Pedersen et al. (2017) claim that persuasion is used in conjunction with the four models of PR. Moreover, Gordon (2011, p. 57) mentions that Grunig (2009) supports that also the two-way symmetrical model requires “persuasion and negotiation but also demands that both parties listen to each other and build understanding” (p. 5) though make it clearer by mentioning that the symmetrical model undermines persuasion.

Strategic public relations can help arts organisations easily influence the people who do not have particularly strong opinions (that is the majority) (Pedersen et al., 2017). As per the cognitive dissonance theory, developed by L. Festinger in 1957, people are seeking information that matches their existing attitudes and opinions, hence the easiest way to persuade someone is to provide information that does not deviate from their existing beliefs, emotions and expectations. However, if an opposite opinion is very well argued or proved, according to cognitive dissonance, people “rationalise their change of mind to fit in with their new view”(Gordon, 2011, p. 50).

The cognitive representations are typically called images, brands, and perceptions (Grunig, 2009). The perceptions can be influenced by several factors: by the extrinsic or intrinsic motivations for having an affiliation with a cultural product/service/organisation, the performance of the product/service/organisation that means if it managed to fulfil consumer’s needs and desires, the level of involvement of the individual with the product/service/organisation, the frequency and type of media exposure, and by demographics (gender, education, number of children living at home etc.) and sociocultural factors (culture and lifestyle).

#### *2.3.2.a. Media Relations*

“Visibility obtained through press releases or media coverage is considered publicity rather than advertising. Publicity is one element of the Public Relations function which generally includes media relations” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 229). Media relations is of high importance for PR professionals that want to manage public perceptions. Mass media, which was explained in detail above, reach the mass and form public opinion. Media’s perception of a cultural organisation or a cultural product “is often the public’s perception as well” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 261). It is important for any organisation to cultivate and manage good media relationships (Pedersen et al., 2017). Indeed, good relationships cannot ensure zero negative coverage by the media, as the latter is supposed to be independent and uninfluenced. Nevertheless, the better the communication with it, the more difficult it publishes something negative about the organisation and its products. The off-the-record common

practice in cases where for example a performance is not good is to hush up the fact and don't present or review it at all. Sometimes though, it happens that although a media outlet is one of the media sponsors of an arts organisation, it can host a negative review about the organisation's performances. Jensen & Jepsen (2006), referring to online media relations, support the monitoring of coverage about the company/brand all over the internet; a useful tool for that is Internet Monitoring Services (IMS).

Media relations start with identifying the media people that interest the marketer and the organisation and creating a media list. This should include names and contact details of "publications, radio programs, television programs, and internet sites that would be open covering" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 142) the product of the organisation. Additionally, it should include the same information for "individual editors, reporters, critics, commentators, and producers" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 142).

Pedersen et al. (2017), citing Connors (2014), mention that there are three styles of media relations: reactive, proactive, and interactive. The first refers to responding to enquiries from the media and providing information, the second happens when the organisation contacts the media to emphasize specific stories or events and distribute information, such as artists' biographies. The interactive style aims at building a long-term relationship, mutually beneficial. Needless to say that reactive and interactive relations are the preferred ones, and sometimes interactive is a necessity. PR professionals should know when to contact the media and when to anticipate contact from the media. In this way, they can always be prepared to give explanations, clarifications and responses that reinforce the mission and the image of the organisation effectively and in a timely manner (Pedersen et al., 2017). Nowadays though, to make a media person's job easier, marketers can pack their "Web site with any information an editor may need, downloadable at the press of a button" (Lathrop, 2003, p. 152). To effectively follow up or phone up to run an idea is always way better to have established positive and mutually trusting relationships with media people. This will happen following the most productive styles of media relations. If marketers put themselves in editors' shoes, they will be able to feed story ideas that will cover, except for the media persons' constant need for new content, their need for quality and on-time content; then their target for free published material can be achieved more easily (Lathrop, 2003).

The tools for maintaining media relations are the following: press release, press conference, media/press kit, fact sheet, and coordination of interviews with artists or key personnel<sup>63</sup>. Lathrop (2003) though, in the tools of the publicity seeker, except for the media lists, the press kit and the press releases, includes also mailings for entertainment calendars and public service announcements (PSA). The first one concerns a "simple notice showing the name of the act, the venue, and the date,

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<sup>63</sup> Pedersen et al. (2017), talking about sports communication, include also media guide but I don't believe it fits in arts.

and include a publicity photo”, plus a fact sheet if it is for radio (Lathrop, 2003, p. 150). The PSA relates to simple, very short “notices of upcoming non-profit or charity events, and they are sent out to non-commercial electronic media” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 150).

### *2.3.2.b. Press release*

Press releases could be also considered part of integrated marketing communication, as they are texts and material produced by the organisation, written by the same people in most cases in order to keep the same style as the rest of the published material, and sent to the journalists or even be uploaded on the website. Nevertheless, I will include it in Public Relations and Media Relations as it is more relevant in this chapter.

Press releases should be interesting, clear and concise for the intended audiences and be distributed without playing favourites with media. They should be newsworthy, sent on time and follow the inverted pyramid style, with the most important information in the lead sentence<sup>64</sup>, which summarises the content of the release and encourages readers to continue reading. The body of the press release provides more in-depth information (Pedersen et al., 2017), and should consider the length and content of paragraphs -preferably one idea per paragraph- and the careful word choice depending on the target audience. The use of active verbs, visual descriptions(imagery) and the avoidance of errors like spelling, “sound-alike” words, redundancies, bias and stereotypes, politically incorrect words, jargon, clichés, hype words<sup>65</sup>, euphemisms, discriminatory language, are all part of the successful recipe and will help avoid misunderstandings (Wilcox et al., 2015; Wilcox & Nolte, 1995). The use of positive, favourable words is preferable in PR texts, but at the same time, these words should not mislead (Wilcox et al., 2015).

Additionally, the relevant context is significant, as well as the use of symbols that identify the organization, persuasive slogans or effective acronyms are suggested, as they enhance clarity and simplicity (Wilcox et al., 2015; Wilcox & Nolte, 1995). Furthermore, writers should be sensitive to semantics, in a sense of knowing how to use them, because semantics carry several meanings and create mixed feelings. Other ways to influence target audiences is the use of words often contained

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<sup>64</sup> The lead sentence, to be clear and concise, should outlines the 5Ws (who, what, when, where, why) (Pedersen et al., 2017).

<sup>65</sup> Frequently used hype words are: generation, world class, cutting edge, leading, international, best, social, offers, important, brand, latest etc. (Wilcox et al., 2015). As these words come from a research in the business world they cannot fully match with the words used in culture. But, some of them can be avoided also in press releases of cultural organisation. An example could be: “An international group of dancers and acrobats that will offer you the best experience of your life”. Definitely in this sentence there are also other mistakes that can be identified, according to the general guidelines of how to write a message, but it is just an example to show that some of the words used in business and cultural world can be the same.

in persuasive messages, such as “discovery, ease, guarantee, health, love, money, new, proven, results, safety, save, you” (Wilcox & Nolte, 1995, p. 46).

There are some elements that audiences seem to like such as drama, statistics, popularity ratings, examples, testimonials, endorsements and emotional appeals that a PR writer can use (Wilcox & Nolte, 1995). But, in the case of cultural organisations these elements are not all relevant. For example, a press release for a concert might include the information that people listen to music X hours per year, results based on a survey, or it might play with audiences’ emotions but it will not easily use endorsements. The above guidelines for writing a message that will successfully appeal to the audience should respect the ethics of persuasion so that persuasion does not become “manipulative, propagandistic, or full of half-truths” (Wilcox & Nolte, 1995, p. 50).

Because nowadays, press releases are sent mostly via online methods (e.g. e-mail), they should include extra material such as photos (preferably high-resolution) and videos; in this format, they can be even posted on the organisation’s website. Moreover, as we are in the online era, the headline, which “should be concise and stimulate reader’s interest” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 264), is better not to exceed 140 characters, so it can be easily posted on Twitter, by media, by the organisation itself, or as a retweet by the followers (and this results to greater distribution). Anyhow, quantity does not ensure quality.

“The better a press release is written, the more likely the media is to convey the organisation’s desired message to the masses” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 264). And if the release keeps the standards, it can be published exactly as it was written by the PR professional and this is ideal. Additionally, nowadays, organisations post their press releases or parts of them even on their websites or social media. Hence, a well-written press release is an asset as the target audience is not only the journalists but also the potential consumers. A precondition for PR practitioners is to be fully informed about audiences’ profiles. Who are they, in which demographic group do they belong, and what are their needs, values, and predispositions (Wilcox et al., 2015)? As Wilcox, Cameron, & Reber (2015) support, audiences pay more attention at the beginning of a message. Hence, it is better to start with a statement compatible with audiences’ values and predispositions or suggest something related to their interests (Wilcox et al., 2015; Wilcox & Nolte, 1995). This technique called channelling<sup>66</sup> can be also combined with the cognitive dissonance theory mentioned above (Gordon, 2011 & Wilcox & Nolte, 1995).

Except for groups’ attitudes and values, if the message taps something popular or current has more chances to grasp attention (Wilcox et al., 2015). In the case of cultural organisations, a very popular

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<sup>66</sup> “The technique of recognising a general audience’s beliefs, values and suggesting a specific course of action related to audience members’ self-interests” is called channelling (Wilcox & Nolte, 1995, p. 42).



group of performers that is coming to town could be a good “hook”. Continuing the message, writers should give more details and at the end sum up. Communicators when creating messages should consider “what is the most important to consumers” (Bernstein, 2007, p. 105).

#### *2.3.2.c. Press conference*

The press conference is another tool of media relations that allows arts organisations and PR professionals -as coordinators- to disseminate information to all media at once, conveniently and efficiently. On this occasion, although it differs from the interviews, the media members can interact with artists and key personnel, such as directors, writers, actors and/or senior staff members. Conferences give to journalists the necessary information to develop material for all kinds of media. Press conferences are usually scheduled for special occasions, such as the beginning of the season or a much-talked-about performance or popular performance contributors. The conferences should consider the timetables of media entities, and give them advance notice. Nowadays, online or virtual conferences are also possible (Pedersen et al., 2017).

#### *2.3.2.d. Media/Press kit*

Either online or print, media kits are used to showcase the organisation. The online ones though have the advantage that they can be easily updated. “Media kits typically include press releases, selected statistics, fact sheets, answers to frequently asked questions, feature story ideas, biographical sketches of key figures in the organisation, photos, and perhaps video footage that can be used by members of the media” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 265).

Press kits can be in electronic or traditional print format. The typical hard copy usually includes “a jacket, with pockets on the inside for inserting other elements, a cover letter {...}, a fact sheet, a bio or product description, publicity photographs, press clips, {...} a DVD of visual performance and interview clips {...} and additional attention-grabbing items (optional)” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 143,144).

#### *2.3.2.e. Fact sheet*

Similar to the press releases are the fact sheets, which also provide concise and useful information; usually a list of key facts about the product and/or the organisation. A fact sheet is normally part of a press kit. As press releases, fact sheets answer the 5Ws-who, what, when, where, why and H (how)<sup>67</sup>. They “typically do not exceed one page”, they “are written in bulleted format and highlight key points” (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 266), and they are ideal for “busy radio or TV commentator who has to interview the guest” but without background research, and print media members “when they have to fact-check articles” (Lathrop, 2003, p. 145).

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<sup>67</sup> These five W’s and an H differ from the three W’s and an H of marketing that were mentioned in the chapter of Arts Marketing.

#### *2.3.2.f. Interviews with artists and key personnel*

As it is mentioned above, although interviews with artists and key personnel differ from media conferences, they share some key points, such as the interaction of these two groups of people and the preparation of individuals to speak and reply to journalists' questions. Interviews though can be presented on many different media platforms, such as print media, TV, radio etc. In contrast with the poor interviews, the positive ones "can both cultivate positive media relations and shape public perceptions" (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 266). Although artists can also train their communication skills and recognise their value for their career, the organisation's key personnel that usually represents the organisation to the media should definitely have these skills. Through interviews, both artists and personnel can disseminate to the public the organisation's message, as long as they are well prepared for it, and establish credibility both with audiences and journalists (Pedersen et al., 2017).

#### *2.3.2.g. Community Relations*

Community relations is a tool of PR that works towards the cultivation of mutual and beneficial relations between the arts organisation and the local and regional community; this objective is succeeded through organisational activities (Pedersen et al., 2017). An example of community relations can be a party that will be organised by the cultural organisation in the neighbourhood around it, focusing primarily on the local community, and except for the sponsored drinks and food, the organisation will distribute giveaways to the publics.

Community relations can also overlap with CSR programs when the organisation organises for example food drives for the neighbourhood or charitable actions. Similar actions reinforce and enhance the organisation's image, communicating its values to the target publics.

#### *2.3.2.h. Crisis Communication*

Crises are usually unexpected and create negative or unfavourable perceptions in audiences. A crisis threatens an organisation's image or reputation and sometimes it is not enough to just try to change media perceptions. An example of a crisis in culture can be performances that deal with sensitive issues and might offend a part of society, affecting the image and the reputation of the organisation, as well as changing the perceptions of the audiences for the values of the organisation. Another example can be a post on social media by the organisation itself, to express an opinion on a subject of topical interest. The reaction of the part of the audience that disagrees with this opinion might be extreme or the post might result in a great deal of negative media attention. As crisis can be considered also the terroristic attack on the Bataclan theatre in Paris in 2015, and the connotations people have had in their minds for Bataclan since that day.

Nowadays that news travel so quickly, and the majority of people use new media, PR professionals are under great pressure to respond more quickly than in the past, and usually, the first reaction to a crisis is what stays in the publics' mind. It is of crucial importance the organisations to respond effectively, with specific plans and at the right timing to communication crisis; the objective is to minimise the damage to the organisation's reputation. A good preparation for handling crises can be the prediction and analysis of possible situations (unexpected or continuous) that might end up in a crisis. This can be done either by a crisis team or a combination of the PR team and other staff members. The outline of policies and procedures in case of crisis, the crisis strategy to be used and the guidelines for dealing with the media are a necessity for quick and accurate communication of information during a crisis (Crisis Kit)(Pedersen et al., 2017).

It is easy to conclude reading the above, that what PR is really doing is to promote the organisation, in other words, to build its image. Hence, rightly the marketing scholars, like Kotler & Scheff (1997), consider PR as part of Promotion, which is the fourth P of the marketing mix, as mentioned in the introduction of this sub-chapter.

### 2.3.3. Arts Communication Research

The research in arts communication can be of two kinds. One is done by industry practitioners and the other is done by academic researchers. Both types of research are important to support and promote arts communication. Arts communication research though should include also media that affect arts and society. As today's media landscape is complex, research can clarify "factors and implications relevant to the media, to media workers, and to the audience" (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 276). Additionally, media research determines audiences' preferences and consumption habits, as well as advertising costs.

Each media (radio, TV, print, new media), to attract advertisers, in this case, arts organisations, should present data and convince them. For this, but also for research reasons, many organisations for media studies, research the industry trends (e.g. mobile advertising) up to the audience preferences, their disposable income, the money they spent online, the circulation of print copies or the unique visitors of websites, "attention web"<sup>68</sup> etc. Media analytics is a tool that helps media to understand all the coveted (Pedersen et al., 2017).

Industry professionals, except for recognising possible challenges and opportunities, should keep themselves up to date with media research and also know their entities' and competitors' place in the communication arena. The research techniques (e.g. surveys, interviews, textual analysis) can be used

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<sup>68</sup> "It is less about clicks per se and more about what users do once they click on a link and how they engage with the content" (Pedersen et al., 2017, p. 281).

by both the cultural and media industry and the academic community (Pedersen et al., 2017). The present research is included in the arts communication research and its methodology will be analysed in the following chapter.

It can be argued here that part of the research that a professional is doing is the evaluation, through measurement, of the strategies used by the organisation. For example, PR practitioners can test their messages by giving sample material to target audiences or try to better understand the needs of audiences, by doing more in-depth research. Moreover, nowadays, technology gives them the tools to “apply readability and comprehension formulas” (Wilcox et al., 2015, p. 209) to the messages<sup>69</sup>. Microsoft Word's built-in-readability is a relatively easy testing function for messages' clarity (Wilcox et al., 2015). The design of effective messages cannot ensure success. This effectiveness should be strengthened by the right channels of communication, depending on the composition of the audience.

Conclusively arts communication research includes all these that can affect communication in arts. Based on Pedersen's et al. (2017) definition of sports communication research, I will define arts communication research as the process by which art “communication practitioners and scholars initiate, discover and expand knowledge” (p. 278) of arts communication texts, audiences and institutions. This definition applies to the media industry, arts organisations, academics and students.

### 3. Chapter 3\_Audience and Culture

This chapter is still part of the theoretical background of this research, presents the terms audience, public and audiences, and analyses the audiences of performing arts, as this research focuses on this art form. It connects to the last section of chapter 1 and gives more detailed information about the decision-making process of the consumers of culture, which consists of the stages of problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase evaluation. Additionally, it introduces the factors that affect this decision-making process; these can be macroenvironmental trends, cultural factors, and social, personal and psychological factors. The chapter elaborates on arts attendance patterns, which are used for the recruitment of the participants of the fieldwork in the next stage of this research. Finally, the chapter ends with the suggestion of decoding the decision-making process of arts attendees, in order to spread the message and approach the targets successfully.

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<sup>69</sup> Two broadly known readability formulas have been developed by Rudolph Flesh and Barr, Jenkins and Peterson; while, William Taylor developed the Cloze procedure that tests comprehension (Wilcox et al., 2015).

### 3.1. Cultural consumption

The French sociologist P. Bourdieu (1984) dealt with the connection between cultural consumption and social stratification basing the “Theory of Distinction”. According to him, “the upper classes are distancing themselves from the popular and mass culture and consume ‘highbrow’ cultural products as a tool and discrimination index from the lower social classes. In this sense, the cultural consumption patterns contribute to the reproduction of social stratification”<sup>70</sup> (Emmanuel et al., 2015, p. 4). Bourdieu writes also about the cultural capital that is possessed by experts (who are also opinion leaders) whose knowledge comes not only from education but mainly from lifelong exposure to arts due to “their family history and social origins” (Botti, 2000, p. 22). Cultural capital is the “socially acknowledged ability” (Botti, 2000, p. 22) of someone to recognise if something is ‘art’ or ‘non-art’, and it is mostly an ‘inherited’ artistic taste, “closely predicted by social origins” (Scriven et al., 2015, p. 2).

Bourdieu’s argument was challenged in the early 1990s by the American sociologist R. Peterson, who introduced the “cultural omnivore”, “omnivore thesis” or omnivore-univore thesis<sup>71</sup>. After research in the field of consumption of music, he was led to the theory, that people of high socioeconomic status, consume and prefer a wide range of, differentiated between them, cultural products, describing them as omnivores. While he argued, individuals who belong to the lower strata, tend to move as consumers in a limited range of ‘low’ level cultural species (Bronner & de Hoog, 2018; Chan, 2013; Chan & Goldthorpe, 2007; Francois Colbert, 2012; Coulangeon & Lemel, 2010; Emmanuel et al., 2015; Gürel & Nielsen, 2019; R.A. Peterson & Simkus, 1992; Richard A. Peterson, 1992, 2005; Scriven et al., 2015; Van Eijck, 2000). Although Peterson’s results regard music, Coulangeon and Lemel (2010) mention that “similar results have been reported” (p. 86) also in the field of performing arts. And indeed, Sintas and Álvarez (2004), conducting research in Spain for performing arts attendance, found out that the “omnivorous pattern of consumption” exists among the upper social classes, the univore pattern “among the upper-middle and middle classes”, while it is noticed a “sporadic attendance by the lower social classes” (p. 1). Additionally, Scriven et al. (2015) mention that people who participate in cultural activities do not exclude other populist leisure options, “they are at least as likely to participate in those too” (p. 1). It seems that he also confirms the omnivore in his way.

Coulangeon and Lemel (2010) note that DiMaggio (1987) originally proposed the concept of ‘omnivore-univore’ [omnivore “for those who participate in many activities” and univore for “those

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<sup>70</sup> Translated from the original file in Greek.

<sup>71</sup> For Peterson, omnivorousness is the shift “to a cultural capital that appears increasingly as a disposition to appreciate the aesthetic of a wide variety of cultural forms, not only including arts, but also a large range of folk and popular expressions” (Coulangeon & Lemel, 2010, p. 87).

who participate in few” (Scriven et al., 2015, p. 3)] and Peterson and Simkus (1992) systematised it. For Coulangeon and Lemel (2010), Peterson’s thesis assumes that nowadays highbrow and lowbrow culture is not responsible for the social distinction, but cultural diversity is; they note that omnivore-univore thesis “highlights the cumulative property of cultural consumption and is expected to depend mainly on wealth and time availability {...} (and) emphasises taste eclecticism” (p. 87), meaning that. In omnivorousness what matters more is the variety of tastes (that’s Peterson’s cultural capital) rather than the quantity of the consumed cultural products (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Gürel & Nielsen, 2019; Hand, 2011; Scriven et al., 2015). One could claim that this comes in line with authors who concluded later on that the attendees of specific cultural activities- such as museums, galleries, and historic places “are more likely than expected to participate in each of other forms” (Scriven et al., 2015, p. 289).

The third approach that came to complete the connection of social stratification with cultural consumption, was introduced by the French sociologist B. Lahire (2008), and it was concerned with the upward or downward mobility of the subjects and the subsequent contact with different contexts of life. These movements are linked to the concepts of “consonance” and “dissonance”, which means the coexistence or not, of divergent practices and preferences in their cultural consumption. The cultural “habitus” (according to Bourdieu, the socialised norms or tendencies that guide behaviour and thinking) cannot be considered as stable, but as multiple, as it is marked by the upward or downward mobility and the “stops” of the individual. Multiple habitus creates disparate moods of expression and realization of preferences in culture (Emmanuel et al., 2015; Lahire, 2008). Regarding this approach and Bourdieu’s, Scriven et al. (2015) note that although these concepts are “useful in explaining *why* people choose particular leisure activities” (p. 2), and in this case cultural activities, they do not shed light on *what* they actually choose.

From the above approaches, we perceive that the relationship between social stratification and cultural consumption is very close, regardless of whether the emphasis is given to the social class, status, cultural omnivores, the appreciation of the aesthetics of a wide variety of cultural- or leisure-forms or the heterogeneous preferences because of the social movement. It is evident that the theories of Peterson (1992) and Lahire (2008) are more closely related, in terms of point of view, as they are both distancing from Bourdieu’s clarity of social strata and his merge of class and status, and they are both supporting Weber’s distinction<sup>72</sup> (Coulangeon & Lemel, 2010; Emmanuel et al., 2015;

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<sup>72</sup> According to Weber (1968, in Coulangeon & Lemel, 2010) “class structure is one formed by social relations in economic life” (employment relations: employers and self-employed workers/employees, salaried-employees, wage-workers) and status order is “a structure of relations of perceived, and in some degree accepted, social superiority, equality and inferiority among that reflects not their personal qualities but rather the ‘social honour’ attaching to certain of their positional or perhaps purely ascribed attributes” (p. 11).

Gürel & Nielsen, 2019; Van Eijck, 2000). Recent work supports that cultural consumption is related more to status, than to class (Chan & Goldthorpe, 2007; Coulangeon & Lemel, 2010; Emmanuel, 2016)<sup>73</sup> and that class is production-based, while status consumption-based. Nevertheless, some authors claim that the choice behaviour (or decision-making process) of leisure activities, which include also cultural activities, is the same as the choice behaviour of other goods and services, and all the experiential purchases<sup>74</sup> have a symbolic meaning for the status and the identity of the consumer (although there are considerable differences in type, presence, and behavioural consequences between them (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Hand, 2011; Scriven et al., 2015). Specifically, research conducted in 2019 by Bronner and de Hoog, showed that participation in specific cultural events (festivals, classical music concerts and theatres) is a status demonstration, although other experiential activities, such as holidays, reach higher scores; identity demonstration though scores higher in the consumption of classical music concerts and festivals. “The social visibility of experiential products is already much greater than before, but will certainly increase in the future” (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 443). “Less well-educated people especially signal status by attending a cultural event more than better-educated people do” (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 440).

As this research regards performing arts, and the profile of audiences of this field of arts will be analysed, it is worth mentioning that according to Botti (2000), classical theatre is considered high art, while at the same time experimental theatre or modern dance<sup>75</sup> might be considered as popular art. This sectorial approach becomes increasingly difficult to be applied, as the borders start being indistinguishable. Especially because this kind of distinction started back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Europe and it was mainly a product/result of elitism (Botti, 2000) with “art seen as a privilege” (Botti, 2000, p. 15).

### 3.2. The audience of performing arts

Formerly, the term audience was more widespread. Nowadays, I could claim that there are three schools. One considers the word audience as outdated and not influential anymore as it refers to passive attenders. This school prefers to use the word public, referring to the active recipients and supporting that publics will be more empowered if they avoid the label of “audience”. Counter-

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<sup>73</sup> Erikson and Goldthorpe, working on Weber’s model for the distinction of status and class, introduced a new-Weberian model known as EGP Erikson–Goldthorpe procedure), which was used to analyse the relation between social class and cultural consumption. The model later on was modified in ESeC (European Socio-Economic Classification) and became very influential for the analysis of social class (e.g. social mobility) (Emmanuel, 2016; “Goldthorpe class scheme | Encyclopedia.com,” 2020; Sintas & Álvarez, 2004).

<sup>74</sup> Bronner and de Hoog (2019) consider “three main categories of experiential purchases: eating out, vacations, and culture” (p.444).

<sup>75</sup> It is defined as “theatrical dance that began to develop in the United States and Europe late in the 19th century, receiving its nomenclature and a widespread success in the 20th. It evolved as a protest against both the balletic and the interpretive dance traditions of the time” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2015).

arguments (that is second school) support that the audience deserves a much higher position than the public in the communication process, as prosumers (producer & consumer) are gaining ground. Rejection of the “public as audience”, stops considering the public as mere receptors of messages and gives it more power (Caldiero, 2015). The third school ignores the use of different words for passive and active and uses both words with the same meaning, separating, when it is necessary, the passive from the active. All schools though prefer the plural form of both words, “audiences” and “publics”. This is because attenders can be divided into many special categories, the special audiences/publics. There are several categories of audiences, depending on the separation that someone will choose to make. A simple example could be: the public that belongs to the age category 18-25 and the public with the age range 26-35 (Caldiero, 2015; Gordon, 2011; Grunig, 2009; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Livingstone, 2004).

This investigation will not focus on the differentiation between the above concepts, as there is contemporary literature related to public relations (Wilcox et al., 2015) or arts marketing (Hill et al., 1995) that chooses the term audiences or uses both terms equally, making the distinction between active and passive audiences/public. The purpose that the word audiences/publics will serve in this research is the description of the possible or existing attenders.

The audiences of a cultural organisation consist of the people who attend the events of the organisation. The loyal audiences are those people who match the organisation’s mission. But, except for them-the core audiences-, there are also broader audiences that include different categories of people, which are actually the key to the success of the organisation. The expanded audiences can include people who will be occasionally interested in the organisation’s activities or will satisfy their curiosity by visiting the organisation (Hand, 2011; Scriven et al., 2015). Organisations should not forget that “the audiences of different art events overlap” (Hand, 2011, p. 13). The expansion and maximizing of the audiences are steadily part of the organisation’s strategy. Sometimes arts organisations are encouraged (or even require) to expand the audience through minority/under-represented groups, something that involves high risk and is more expensive. “Targeting the mainstream audience would be more sustainable”, while “targeting non-attenders who have the same demographic characteristics as current attenders {...} is likely to be the more cost-effective option if the aim is to increase (net) revenue” (Hand, 2011, p. 13). As we are in a post-mass communication era, and it is difficult to attract anymore broad and heterogeneous audiences, the attraction of loyal audiences is a challenge (Badimaroudis, 2011; Hand, 2011).

This research is dealing with arts organisations, marketing and communication strategies for performing arts and audiences’ perceptions and consuming behaviour. Throughout the years, changes have been observed in all these fields. The mentality of the arts organisations is constantly changing,



given the circumstances. Formerly, while the economic situation in Europe was prosperous, most of the organisations were depending on governmental subsidies. Later on, they had to depend on their own strengths and they started to apply and appreciate arts marketing (Kotler & Scheff, 1997 & Boorsma, 2006). Likewise, the audience's behaviour did not stay stable. For example, in the early 90s, a declining audience base is observed internationally, compared to the early 70s (Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The audience of performing arts is a special one, and it is researched separately. What really motivates them to attend a performance is always under investigation, but understanding audiences is the way to effectively communicate with them and effectively promote performing artworks to them (Blackwell et al., 2001; Brida et al., 2013; Guillon, 2011; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Consumers' "arts attendance decisions, interests, needs and satisfaction levels go beyond issues specific to the artistic offering" (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 69). Their behaviour can be influenced by several factors, which will be analysed below.

Cooper and Tower (1992) conclude in their research that the arts fulfil social, personal and spiritual needs, which in their majority are failed to be fulfilled by arts; although this research dates back to 1992, it could be considered that applies also in the current era. Moreover, arts consumers are seeking "clarity of what the art experience will mean and offer, approachability by the arts to them, relevance to themselves and their everyday lives" (Cooper & Tower, 1992, p. 307), which can be claimed that are points directly connected to the way art experience will be communicated.

Multiple authors (Gordon, 2011; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997) support that the factors they mention as influential for arts audiences are the factors that influence also their decisions. A deep understanding of the factors that influence the decision-making process will help arts organisations to overcome "the physical and mental barriers, which restrict access to the arts and hinder the development of wide-ranging audiences" (Hill et al., 1995, p. 28).

Although the decision-making process will be thoroughly analysed in the next subchapter, it is worth mentioning the five stages it includes, as they will be also mentioned in combination with the influential factors. The problem recognition starts this process, the information search comes after and then evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase evaluation follow. Theatre belongs to arts and leisure experiences. According to Getz (2007, in Walmsley, 2011), the evaluation of a leisure experience follows the criteria of "anatomy (nature, location and duration of event); moods, emotions and feelings; involvement; cognitive engagement (ideas, beliefs and meanings); sense of freedom and control" (Walmsley, 2011, p. 5). These are the criteria for evaluating an experience after its end (experience characteristics), but they are not factors to be considered as motivations, as you

come to know about all these after attendance of the event. However, they are all based on the motivation theory that will be described below (Hausmann, 2012; Walmsley, 2011).

### 3.3. Decision-Making Process & Influential factors

Even though there are two schools, one supports marketing and the other public relations (check Chapter 1.2), both have elements in common when they refer to the factors that affect consumers' decision-making and consequently behaviour. It will be interesting to examine these similar opinions simultaneously.

For Kotler & Scheff (1997) the first category of factors that play an important role in audiences' behaviour include macroenvironmental trends that concern social, political, economic, and technological forces; while Colbert (2012) replaces social with demographic and cultural. The macro-environmental variables are uncontrollable ones and influence continuously apart from the market, also the organisations, which sometimes need to adapt drastically to radical changes. Through these years, except for the above changes (social, political, economic and technological) or at the same time with these, there was also noticed a change in audiences' needs (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

Taking the trends in technological and economic forces, and living in the information society, where everything is moving so quickly and personal contact tends to get lost, people search for interaction and unique experiences (Bousiouta, 2010). Experience is "the next step in what we call the progression of economic value", as Pine and Gilmore (1999) state in their book *The Experience Economy* (1999). Experience economy came about in the same way as the transition from the industrial to the service economy (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). In fact, as Bronner and de Hoog (2019) note, another recent trend in consumer behaviour is that people, especially young people, in addition to status and wealth, want to state something about their personalities through the consumption of experiences<sup>76</sup>; status and wealth are considered more connected to material consumption, but not exclusively connected<sup>77</sup>. When the consumption happens not only for the personal utility of the consumer (consumer group) but also to send a message to the social environment (signal group), is called conspicuous consumption<sup>78</sup> (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Sintas & Álvarez, 2004); the latter "can also be a driver of consumption behaviour in the cultural and arts domain, as another instance of experiential purchases" (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 432), which yield extrinsic and intrinsic benefits.

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<sup>76</sup> The authors mention Woodward's (2010) words: "The Facebook generation does not define what they own, but what they know and what they do or experience..." (p. 7, in Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 431).

<sup>77</sup> For instance, a luxurious experience in a five-star hotel can be easily connected to status and wealth.

<sup>78</sup> "Symbolic meanings of cultural consumption" (Sintas & Álvarez, 2004, p. 2). The symbolic meaning of consumption was firstly introduced by Veblen (1965, in Sintas & Álvarez, 2004).

Bronner's and de Hoog's (2019) research showed that many people believe in conspicuous consumption of "cultural events, as example of experiential purchases" (p. 438); specifically for theatre 51% of participants believe that attending performing arts expresses something for one's personality, while festivals got the highest score of 75%. Nevertheless, the same research -conducted in the Netherlands- shows that only 19% of people like to tell friends and acquaintances to which theatres they are going; however other cultural events have higher scores (e.g. pop concerts and festivals), the communication of consumption of cultural events is not that frequent, comparing to other experiential purchases (e.g. holidays).

Accordingly, changes in behaviour have been caused by social, political and economic trends separately or in their combination. For example, the economic crisis in Europe in the last decades, which is also attributed to political crises or changes, influences the purchasing power of the consumer and its priorities. Such a situation can possibly affect also cultural consumption (Avdikos, 2014), although Kotler and Scheff (1997) back in the 90s claimed that especially in Europe, arts are considered a necessity for some people, as it is also essential for their education and upbringing. Under these constantly changing conditions, the question is how arts organisations can approach different groups of audiences. The macro-environmental trends can influence except for attitudes, values and important decisions, also the day-to-day decisions, such as how to spend leisure time (the latter can also be translated into lifestyle) (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). An example of a trend could be that of attending interactive performances, hence, in this case, the audiences of these arts events can vary and people from different educational levels or classes might attend, only because it is a trend. Another example is that of "blockbuster seekers", one of Kim's and Tucker's (2016) study groups of consumers of live entertainment in two specific venues; this can be also considered a trend. Each group of attendees has a profile and for instance, the blockbuster seekers consume pop art, are seeking a social occasion and are willing to pay more if someone can guarantee their satisfaction. Blockbusters can be also connected to identity demonstration through cultural consumption (e.g. I attend trendy performances) (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Kim & Tucker, 2016).

Although Kotler & Scheff (1997) do not clearly mention communication behaviour as a factor, nevertheless, as Gordon (2011) -that comes from PR School- supports, this behaviour is very much influenced by technology. As Gordon (2011) is more contemporary -in terms of edition-, she mentions that how the information is exchanged nowadays has drastically changed, the way people exchange and share information has also changed, and this way might describe people or group them. This is something that Kotler & Scheff (1997) support as well, mentioning also that media preferences can be affected by sub-factors such as social class, occupation and opinion leaders.

Gordon (2011) though supports that media-agenda can be also a factor of influence and she connects it with the psychology of the audiences and its influence on their decision-making process, but this topic will be discussed later in this research. Moreover, Wilcox et al. (2015) support that one of the reasons people use mass media is to decide about a purchase of a product or service. Hence, they include it as a factor of influence as well. Hill et al. (1995) also support that opinions found in media can affect the decision-making process, especially the stage of information search.

Compared to Kotler & Scheff (1997) some slight differences can be noticed in Hill's et al. (1995) categorization of factors. They do not mention macroenvironmental trends and they consider social, personal and psychological factors the most influential for audiences' decision-making, a categorisation that Gordon (2011) also seems to support, without clearly referring to that though. The concept Kotler & Scheff (1997) use is similar, with the difference that they add to the mentioned above factors the cultural ones. On the other hand, Hill et al. (1995) include culture in the social factors category.

For Kotler & Scheff (1997) the cultural factors concern nationality, subcultures and social class. For example, when comparing Americans and Europeans, the last "are more habituated to arts attendance; {...} In Europe, {...} performances are often more affordable, attracting working-class people as well as the upper class" (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 71). Subcultures, driven by religion, region etc., are also influential in consumers' extent of interest in performing arts. For Blackwell et al. (2001), culture, "in the study of consumer behaviour, refers to the values, ideas, artifacts, and other meaningful symbols that help individuals communicate, interpret, and evaluate as members of society" (p. 85). Regarding social class, the "divisions within society that comprise individuals sharing similar values, interests, and behaviours" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 85), it is considered to affect consumer behaviours and attitudes (Blackwell et al., 2001; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Sociology has dealt a lot with cultural consumption and audiences, and some of the theories were mentioned in cultural consumption's subchapter (3.1). Based on Peterson's (1992) arguments, I argue that even if the individuals belong to the upper class, they might be interested in 'lowbrow' cultural products. Respectively, based on Lahire's approach (Emmanuel, Kaftantzoglou & Souliotis, 2015), I conclude that everybody is a potential audience for performing arts, depending on the experienced contexts of life. If an individual was part of the upper class and with downward mobility ended up in a lower stratification, he/she is still acquainted with the old preferences, but at the same time, he/she has adopted also new ones. Accordingly, the same happens on the reverse path. An arts organisation should consider these sociological analyses when it plans its communication strategy.

Another category of factors that influence audiences' behaviour is the social factors, which, for Kotler & Scheff (1997), refer to reference groups, opinion leaders and innovativeness. For Hill et al. (1995) though social factors include culture, reference groups and social class. Kotler and Scheff (1997) hold that reference groups include informal primary groups such as family, friends, neighbours and co-workers, and more formal secondary groups, such as religious and professional groups (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 74). Regarding opinion leaders, people can become opinion leaders or opinion followers depending on the circumstances. Finally, innovativeness concerns people's different levels of readiness to try new products. Five categories classify people according to their level of innovativeness: early adopters, early majority, late majority, laggards (or else: innovators, early adaptors, deliberate, sceptical, laggards) (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Gordon (2011) supports the same referring to "the diffusion of innovations theory" (Rogers, 1983 cited in Gordon, 2011, p.53) at the stage of information search during the decision-making process. Both Kotler & Scheff (1997) and Hill et al. (1995) support this point of view, focusing on the audience of performing arts and cultural organisations. Specifically, Hill et al. (1995) support that innovation is at the heart of the arts, and consider the mission of arts organisations to always try to involve their audiences in new areas and art products. Moreover, the five classifications of people regarding innovation that were mentioned above (and also in Arts Integrated Marketing subchapter 1.4.3) reflect the tendency of social segments to adopt new ideas or products (Rogers, 1962 cited in Hill et al., 1995, p.132). For example, Blackwell et al. (2001) mention that "highly innovative consumers attach more importance to stimulation, creativity, and curiosity" (p.37). The innovators but also the early adaptors can function as intermediaries and replace the arts organisation in the exchange with the customer, through viral marketing; of course these people might be also the ones that possess Bourdieu's cultural capital (opinion leaders).

Blackwell et al. (2001), although they are dealing with consumer behaviour not focused on arts but including arts (cultural products), they divide the factors into three categories: individual differences, environmental influences, and psychological processes. It seems like they merge some of the categories that Kotler & Scheff (1997) and Hill et al. (1995) use. The factors that affect the decision-making process overlap. Many of the environmental influences can be found in individual differences, and the latter is affected by the first one. The environmental influences consist of Culture, Social class, Family, Personal Influence and Situation. Below, the rest of their categories will be mentioned gradually and will be combined with the authors that focus on arts audiences.

Regarding psychological factors, what matters are personality, beliefs and attitudes, as well as motivation. Kotler & Scheff (1997) and Hill et al. (1995) agree on these, with the slight difference that

the latter add also perception. For Hill et al. (1995) perception “is the process by which people make sense of the world” (Hill et al., 1995, p. 33). It is related to the selection of information that will lead to the satisfaction of needs with the help of selective perception<sup>79</sup>. To interpret the information people use the recall of memories and selective retention of messages.

Beliefs, based on knowledge, faith or opinion, lead to attitudes and then to behaviours. Attitudes<sup>80</sup> are more long-lasting than beliefs and difficult to change; both can change more easily than behaviours (Blackwell et al., 2001; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). An example could be that if a group of people believes that theatre attendance is only for highly educated people, arts organisations can choose the best strategy and messages that will encourage them to change their attitude towards this, using messages with positive vibes or messages that make clear that this performance is for everybody. However, this is a controversial issue for the scientific community; the model that was just mentioned is closer to the traditional persuasion approach, while there is also the so-called instrumental conditioning or behavioural modification approach, which supports that people “adjust their attitudes to fit their behaviour rather than vice versa” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 76). In other words, people might change their behaviour and attend an event, that they are not used to attending, because of a special occasion and not because they have changed their attitudes about it. “Nevertheless, attitude change is a common marketing goal” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 85). Attitudes, and in this case attitudes toward a brand (such as Onasis Stegi), influence behaviour. “An attitude is simply an overall evaluation of an alternative ranging from positive to negative” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 85).

Personality includes unconscious motivations, interdependence with society, behavioural motivations, the trait-factor theory<sup>81</sup>, personal values, lifestyle and psychographics (Blackwell et al., 2001; McGuire, 1976). Effective marketing causes consumers to think, “that product or message fits what I believe (values), the way I normally behave (personality), and my situation in life (lifestyle)” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 212). “Personal values reflect the choices an individual makes from the variety of social values or value system to which that individual is exposed” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 215). They are very central in the personality structure, important in the need recognition and in determining evaluative criteria, and influence the effectiveness of communication programs. Several

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<sup>79</sup>“Screen out messages which are of no use to us” (Hill et al., 1995, p. 33).

<sup>80</sup> Attitudes are difficult to change (Blackwell et al., 2001; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997) and help people to “economise on energy and thought rather than having to interpret and react to every object or situation in a fresh way” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p.76).

<sup>81</sup> “A quantitative approach to personality, which postulates that an individual’s personality comprises predispositional attributes called traits {...} (traits) can predict a wide variety of behaviours” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 213). Some of these traits are very useful in marketing, “such as risk taking, self-consciousness, and need for cognition” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 213).

studies have linked them to “brand choice, product usage, market segmentation, and innovative behaviour” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 215). Personality traits, such as self-confidence, self-esteem, sociability etc., usually go along with other capacities such as opinion leader, innovator etc. or even along with social classes. But, based on the self-concept, personality is not only about the traits that people have but also those they believe they have, those they would like to have and finally how they think are viewed by others (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p.75). Talking about cultural products and organisations, and following the Rokeach Value Scale (RVS), people who have as a desirable end state an exciting life, their mode of conduct is “Broad-minded”. A cultural organisation, like Onassis Stegi, that has branded itself as such- that means as an organisation that is open-minded and hosts fresh productions that deal with current issues of the society, presenting a different point of view, or as an organisation that offers exciting experiences- is the perfect match for this target. Respectively, following the Schwartz Value Scale (SVS), an individual that belongs to the motivational value type of stimulation (value domain: openness to changes) will have as an exemplary value daring, and varied and exciting life, and both imply the above-mentioned Rokeach Value Scale example (Blackwell et al., 2001; McGuire, 1976).

Motivation refers to the satisfaction of the psychogenic and biogenic needs of a person to act. For these needs, one very influential model that has been developed is Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, designed in 1954. The model lists human needs, starting from the basic and going to the more complex: biological and physiological needs, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation needs (Blackwell et al., 2001; Gordon, 2011; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Manolika, Baltzis, & Tsigilis, 2015; McGuire, 1976; Walmsley, 2011; Wilcox & Nolte, 1995). According to Maslow these needs should be satisfied following a sequential hierarchy, but modern theorists argue that different needs can coexist simultaneously. And although the apparent need an art experience can satisfy might be that of self-actualisation, in reality, it can cover the full spectrum of levels of Maslow’s needs (Botti, 2000; Hill et al., 1995). For example, a visit to an arts centre can satisfy the needs of adequate lighting and ventilation (physiological), cloakroom facilities (safety), the possibility of meeting friends (social), enhanced self-image for being up to date on arts events (esteem), increased knowledge on a specific artistic form (self-actualisation) (Hill et al., 1995).

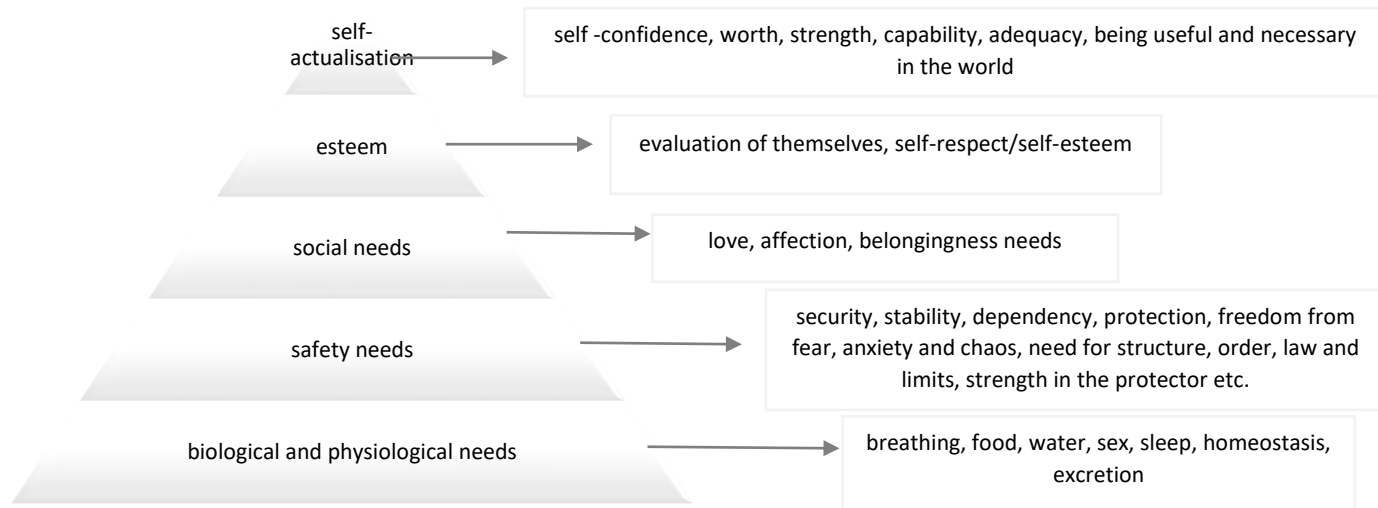


Figure 5. Hierarchy of needs-Model of Abraham Maslow, designed in 1954 (Source: Ciceo, 2012)

Tower's and Cooper's research in 1992 regarding consumer attitudes towards arts suggest a model of hierarchy, in which at the higher levels "a state of 'self-actualisation' is reached. This constitutes the integration of aesthetics, spirituality and meaning of life" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 304). The model consists of personal and social needs. Personal needs such as catharsis, projection, illumination, nourishment, and social needs like euphoria, shared emotions, and participation, lead consumers to the aesthetic experience (self-actualisation, beauty, transcendence); "live performances are aesthetic experiences due to the rich sensory input needed" (Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 113). Social needs such as display, going out, dressing up, and personal needs like relaxation and learning anticipation, lead consumers to entertainment, which gives people relief from boredom and everyday life routines (Blackwell et al., 2001).

However, Botti (2000) follows a different categorisation of consumers' needs, which results from the benefits sought from cultural consumption. For him, the categories are the following: functional (cultural) benefits such as a cultural need or the need for gaining knowledge (so-called extrinsic rewards), symbolic benefits that represent the meaning of the cultural consumption choice for one's personality, values, culture or subculture, and/or attained social status, social benefits where the cultural product/choice conveys messages about one's social status or it can be a means to build relationships, and emotional benefits that cover a need for compelling, stimulating or fun experience (called as intrinsic rewards); "emotional benefits can be broken down into intrinsic satisfaction, escape from daily routine and traditional social roles, excitement and fun, relaxation and spontaneity. If one wanted to correlate this categorisation with Tower's and Cooper's model (1992, in Blackwell et al., 2001), he/she could claim that the emotional benefits/needs converge with the personal needs. Although there are many categorisations like these, it is pointless to mention them all. I will only



mention a last one, this of Hood (1983, in Zaharie, 2014, p. 75), who divides the benefits and values of leisure activities into 6 categories: 1) Social interaction 2) “doing something worthwhile 3) feeling at ease 4) appreciating the challenge of a new experience” (p. 75) 5) learn something/knowledge 6) active participation. Again here one can notice similarities with Maslow’s self-actualisation, esteem and social needs.

Consumer motivation answers the question “Why do people consume this product”, and behind this question, consumers’ needs are hiding (or in other words benefits that are sought from art consumption). Even if they are physiological needs, safety and health needs, the need for love and companionship, financial resources and security, pleasure, social image needs<sup>82</sup>, the need to possess (not necessarily material goods, it could be also knowledge and the like), the need to give, the need for information or the need for variety, some of them will be stronger at a specific moment/time/month/week/day in the life. Some will be the reason why and some others the deciding factor (need priorities). Sometimes individuals might experience motivational conflict; some activities though, as mentioned above, can cover more than one need. Except for priorities, the motivational intensity is equally important -how motivated consumers are to satisfy needs- a thing that sometimes might come from the importance of each need. Motivations are not always as obvious as they look. Proper research is needed to discover them, and this can be a challenging endeavour, as people may not want to reveal their motivations, they distort them with or without realising it (to give socially acceptable answers) or maybe they do not even know them themselves (unconscious motivation). Additionally, motivations are not stagnant, they change over time (Blackwell et al., 2001; McGuire, 1976). Organisations and governments should follow up on these motivation changes and benefit from them. For instance, if culture (or entertainment or cultural experiences) becomes more important as a need, cultural organisations can listen to this change, and try to serve this need and benefit. Similarly, in the case of Greece which combines history, culture and tourism, the ministry of culture along with the ministry of tourism can work towards this direction and benefit from it.

Personal factors for Hill et al. (1995) are all about age, gender, income and educational level, while for Kotler & Scheff (1997) concern occupation, economic circumstances, lifestyle, family, as well as the life-cycle stage. The interest that one shows in arts, or programming preferences, are both connected to the occupational group to which he/she belongs and vary accordingly. Desires also increase with the actual rising of income or “the expectation of rising income” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 73).

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<sup>82</sup> “Conspicuous consumption is often used to describe purchases motivated to some extent by the desire to show other people just how successful we are” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 240) or maybe who we are and how much high our social and educational level is, in the case of consumption of cultural products (Blackwell et al., 2001; Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Sintas & Álvarez, 2004).

Economic circumstances regard the general economic situation and attitude of a consumer that can be also connected to the occupation but it doesn't depend only on this (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). For example, an economic crisis can heavily affect this factor and consequently, the consumer's behaviour will be modified. It seems like Blackwell et al. (2001) included all these in demographics, or name them demographics. In their category 'individual differences' is like merging personal, psychological and microenvironmental trends. For Blackwell et al. (2001), this category consists of 1) Demographics, psychographics, values, and personality, 2) Consumer resources (time, money, attention/information reception & processing capabilities), 3) Motivation, 4) Knowledge<sup>83</sup>, 5) Attitudes.

Demographics might include gender, age, geography, origin, marital status, occupation, education, and income level, depending on the aim of the analysis. The latter though is also one of the three components of consumer resources. Demographics can guide marketers and analysts at the initial stages or when there is no primary search. If they know the population groups that will be growing in the future (demographic trends), they can "predict changes in demand for and consumption of, specific products and services" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 188). In the case of cultural products and considering the attendance patterns (we will see them below), a simple example could be the below: if the predictions show that the future population groups will be highly educated but with a medium financial status, there will be high demand of cultural spectacles at reasonable prices. Nevertheless, demographics cannot work isolated by personality, personal values, lifestyles and psychographics, which are more determinant characteristics of behaviour (Blackwell et al., 2001).

Demographics can be used alone in trend analysis and combined with psychographic profiles and consumer behaviours of a segment in market segment descriptors. An example could be the rise of teenagers during much of the 90s which meant a growing market not only for goods but also for services, such as entertainment (Blackwell et al., 2001), and the cultural industry is part of that. Their consumer behaviour can be characterised as fickle, and highly affected by peers' behaviour or opinion leaders. So marketers would probably approach opinion leaders at the first point (teens' magazines, celebrities, etc.). Another example is the rise of the 45- to 55- and 55- to 64-year-old age groups, which enjoy luxury travel, restaurants, and theatre, and they have young attitudes. Trend analysis has shown that the population of Europe, and not only, is becoming older. The growth of this market will affect various aspects of society, such as lifestyle, family structures, political situation etc. (Blackwell et al., 2001).

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<sup>83</sup> For Blackwell et al. (2001), knowledge is related to the information stored in memory, regarding the options of the consumer and the specific characteristics of the products. This information is usually coming from marketing. Communication campaigns should aim at providing the information needed to the consumers.

Lifestyle is the way a person chooses to live, depending on the phases she/he passes through in life. Lifestyle can be influenced for example by macro-environmental factors, according to Kotler's & Scheff's (1997) categorisation. Another example can be the favourite audience of arts organisations: the "traditional" Cultural Lifestyle Group; it is seeking a cultural experience, focusing on the content and the contributors of performances. Nevertheless, there are much more lifestyle groups that might be proved ideal to become future audiences. For instance, the *Socially Active* group; focuses on "going out", no matter what event they will attend. Compared to the traditional group, instead of cultural experience, this group is seeking a social experience (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Lifestyle reflects a person's activities, interests, opinions (AIOs) and demographic variables. "Lifestyle marketing attempts to relate a product, often through advertising, to the everyday experiences of the market target" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 219). Referring to cultural products, it might be even enough to relate the product to the weekly experiences of the market target, considering how often this target spends its leisure consuming cultural products. "Effective advertisers track lifestyle trends of key market targets and reflect those lifestyles in their ads" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 220).

Psychographics is an "operational technique to measure lifestyles" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 220) and focuses on why people buy. "With psychographic analysis, marketers can understand their core customers' lifestyles better and develop {...} communication programs that position products to their various lifestyle attributes"(Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 222). The products in this case are cultural.

Consumer resources affect consumers' motivation and behaviour. Except for the money resources that are linked to some demographics mentioned above (income, wealth, occupation, marital status also in some cases), there are the time resources, and information reception and processing capabilities (attention). The time resources might be also linked to the profession (the more money people make, the less leisure they have and the value of their time is increasing) or the marital status, while the attention resources to educational level, leisure time, levels of stress (psychological processes) etc. "Cognitive resources represent the mental capacity available for undertaking various information-processing activities {...} (and) capacity refers to the cognitive resources that an individual has available at any given time for processing information. {...} The allocation of cognitive capacity is known as attention"<sup>84</sup> (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 151). The amount of attention a consumer gives to a product or specific purchase choice depends on factors such as involvement, situation, personality, and other variables. Consumers' resources are very important for all the stages of the decision-making process, as well as the creation of needs. Does the individual have time to recognise the need, or to

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<sup>84</sup> "Attention consists of two dimensions: direction and intensity. Direction represents the focus of attention. {...} Intensity, however refers to the amount of capacity focused in a particular direction. {...} Gaining the consumer's attention represents one of the most formidable challenges a marketer may face" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 151).

recognise it on time? Does he/she have the time to attend? The time, or the money to purchase? Online purchase is usually time-saving, but does he/she have a credit card? etc. It is important though to mention that how people allocate their spare time, depends on their time styles.

Family “often is the primary decision-making unit, with a complex and varying pattern of roles and functions” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 85). Family, except for the personal factors, is also included in the social factors and especially in reference groups. But in the case of personal factors, decisions for outings are taken by both (husband-wife) or all members of the family, but each person is carrying their own experiences and has their preferences. Hence, arts organisations should target both husband and wife or other members as well (Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

The life cycle stage is a combination of the above two categories, as it is closely related to lifestyle and family. “Each person passes through several life cycle stages” (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 80); these stages may depend on age, marital status, parenthood, experiences and other factors (Blackwell et al., 2001; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). They might also depend on the upward or downward mobility of the individual and the different contexts of life, as mentioned above. Cooper and Tower (1992) mention a model based on “the phases of development associated with age”, which includes “adolescence, early adulthood (single), married/cohabiting, empty nesters, pre-retired, retired” (p. 307). The interesting point though is that “adoption of the arts and interest in particular art forms occurs notably at the transition”, while at each stage the priorities, concerns, attitudes and role models differ and “stimulate particular interest in specific aspects of the arts” (Cooper & Tower, 1992, p. 307).

Personal influence refers to the influence of those surrounding or closely associated with the individual. Social norms or expectations by others, affect buying choices and evaluation of alternatives. Behaviours are affected by situations, which in their turn are affected by social, political, economic, technological trends or personal circumstances, unpredictable or not. Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2001) analyse the perspective of personal policy, which according to them “includes how you behave (toward others and in buying situations), your values and beliefs, and how you live your life {...} or how individuals define success” (p. 13, 15). These personal policies include by extension the spending and saving policies, and all the above are part of personal and psychological factors (economic circumstances, lifestyle, personality, beliefs, etc.). For example, one could claim that middle and upper-income consumers, would visit Onassis Stegi anyway, but this can be questionable, as the spending and saving policies of people may contradict the stereotypical spending and saving patterns. Likewise, success for someone might be the possession of material goods or the donation to non-profit organisations. Linking success with arts consumption, for some individuals, success might be the

attendance of highbrow artistic events, as this makes them belong to a specific class or a group of people they admire, while for others, the attendance of all kinds of arts, make them perceive themselves or be perceived by others as “open-minded people”. The definition of success and by extension the personal policy are also linked to the motivation that refers to the satisfaction of psychogenic and biogenic needs of a person to act (Maslow’s hierarchy of needs).

For Blackwell et al. (2001) there is a third category of factors, that of psychological processes. It consists of Information processing, Learning, Attitude and behaviour change. Information processing was also mentioned in individual differences (consumer resources). The sender always hopes the message will be accurately decoded by the receiver. Consumers’ analysts focus on how consumers “make sense of marketing communications” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 85). Learning happens when marketers try to change the knowledge and behaviour of consumers through experience (e.g. Stegi through lifelong learning programs). Attitude and behaviour change are important marketing objectives.

The mentioned factors influence the behaviour and the decision-making process. They affect the need itself, the fulfilment or not of this need, and in case of fulfilment they affect also the *how* –that is the *where* and the *what*. In other words, they affect how the need for art attendance will be expressed. Below, two examples will be given. Personal factors, specifically the lifecycle, create the need for a married couple with a newly-born baby to have an outing only the two of them, attending a cultural event. The same personal factors will make them decide if they can do it and how. The cultural organisation should not be very far from home (insecurity), the duration should not be long, and the day should be Thursday when the nanny can look after the baby. Personal factors such as lifestyle, combined with macroenvironmental trends can lead to a decision for art attendance. A person who chooses always to be “in fashion” in every aspect of life, will follow the trend of the year in theatre and will attend a specific performance or a performance at a specific place. In a nutshell, these factors affect the audience of performing arts to attend a specific performance at a specific cultural organisation.

To sum up, there are so many factors that should be taken into consideration when the communication strategy of an arts organisation is under planning but it is very hard to consider everything at the same time. Each group needs a different approach. Different marketing or public relations strategies, and consequently communication strategies, should be applied for different social classes or different lifestyle groups and so on, or specific focus categories should be chosen. The audiences should always be researched and arts organisations should try to spread their messages to the broadest audiences possible (Cooper & Tower, 1992; Hill et al., 1995). Besides, for marketing

theorists, marketing’s objective is to build and develop audiences, and development is as much about increasing “the range of audiences as it is about the size of audiences” (Hill et al., 1995, p. 27).

<b>Comparison Table: Influential Factors for the Audience of Performing Arts</b>		
<b>Kotler &amp; Scheff, 1997</b>	<b>Hill, O’Sullivan &amp; O’Sullivan, 1995</b>	<b>Blackwell, Miniard &amp; Engel, 2001</b>
<b>Macroenvironmental Trends</b> Social/Political/Economic/Technological		<b>Environmental influences</b>
<b>Cultural</b> Nationality/Subcultures/Social Class		Culture/Social class/Family/Personal Influence/Situation
<b>Social</b> Reference groups/Opinion Leaders/ Innovativeness	<b>Social</b> Culture/Reference groups/Social Class	
<b>Personal</b> Occupation/Economic Circumstances/Family/Life-cycle/Lifestyle	<b>Personal</b> Age/Gender/Income/Educational Level	<b>Individual Differences</b>
<b>Psychological</b> Personality/Beliefs & Attitudes/Motivation	<b>Psychological</b> Perception/Beliefs/Attitudes/Personality/Motivation	Demographic, psychographics, values, personality/  Consumer resources (time, money, information reception & processing capabilities)  Motivation  Knowledge (information stored in memory-information that usually comes from marketing)  Attitudes (beliefs lead to attitudes, attitudes are more long-lasting than beliefs and difficult to change, behaviour is strongly influenced by attitudes toward a brand,
		<b>Psychological Processes</b>  Information processing/ Learning/

		Attitude and behaviour change
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Table 3. Influential Factors for the Audience of Performing Arts (Source: Blackwell et al., 2001, Hill et al., 1995; Kotler & Scheff, 1997)

### 3.3.1. Media agenda as a factor of influence

Scientists that have dealt with Public Relations, such as Gordon (2011) and Wilcox et al. (2015) support that media among other purposes (...) is also used for decision-making about buying a product or a service and hence belongs to the factors that affect the decision-making process. Below, the media agenda will be analysed as such.

During the last century, a lot of research has been done regarding the effects of media. The results conclude that media can change the audience's perception of reality and that people can never fully control their media consumption, as the human brain captures the received messages even unconsciously. Even if people try not to be influenced by their exposure to media, this seems to be impossible. Scholars though converge that the degree of media's effects depends on several factors (age, education, class origin, social mobility, ideological identity, etc.) (Orbe, 2010).

This research is interested not in the general effects of media on society, but in the effects that media agenda can have on the audiences of performing arts and their decision-making process. Nevertheless, basic theories of media effects will be mentioned briefly, in order to reach the desired focus point.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the prevailing theory of *Direct Effects Theory* (known also as the *magic bullet* or *hypodermic needle approach*) (Lasswell, 1938) was predicting strong and more or less universal effects of mass communication messages on all audience members who happen to be exposed to them (Werder, 2009 & Severin and Tankard, 1992). Later on, most contemporary scholars considered this theory as over-simplistic and that it could not be fully supported scientifically. Hence, researchers passed to a *Limited Effects Model* that, in contrast to the previous theory, supported that media had only "minimal effects on a person's everyday life" (Orbe, 2010, p. 243).

The balance of potential media effects and active media consumption came under the framework of *Cumulative Effects Models*. These models introduced a new focus on the agenda-setting function of media. "The main assertion of scholars was that media cannot tell people how to think, but it does tell people what to think about" (Orbe, 2010, p. 244). This assertion actually attributes to media a guiding role in establishing what is viewed as important, setting the agenda for the public's attention to a specific group of issues, around which public opinion forms, or to specific cultural events that become the alternatives of people at the evaluation stage of the decision-making process. What we know

about the world is largely based on what the media decide to tell us. The priorities of the media strongly influence the priorities of the public. Elements prominent on the media agenda become prominent in the public mind. “The agenda of issues or other objects presented by the news media influence what the pictures in our heads are about” (McCombs, 2000, p. 6).

During the following decades, the term “agenda-setting function” started taking a leading role and opened the conversation about the way public opinion is shaped by media messages. In this context, relevant theories were developed, dealing with media exposure and elaborated media messages. This combination stretched on the relationship between reality and reality portrayed on television, as well as the degree to which perceptions can be influenced. At this point, the degree of dependency of the audience on media, in order to learn about the unknown, can be also considered an influential factor. The inter-media agenda-setting, or else the fact that the media adopt other media’s agenda, plays also an interesting role in determining the media agenda (McCombs, 2000). Hence, for example, online cultural websites may end-up having a shared agenda and proposing the same spectacles.

It is obvious that the focus on the effect of media on perception continues to be among the most popular focuses until now. Media agenda<sup>85</sup> can play an influential role in the stages of information search and evaluation of alternatives. City guides, and online and offline media will be the sources of information regarding what is on in the city. Hence, the shortlisted alternatives that will be evaluated afterwards, will include the spectacles covered more by the media. This is because there are several performances going on in the town every day, so the ones that the media choose to include in their agenda, either as a media sponsorship or as advertisement will be predominant in the publics’ mind. Audiences will not keep (in mind) all the performances are exposed to, but other factors, such as perception, will play their role at that point. This is not the only path though that someone can take to decide on the spectacles. They can also search for information from their previous experiences, but this is not related to the media agenda.

Putting the above-mentioned theories in the context of arts, the agenda of media that deal with arts and culture, such as cultural websites or cultural sections of tv/radio shows etc., is an influential factor in audiences’ decision-making process. This process includes also the stage of information search, at that stage except for their own memories and experiences, audiences check city guides or cultural websites and other media, to go on with their decision. The presence of an arts organisation in media depends on the PR strategy it uses. The more successful the strategy, the more present the

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<sup>85</sup> We should always consider at this point that most of the media agenda theories are developed in the field of journalism, and they do not always fit correctly in advertising, as the aims might differ (e.g. agenda about what to think versus agenda about what to buy).



organisation. The more presence it has on the media's agenda, the more chances it has to be included in the next step of decision-making, the evaluation of alternatives. Finally, media affects audiences also through opinion leaders (social factor), who can be journalists who write a review or people who have expertise on something and suggest an arts event through media.

### 3.4. Arts Attendance patterns

Although definitions of arts activities vary and hence it is hard to measure the attendance patterns, there are general characteristics that can be attributed to arts audiences, which "are most likely to emerge from particular age groups, social classes and educational backgrounds" (Hill et al., 1995, p.28) (Francois Colbert, 2012; Hill et al., 1995). The data cited by Hill et al. (1995) concern UK arts attendance, and although each culture has particularities, this research will use these data as a sample of European audiences. Besides, as Colbert (2012) notes, "the sociodemographic profile of consumers of cultural products" (p.71) is unchanged at least for the last 40 years. In this research, the categorisation of the attenders has been done according to the factors that Hill et al. (1995) consider more effective for consumers' decision-making processes (or preferences and behaviours). It should be mentioned that other authors might not follow the same categorisation (e.g. Kotler & Scheff, 1997) but in general terms, they include similar factors. All three factors (social, personal, psychological) affect patterns of arts attendance, as predictors or as influences on the decision- including the decision to finally attend, except for the personal factors that can additionally affect the pre-disposition of individuals towards arts.

According to Hill et al. (1995), although the definition of culture is broad, in general, societies that appreciate education, creativity and leisure have more chances to support arts, in terms of infrastructure, development of the sector and its audiences. Subcultural groups are included in the cultural factors and "are usually separated by geographical regions and ethnic backgrounds" (Hill et al., 1995, p. 29). Each subgroup has particularities and different factors that might influence its arts attendance (Hill et al., 1995).

Regarding the reference groups, parental influence is stronger than other ones, that's why people whose parents have a particular interest in arts, by participating in arts or encouraging their kids to participate or attend art lessons, are more likely to attend arts than those who did not have this influence; the latter group though might have the chance to receive socialisation in high arts by the school. Nevertheless, there are many reference groups that arts organisations can take into consideration designing their communication strategies (Francois Colbert, 2012; Hill et al., 1995).

In terms of social class, people who belong to higher levels of society are considered "more active in almost all types of arts participation" (Hill et al., 1995, p. 30). a) Higher and b) intermediate managerial,

c) supervisory or clerical and junior managerial and respectively administrative or professional for all the above mentioned, are the social classes that mostly attend arts<sup>86</sup>. The rest three categories, except for practical issues such as low income, face mental barriers to attending arts. Worth mentioning is that there are arts that have exclusively high social class audiences, such as opera and dance (Hill et al., 1995). This kind of categorisation of the audience though might agree with theories of cultural consumption and social stratification, such as the Theory of Distinction by Bourdieu (1984), but it does not apply anymore according to more recent scientists. For example, Peterson argued that people with high socioeconomic status are omnivores in terms of cultural consumption; similarly, Lahire (2008), talked about the upward or downward mobility of the subjects and the coexistence of diverse cultural habits they might come across during their mobility (Emmanuel et al., 2015; Gürel & Nielsen, 2019; Richard A. Peterson, 2005). Hand (2011) and Scriven et al. (2015) talked about grouped leisure activities and Botti (2000) about the disappearance of distinctions produced by elitism back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; consumers are more likely to attend most of the activities belong to one group and avoid/eschew the activities of another group. Scriven et al. (2015), following Mencarelli, Marteaux and Pulh (2010) also mention that “recent trends suggest that the more successful strategies have shifted emphasis from high culture to more popular cultural appeal” (p. 3), such as interactivity in museums or the addition of entertainment factor in education (popularisation of high culture).

It is worth mentioning at this point that there is a constant overlapping and interconnection between the factors that influence cultural consumption. Taking the example of social class, considering that a subject has reached a high socioeconomic status, but comes from a family with a lower status; the stimuli it had as a child differ a lot and its parents, as reference groups, were not that interested in arts, then it is hard to say which model will predominate and which factor will be more influential. Moreover, social class will be most probably connected to the educational level, so social factors are connected to personal, psychological are connected to social and personal, as we will see later on, and so on. Research conducted in 2019 by Bronner and de Hoog (2019), showed that participation in specific cultural events (classical music, festivals, and theatres) is a status demonstration, although other experiential activities, such as holidays, reach higher scores; identity demonstration though scores higher in the consumption of classical music concerts and festivals. “The social visibility of experiential products is already much greater than before, but will certainly increase in the future” (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 443), with social media playing a significant role; social media “can facilitate viral marketing and stimulate word-of-mouth” (Hausmann, 2012, p. 173). “Less well-educated people especially signal status by attending a cultural event more than better-educated

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<sup>86</sup> Colbert (2012), linking attendance with income and occupation, mention that the majority of high art consumers belong to white-collar workers, and the blue-collar workers (manual labour) prefer popular culture.

people do” (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019, p. 440), maybe because the latter do not feel the need to do it.

Moving forward, for Hill et al. (1995) personal factors are composed of age, gender, income and education levels. Generalisations on the age groups can be proved inaccurate or unhelpful; nevertheless, the more powerful age group in arts attendance is the 35-54 years old. For the performing arts (theatre and dance) women dominate the attendees, and “make-up two-thirds of the market for both high art and popular art” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 73; François Colbert, 2009, p. 16; Myer, 2009, p. 4).<sup>87</sup> In Greece, “in the frequency of visiting cinema, attending plays and concerts, and visiting cultural sites” {...} “fewer women tend to belong to inactive consumer groups in all three cases” (Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 28) (More than 50% of the audiences of Onassis Stegi age between 25-44 years old, while 73% are women (MRB,2015). Without being able to correlate with certainty the income with the social class, undoubtedly there is a relationship between arts attendance and income levels, but the picture is not clear. Most would assume that for low-income people, it would be more difficult to attend arts because of pricing; but surveys show that this category of people will still spend money for entertainment but the important point is the type of entertainment they choose (Hill et al., 1995). In terms of entertainment, there are two types, the one involves people’s cognitive functions and intellectual quests, completes the existing knowledge, and seeks further learning, and learning is entertainment. The second type is by nature more passive that involves emotional functions and satisfies needs such as relaxation and escapism (Badimaroudis, 2011; François Colbert, 2009; Cooper & Tower, 1992;). According to François Colbert (2009) and Myer (2009), aside from a very small number of discerning connoisseurs, consumers are looking for temporary entertainment when choosing a cultural venue.

Taking for granted that all these categories are some drivers that give general guidelines and not something to follow faithfully, regarding education, people who completed their education at a higher age, hence they have a higher education level, are keener on arts and more likely to be attendees (Hill et al., 1995). A study conducted in Greece in 2016, showed that “the higher the educational attainment of the public, the higher the frequency of visiting cultural sites, cinemas, attending plays and concerts, and the higher the frequency of reading books and newspapers as well” (Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 28). It’s worth mentioning here that according to MRB's (2015) research conducted on behalf of Onassis Stegi, the audiences of the organisation do not deviate from the aforesaid attendance

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<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, there are researches in 21<sup>st</sup> century in specific countries (van Eijck & Bargeman, 2004), which support that categorizations based on gender (and income) have been weakened. This kind of specific researches though usually lack generalisation, hence I will support what Colbert (2009) states.

patterns. Specifically, 75% of audiences have a higher education level (Bachelor's degree 38%, Master's degree 30%, PhD 7%) (MRB, 2015).

As mentioned in the first chapter (1.4.2) and the section related to segmentation and positioning, cultural goods are divided into two main categories, popular art, and high art {or according to Hand (2011) audiences that consume opera, and classical music and ballet, and audiences that consume plays/drama, and other theatrical performances or art exhibitions}. The audiences of high art (or highbrow culture) are highly educated, while these of popular art possess almost the same characteristics as the general population (20%-25% hold a university degree and 50% a high-school diploma). "Contemporary art institutions have the most educated patrons, with 85% to 90% of visitors holding a university degree; by comparison, for theatres and symphony orchestras the figure is around 65%"(François Colbert, 2009, p. 16). Since the 1960s, the characteristics of these different arts audiences have not changed, and the percentage of the population that consumes high art is almost the same between countries. "Popular art attracts people from all levels of society" (François Colbert, 2009, p. 16). Nevertheless, Chaney (2002) supports that in postmodernism "social and cultural divides between high culture and popular culture are disappearing" (p.157). Cosmopolitanism emerged with cosmopolitans who could cope with unpredictability and were willing to look outside the national cultural traditions, which tell us the distinctive way of doing things; cosmopolitanism was seen as a source of prestige in elite formations. During modernisation the urban popular culture (public art), and mass popular culture<sup>88</sup> emerged and the connection between this emergence and the dominance of consumerism are not coincidental. "The state and associated public bodies assume a responsibility to provide public services in the cultural as in other spheres" (Chaney, 2002, p. 162). But right-wing thinkers and policymakers put an end to "welfare liberalism", during the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, strengthening the consumption of cultural goods by those who were socially privileged, and specifically better educated, because they claimed that cultural provision should be market-governed. The fragmentation of cultural order -fragmented culture differs from mass culture- came when cultural objects or performances started making up the contexts of everyday life, instead of functioning as representations of social life. Chaney (2002) claims that one of the reasons why contemporary culture is special is attributed to the increasing undermining and destabilisation of the boundaries that sustain elite or high culture (Chaney, 2002; François Colbert, 2009; Gürel & Nielsen, 2019; Hand, 2011; Myer, 2009).

In postmodernism, cosmopolitanism came to 'soften' class divisions and undermine the authority and legitimacy of high culture. Cultural citizenship is "an ability to use the reflexive potential {...} of the

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<sup>88</sup> "A variety of entertainments made available as a broad social appeal, usually reinforced by strong advertising campaigns, to anonymous audiences who consume performances as commodities" (Chaney, 2002, p. 161).

radical democracy of fragmented culture” (Chaney, 2002, p. 170). Nevertheless, although the version of citizenship in cosmopolitan tourism is hardly empowered, it can still work effectively in blurring what traditional cultural distinctions mean (Chaney, 2002).

Psychological factors are not easy to be included in arts organisations' strategies as they cannot be easily predicted or need specific research to be discovered. Additionally, if arts organisations decide to deal with these factors they should spend time, and money and educate the audience to attract it. There are no standards for most of these factors and others are difficult to be measured or even if they are measured they create stereotypical images that are better to be dispelled (Hill et al., 1995). It would be reasonable to say that psychological factors are connected to the other factors, as people who belong to the upper classes might probably be the people who will have a good perception of arts, and will believe that this kind of performance suits their class and will act accordingly, being highly motivated. For Cooper and Tower (1992), the psychological barriers are those that seriously undermine the desire to go. People might be “inhibited by the social ‘image’ of the arts, the perceived costs and effort, and the stereotypes of people who do go” (Cooper & Tower, 1992, p. 305). Stereotypes such as that person from the upper class are regular visitors to some ‘serious’ art forms, or that male art-goers can be perceived as ‘effeminate’, combined with a lack of confidence and conservatism in trying art activities, prevent individuals from consuming arts; the same people might find a way out on television, which comes together with their comfort zone, and exclude physical constraints (or even perceived risks) such as hard seats, poor ventilation that can also lead to the feeling of being trapped (Cooper & Tower, 1992; Kim & Tucker, 2016; Martinez et al., 2018).

Psychological factors include perception, beliefs and attitudes, personality and motivation. There is no standard for perception and it is difficult for arts organisations to change perceptions (Hill et al., 1995). In addition, behaviours are very slow to change and they are interconnected to beliefs and attitudes. Hill et al. (1995) do not mention any standard for this category either.

Even though some stereotypical images link personality and arts attendance, in the sense of what type of people attend what kind of artistic spectacle, authors (Hill et al., 1995) want to dispel them “to avoid other personality types being alienated” (Hill et al., 1995, p. 34). Finally, motivation is correlated with the satisfaction of needs. Cooper and Tower in 1992 (cited in Hill et al., 1995, p.35) noted down the principal motivations that make people attend arts: self-actualisation, psychological needs, personal development, social needs and stimulation. Manolika et al. (2015), in their literature review, support that the core motives for cultural consumption are socialisation, family togetherness, escape and novelty. More specifically, the performing arts’ audiences, according to NOP (1991, cited in Hill et al., 1995, p.35), are mainly motivated by needs not related or little related to arts: entertainment, self-

improvers, trendsetters, status seekers, lonely escapists, inspiration/sensation, extroverts/performers, and social attenders (Hill et al., 1995). Bibliography on theatre and performing arts refers to the below motivations: escapism and entertainment, edutainment, personal enrichment, social hedonism, the satisfaction of deep-set values (Bergadaa & Nyeck, 1995, in Walmsley, 2011), value for money and time, service-related elements (Hume et al., 2007, in Walmsley, 2011). While the literature on other art forms mentions pleasure, escapism, shared experience, more challenging and socially engaged leisure activities, and quality time with friends and family. Slater (2007, in Walmsley, 2011) claims that it can be multiple motivations at the same time or different motivations for different people. Finally, the hierarchy of needs and the satisfaction of the most important of them, such as self-fulfilment or ideal self-image can also be motivations in selecting arts and leisure products (Walmsley, 2011). According to another research (Walmsley, 2011) that involved British and Australian audience in 2010, the three main motivations for people to attend theatre were -with priority order- the pursuit of emotional experiences and impact, the edutainment, in the sense of being challenged in several ways, and the escapism, in a sense of escaping from everyday life with new experiences or detaching from real life. According to the author, his research “contests previous findings in other arts and leisure sectors, which prioritised escapism, learning, enhanced socialisation and fun” (Walmsley, 2011, p. 2); but, at the same time he mentions that escapism, for the most committed theatre-goers of his interviewees, is “invariably linked to the desire to maximise the emotional impact of the experience” (Walmsley, 2011, p. 13), which was the first motivation for theatre-goers according to his research. Botti (2000) emphasizes the fact that, unlike other forms of consumption, arts consumption is based more on emotional aspects. Walmsley (2011) acknowledges Slater’s (2007, cited in Walmsley, 2011, p. 16) finding “that people often want to fulfil multiple motivations simultaneously”. This comes under what theorists, after Maslow and his sequential hierarchy, claimed: different needs can coexist simultaneously; but also, on the way of satisfying one need through cultural consumption, individuals end up satisfying more at a time (Botti, 2000; Cooper & Tower, 1992; Hill et al., 1995). Research conducted in Romania in 2012 (Ciceo, 2012) claims that social and esteem needs are the main reasons for live performing arts attendance. Martinez et al. (2018), mentioning all the above-noted motivations (social distinction, intellectual enrichment, escapism, etc.), support that “there are as many experiences as there are individuals” (p. 61).

To sum up, it seems that the more usual attendance patterns of arts events can be found within societies that appreciate education, creativity and leisure. They are audiences with high social class, influenced mostly by their parents that had a particular interest in arts, they belong to the age group 35-54 and they are mainly women. On motivation, there are several opinions regarding the most

prevailing for arts attendees and it is not easy to standardise, but self-actualisation and entertainment are among the first.

### 3.5. Spread the Message and Approach the Targets Successfully

#### 3.5.1. Decision-making process

One of the main points that both schools of Marketing and PR agree on is that arts organisations, to be successful, need to “understand what and how people are thinking and making decisions” (Gordon, 2011, p.79). Hill et al. (1995) and Batra & Keller (2016), who share this opinion, analyse the stages of the decision-making process. Hill et al. (1995) support that the essence of marketing research is to understand deeply, make questions and find the answers at all stages.

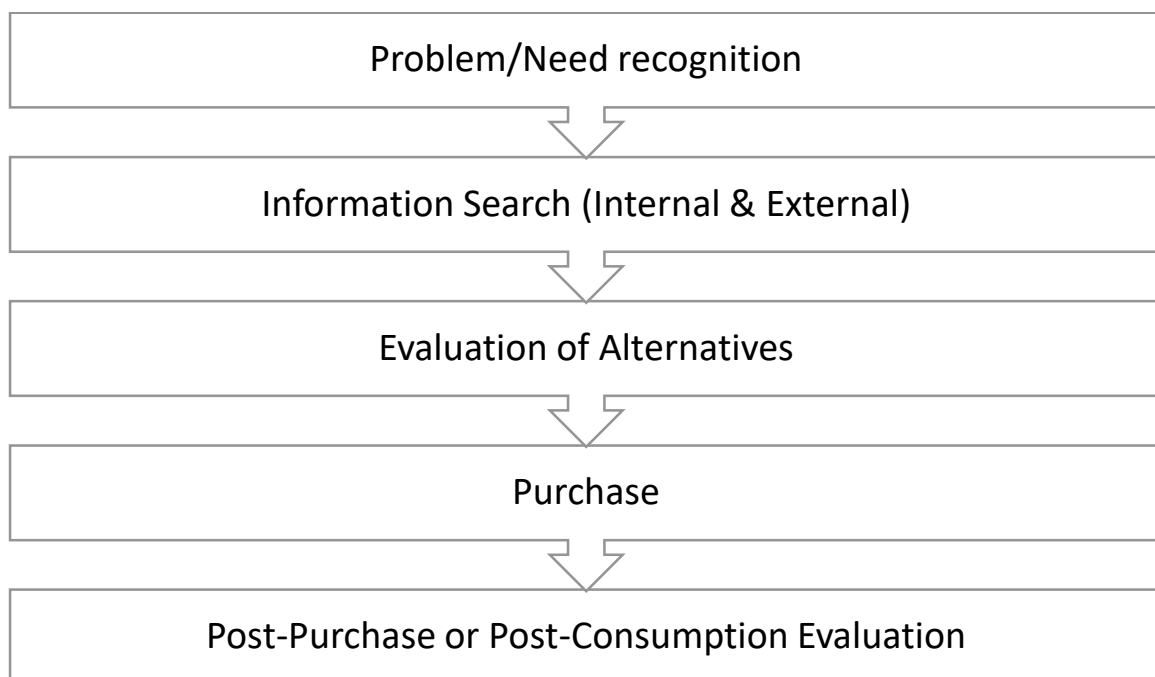


Figure 6. Decision-Making Process (based on analysis of previous literature)

As was analysed in the previous sub-chapter, according to literature (Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Cooper & Tower, 1992; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997), several factors influence the decision to attend. According to literature (Ciceo, 2012; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Armstrong, 2010), the process of decision-making consists of five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase or post-consumption evaluation. However, the process of decision-making for products includes seven stages according to Blackwell et al. (2001), as they add consumption between purchase and post-consumption evaluation, and also add the seventh stage of divestment. Consumption though cannot be clearly considered as part of the decision-making process, as the whole process is done to reach consumption; the satisfaction or dissatisfaction after the consumption is part of the post-consumption or post-purchase

and is mainly affected by consumers' intentions (Kim & Tucker, 2016). Problem recognition is taking place when the publics/audiences recognise their desires or needs that can have been created by the environment or by unrelated factors that cannot be controlled and can be unexpected (Blackwell et al., 2001; Hill et al., 1995). A need for entertainment, relaxation or a need to celebrate something can be covered by an outing to arts events. "It is problem recognition that turns public into potential attenders" (Hill et al., 1995, p.37). Recognising the problem means that audiences recognise their needs, and their needs become automatically their motivations. It is inevitable to mention Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs when we talk about needs. He listed the needs from the basic to the complex ones in the below order: biological and physiological needs, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation needs (Blackwell et al., 2001; Ciceo, 2012; Gordon, 2011; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; McGuire, 1976; Wilcox & Nolte, 1995). As mentioned in the previous chapter, an arts experience can satisfy simultaneously more than one of the above-listed needs at the same time (Cooper & Tower, 1992; Hill et al., 1995). The problem or need "may be triggered by either internal or external stimuli" (Ciceo, 2012, p. 1122), such as a desire for entertainment or the desire to support an organisation, and advertisements and word-of-mouth (Ciceo, 2012).

To find the right way to satisfy their needs, the publics will search for information. Search represents "the motivated activation of knowledge stored in memory or acquisition of information from the environment concerning potential need satisfiers" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 106). They will first search for anything that is relevant in their memories and experiences (internal sources). Experience economy came, after the industrial and service economy, to be the fourth economic offering, with experiences to be as distinct from services as services from goods. People were not satisfied anymore with the simple provision of services and started searching for fascinating experiences. Meanwhile, arts centres adopted different practices and mentality regarding what they should provide to their audiences. In the experience economy, audiences are seeking experiences and, according to Pine and Gilmore (1999), the experience is met where the realms of aesthetics, escapism, education and entertainment overlap; experience is something non-tangible and its value is memorable. Performing art, as ephemeral art, has the same quality as experiences; the performance lasts only for the time performed and then passes in memory and is left there for a long time afterwards. As experiences occur within individuals, two persons cannot have the same experience during a specific event. The sensations that will be created within a person and the influence that the event or the ambience has on each person derive from the background of each one (Botti, 2000; Bousiouta, 2010; Martinez et al., 2018; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Walmsley, 2011). Arts organisations should care for the experiences that create for their audiences and ensure they are positive, as these memories will be also used at the next stages of the process of decision-making, such as the post-purchase evaluation. Moreover,



these audiences might be part of reference groups or opinion leaders, hence their experience and memory will affect future potential audiences (Blackwell et al., 2001; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997) (Influencers and opinion leaders though can be included in external sources). Adequacy or quality of existing knowledge, ability to retrieve it and degree of satisfaction with prior experiences affect the internal search of individuals. If satisfaction has occurred with previous experiences, the internal search might be enough (Blackwell et al., 2001). Satisfaction is linked to repeat purchase behaviour and loyalty (loyalty to cultural organisations and their products in this case) (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016).

Except for personal experiences and memories, the so-called internal sources, audiences will also search for information from external sources (environment and marketplace). External search can be either pre-purchase or ongoing. The first concerns an upcoming purchase decision with the desire to make better choices, while the second aims at developing knowledge that will be used in future decision-making (Blackwell et al., 2001). At these external sources, arts organisations should have spread their messages, so that the publics can easily access them. According to Hill et al. (1995), these sources might be the “opinion of friends and relatives, advertisements and leaflets and editorial comment” (p.37) or as Blackwell et al. (2001) mention “peers, family and the marketplace” (p. 73). In other words, the internal sources are divided into personal, commercial, public<sup>89</sup> and experiential (Ciceo, 2012; Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Nowadays, these sources have been slightly changed or have been broadened, in a sense that opinions of friends and relatives can be found also in social media, through comments and posts, advertisements and editorial comments can be met in social and online media in general, such as online city guides or websites with cultural content. It is worth mentioning that “different segments of the population have different media exposure habits” (McGuire, 1976, p. 304). Additionally, the popularity of an organisation’s social media posts “positively relates to consumers’ purchase intention” (Lin et al., 2017, p. 1).

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<sup>89</sup> Public sources can be mass media or award granting institutions (P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

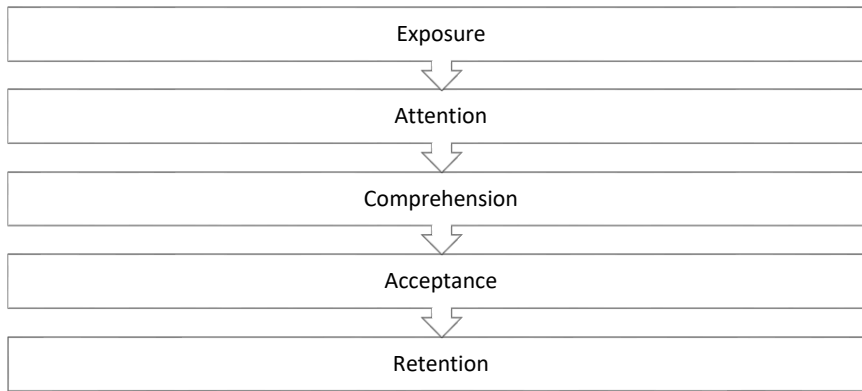


Figure 7. Information Processing (Source: Blackwell et al., 2001, p.75)

The information processing includes five steps: 1) The exposure, which happens after the information and the communication reaches the consumer, and “one or more of the senses are activated and preliminary processing begins” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 76). This step “deals with the habits of the person” (including consumption style) “that determine the kind of information to which he or she will be exposed” (McGuire, 1976, p. 303) 2) The attention that is more likely to be attracted if the information is more relevant to the consumers, who usually engage in selective attention. The attention levels, “which fluctuates across individuals and circumstances” (McGuire, 1976, p. 305), and the span of attention are important factors. 3) Comprehension; once “attention is attracted, the message is further analysed against categories of meaning stored in memory” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 76). Accurate comprehension is marketers’ hope and leads to the further impact of the information; comprehension depends on linguistic and imagery encoding. 4) Acceptance or agreement; if the message is accepted, as it can also be dismissed, the common marketing goal is “to modify or change existing beliefs and attitudes” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 76) 5) Retention; once the information is accepted, the goal is to be “stored in memory in such a way that it is accessible for future use” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 76). Although McGuire (1976) adds one more step in this process, that of retrieval, Blackwell et al. (2001) seem to incorporate retrieval in the fifth stage of retention. Interestingly, McGuire defines the directive aspects of personality (structural characteristics) and the dynamic aspects of personality [“energising components of human personality or motivational forces that activate and sustain” (McGuire, 1976, p. 302)] (information processing) as the internal factors (characteristics) “of the person that affect exposure to and influence by” (McGuire, 1976, p. 302) the external factors influencing consumer choice (Blackwell et al., 2001; McGuire, 1976).

Blackwell et al. (2001) using more business terminology categorize sources of information as marketer-dominated and non-marketer-dominated. The first concerns the information that the marketer can control (e.g. website, advertising, sales persons etc.), while the second regards the “information from sources over which marketers have little control”, such as “friends, family, opinion

leaders, and media” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 75). “Publicly available data suggest that 92% of consumers trust recommendations from friends and family more than any other form of marketing communication” (Chieffi et al., 2022, p. 17, following The Nielsen Company, 2009); WOM conversations or recommendations can affect tremendously arts consumption (Chieffi et al., 2022, following Carrasco-Santos & Padilla-Meléndez, 2016).

Blackwell et al. (2001) separate the information search of consumers into active and passive, attributing to the latter the meaning of being receptive to information around them, while to the active the meaning of engaging in an active search behaviour offline and online. “The length and depth of search is determined by variables such as personality, social class, income, size of the purchase, past experiences, prior brand perceptions, and customer satisfaction” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 74). I would add though that it is also determined by the importance of the individual’s need.

Listening to recommendations, reading city guides or collecting information from other sources, audiences have to choose between alternatives, creating a puzzle of their available information. Marketing hopes to establish a brand/product/service “as a possible want, amongst other alternatives, to satisfy a need” (Hill et al., 1995, p.119). “Wants are the individual expressions of needs” (Hill et al., 1995, p. 119) and although marketing “has been accused to create needs and wants” (Hill et al., 1995, p.119), its role is to recognise the needs and try “to fulfil them” (Hill et al., 1995, p. 119) or raise “consumers’ awareness of unperceived needs or problems” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 73). In this stage of evaluation, the most important criteria for the evaluation of arts events are the expectations of the event. A memorable experience can lead to word of mouth, engagement/retention/return and even loyalty (Martinez et al., 2018). But the successful branding of the symbolic meaning of a product can also lead to WOM. Price can also play a role, but audiences cannot really judge at this stage the value for money (economic price) and time (time price)<sup>90</sup>. This is the value established before the purchase and is called the purchase value-cognitive approach; there is though also the evaluation during or after the consumption called as consumption value-affective or experiential approach (Ciceo, 2012). What events consumers will consider as alternatives will be also affected by the factors mentioned above (macroenvironmental, cultural, social, personal and psychological) (Blackwell et al., 2001; Ciceo, 2012; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). The choice of what and when to attend might be also affected by factors considered minor, such as the location of the venue, convenient date, and duration of the event. “Different consumers employ different

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<sup>90</sup> “The more money people make, the busier they are, thus increasing the value of their time” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 149); the attendance of cultural events is included in the time-using goods (and services), instead of the time-saving ones (e.g. childcare, housecleaning, dishwasher), and the monochromic time, instead of the polychromic (combining activities simultaneously) (Blackwell et al., 2001).

evaluative criteria- the standards and specifications used to compare different products and brands” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 76). These evaluative criteria, which are affected by the factors mentioned in the previous subchapter, become a product-specific (in this case a cultural product) “manifestation of an individual’s needs, values, lifestyles, and so on” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 76, 77). Blackwell et al. (2001), talking about products in general, mention that “consumers must also evaluate *where* they are going to purchase the desired product and they apply relevant evaluative criteria to the retail outlets from which they will buy” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 77). Adapting this to culture, I believe that the *what* (cultural product) might sometimes be sacrificed for the sake of the *where* (cultural organisation) and the other way round. Sometimes though the evaluative criteria might concern both; they might even concern the payment method (cash, card etc.) and the point of sales that suits them (third ticket provider, organisation’s website, physical point of sale and which one). A cultural organisation should try to target the evaluative criteria of the consumers for both the *where* and the *what*. Most probably always something will prevail. According to Martinez et al. (2018), the venue- that is the *where*- plays “its role in the decision-making process” (p. 62).

In the evaluation of alternatives, the attributes of products and brands play an important role. They are separated into salient and determinant, with the first ones to be considered potentially the most important and the second ones those who determine the choice, especially when the salient attributes are considered equivalent (Blackwell et al., 2001; Ciceo, 2012; McGuire, 1976). Brand building influences the decision-making process of consumers of cultural products. For instance, considering conspicuous consumption of cultural products, the successful product representation through a brand, the creation of a feeling of close proximity with the product, or the success to express its symbolic meaning for the consumer’s status or identity, helps in the stages of information search, evaluation and purchase stages, and definitely reduces the feeling of risk in making choices or taking decisions (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019). Similarly, positive viral marketing is reducing the perceived risk (money, time, etc.) or in other words, the uncertainty the consumer feels before making a decision, activating the individual emotionally and supporting a ‘real visit’ (Chieffi et al., 2022; Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012).

To give some examples, let’s assume that an individual’s need for arts attendance is affected by psychological factors. The person’s motivation is a social need. The latter might be a need for a night out, meeting friends, or a need to go out and dress up. In the first case, the salient attribute might be the location of the organisation, so the group of people can enjoy some drinks after the cultural event. In the second case, the salient attribute might be a fancy or formal cultural organisation, such as Opera. In both cases, there is no product involvement or the product might be the determinant attribute. Another example could be individuals pushed by the personal need for entertainment or

entertainment and the psychological need for self-esteem and/or self-actualisation. These people are most probably seeking a qualitative performance according to their evaluative criteria. Quality is the salient attribute, whatever quality means for everyone. The potential consumers might shortlist two different performances at two different cultural organisations. In that case, the *where* will be the determinant attribute. If for example, the options are Stegi and one of its competitors, the branding of each organisation (e.g. classy, contemporary, traditional, edgy, cool), the location, and other factors, in combination with the personal memories will determine the choice. According to Martinez et al. (2018) location's reputation-place, name, personality, quality and composition of programming, and architecture in many cases- can reduce the perceived risk (financial, psychological, social, etc.) of the spectator and even facilitate decision-making. ("The theatre itself influences several dimensions of the experience: Hedonic {...}, Social {...}, Statutory {...}" Martinez et al. p.63). A last example can be a person with a personal need for self-esteem and esteem from the group of people surrounding her/him. This might be translated into the need to belong to an upper class. If the person does belong to this class since his/her birth most probably will not have this need, but if she/he does not belong or is a new member of this class and his/her upward mobility has not been established yet, then there is the need to belong and be accepted/esteemed. In this case, the salient attribute could be a performance approved by the group of people that interests that person. The determinant can be any, such as location.

The needs give motivation. In essence, the need based on the priority it has can be salient or determinant. For instance, if someone has the need for entertainment and safety- with this priority- he/she might be at the evaluation stage between skydive and theatre. Although the need for entertainment comes first (salient need), the need for safety will be the deciding factor-or maybe we can call it a determinant need. People differ in the importance they attach to their needs (Blackwell p.246, 247) and although Maslow's hierarchy shows the priority that the majority of people give to their needs, it does not apply always. The priority that people give to their needs affects how they evaluate products and their benefits. Except for the real use of a product, the product's symbolic meaning or image can cover some of the needs (Blackwell et al., 2001; Ciceo, 2012).

At the evaluation stage, consumers need also to decide whether they will rely on pre-existing evaluations or construct new ones. The alternatives that will be finally evaluated are known as the consideration set (e.g. a subset of cultural organisations). Loyalty can narrow down the size of this set even to a one-and-only alternative. "Research shows that customers can quickly name a store (that is, retrieve from long-term memory) when asked what store comes to mind for specific attributes such as 'lowest overall prices' and 'most convenient'. These top-of-mind responses are described as automatic cognitive processing and are associated strongly with customers' primary store choices,

within each segment of the market” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 130). The same can easily apply to cultural organisations, and marketers should try to place them at the “top of the mind” for the attributes that the cultural management along with the communication and marketing department will decide. For instance, Onassis Stegi might want to come to mind of audiences for the attribute “quality” or “contemporary”. Other organisations might prefer the attributes “lowest overall prices” or “most convenient-easiest transportation”.

As mentioned above, evaluation and purchase are intertwined, as one of the evaluation criteria might be the stage of purchase (e.g. consumers might consider important the payment method). After the evaluation stage, the decision of whether or not the purchase will happen is taken. The choice of what and when to attend, the purchase of the ticket (how and from where: e.g. by credit card through the organisation’s website) and the attendance of the event, complete the stage of purchase, which can be a fully planned one, a partially planned or an unplanned. This is a quite decisive stage, as although the consumer might had initially a plan or a choice that came from the decision-making process, the options at the purchase stage may change everything. Cheaper tickets of the same product on another platform, or at another source (e.g. Onassis Stegi gives discounted tickets for a dance performance to dance schools), the lack of credit card, the hours of operation and the location of the cash desk or the options of points of sale, the option of phone booking from the competitor, the failure to find tickets for the intended performance (timing factors: late searching), a system error during purchase, and many other things can change the final decisions of the consumers, therefore the likelihood of a purchase. All three types of purchase (fully planned, partially planned and unplanned) can be affected, diverted or interrupted by marketing practices.

All 4Ps (including people, that is one of the factors affecting experience) affect the purchase stage; the location of the organisation, the nature and quality of products and services, what they offer to the consumer's soul, body and aesthetics (e.g. atmospherics), the price, the advertising and promotion, the personnel, and the nature of regular audiences (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016). Purchase is affected not only by the 4Ps but also by the memories from previous purchases and many other factors mentioned above, such as consumer resources (money, time, attention). Consumer resources in their turn are affected by other factors. For instance, attention depends on involvement, situation, personality, etc., while time depends on money which depends on the profession and so on. They are all intertwined.

## Post-Purchase/Post-Consumption

- Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction
- Post-purchase regret/Cognitive dissonance
- Emotions
- Revisit the evaluation of fairness of exchange

*Figure 8. Post-Purchase Evaluation (based on analysis of previous literature)*

The process of decision-making ends with the post-purchase evaluation that is equally important. If the experience has met the expectations, the positive impressions will be used the next time at the stage of information search, and the same people can play the role of influencer for future attendees (Blackwell et al., 2001; Hill et al., 1995; Martinez et al., 2018); the post-consumption stage can be linked to “recommendation”, such as Tripadvisor works for other kinds of services. Besides, “whereas, on average, a satisfied customer tells three people about a good product experience, a dissatisfied customer gripes to eleven people” (Kotler and Armstrong, 1991 in Hill et al., 1995, p.38). Ciceo’s (2012) research showed that consumers consider a live performing arts event as successful when the experience is positive; this practically “implies a communion between performers and audience, as well as a good understanding, communication and mutual respect” (Ciceo, 2012, p. 1125). In the context of live performing arts, the experience of spectators is the result of the interaction between the venue and the show (Kim & Tucker, 2016; Martinez et al., 2018; Mencarelli et al., 2010). Kim and Tucker (2016), citing a study conducted by Manners, Kruger and Saayman in 2012 on a type of live entertainment event, music concerts, mention that people (employees or else ‘the 5<sup>th</sup> P’), “venue and technical aspects, marketing, accessibility and parking, amenities and catering, and souvenirs” (p. 115) affect consumers’ experience. Hence, it is not only the performance itself that can create a positive experience but maybe for some consumers is the most important. For those who consider performance as a priority, a good one can make them ignore or overlook some other negative points. It finally depends on the priorities and needs of each consumer.

According to Blackwell et al. (2001), satisfied consumers are difficult to be reached by competitors. This might happen also for services, but not to the extent that can happen for goods. As the research focuses on cultural products and organisations, loyal consumers who usually buy subscriptions as well might choose many times their favourite organisation, but they might have also several favourite organisations, or they might need to change environments when they spend their leisure time. In the case of goods, dissatisfaction might be due to misuse, although the product is good. In the case of services and especially cultural experiences, the “misuse” can be due to the inadequate background

of the consumer, or the different expectations he/she had that specific day, from this specific performance. It should be clarified here, that the post-purchase or post-consumption evaluation consists of the evaluation of the whole experience, starting from the purchase process (e.g. ease, speed, etc.), and ending with the impressions and feelings after the consumption. The impressions and feelings might concern the artistic product itself but also the whole experience of the consumers from the time they start the purchase or they reach the cultural organisation by public transportation, by car or on foot; non-friendly behaviour from the personnel, or cell phone ring tones during the performance can affect the experience (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016; McGuire, 1976). “Consumers often second-guess their purchase decisions” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 80), asking themselves: ‘Have I made a good decision?’, etc. This kind of questioning is called post-purchase regret or cognitive dissonance and concerns the moment after the purchase and not the consumption. It refers to the doubts consumers have if they took the right decision, especially when the price is high. The higher the price, the higher the level of regret or dissonance. When Blackwell et al. (2001) refer to the latter, they are mainly talking about goods, but the same could happen with an expensive ticket for a ballet performance or a concert, where prices can be above the budget of each person. Most probably this post-purchase regret does not happen for cheap tickets, but “cheap” is relative. For some people though, time might be more precious than money, and the post-purchase regret or cognitive dissonance can concern the value of time. Additionally, emotions play an important role in this stage, during which the individuals also revisit the comparison of prices and the evaluation of the fairness of the exchange they have done during the third stage of the decision-making process (evaluation of alternatives). The overall evaluation of the fairness of exchange over time affects future consumers’ usage (or consumption) and overall satisfaction<sup>91</sup> (Blackwell et al., 2001).

How the consumption experience will feel depends on when, where, how and how much the product is consumed (behavioural characteristics of consumption). “A critical characteristic of many consumption behaviours is the particular feelings experienced during consumption” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 165) (e.g. How do you feel when visiting Onassis Stegi or attending a performance there?). Feelings come in a variety of shapes and sizes (negative, positive, overwhelming, less intensive etc.). Typically, negative feelings are undesirable from consumers and organisations, but in the case of arts organisations, this applies in half. The negative feeling might not come from the organisation (e.g. atmosphere, personnel, etc.) but from the product itself, and sometimes this negative feeling might be the target of the producer, the director, the cast, or the arts organisation. For instance, a theatrical performance based on Sarah Kane’s plays can create intense feelings and also negative, but this is the

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<sup>91</sup> For example, successful loyalty programs can offer fairness of exchange over time. Stegi’s loyal program can be considered as such and will be analysed in the chapter of Onassis Stegi description.



objective of this kind of theatre (In-yer-face theatre) (Sierz, 2001). The knowledge of the nature of the consumption experience helps in positioning the cultural products and the cultural organisation based on consumption feelings. There are two approaches to this positioning, the one is to “focus on the positive feelings that consumption provides” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 166). The symbolic image/meaning of a product can also create a positive feeling. For instance, if the need is that of self-esteem and the slogan is “Stegi: makes your mind works”, the need possibly can be covered by this product, as symbolically Stegi is offering products that make people better.

The other approach of positioning focuses on how the organisation and/or its products (the consumption) reduce or eliminate negative feelings. Blackwell et al. (2001) speaking about goods mention this second approach emphasizes “how the product reduces or eliminates negative feelings” (p. 167). But, as explained above, this cannot apply to some cultural products that are meant to create negative or intense feelings. It can be used though when the positioning concerns a comedy.

Blackwell et al. (2001) point out that “consumption experiences can be characterised by whether they provide positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, or punishment” (p. 167). Adjusting this to culture, I could claim that all three could happen with cultural consumption. During positive reinforcement, consumers receive some positive outcome from the consumption, as can happen with a good theatre performance. The consumption of such a cultural product though can also enable consumers to avoid or reduce some negative outcomes (negative reinforcement), such as stress, and bad mood. Both positive and negative can happen in one consumption when the users consume because they need both to relax (positive) and reduce stress (negative). A general slogan for negative reinforcement could be: ‘Don’t let your mind rot. Come to plant together the seed of modernisation. Visit the arts exhibition that embraces diversity.’ Or ‘Theatre takes you out of your boredom.’ A positive could be: ‘Theatre makes you a better person’. “Punishment occurs when consumption leads to negative outcomes” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 169) such as: “I went to enjoy a performance, and I finally lost two hours of my life. It was disappointing”.

“Another way to think about consumption experiences involves the degree to which the expectations carried by consumers into purchase and consumption are confirmed or disconfirmed. {...} The extent to which the consumption experience confirms or disconfirms expectations typically has a powerful influence on consumers’ evaluations following product consumption” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 169) (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016); the building of realistic expectations and not of high ones that cannot become true was something mentioned also in Marketing chapter (Chapter 1). The evaluation of the chosen alternative at the post-purchase stage describes mainly the evaluation of the whole experience, including the met or unmet expectations. Consumers’ satisfaction is extremely

important as it influences repeat buying, it shapes word-of-mouth communication that “is one of the main reasons of arts consumption” (Chieffi et al., 2022, p. 18), while dissatisfaction leads to complaints (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016). As Blackwell et al. (2001) point out though, “the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention is not perfect” (p. 172), and many customers satisfied today may choose another cultural organisation tomorrow, as the competition is too big and (as mentioned above) people many times need variety; but in the case of cultural consumption, the fact that consumers will choose in January organisation A, in February organisation B and in March organisation A again, does not mean that they are not loyal in organisation A. “Although a satisfactory consumption experience does not guarantee loyalty, the likelihood that customers will remain loyal depends on their level of satisfaction” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p.), but I would add the word overall, hence loyalty depends on the level of overall satisfaction. If someone has visited the place 30 times in one year and 20 of them he/she was “totally satisfied”, 7 “satisfied”, and 3 “not so satisfied” or “dissatisfied”, then the overall satisfaction might lead again to loyalty, although it was not on the highest level every time. Many researchers though, as Kim and Tucker (2016) mention, have found a correlation between satisfaction and repurchase intentions, as well as satisfaction and purchase of ancillary items<sup>92</sup> (Kim & Tucker, 2016). Pure dissatisfaction though can lead to very negative word-of-mouth; satisfied consumers might happen not even to share their experiences, but dissatisfied will do their best to make people know about their bad experience and avoid purchasing. It seems to me that a dissatisfied consumer can be more fanatic than the satisfied one. Nevertheless, some consumers may blame themselves for the dissatisfaction (e.g. “I don’t have the appropriate background to enjoy/understand this performance”) or may consider that it is not worth their time and effort to complaint (they lose their respect about this organisation that they do not even want to initiate a complaint). Satisfaction is determined by the “comparison of pre-purchase expectations to actual outcomes” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 175). There are three possible results: the negative disconfirmation that happens when the experience delivers less than expected, the positive disconfirmation- more than expected, and the confirmation when the experience matches expectations. “Expectations may colour or bias the interpretation of the consumption experience itself” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 178). “The feelings experienced during consumption may also be important in determining satisfaction. Positive feelings enhance satisfaction; negative feelings reduce it” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 179).

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<sup>92</sup> I would call the purchase of ancillary items as ‘optional peripheral expenses’ {e.g. “refreshments, souvenirs, donation” (Kim and Tucker p.117)}.

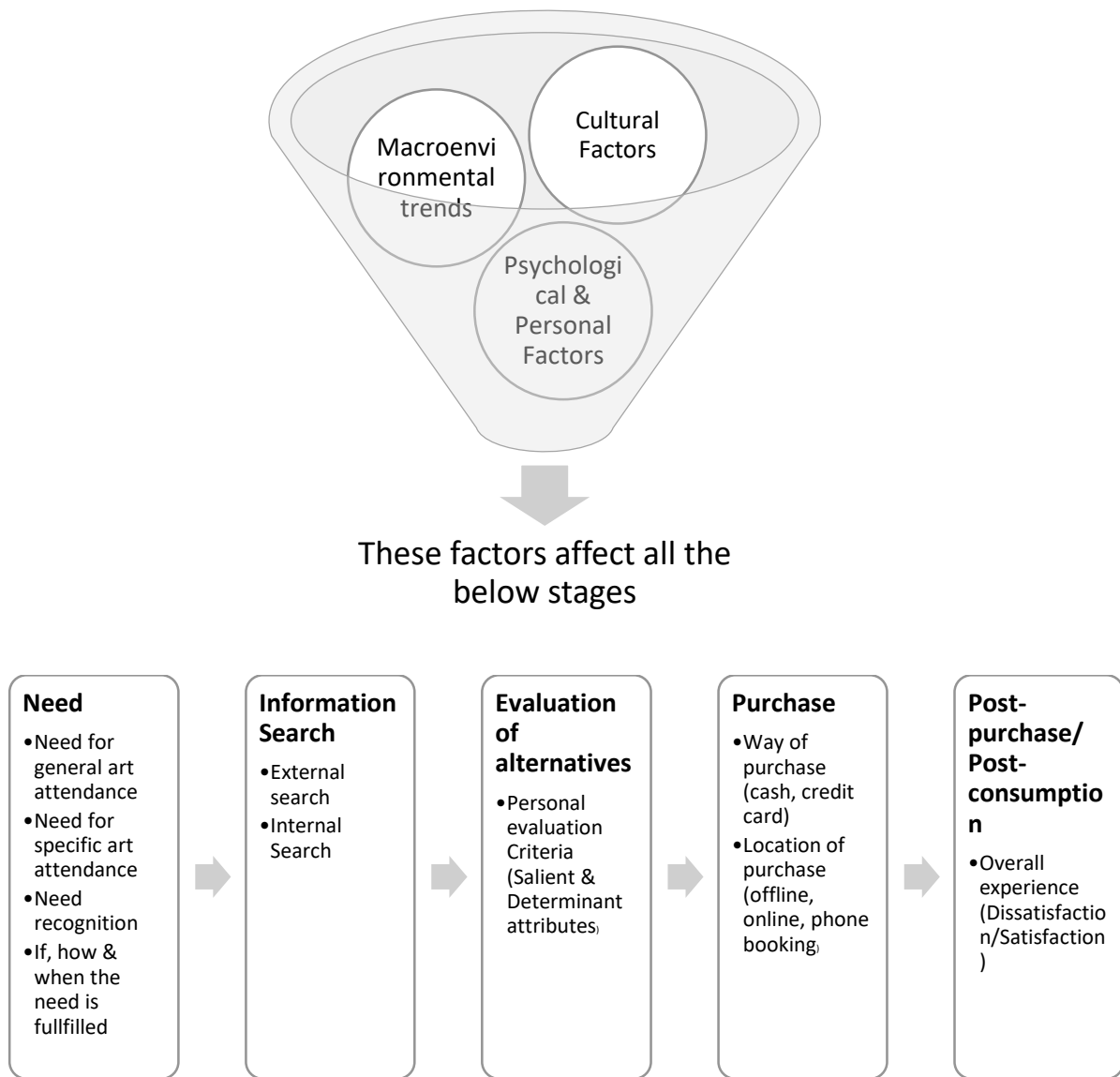


Figure 9. Factors that affect the decision-making process

The macroenvironmental trends and the cultural, personal, and psychological factors affect the needs and the decision-making process of individuals. The attendance patterns that were described in the previous subchapter (3.4) are clearly affected by these factors (educational level, influences, etc.) and the personal hierarchy of needs. The need for specific art attendance is also affected. The two following hypothetical examples (Table 4 & Table 5) will help to better understand the above scheme. The examples mainly link these factors with the creation of the need, the right, wrong, early, late or no recognition of the need under specific circumstances, the *If, how, and when* the need will be fulfilled, the external information search (e.g. age, familiarity with technology, a fan of newspapers, economic situation, possession of electronic devices, beliefs, etc.), the internal search (a memory that is created by an experience), the evaluation of alternatives (personal evaluation criteria and how they form the hierarchy of the attributes), the purchase *-how, where and why-* (e.g. proximity of individual's

and organisation's locations, possession of credit card, familiarity with online transactions), the expectations, the ever-changing tastes, emotions<sup>93</sup> and the like of the individual, and by extension the post-purchase/post-consumption stage (satisfaction/dissatisfaction).

**EXAMPLE A:** Person A is an expat in UK during 90s. Let's assume that the theatrical trend at that time and location is the devised theatre. This person is very socially active, with a contemporary lifestyle, with choices that depend much on the trends. His level of English is not perfect and he does not have a car. He has already recognised a need for art attendance. He is looking for a devised theatre performance, preferably by non-native speakers, as he believes he will be able to better understand the plot and interact with the actors on stage. He is looking for information on a city-guide that usually trusts for cultural events. He remembers one theatre he visited last month and he liked it. He likes the performance it is currently presenting; this theatre though is out of the city and the tube station will be closed once the performance is finished. He evaluates (personal criteria) the other alternative, a devised theatre performance with non-native cast (salient attribute), with close proximity to his neighbourhood, from where he can catch the night bus (determinant attribute). Needless to mention that Mr. A is an anxious person that would not leave for last minute at the cash desk the purchase of the ticket. Moreover, as an expat and a person who travels around the world, he has a credit card. Hence, he will make a phone booking by credit card. The purchase process was easy and fast and he is satisfied, but he did not like the performance much. His expectations were high because everybody around him (social circle and not only) were talking about and suggesting this kind of theatre. Additionally, he realised that his personal tastes are not fulfilled by devised theatre. Nevertheless, the place was very nice, the seats comfortable and the staff polite.

Table 4. Example A

**EXAMPLE B:** Ms. B is a 27year old Greek girl that lives in Athens, Greece, in 10s, when the economic crisis is at its pick. She is highly educated, with a low salary though. For her attending theatre is a way of being. She intends to attend a performance this week, but it should be one with cheap ticket. She doesn't have a car, due to her financial condition but also her environmental friendly beliefs. So she will choose a cultural organisation with easy transportation, on "cheap Wednesdays" when many theatres have discounted prices. She is tech-girl, addicted to social media and active in many online communities about culture. She found out two good performances with discounted ticket (salient attribute). Although the one organisation had a great location with easy transportation, and the other one was far away and she would need to get two public transportations, she finally chose the second one, as her online friends were highly recommending it (determinant) and a past memory (determinant) she had from the first organisation was not the best (memory might concern either the organisation, or the product or the personnel etc.). She purchased online her ticket but there was no seat booking. She reached there a bit late because the second bus was late. Hence, the good seats were already taken. This was her first and last disappointment that day, because she was finally extremely satisfied with the performance, which fulfilled her personal expectations and satisfied her tastes. The overall post-purchase/consumption was positive for her, as well as the memory she will use in future information search.

Table 5. Example B

<sup>93</sup> Reactions "to a cognitive appraisal of events or thoughts" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 81).

Respective examples can be given for family outings or couples with babies that want to attend performing arts (lifecycle). In the second case, the busy parents might not even have the time and the luxury to recognise their needs for arts attendance. If this finally happens though with a considerable delay, the couple will be desperate for an outing and in this case, because of their cultural, and social background or their lifestyle, a cultural outing. The information search has been already analysed in previous examples. At the evaluation of alternatives, given the situation, the evaluation criteria will be “a performance tonight that matches the nanny’s availability and it is at close proximity for psychological reasons”. These might be the salient attributes and the determinant can be the ease of the parking process. There is no reason to expand to the other stages, as the procedure followed is very similar to the above-mentioned examples. In each example, I have not mentioned the full spectrum of the factors that affect the needs and the decision-making process, as these influences are multi-factorial.

### 3.5.2. Cultural Management, Cultural Marketing and the Decision-Making Process

To market an organisation, marketers should have a deep knowledge of the audiences/consumers. What motivates them to attend the performances, who are they and how they make decisions, are questions that should be answered by theatre/cultural marketers and managers (Walmsley, 2011). The marketers’ target, apart from selling, is to predict consumers’ perceptions and behaviours. Essentially, the 4Ps (including People as part of Promotion-communication with consumers) create the cognitive maps of consumers. These maps are the determinants of success or failure. An arts marketer should work on how to create successful cognitive maps and place the arts organisation at the top of consumers’ minds, through the 4Ps. Consumers’ perceptions of the 4Ps might not always follow the actual 4Ps, and the perceptions are more important than the actual ones. Nevertheless, except for that, marketers should be aware of the decision process that consumers follow and the factors that affect it.

The complexity of the decision-making process depends on the degree of complexity of the problem, whether or not the decision should be taken for the first time and if consumers will be based on previous purchase habits. There are extended problem-solving (EPS), midrange and limited problem-solving (LPS). The decision process is very complex, with a middle degree of complexity and a lower degree respectively. When consumers skip the evaluation of alternatives and stick to previous purchase decisions, this is called habitual decision making and it is the least complex process. EPS usually concern “products or services for which costs and risks of a wrong decision are high (e.g. if the ticket is very expensive for a cultural event or if the outing and the cultural experience that implies are very important to take a risk that will finally disappoint the consumer). The more the perceived risk, the more the invested effort into search, which is mostly done online (Blackwell et al., 2001;

Martinez et al., 2018). “Sometimes EPS is fuelled by doubts and fears; other times it is based on lack of experience and information about an expensive, significant, or high-involvement purchase. Regardless of the reason, these consumers are open to information from various sources and are motivated to undertake the effort to make ‘the right choice’. {...} If the item purchased is perceived as falling short of expectations, the outcome can be substantial, and often vocal, dissatisfaction. The desired outcome is satisfaction, expressed as positive recommendations to others and the occasion to repurchase should the occasion arise” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 87). LPS is usually driven by simple rules in consumers’ choices. “ In most situations, consumers have neither the time<sup>94</sup>, the resources, nor the motivation to engage in EPS” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 87), hence they simplify some stages of the decision-making process (information search and evaluation of alternatives), as the purchase is not considered of great importance (e.g. a consumer that needs to have a cultural outing with a special friend, no matter what the spectacle will be). The midrange problem solving is between the extremes of EPS and LPS on a decision process continuum, can be quickly accomplished, and needs only moderate deliberation. Although Blackwell et al. (2001) classify the decision for cultural attendance, into the midrange category, using the example of choosing a movie, I believe I justified above why some cultural attendance decisions can belong to EPS or LPS as well. In case of repeated problem-solving or habitual decision-making, purchases are repeated. In repeated problem solving the desired performance might be sold out, or the need might not have been covered by the previous purchase, because of dissatisfaction. Habitual decision-making results from satisfaction, habits or routines and it is expressed with brand loyalty or inertia. Loyalty derives from satisfaction and meeting or exceeding expectations, and it can also become a habit. Depending on the nature of the need and the importance of the cultural product to the consumer, the decision can be also faced with inertia, which means for example that the need is to have a cultural outing and it does not really matter where the individual will go or what he/she will attend. Buying habits here are quite unstable and can change if the opportunity is given (e.g. coupons for a performance). Nevertheless, even in cases of loyalty, variety seeking can occur, especially when there are many similar alternatives (e.g. many cultural spaces), and high purchase frequency (e.g. regular theatre-goer) (Blackwell et al., 2001).

The extent of the problem-solving process depends on the degree of the consumer’s personal involvement, the degree of differentiation between alternatives and the time available for consideration. Personal involvement in its turn is determined by personal, product and situational factors. A personal factor in the case of cultural products can be self-image. A product factor can be the perceived risk that the product will not meet expectations, or will harm the self-image (e.g.

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<sup>94</sup> “Consumer decision making also takes time” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 149).

lowbrow performance). “The greater the perceived risk, the greater the likelihood of high involvement” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 92). Whether the product is intended for personal use or a gift (e.g. a loyalty card as a gift to a theatregoer), whether it is consumed alone or with others are possible situational or instrumental factors. “The more similar choices are perceived to be, {...} the greater the likelihood that consumers will spend less time on problem solving” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 93). A successful positioning, which means the differentiation of competitive products, can lead to EPS. Time availability includes both the available time of the consumer and the time frame for the decision to be made. Time can also be considered as an evaluative criterion, a salient or a determinant one, and it can be also connected to the location. “Consumer mood can strongly influence information processing and evaluation” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 93). “The decision-making process in arts attendance is made more complex by the fact that the target consumer is often not an individual, but a group. Five different roles may be played by people involved in the decision process: initiator {...}, influencer {...}, decider {...}, transactor {...} and consumer (who may or may not participate in the actual purchase)” (Ciceo, 2012, p. 1123). These roles are also linked to the consumer’s personal involvement in the decision-making process.

Cultural management and mainly marketing research are inextricably linked to the public’s decision-making process. To understand their audiences, arts organisations should first understand their own identities. By understanding who they are, arts organisations can understand what kind of audiences they do, can or want to attract. Replying to the question of what kind of needs they satisfy to their audiences, organisations learn what is the perception of the publics about them-who they are for their publics (for example, it might be a pioneer organisation that will always host a specialised spectacle or it might be that organisation that people want to visit for a casual outing). Organisations through cultural marketing/communication can influence need recognition, they can activate it, and identify market segments with unsatisfied desires. The unmet needs of target markets might be a barrier to an organisation’s success. Organisations should help consumers to move from their actual state to their desired one, and even if they do not have a desired one, communication departments can make them have one or change their desired one. Need recognition can be activated, offering individuals something tempting. For instance, even if they were not planning to have a cultural outing this month, organisations can make them unable to resist this new performance they will host for only three weeks. Another way is to make consumers doubt their actual state and the satisfaction they get from it, and finally, alter their perceptions about it (e.g. staying at home during the weekend instead of attending a cultural thing). In a hypothetical scenario where the ministry of culture or a group of cultural organisations want to activate the need for culture in the citizens and influence their perceptions about their actual and desired state, it could create a campaign with the following

message: “So many cultural things are happening in the city! Are you gonna stay home?” (primary demand-generic need recognition<sup>95</sup>). Finally, reminding consumers of a need is also an effective way to trigger need recognition (e.g. newsletters can work here).

The communication campaign should catch the audiences/potential consumers at the stage of the information search. Furthermore, knowing where the audiences search for information, organisations firstly try to create positive impressions in their memories and secondly, they choose which media, influencers and publicity material they will use depending on the publics they want to attract<sup>96</sup>, but also the other way round. Depending on their publics, they will keep their existing publicity strategies or they will develop new ones. For instance, Kim and Tucker (2016) in their study, outlining the profile of live entertainment consumers in two venues in South-eastern U.S., note that to reach ‘diversity seekers’, marketing managers should use combined newspaper and radio, while to reach ‘blockbuster seekers’ is recommended to use e-marketing strategies (e.g. e-mail and online media). To individuals that have already visited the organisation, positive memories should have been created. These memories concern the full spectrum of 4Ps (e.g. product quality, price, value for money, purchase and distribution process, and fulfilled expectations). The individuals will use these memories at the information search stage for themselves, their circle of friends or the people they influence (e.g. influencers, word of mouth). For the external sources, it is very important to consider not only where people search for information, but also what information they are looking for during their search and provide them (e.g. price, location, duration). If some info of them are missing, consumers might be frustrated, go for the next search or not include this product/organisation at the next stage, the evaluation of alternatives. If organisations know which external source or search activity is more influencing for consumers (e.g. a specific person/medium etc.), they can encourage them. If for instance, consumers use a lot the city guides during the external search, or if they are affected by tweets of specific people, organisations should encourage them to keep using these sources, making sure that through them they communicate very well the desired messages (e.g. Did you check your favourite city guide? or Did you ask your favourite theatre critic to suggest a performance?).

Information search and evaluation of alternatives are two intertwined stages because the internal and external information will lead to some evaluation that will lead to acceptance or rejection of the alternative, and by extension to subsequent search or not. To gain entry into the consideration set (mentioned above) and to increase consideration, the cultural management and the communication

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<sup>95</sup> Selective demand mainly concerns comparative advertising, something that can be met usually at commercial cultural products/organisations/companies (e.g. Broadway), like I mentioned in subchapter 1.4.2.

<sup>96</sup> This means that the audience research has already been done and the preferences of the audiences are already known to the organisation (e.g. What media they prefer, what radio station they choose, what the preferences are online and what offline, etc.).



and marketing department can work on the mission and values of the organisation, the branding, the positioning and differentiation from competitors, the successful communication plan, the quality of the product, the value for money and the comfort of the audiences (e.g. practical issues such as easy parking, easy transportation-central location or comfortable seats), the effective delivery and the like. The needs of the audiences and the personal evaluation criteria determine the attributes that will be considered salient and determinant. Organisations should try to understand how audiences evaluate alternatives, what is (more) important to them, and what evaluation strategy they are using (e.g. lexicographic or conjunctive- non-compensatory strategies, simple additive or weighted additive-compensatory strategies). For example, if for the publics, the location is the most important at this stage, then they will approach/target publics in close proximity, or If the venue is important, they should develop a strong identity and branding strategy (Martinez et al., 2018). If the price is the most important they should work on their pricing policy or if the price is already the best in the market, they should focus part of the communication campaign on this attribute. In some cases, organisations can even change consumers' evaluation strategies (e.g. changing the importance of product attributes or changing the cut-offs for choosing). Marketers should try to place cultural organisations at the "top of the mind" for the specific attributes that have been decided, and in this way, they can gain entry into the consideration set. The brand image works towards linking a specific organisation and its products with specific attributes. It is also important though for organisations and marketers to "penetrate" the information processing of the consumers and especially grasp their selective attention, maximising the probability that the information will be perceived. To achieve this they should consider the stimulus intensity ["more likely to notice loud noises than soft ones and bright lights more than dim ones"(McGuire, 1976, p. 306)], the past reinforcement ["notice some aspects due to prior training that associates noticing these aspects with rewards" (McGuire, 1976, p. 306)], the dimensional dominance [e.g. "noticing the colour versus the form of physical objects" (McGuire, 1976, p. 306)], but also the personal determinants of perceptual selectivity (transient need states, persisting values, present expectation, distinctiveness or unpredictability-notice the surprising aspects) (Blackwell et al., 2001; McGuire, 1976). The message should be correctly comprehended and make receivers accept it as valid. An approach though that looks more effective in terms of comprehension might be less effective for attitude change (McGuire, 1976). Acceptance by receivers can be succeeded through the credibility of the source, the contents of the message and the persuasive impact of the message that will lead to attitude change. Marketers should make sure that a persuasive message will continue affecting the consumers in their future purchasing decisions (McGuire, 1976)<sup>97</sup>. Besides, the cost of

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<sup>97</sup> An example could be the below: "Stegi, it always has something for you". This is a message that could encourage future purchasing decisions.

communication campaigns “can usually be justified only insofar as there is a continuing impact on purchasing behaviour” (McGuire, 1976, p. 308). To succeed in this, marketers should encounter forgetting and delayed processing. “The first deals with retention over time of what was initially comprehended, and the second deals with further processing of the initially comprehended material as time passes” (McGuire, 1976, p. 308).

At the stage of purchase, comfort is again important. Organisations should find out if the process of transaction is easy for the customer and work towards that with user-friendly organisation’s and third party supplier’s websites, a central location for supply of tickets, convenient timings etc. This stage might demand the close cooperation of the organisation with the external ticket suppliers, and an effort from both sides. For example, stores that sell the tickets of the cultural organisation should train their salespeople to promote these tickets, and cultural organisations should promote the supply of the tickets at these stores. Both sides should work on problem recognition, information search and evaluation of alternatives. To persuade consumers to buy the tickets of one cultural organisation from a specific supplier “requires the cooperative strategic efforts” of both sides “on all stages of consumer decisions” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 83).

As mentioned above, all 4Ps and the perceptions of audiences about 4Ps affect the purchase stage. So organisations should work on the “cognitive maps or consumer perceptions of store location” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 132), actual location, the products and services they offer, the forms of promotions they use (e.g. image advertising, information advertising), the personal characteristics, skill levels and motivation of the personnel, the “atmospherics (that) can involve multiple senses to attract consumer purchase behaviour<sup>98</sup>” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 139) (e.g. music at the background-slow versus fast tempo, colours) and they can also affect the overall experience (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016; Martinez et al., 2018) [“the individual experience arises from the combination of an encounter with an object {...} and its location” (Martinez et al., 2018, p. 60)]. The type of people who visit the organisation affects also the purchase, or the perception about the regular audiences, affect the purchase intention of consumers, as they match their self-image with that of the organisation, and they might want or do not want to be associated with this organisation. For instance, young audiences may avoid arts organisations where they can find too many old people; the same applies for old people. For example, the connotations of young people for arts organisations with old audiences might be “conservative art”. It is needful to mention here that the stages of the decision-making process apply also for the e-commerce purchasing (Blackwell et al., 2001).

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<sup>98</sup> This suits better though to arts organisations with retail shops such as museums.

Finally, the concern of arts organisations should be whether the expectations of the audiences are met or exceeded and act accordingly, as expectations are linked to reputation; besides, “satisfaction is a better predictor of consumer intentions than service quality” (Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 116). It is not advisable to create through marketing high expectations to consumers, especially if these are not going to be met; a conservative approach is recommended. Advertising, but also price can influence consumers’ expectations<sup>99</sup>. An organisation should work on strong brand names, as they can strongly affect consumers’ interpretations of experiences. At the post-purchase/consumption stage, the organisation in general and the communication and marketing department, in particular, should listen to the consumers’ complaints and positive comments, care about their points of view, and try to improve in a communicative but also meaningful way its mistakes or omissions (Blackwell et al., 2001; Hill et al., 1995). “A sincere attempt to rectify problems can alleviate the dissatisfaction and potentially lead to even stronger intentions to repurchase” (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 174,175); the speed and nature of response are important factors. It is also advisable to understand the post-purchase evaluations of competitors’ consumers<sup>100</sup>. According to Batra & Keller (2016), very important communication outcomes, targeting the consumer’s decision journey, are to: create awareness and salience, convey detailed information, create imagery and personality, build trust, elicit emotions, inspire action, instil loyalty and connect people.

#### 4. Chapter 4\_ The Greek Picture

This chapter is dedicated to the context of the society the case study organisation belongs to, that is Greece, and the potential changes in cultural consumption, audiences’ behaviour and marketing strategies of arts organisations because of this context. It describes how the cultural sector in this country is formed if audience measurements exist and if they reflect reality. Additionally, it discusses how far the research on the cultural sector goes and identifies a lack. It presents the prevailing arts attendance patterns, as well as how the Greek media market works and affects cultural media consumption. It is also referring to the contribution of culture to the economy of the country. Finally, it elaborates on how the Greek culture affects the social media strategy that social media managers apply.

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<sup>99</sup> Product packaging as well, but it does not apply for performing arts.

<sup>100</sup> Blackwell et al. (2001) talking about companies, mention that by advertising their success in satisfying customers, companies take advantage. This could apply to a cultural organisation too. For instance: “Onassis Stegi, 1.000.000 satisfied people per season” or “Onassis Stegi, 1.000.000 people trust us every year”. But, unfortunately, in Greece, there are no official bodies presenting the attendance of public to each organization per year, so this statement would be non-existence, as the number of attendants of one organisation cannot be compared to the others’. Nevertheless, a general statement, without comparison, like “Thank you 1.000.000 people out there for the trust you show at Stegi” could stand.

#### 4.1. Cultural Sector in Greece, and Cultural and Media Consumption

Greece experienced an economic and social crisis after 2009. Although until today it has not fully recovered, as the measures that were taken by the government to handle the crisis are still in place, such as taxes, lowest wage etc., it cannot be considered an economic crisis anymore but an established situation. The crisis brought changes that are still on today. Some research has been done on consumption in general in the context of a crisis. One of them concluded that "in times of recession consumers reassess their consumer priorities and to justify their choices, they transfer categories from the group of necessary or pleasure of the past, in the group of 'delaying' or minor or even the group of the abolished. They may even replace one category to another or blend features of two categories" (Hellenic Management Association, 2013, p. 2). It is very interesting to see what application has the above effect on culture, whether cultural activities can be classified in the category of "delaying" or minor or even one of the abolished ones, and if so, what role the communication strategies of cultural industries can play to suspend this new classification, as the low purchasing power of today's consumers, have made them less sensitive to receive promotional messages (Greek Institute of Marketing, 2013). At the end of the 90s, Kotler and Scheff (1997) claimed that "for some people, especially in European countries, art continues to be one of the basic necessities of life, an integral part of their education and upbringing" (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p.18). Contrary to the United States, where arts education is missing, in Europe, it is prevailing. Specifically in Greece, which has a big history and connection to theatre, rooted back in ancient drama, the public school system supports cultural literacy. However, another contemporary research, conducted by the National Centre for Social Research in Greece, claims that the comparison of performing arts consumption in Athens for the two-year periods 2008-09 and 2011-12, shows that the crisis has affected the consumption of this specific cultural genre, as the percentages of the consumers have been decreased (Emmanuel D., Kaftantzoglou R. & Souliotis N., 2015). "With regard to cultural consumption, as this manifests itself through going to the cinema, attending plays and concerts, and visits to cultural sites, Eurostat data indicate that in 2011 a significant figure of respondents, in both Greece and EU, are not participating in cultural activities, at least to the extent that these are captured in the aforementioned activities" (Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 27), obviously because of the economic crisis. Besides, "between 2007 and 2017, the share of 'recreation and culture' in total household expenditure dropped in most Member States." ("Household spending on recreation and culture - Products Eurostat News - Eurostat," n.d.). It is worthy to mention here that "performing arts as a cultural activity tends to be more centralised in cities" (Zaharie, 2014, p. 75), and this is something that applies also for Greece, where the major activity happens in Athens, for specific periods in Thessaloniki, and for the rest of the country performing arts are available only in the form of a tour.

Except for the changes in cultural consumption and audiences' behaviour in the context of the crisis, changes in marketing have also occurred. Many forms of marketing strategies we used to know, began to disappear and the need to reboot the system was expressed. New promotional methods were used, such as social media, which are a main part of social and technological change. "The markets' study into recession demonstrates that brands, which listened, understood, supported and reacted quickly to the changing needs of the consumer, came out of the crisis unscathed and entered the stage of recovery" (Greek Institute of Marketing, 2013, p.1). Except for the brands that were mentioned above, the same applies to several organisations. For instance, the case study of this research, Onassis Stegi, is an organisation that opened during the economic crisis in Greece (2009) and it is of great interest to research its marketing strategies, as well as its audiences, although it is a public benefit organisation.

Despite the economic crisis and the decrease in cultural consumption, during the last decades, the leisure of people is emerging as a valuable commodity, while a service economy, connected to thousands of jobs worldwide, is based on leisure (Badimaroudis, 2011). The cultural economy has emerged as an important part of economic growth all over the world. Cities have been at the centre of this economy, positioning themselves in a competitive environment (Brandellero, 2009). Hence, this increased attention to cultural industries comes from the fact they are at the heart of economic activity and their turnover is important for the GDP of their countries (Avdikos et al., 2016; Badimaroudis, 2011; David Hesmondhalgh, 2008). The wider contribution of cultural organisations to the development of national economies is very well combined with the tourism industry. Although Greek culture contributes to the GDP of Greece, as we will see below with more detailed data, the share of culture in central government and local public budgets is not high. More specifically, for the period 2015-2017, statistics from Eurostat show that in the central government budgets of Greece, the share is less than 0.25%, while in local public budgets less than 2% (Inkei, 2019). Inkei (2019) mentions though that it is "a mystery (or misery?): how can all those Greek museums, excavation sites, theatres and festivals etc. be run with a constant 0.1% of the GDP?" (p. 10).

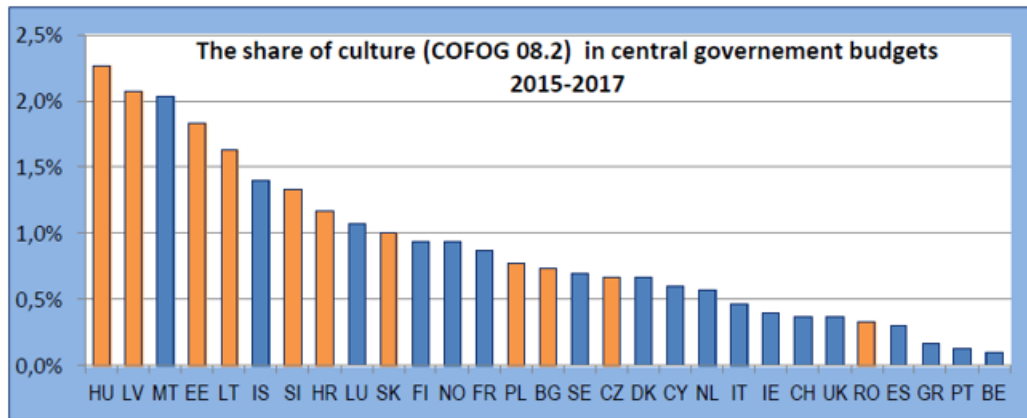


Figure 10. The share of culture in central government budgets 2015-2017. Source: The Budapest Observatory (Inkei, 2019, p. 12)

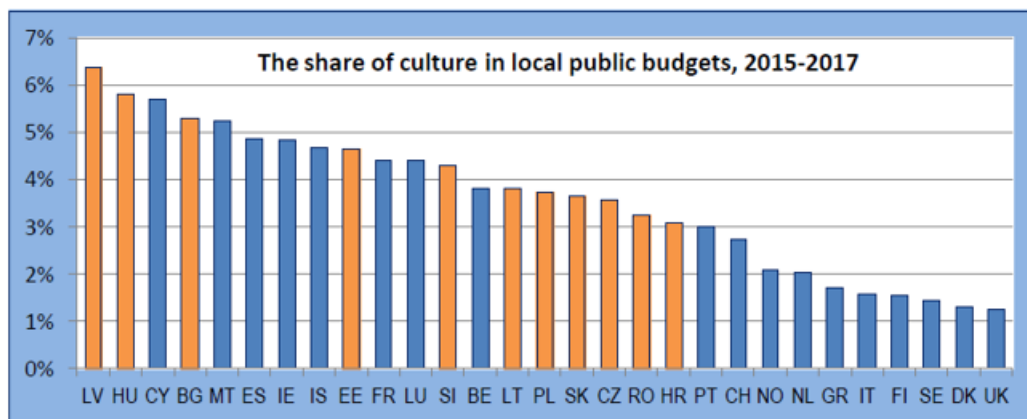


Figure 11. The share of culture in local public budgets. Source: The Budapest Observatory (Inkei, 2019, p. 12)

In the previous chapter (3.4), general cultural attendance patterns of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries were presented. Greece does not deviate from these patterns as the higher the educational level of the public, the higher the frequency of being involved in cultural activities (e.g. attending plays and concerts, visiting cultural sites, reading books etc.). Moreover, the older the age, the higher the chances of being inactive in cultural consumption. Finally, women tend to be more active cultural consumers (Avdikos et al., 2016). In general, Athens is a city where people choose to attend cultural events during their outings. According to research conducted by MRB (2014-2015), cinema, theatre and concerts are the preferred cultural outings for the people with higher education that live in Athens<sup>101</sup>. Moreover, “Athens hosts almost 168 theatres”<sup>102</sup> (Avdikos, 2014, p. 121), much more than other European countries (Avdikos, 2014). Additionally, “in Greece, the cultural market is of great

<sup>101</sup> The research of MRB (2014-2015) shows that the first preferred outing for Greeks is clubs/bars. But, as this study is interested in cultural outings, it is not necessary to include it in the description above.

<sup>102</sup> Translated from the original book in Greek.

importance for the economy and the quality of people's life. It interacts or is identified with the tourism industry and together constitute the so-called 'heavy industries' of the country"<sup>103</sup> (Badimaroudis, 2011, p. 29). Except for the above, also the average household spending on cultural goods in Greece, including newspapers, books, cinema tickets, plays and concerts, and equipment for sound and vision reproduction, surpasses the corresponding expenses in the EU. However, Greece ranks quite low among EU-28 countries in terms of purchasing films and music online (Avdikos et al., 2016). The personal opinion of Haris Giakoumakis though (Campaign Manager OCC) is that the majority of cultural events in Greece are more commercially oriented, instead of educationally or culturally oriented; Onassis Stegi though belongs to the last category (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 12/12/2018).

One of the main reasons why this research is important (as has been mentioned in the introduction of this thesis) is the lack of research on culture and cultural consumption in Greece. Only the [Hellenic Statistical Authority \(ELSTAT\)](#) conducts some general research, which includes data regarding the monthly expenditure for culture, the visitors of museums, archaeological sites, public theatres and orchestras, but this cannot be considered enough as the majority of cultural spaces and events in Greece are not public. According to a study conducted in Greece during the 2008 – 2014 period<sup>104</sup>: "in order to have for the first time a description of the cultural and creative economy, on a national, sectoral and spatial level" (Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 33), the term 'Cultural and Creative Industries' (CCIs) refers to enterprises engaged in producing marketable goods with a strong aesthetic or symbolic nature, intending to evoke consumer reactions based on the experience they provide. These goods or services involve intellectual property and are subject to legislation protecting intellectual property rights. Essentially, CCIs encompass a broad and diverse array of activities, including performing and visual arts, design, architecture, advertising, publishing, audiovisual media, software, and other fields related to culture (Avdikos et al., 2016). This study confirms that in 2014, the cultural and creative sector in Greece played a significant role in the economy. It employed 110,688 individuals across 46,370 enterprises, generating sales of approximately €5.3 billion. This sector contributed about €2.1 billion in added value to the Greek economy, accounting for 1.4% of the GDP. In comparison, the cultural and creative industries (CCIs) in the EU-28 contributed 2.8% (€353 billion) to the European GDP in 2014. This contribution was made through 1.7 million enterprises employing 6.1 million employees. For Greece, the cultural and creative sector holds a critical position within the economy when compared to other selected sectors for the year 2014 (Avdikos et al., 2016), as the below figure

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<sup>103</sup> Translated from the original file in Greek.

<sup>104</sup> Co-financed by Greece and the European Union and conducted by the Regional Development Institute of Panteion University and supervised by Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports.

confirms (Figure 12). And despite the enormous downfall of the sector during the years of economic crisis- data confirm that in times of recession cultural consumption is not a priority anymore, and the consumption of cultural goods and services might be delayed or even abolished (Greek Institute of Marketing, 2013, p.2)- in 2014 it recovered. As researchers report, “CCIs were affected by the recession more intensely than the Greek economy” (Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 8). Based on the interim data from the annual turnover indicator (ELSTAT, 2016) for 2015 and the first half of 2016, there is evidence suggesting that the upward trend will persist in the software publishing, specialized design, architecture, and libraries-museums sectors. On the other hand, the sectors of advertising, printing-manufacturing-handicrafts, arts, and audiovisual are anticipated to stabilize. However, publishing and radio and TV sectors seem to be experiencing another downturn, albeit of low intensity (Avdikos et al., 2016). Nevertheless, according to Eurostat, Greece was the country in the EU in 2017 that spent the least share of household expenditure on recreation and culture; a percentage of about 4.6% (“Household spending on recreation and culture - Products Eurostat News - Eurostat,” n.d.).<sup>105</sup>

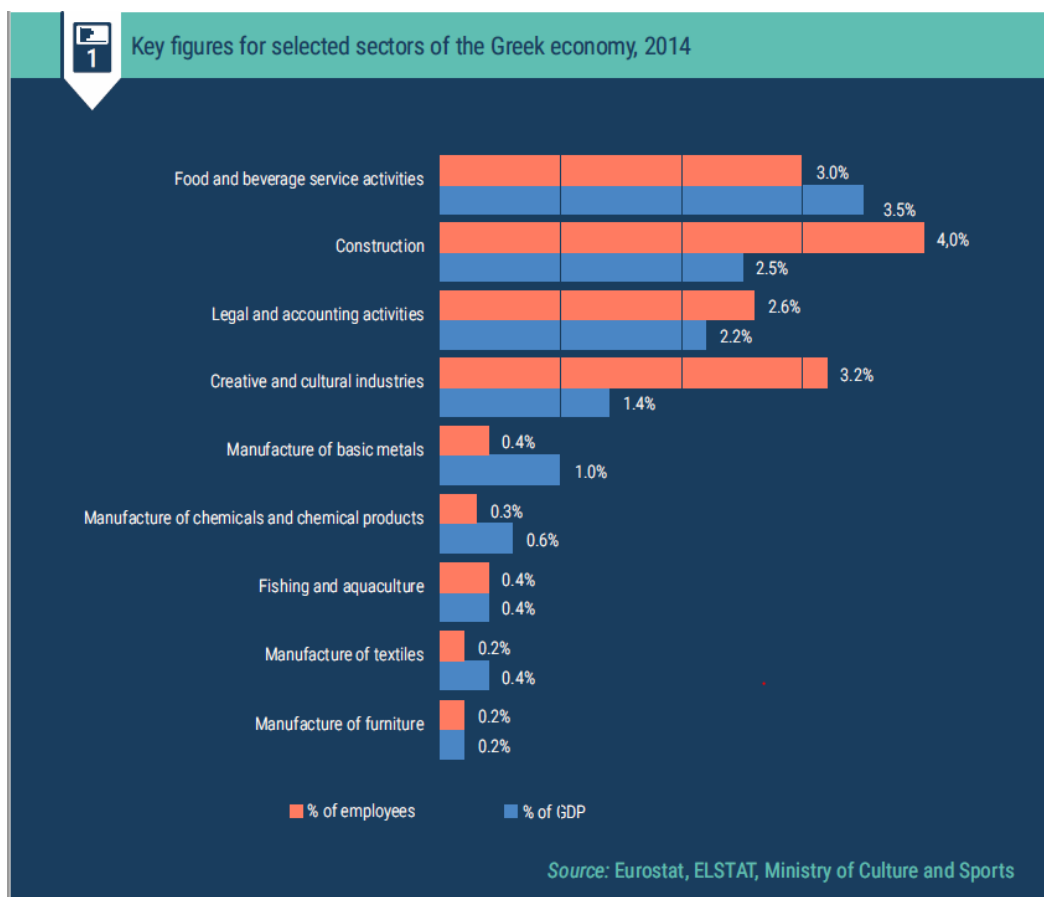


Figure 12. Key figures for selected sectors of the Greek economy, 2014 (Source: Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 6)

<sup>105</sup> In contrast with Greece, in 2017, Denmark was spending the highest share of household expenditure on this sector (11.5%) (“Household spending on recreation and culture - Products Eurostat News - Eurostat,” n.d.).



In the EU-28, Greece holds the 11th position concerning employment and the 10th position in the number of creative enterprises. As of 2014, the sectors with the most significant number of employees in Greece “are architecture (21,200 employees), publishing (16,200), advertising (11,300) and arts and recreation (11,200)” (Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 15).

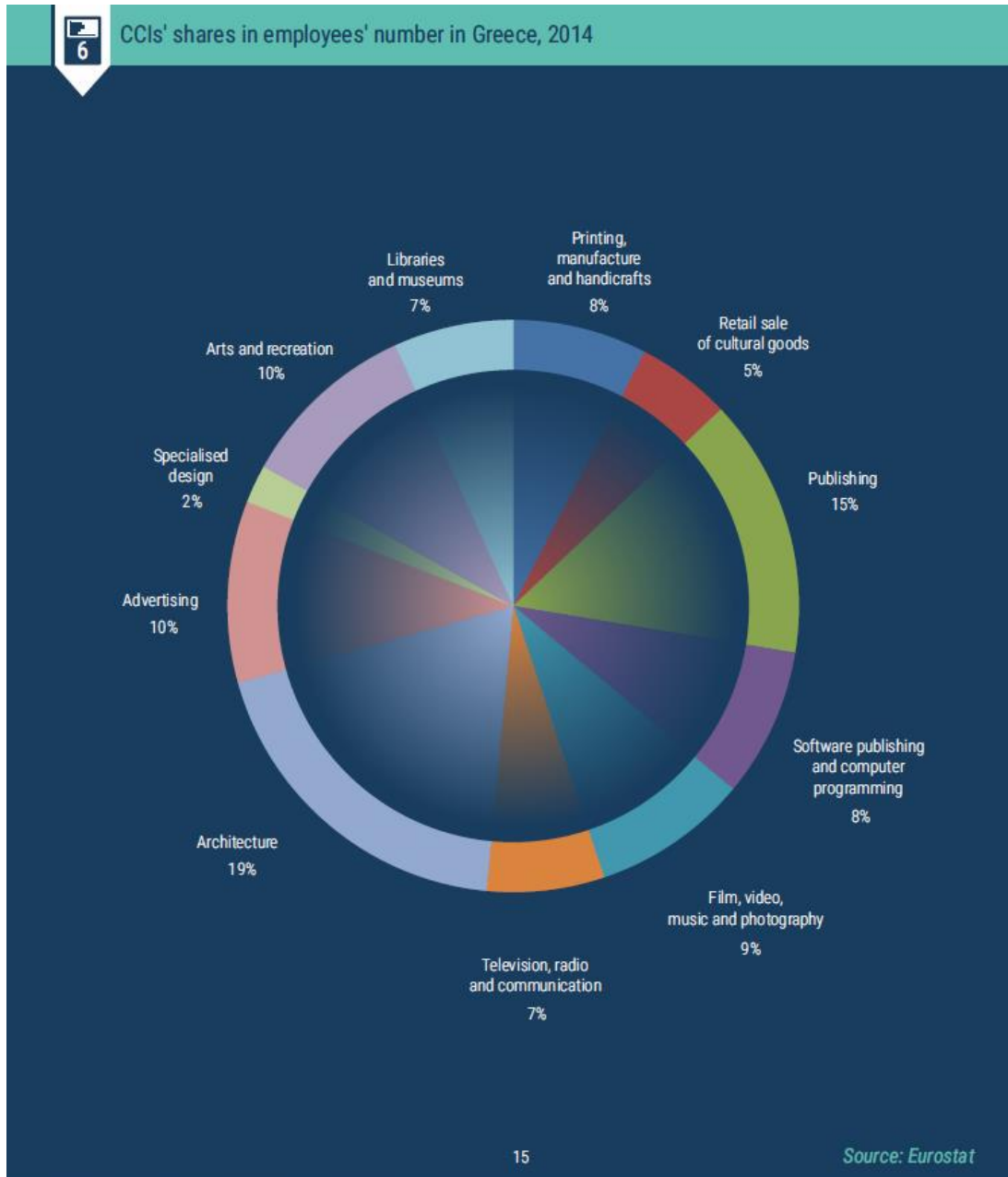


Figure 13. Employees' number in Greece, 2014 (Source: Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 15)



Figure 14. Theatre and dance data in Greece, 2015 (Source: Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 16)

According to the results of the same research (Avdikos et al., 2016), the two large urban centres, Athens and Thessaloniki, produce 85.6% of the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the CCIs in Greece (Athens-Attica 75.5%, Thessaloniki-Central Macedonia 10.1%), with 70.8% of creative enterprises (Attica 57.3%, Central Macedonia 13.5%), which employ 73% of employees as a whole (Attica 60.8%, Central Macedonia 12.2%) (Avdikos et al., 2016).

It is worth mentioning here that the terms ‘non-profit’ and ‘non-governmental’ refer to the same forms of organisation, with the first coming from the vocabulary of economists, and the second from political science (Michailidou, 2011; Zannis, 2013). Nevertheless, Zaharie (2014), describing the Romanian legislative framework, claims that non-profit organisations can be governmental (e.g. theatres) and non-governmental (e.g. associations)<sup>106</sup>. The conclusion is that a non-governmental organisation is also non-profit, but a non-profit can be also governmental. In Greek authors’ articles though it seems that both terms are considered the same, in the sense that when they write about NGOs, they mean NPOs. Non-profit organisations do not seek profit, and in case of surplus, they reinvest it for the achievement of social benefit. These criteria apply globally, and by extension in Greece (Gertos, 2018; Michailidou, 2011; Zannis, 2005, 2013).

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of international NPOs was approximately 40.000, while the national ones were even more. Greece for instance had approximately 3.000, while bigger countries had way more (Gertos, 2018). Another research that investigates the NGOs in Greece, shows that those amount to almost 1.000, from which less than half were active after 2014. Of those, the majority are active in the areas of "Social Solidarity" and "Health-Welfare-Food-Housing" (around 100 in each area). NGOs in Greece are extremely heterogeneous (Huliaras & Petropoulos, 2015). “Within the last decade, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Greece have become very active in a wide variety of sectors – ranging from human rights to poverty reduction and from the environment to cultural

<sup>106</sup> Some of the well-known non-governmental organisations in a global level are the below: ActionAid, Greenpeace, SOS Children's Villages, Doctors Without Borders etc. (Gertos, 2018).

heritage” (Huliaras & Petropoulos, 2015). Almost 80% of the European funding for NGOs is managed by the member-states of the European Union themselves. In Europe, and by extension in Greece, the program “Creative Europe” supports initiatives in the European audio-visual, cultural and creative sectors. The program consists of two sub-programs: “Culture” and “MEDIA”. The management of these programs is handled by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, which belongs to European Union<sup>107</sup> (Gertos, 2018).

NPOs were developed and operated in the West mainly during the development of the welfare state in each country. In Greece, the institutional regulation of private non-profit organizations operating in the welfare sector was promoted in 1998 through the adoption of Law 2646/98, which provides for their participation in the implementation of the actions of the National Social Care System. NPOs are established on a private initiative and appear in the following legal forms based on their statutes: 1) As a Charitable Association, which is the most widespread type of activation of private initiative in the field of Social Welfare. 2) As Public Benefit Institutions, the goal of which is the social benefit of persons as defined in the founding act (They acquire their legal personality by ex officio issuing a Presidential Decree approving their establishment) (Gertos, 2018). I need to mention here that Onassis Stegi is a Public Benefit Organisation but is not funded by the government. It is founded by the Onassis Foundation and it is represented in Greece by the company ARIONA HELLAS S.A; hence, it does not fall under the tax system of NPOs {In Greece, and in other countries where applies a broad definition of the concept of non-profit, such as Austria, the Czech Republic Democracy, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United Kingdom, United States, the NPOs are entitled to tax benefits (Michailidou, 2011)}. Instead, the Onassis Foundation funds programs of non-profit organisations active in the sectors of culture, education, healthcare and social welfare. It acts as a non-profit and like non-profit, governmental theatres, it aims to “democratise culture, facilitating access to the cultural values and to promote local and universal artistic values” (Zaharie, 2014, p. 77). Besides, Onassis Foundation’s “guiding aim is to advance the ideals of social justice by broadening access to healthcare, education and culture” (“Onassis Cultural Centre Official Website,” n.d.). 3) As Urban Non-Profit Companies, are the most common type of voluntary organizations in Greece (Gertos, 2018).

The general characteristics of non-profit/non-governmental organizations can be used to define them, including their form, type, and rules of operation. Such organisations can exist as companies or associations of individuals and are generally treated similarly in legal systems around the world.

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<sup>107</sup> The “Culture” sub-programme funds projects in many dimensions, such as cooperation projects, literary translation, networks and platforms, etc. The “MEDIA” sub-programme provides financial support to the European film and audiovisual industry for the further development, dissemination and presentation of its work. It also finances training programs and film projects (Gertos, 2018, p. 35).

Although they have a legal form, some non-profit organizations may not have the ability to acquire or hold rights in other corporate forms. “In other countries, however, for example, such as Germany, the possibility of acquiring and selling shares and rights is without restrictions as long as the organization does not violate the basic purpose of its operation” (Michailidou, 2011, p. 9).

#### 4.2. Greek Media Market and Media Consumption

“The media market in Greece is characterised by online fragmentation, a changing and polarised TV market” (Reuters, 2019, p.87), a weak print sector in crisis and some of the highest use of social media in general -and social media for news in particular- and digital-born outlets in Europe (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2018; Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, & Nielsen, 2019).

In terms of the size of advertising turnover, the Greek media market is very small. However, the number of media (per type of media) is usually disproportionately large (Nikos Rossolatos, personal communication-email, 24/04/2019). For instance, although the circulation of print media continues to decline dramatically, the number of national newspapers in Greece is 20, the same time that the UK has 10 (Newman et al., 2019). “When you need to advertise though a qualitative cultural product the options are not many” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal communication-email, 24/04/2019). The newspapers do not have the same prestige as they used to have (for many reasons), and the deep crisis in the print market continues. The circulation of all Sunday newspapers during a typical week in 2018 is down by 75% compared to a typical week ten years ago. People do not trust them anymore, and the percentage of people in Greece reading newspapers on daily basis is only 23%, the same time that the European figure is 56% (Avdikos et al., 2016; Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2018; Newman et al., 2019, Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 5/03/2019). And although, according to Reuter’s surveys in 2018 and 2019, there is a global decline in trust in the news, the trust in Greece is one of the lowest (Newman et al., 2018, 2019).

Regarding the media demographics and media circulation data, Nikos Rossolatos (personal interview, 10/10/2017) supports there should be a state authority or independent authority that provides them. In advanced markets, for example in Germany, the circulation of newspapers and magazines is done and certified by auditors. Hence, big advertising companies or individual advertisers make annual deals with publishers, based on these circulations. There is also a clause in the contract saying that if the circulation drops, it means that the price of advertising will be reduced. “This is a completely different model than what exists in Greece, where mainly printed media and radio decide to enter or leave the circulation research without any consequences. They leave the researches as they might not like the results and they want to hide their weak points” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). Additionally, after 2009 when the Greek economy started dropping down, the media

started to cut down their research budget. “Media does not invest in research that is a tool of great importance, hence the audience measurement and circulation researches are either basic or they do not exist; this situation affects much the market, as these tools could upgrade the market and give to all stakeholders accurate information. But because all these are in their infancy in Greece, compared to practices abroad, and the market is not so advanced to understand how much useful this pattern of research can be, we, as Onassis Stegi, are trying to make some conclusions about audiences and circulations with the tools we have” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). “We decide which media suits us by experience and deep knowledge of the media market, combined with some media demographics that exist from market research companies (mainly from a company called [Focus Bari](#)), and also combined with the qualitative characteristics of each media that are obvious (content, aesthetics)” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). This is probably a practice that many cultural organisations in Greece follow, as there is a lack of formal data. There are also some circulation data collected by only one press distribution agency ARGOS S.A. It was founded in 1998 and according to its website, it is currently the leading agency in Greece. “Its activities also include the marketing of fast-moving consumer goods to small sales outlets and the development of high-profile press shops” (Argos, n.d.). According to ARGOS, the newspaper TA NEA was the most sold on 22/04/2019.

Passing from print media to TV, it is worth mentioning that the saga of TV relicensing in Greece finished just recently (2020), although the seven national licenses were opened up by the government in 2016-2017. The media groups, to which the homonymous TV channels on air belong, are, in order of higher news reach offline and online in 2019, the below: SKAI, ANT1, Alpha, Star, ERT (Public Broadcaster), Open TV (Newman et al., 2018, 2019). “One TV” is missing from this list, most probably due to the low reach level. Additionally, the MEGA channel is not included in the above list, as it ceased operations in 2018 due to financial issues, after 29 years of broadcast (Newman et al., 2019). It reopened, under a new license and owner in February 2020, without stable and original content yet.

AGB-NIELSEN, a company that came from the merge of AGB Group and Nielsen Media Research International in 2004, has been operating as a monopoly in the field of TV audience measurement in Greece, already as AGB since 1988, providing TV viewing data/figures along with specialized software and know-how to analyse them. The company has been accused many times of corruption, fraudulently publishing audience metrics in favour of some television media over others, and manipulation of the TV advertising market, including government advertising<sup>108</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup> (“Ο πόλεμος για την AGB - Ειδήσεις - νέα - Το Βήμα Online,” n.d.). English translation: “The war for AGB-News-Vima Online”, n.d.

Recently, this market entered Focus Bari as it records basic TV viewing indicators for National and Regional Channels in 8 Geographical Regions of the country (but not on a fixed frequency) (“Home - Focusbari,” n.d.). Focus Bari is a Greek, privately owned Research Agency, with a leading position in Media Research. It was launched in September 1988, and since then it designs and conducts Industry Currency Surveys for Radio and Press, used by the advertising market in Greece. In 1995, it launched the only national, “continuous offline Survey on Greek people's relation with technology and the internet, social media and e-commerce, and how these form Greek society's new, everyday life” (Focus Bari, 2019). Focus Bari has an international presence and activity (58 countries all around the globe’s 5 continents).

“The Greek online news market is congested and highly disrupted. Most of the online news brands in Greece are digital-born including Newsbomb (34%), In.gr (26%), and News247 (26%)” (Newman et al., 2018, p. 81). Because of the low trust in the old type of news media and their increased political polarisation during the financial crisis, during the transition from offline to digital, unlike most European users, Greeks prefer non-traditional brands (Newman et al., 2018). The general results of the Reuters research 2019 in all participated countries show that, although Generation Y and Generation Z understand how important the traditional news brands are, they are not as loyal as their parents and they prefer to choose multiple outlets and mix them (Newman et al., 2019). The Greek government, trying to control the existing chaos in the market, has introduced a register for online media, through which the eligibility for state advertising and access to “a service for tracking plagiarism which is a problem in the Greek news media landscape” (Newman et al., 2018, p. 81), are given to approved outlets (Newman et al., 2018).

Unlike the other 37 countries of Reuters’s research (2018) and similar to the other 2 countries, Greece’s population use of social media news is higher than TV news use. Facebook is still dominant and is noticed “a slow shift towards private messaging apps for reading, posting, and commenting on news, as in many other countries” (Newman et al., 2018, p. 81). In Greece, the most used messaging apps to share and discuss news are Facebook Messenger (25%) and Viber (11%), a very high share-in fact the highest compared to the rest study’s countries (Newman et al., 2019). This very high use of social media platforms for news is associated with random exposure to news sources (Newman et al., 2019, influenced by Fletcher & Nielsen, 2017). “Greece is a world leader in ad-blocking use (42%), with even higher numbers for those aged below 35 (57%)(Newman et al., 2018, p. 81). The combination of the very high use of ad-blocking software and social media platforms for news creates a very particular landscape for online news publishers.

The Population of Greece is 11m and internet penetration increased by 1% from 2018 to 2019, reaching 70% (Newman et al., 2018, 2019). “Websites and social media remain the most frequently

accessed source of news in Greece, though television remains popular with older groups. Smartphones have become a more popular way to access news over the last three years (up 8 percentage points) approaching reach from computers and laptops” (Newman et al., 2018, p. 82). It is interesting to mention here that Onassis Stegi is not using much TV advertising (only a couple of times per year) because its team considers it is a less flexible medium, compared to other ones, and it is not developing and progressing quickly. Additionally, the moving picture is not just a TV privilege anymore, and with the advent of the internet, the moving picture on TV has not had the same impact as it used to have (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). The commercial manager of OCC, Nikos Rossolatos, agrees that online media has greater appeal, while in print media a downward trend is remarked, which makes publishers change the content to get more audience, and this changing character is not in favour of this media (they usually become more mainstream) (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 06/10/2017). I would say that more commercial cultural events/organisations use TV advertising in Greece, while the rest usually do not, also because they do not have the financial sources to support it, considering always the value for money or in other words the reach for money. Nevertheless, when you need to advertise a qualitative cultural product the options are not many either online or offline. The cultural news market is very specific. “There are about 6 or 7 serious cultural websites. We, as Stegi, mainly use the online version of newspapers with big reach (paid newspapers or free of charge press like [Athens Voice](#) and [Lifo](#)), the online version of the city guide [Athinorama](#), which is in essence the only city guide, and all the big cultural websites such as [Culture Now](#), [Monopoli](#), [El Culture](#), [Propaganda](#). There are also some specialised websites that we use, such as [Dancepress](#), [Dancetheatre](#), and some related to music” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). For these websites, though there are no demographics, Nikos Rossolatos seems to liken the online landscape to a small village, where the options are limited. “Although the lack of demographics, it is quite obvious where you will advertise; the market is very specific, so to advertise a cultural organisation or a cultural good you do not have many options” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017).

The aforementioned company Focus Bari is also active in Radio research and it is running daily surveys for the radio audience measurement. For the period 5/11/2018-10/2/2019, the most popular news radio stations were Real FM 97.8 (5.3%) and SKAI 100.3 (5%), and music radio stations Melodia FM 99.2 (4.5%) and Easy 97.2 (4.1%) (Focus Bari, 2019). The company publishes officially the results three times per year, but unofficially, it provides radio stations and interested companies and organisations with the results weekly; but the latter are not in their final form. The audience radio measurements include many categorisations, such as demographics of core audiences (women, men, age, education, etc.), measurements by zones (morning, evening etc.); sometimes they even include lifestyle

information about the audiences (possession of specific goods, preferable brands, etc.), but because the sample starts to diminish dangerously is something that the market does not use much (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). As mentioned above for printed media, the combination of the existing statistics for audience radio measurement and the style of radio programs or radio producers leads cultural organisations to choose where to advertise their products. Radio is one of the organisation's favourite advertising mediums.

In Greece, there is no official body that collects box office data and presents the market share of each cultural organisation. "I am not sure what is happening in other markets, but in Greece, there is 'suspicion'; this is why organisations do not reveal their box office data and nobody forces them to do it. If for instance, the box office data are positive, the people in charge do not want to provoke the envy of competitors, who will definitely put the winning organisation's strategy under the microscope, with the ultimate purpose to steal part of their audiences. In case the data are negative, the people in charge will not reveal them not to lose space. These all are wrong ways of thinking. Culture is a business field, in which the better we know the competition, the better we know the field, and we can all improve. The final target is to have a very active and varied cultural market" (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). "With social media though we can have a general picture of the competition. Furthermore, various institutions might award an advertising campaign, the general presence of a cultural organisation etc. Stegi has been awarded many times by several institutions" (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 06/10/2017)<sup>109</sup>.

In the same way, there is no official body or any valid source that can provide the average ticket price for cultural events in Athens. "Something like this does not exist. It is chaotic. We, as Stegi, collect some data by ourselves for almost all the productions that take place in Athens, to get the full picture of the cultural map. There are very expensive and popular productions, where the ticket might cost up to 80 euros, and usually, these productions are block busters (e.g. "The witches of Smyrna" in Pallas in 2018 or productions of Mimi Denisi), but there are also the normal theatre productions that cost around 15-20 euros. Moreover, the price of some other cultural events depends on who organises them or supports them. For example, the Athens Concert Hall ticket is quite expensive as it goes for the break-even of its productions. Formerly, when its productions were more expensive and the purchasing ability of the consumers was higher, the ticket was even more expensive. There are organisations though such as Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center that offer some free-entrance cultural events, but it (SNFCC) includes also the Greek National Opera, with the Stavros

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<sup>109</sup> It is worthy to give an example of a European country where audience researches are conducted regularly. In Netherlands a survey about the brand strength of cultural brands is conducted every year, on behalf of a large number of organisations in the cultural sector; this research heavily affects the marketing decisions of the participated organisations (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019), and I guess it affects also the advertising contracts.



Niarchos Hall ticket prices reaching up to 70 euros, while the alternative stage offers cheap tickets around 10-15 euros. But there is no official source to confirm these data” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 5/03/2019). Due to this lack of data regarding ticket pricing, I believe that the majority of cultural organisations follow Stegi’s practice to decide about their ticketing pricing and place themselves on the ticketing map of cultural events in Athens.

Regarding the ticketing companies in Greece, the two top ones are [Viva](#) and [Ticketmaster](#) (former Tickethour). There is also [Ticketservices](#) that collaborates with Athens Concert Hall; the rest are all smaller players (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017).

### 4.3. Greek Culture and Social Media

In chapter 2 and the social media section (2.3.b), it was mentioned that each country has its own habits regarding the use of digital media and mobile devices. According to Reuters Institute Digital News Report (Newman et al., 2018), “websites and social media remain the most frequently accessed source of news in Greece, though television remains popular with older groups. Smartphones have become a more popular way to access news over the last three years (up 8 percentage points) approaching reach from computers and laptops” (p. 83). Moreover, the top social media and messaging for news are Facebook (60%) and Youtube (36%), Messenger (22%), Viber (14%), Twitter (13%), and Instagram (10%) while for all the uses is Youtube (79%), Facebook (78%), Messenger (58%), Viber (49%), Instagram (33%) and Twitter (24%). Additionally, 49% of the users share news via social and e-mail.

Likewise, for each culture different practices should be applied to social media posts, to make them effective and impact their popularity in terms of likes, shares and fans. Vividness and practicality in the content of posts can be used for all cultures. However, how a post can be interesting, personalised or interactive, depends on the characteristics of the specific target markets (Lin et al., 2017).

As mentioned again in chapter 2, five cultural dimensions affect social media and social media managers should consider when they plan their strategy (local or global): collectivist/individualism, (less/more) long-term orientation, (high/low) uncertainty avoidance, (high/low) power distance, and high-/low-context culture. For each dimension, there are respective social media strategies, which can strengthen the brand post popularity. At this point, we will elaborate a little bit on the Greek culture and audience, with respect to social media. These characteristics will help us later to ‘verify’ if Stegi is addressing them through its social media strategy.

Greek culture is a collectivist one, and in fact “Greece appears to have a greater collectivist orientation among other European countries” (Giousmpasoglou, 2014, p. 53). The society of countries with this characteristic tends to favour collectivism (also known as family collectivism) versus autonomy/individualism and highly-valued belonging to small groups. “One of the main characteristics

of the Greek culture is strong family bonds, even though in big cities there might have been a recent change in this respect” (Giousmpasoglou, 2014, p. 56). “Collectivist cultures tend to rely on online word-of-mouth opinions more than consumers from individualistic cultures” (Lin et al., 2017, p. 8) to secure decisions to try a product/make a purchase.

The dimension of long-term orientation refers to the way that every society maintains “some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future”<sup>110</sup> (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). Greece tends to be closer to a low long-term oriented culture (or else less long-term), instead of a more long-term, but without a clear lead, as its score is intermediate on this dimension (45%). According to Lin et al. (2017), for less long-term oriented cultures, to make posts interesting, one should target personalisation acknowledging “the consumers’ history as uniquely important and connect with them on this basis” (p. 10); and this is what by default Onassis Foundation in Greece and U.S. do, and by extension Onassis Stegi (but we will go into details on that in the chapter that concerns exclusively Onassis Stegi and the subchapter of its social media). The institution itself as an institution makes reference to the history of the Greeks and in fact of the demonically successful Greeks abroad (Aristotle Onassis). Also one of the main missions of the foundation is the dissemination of Greek culture, the rest- as will be mentioned in Onassis Stegi's chapter (Chapter 6) -are the promotion of contemporary cultural expression, the support of Greek artists etc. For the less long-term orientation “interactions with the brand or other consumers should be those that help consumers identify with their history and interact with others sharing a similar history” (Lin et al., 2017, p. 10). However, these kinds of dimensions can be a bit vague/uncertain, as, apart from the cultural characteristics, are also affected by personality. Moreover, nowadays (with globalisation etc.), Greeks (and not only) are a mixture; many of them have been brought up with other cultures, going for instance to private American<sup>111</sup> schools, studying in England or Germany and assimilating elements of other cultures. I believe the same for the people who represent/manage the Stegi and Onassis Foundation (“the people who are Stegi” are modern people, open-minded, with studies abroad and stimuli from being citizens of the world, and a fresh approach to everything). Additionally, we should not forget the Onassis Foundation's subsidiary foundation in the U.S., a country with which Aristotle Onassis had close ties. Another important element is that the Onassis Foundation in New York (but also in Athens) was created “for the promotion and prominence of contemporary Greek culture” (Onassis Foundation in New York, 2020), a mission that is connected with the next dimension, this of power distance, and

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<sup>110</sup> Normative societies. which score low on this dimension, for example, prefer to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion (Hofstede Insights, n.d.).

<sup>111</sup> U.S. for instance has an estimated 26% on long term orientation (Hofstede Insights, n.d.).

in a way supports the score of 60% (intermediate but a slight tendency to the higher side) on power distance dimension for Greece, which is considered in higher power distance countries.

This dimension (power distance) “is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). This is obvious in everyday life, from the respect that Greeks show to elder people (even from offering a seat on the bus) to the fact that in companies there should be always one person who will have the overall responsibility. “One should never forget that in the mind of a Greek all other cultures in the Western world inherited something from the ancient Greek culture. Status symbols of power are very important to indicate the social position and ‘communicate’ the respect that could be shown” (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). The high power distance countries make high use of “social media sites like Facebook and Twitter” (Lin et al., 2017, p. 9), comparing to the lower power distance (Giousmpasoglou, 2014; Hofstede Insights, n.d.; Lin et al., 2017; Study.com, 2015). Considering what was mentioned above regarding globalisation, the different way people are brought up nowadays and the people of Stegi who belong to this generation-they are contemporary- in the next section, we will check the kind of communication Stegi uses (one-way or two-way communication), taking into account all the factors that contribute to the decision making about this strategy.

Greeks have the highest level possible of uncertainty avoidance (100%). This dimension regards “the way that a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known” (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). This high score for Greeks shows their uncomfortableness in ambiguous situations. Taking that further, and relating it to marketing, this might be a reason why in many advertising campaigns phrases such as “an award-winning performance”, “a show that has travelled to 20 countries”, or “a book that won the acclaim of critics-popular or critical” might dominate. The high level of uncertainty avoidance of Greeks leads to what Lin et al. (2017) mention: “Personalisation attempts should offer more targeted assurances and information” and interactions should “allow consumers to gain supporting information on the product or brand from a wider variety of sources to help reduce anxiety and concerns over potential risks” (Lin et al., 2017, p. 10).

Greece is a high-context culture<sup>112</sup>, and this kind of culture needs less direct messages. (Giousmpasoglou, 2014; Hagan, 2013; Hofstede Insights, n.d.; Study.com, 2015); although “nonverbal communication is very strong within the Greek society” (Hagan, 2013), “it is important to note that no culture is completely high-context or low-context since all societies contain at least some parts that

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<sup>112</sup> “High-context culture is a phrase that was created by anthropologist Edward T. Hall in the 1970s to describe a culture's style of communication” (Study.com, 2015).

are both high and low” (Study.com, 2015). In Greece for instance, “they are high-context and collectivistic but also are open to showing one’s emotion like low-context cultures” (Hagan, 2013, p. 11).

Giousmpasoglou (2014) explains that when Greek people seek information (or people in any high-context culture) trust their personal networks (family, friends, colleagues etc.) more and they take decisions or make deals only if they are very well-informed about related issues. This can lead someone to think that for the Greek audience, the sharing, liking, and tweeting of posts from people that the users trust can more easily promote a purchase behaviour/promote sales/affect purchase behaviour or change perceptions about any brand, and in this case about arts organisations.

In high-context cultures, interesting messages and personalisation attempts “would be more effective if conveyed subtly through indirect mannerisms and signs than through direct statement” (Lin et al., 2017, p. 6). Interaction could happen more easily and effectively “if options for context rich interaction (e.g. video, voice, emoticons) was made possible” (Lin et al., 2017, p. 7). When the posts though of a brand are addressed to a general audience, in a global network, general dimensions should be used.

In a nutshell, Greek culture seems to be marginally long-term oriented, a collectivist one, with high uncertainty avoidance, high-power distance, and high-context culture. As mentioned above though, the mixture of cultures from West and East, globalisation and similar factors have affected the scores of these dimensions, or even the practices that are followed, which many times might be opposed to the scores of each dimension; this happens especially with dimensions with marginal scores. Additionally, social media managers should always create different strategies for local and global markets, as the cultural characteristics differ much in many cases. Nevertheless, due to immigration and cultural clustering trends, it is always valuable to adopt a global orientation when it comes to social media practices, even if you address a domestic/local market (Lin et al., 2017). In the next section, we will see how Stegi is addressing the Greek market but also the global one, through social media.

## 5. Chapter 5\_Methodological Design

### 5.1. Overall Design

As briefly seen in the previous chapters, a lot of research has been done regarding arts marketing, cultural consumption and audience behaviour. Specifically, the research in arts marketing started evolving in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (it was limited even at the beginning of the 90s). Nevertheless, arts organisations even today neglect “the wider range of marketing tools and activities” (Kirchner et al., 2007, p. 105) and they focus on advertising and public relations. The scarcity of skills and the inexperience make arts organisations underdeveloped in the area of marketing (Fillis, 2011; Kirchner et al., 2007; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Rentschler, 1998). I believe that a wider range of examples of successful application of marketing strategies from cultural organisations can help new, newer or future organisations to evolve and meet the needs of today's reality.

Furthermore, in the context where the research takes place, Greece, there is not enough research on cultural consumption and audience behaviour; more accurately, there are very few. Academics, researchers, professionals and even the wider audience would be interested in accessing such information. In my attempt to set up the related research, my experience showed that the cultural organizations in Greece are hidden, in a sense, they are reluctant to participate in the above-mentioned kind of research. One possible explanation could be their unwillingness to reveal their bad box office numbers, their bad ranking, or on the contrary their high ticket numbers. The Ministry of Culture or any other related ministry has not formed until now structures and bodies to force cultural organizations to go through an audit, share data, and categorise their public (according to demographics, social criteria and so on). All the above led me to design a series of objectives and research questions that will allow me to address these shortcomings and contribute to the development of the evolving disciplines of arts marketing communications and audience behaviour in cultural consumption.

The main research objectives are two: A. Improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption and B. Study attitudes, motivations and perceptions of Onassis Stegi's audiences. The effective use of marketing tools can help cultural organisations target their consumers better and increase the consumption of their cultural products (services). It is equally crucial to be aware of consumers' way of thinking and acting. The nature of the main research objectives oriented the researcher towards the use of a qualitative approach. This was complemented with the descriptive analysis of the case study, Onassis Stegi.

In the introduction of this thesis, the main reasons why this case study was chosen were briefly mentioned. Moreover, in the introduction of this particular chapter, the shortcomings that this thesis tries to cover are also presented. Below the reasons for this choice will be analysed.

The main selection criterion for Onassis Stegi case study was the multifaceted involvement of this organization in arts and its position in the Athenian cultural scene. Additionally, after a review of Greek cultural websites, OCC is included almost always in the weekly agenda of some popular e-magazines and sometimes more than one of its events is hosted. Another criterion for the selection of OCC was the content of its artistic agenda. Stegi has a contemporary character and it hosts performances that follow the European but also Greek trends regarding their theme, while it cooperates with international groups and hosts performances also for non-Greek-speaking audiences. Moreover, OCC is very active in social media, using Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Vimeo and Issue consistently.

Apart from this main criterion, several more factors were taken into consideration when choosing the case study. OCC has been chosen because of its intrinsic value. It is a big and internationally well-known cultural organisation, sponsored by the Onassis Foundation, with a rich agenda, collaborations with international groups and a high percentage of audiences' attendance. OCC is regularly running research on audiences and performance of the organisation, hiring research companies such as MRB HELLAS S.A. Given the fact that in Greece there is no public body or private initiative that regularly researches and reports Athenian audiences' cultural behaviour in consuming performing arts, it was considered very useful to examine a case study that has already invested in a better understanding of its audience and can provide the general frame of its audience attendance. Choosing such an organisation can also minimize the risks and problems that this research might have in reaching the audience. Because of its prior experience with audience analysis {e.g. MRB (2015)}, OCC offers a secure environment for this kind of investigation.

Finally, my first contact with OCC was done in November 2016, and the organisation officially accepted in January 2017 to give me access to settings or information that serve research purposes. Taking into consideration that this is a single case study research completely based on a single organisation, the most important step is to ensure that the researcher will have access to the needed data because without these the research cannot exist (Daymon & Holloway, 2002; Holton & Walsh, 2017). OCC was considered a reliable research partner; "companies are often unwilling to allow researchers entry on the grounds that confidential information may leak into the public arena" (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 129).

Onassis Stegi was considered by the researcher as “a critical case in testing a well-formulated theory” (Yin, 2009, p. 47), the arts marketing theory, and meets the conditions for testing the theory, confirming, challenging or extending it, as it uses the known until now arts marketing strategies in a successful way. Additionally, it can be considered a representative or typical case in terms of applying widespread/popular or not among cultural organisations' marketing strategies. But it is not a typical case in terms of the nature of the organisation, which can be considered rare as it is a beneficiary organisation, part of a big public benefit foundation (Onassis Foundation), that operates under a special regime; the latter though might mean that it can be a revelatory case, revealing how arts marketing can work when there is ‘plenty of money’. Finally, an additional factor showed up in the meantime of the research. The study took place during the transition of the “old Stegi” to the “new Stegi” (in terms of the website, organisation chart, strategies, etc.), so it could specify how certain policies/strategies changed over time (longitudinal case) (Yin, 2009)<sup>113</sup>. The case study of this research is considered an embedded case study design as it involves “more than one unit of analysis” (Yin, 2009, p. 52), the organisation itself, its strategies, services, products and staff employed, and the perceptions of its audiences about these. In embedded design though, there is the danger of the original phenomenon of interest becoming “the context and not the target of the study” (Yin, 2009, p. 52).

OCC was observed and investigated over a time frame of almost three years (November 2017 until October 2020). This case study approach was used in order to capture the complexity of arts marketing phenomenon, as well as audiences' behaviour in consuming cultural products. To address the case study, a qualitative approach has been followed, which can offer a “specific and in-depth focus on the case as an object of interest in its own right” (Daymon & Holloway, 2002, p. 105). Yin (2009) says “if you do use a single-case design, you should be prepared to make an extremely strong argument in justifying your choice for the case” (Yin, 2009, p. 62). According to the same author, one of the three tactics “available to increase construct validity is to {...} establish a chain of evidence” (Yin, 2009, p. 42)<sup>114</sup>. In this research, this is established through the interviews of the key personnel of Onassis Stegi, who are considered the experts, and the documents (hard and soft copies) they have shared with me, as well as data regarding their social media presence by numbers; all these consist the descriptive analysis of the case study.

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<sup>113</sup> According to Yin (2009) there are five rationales under which a single-case study can be considered appropriate: when it represents a critical case, an extreme or unique case ( usually used in clinical psychology), a representative or typical case, a revelatory case (“previously inaccessible to social science inquiry”) (p. 48).

<sup>114</sup> “...three tactics are available to increase construct validity when doing case studies. The first is the use of multiple sources of evidence, in a manner encouraging convergent lines of inquiry, and this tactic is relevant during data collection. A second tactic is to establish a chain of evidence, also relevant during data collection. The third tactic is to have the draft case study report reviewed by key informants” (Yin, 2009, p. 42).

There are different research and philosophical paradigms on marketing communication studies and this is because researchers perceive in different ways the nature of the social world (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2019; Daymon & Holloway, 2011). This study is based on critical research, known also as critical-imperative research. This approach, “grounded in critical social theory and based on an interpretive paradigm, {...} assumes that reality is determined by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender values and inequalities” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 102,103). Following the example of critical theorists and taking also into consideration professional communication practices, this study attempts to illuminate audiences’ behaviours, “posing research questions that challenge common sense or conventional norms” (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009, in Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 103). Grounded theory will be used, and in this context, “data are analysed as they are collected” (Holton & Walsh, 2017, p. 73).

Working within the interpretive paradigm, this research uses qualitative methods, inductive reasoning and particularistic approaches. No hypotheses or theories are developed at the beginning of the research. Although qualitative research has its roots in interpretive paradigm, it can be considered as ‘multi-paradigmatic’, as it can be used with the same success in positivism and interpretivism as well. For example, interviews and observations can be useful in all paradigms (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). “Qualitative practitioners are sensitive to the value of a multi-methods approach, whereby, in the same research project, they might employ techniques and methodological approaches associated with more than one philosophical paradigm. What is important, then, is ensuring that research is always problem or question driven rather than methods driven” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 105).

The research aims at tracing and, furthermore, examining the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption. Building on contemporary theories and methodological principles, the study is based on qualitative research, and it uses the approach of case study as the primary concern is to know “how and why things occur in a particular situation” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 115). “Case studies have a distinctive place in evaluation research” as they have several applications. They can be used to “explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for” other strategies (surveys or experiments), to “describe an intervention and the real-life context”, “illustrate certain topics within an evaluation” and “enlighten those situations” (Yin, 2009, p. 19,20). This research investigates in-depth and in its natural context the Onassis Cultural Centre and its “organisational and managerial processes” (Yin, 2009, p. 4); more specifically its communication strategies for performing arts and its audiences’ perceptions about them and their behaviour in consuming performing arts products. As the range of the events at OCC is very wide, I have chosen to focus on the study of performing arts, which means theatre and dance performances (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Yin, 2009).



The descriptive analysis of Onassis Stegi is considered as a tool box that contributes to the clearest possible description of the activities of the cultural organisation. To understand how Stegi works is the necessary first step before the solid research and analysis of its audiences (consumers and stakeholders). Hence, the descriptive analysis, which is based on interviews and content analysis, was used as a framework to the main qualitative research. Each methodology can light different aspects of the same research problem (Silverman, 2013; Suau, 2015), the nature of which though is decisive in the choice of the methodology. But as decisive as this variable is, so are the preferences of the researcher (Larsson, 2012; Suau, 2015), and the methodological tools that the researcher is allowed to use, due to several restrictions that may face (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

Each main research objective of this research consists of secondary objectives, and these in turn consist of research questions. They will all be gathered and presented below, in a table (Table 6), which also includes the methods used for the investigation of each research question. Different techniques are needed in order to answer these main research objectives.

As mentioned above, the main research objectives are two: A. Improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption and B. Study attitudes, motivations and perceptions of Onassis Stegi's audiences. The secondary objectives of the first main research objective are the following:

A1) Comprehend the marketing mix tools (4Ps) that Onassis Stegi applies.

A2) Improve knowledge on how the 4Ps of a cultural organisation affect audiences' cultural consumption, including the decision-making process that leads to it.

The A1 secondary objective is achieved through descriptive analysis, that is the use of personal interviews with key personnel of the organisation, the study of already conducted research of the organisation on audiences' characteristics, perceptions and behaviours, study analysis of content given by the organisation, content analysis of the activity of Onassis Stegi on social media, basic content analysis of the organisation's presence on media, study analysis of the evolution of organisation's website through the years that the research lasts (2018-2020); the latter analysis though concerns all the communication strategies of the organisation. A1 is divided into two research questions:

RQA1a) What are the product, price and place strategies OCC uses?

RQA1b) What are the communication strategies (4<sup>th</sup> P) OCC uses to promote its cultural programming and the brand of Onassis Stegi itself?

The A2 secondary objective is achieved through the use of focus groups, which will be analysed in the related section, and is divided into the two research questions below:

RQA2a) Do the product, price and place influence audiences during their decision-making process to consume arts?

RQA2b) How do the communication strategies (4<sup>th</sup> P) of a cultural organisation affect audiences' decision-making process for cultural consumption?

The secondary objectives of the second main research objective are the below:

B1) Comprehend the motivations of Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture in general.

B2) Understand the opinion of OCC's consumers about the product, price and place strategies of Onassis Stegi.

B3) Gain knowledge from the opinion of Onassis Stegi's consumers regarding the organisation's communication strategies.

B4) Comprehend the link between the perceptions of OCC's consumers and their consumption of OCC's products.

B5) Explore the opinion of stakeholders regarding Onassis Stegi's cultural product and communication strategies (and link it to consumers' opinions).

The second main research objective and its secondary objectives are related to the audiences' research. The audiences that will be researched are the active consumers and the stakeholders. The main methods are focus groups (FG) and interviews. The method of investigation used for B1, B2, B3, and B4 is the focus groups, and for these secondary objectives the below research questions correspond:

RQB1) What motivates Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture?

RQB2) How the product, price and place of OCC are perceived by consumers?

RQB3) How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by consumers?

RQB4) How do consumers' perceptions affect their consumption behaviour regarding Onassis Stegi's products?

The B5 secondary objective is divided into the below three research questions, which will be answered through personal interviews with the stakeholders:

RQB5a) How the product of Onassis Stegi is perceived by stakeholders?

RQB5b) How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by stakeholders?

RQB5c) What are the similarities and differences between consumers' and stakeholders' perceptions of Stegi's products and communication strategies?

To sum up, this research has chosen to use the below methodologies: 1) for the descriptive analysis of Onassis Stegi's marketing and communication strategies: one-to-one or group in-depth interviews and content analysis of hard or soft copies of informational material about the organisation 2a) for the analysis of stakeholders perceptions about Stegi's communication strategies: one-to-one, in-depth interviews 2b) for the analysis of consumers' perceptions about Stegi's marketing and communication strategies, and the effect of their perception on their consumption of Onassis Stegi's products: focus groups. The consumer behaviour regarding Stegi's products is of course related to the general cultural consumption of the consumers to be investigated and the social environment (including physical and social settings) at the time the research is taking place<sup>115</sup> (Woolf & Aron, 2013). At this point, it is necessary to clarify that although this PhD research started in October 2016 and finished in first half of 2023 the actual research of the case study, personal and group interviews, content analysis, and focus groups, was conducted between November 2017 and October 2020. This means that all the data collected from Onassis Stegi and its consumers concern this period.

MAIN RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	Secondary Objectives	Research Questions	Methods
A- Improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption	A1- Comprehend the marketing mix tools (4Ps) that Onassis Stegi applies	RQA1a- What are the product, price and place strategies OCC uses?	Interviews, content analysis
		RQA1b- What are the communication strategies (4 <sup>th</sup> P) OCC uses to promote its cultural programming and the brand of Onassis Stegi itself?	Interviews, content analysis
	A2- Improve knowledge on how the 4Ps of a cultural organisation affect audiences' cultural consumption, including the decision-making process that leads to it.	RQA2a- Do the product, price and place influence audiences during their decision-making process to consume arts?	Focus groups
		RQA2b- How do the communication strategies (4 <sup>th</sup> P) of a cultural organisation affect audiences' decision-making process for cultural consumption?	Focus groups
B-Study attitudes, motivations and perceptions of Onassis Stegi's audiences	B1- Comprehend the motivations of Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture in general	RQB1- What motivates Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture?	Focus groups

<sup>115</sup> At this case the pandemic of COVID-19 affected the research as its impact was obvious on society, economy, health, cultural consumption, education etc. I consider cultural and economic settings as parts of social settings, and in this case they contributed to how each country dealt with the pandemic and its consequences.

	B2- Understand the opinion of OCC's consumers about the product, price and place strategies of Onassis Stegi	RQB2- How the product, price and place of OCC are perceived by consumers?	Focus groups
	B3- Gain knowledge of the opinion of Onassis Stegi's consumers regarding the organisation's communication strategies	RQB3- How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by consumers?	Focus groups
	B4- Comprehend the link between the perceptions of OCC's consumers and their consumption of OCC's products	RQB4- How do consumers' perceptions affect their consumption behaviour regarding Onassis Stegi's products?	Focus groups
	B5- Explore the opinion of stakeholders regarding Onassis Stegi's cultural product and communication strategies, and link it to consumers' opinion	RQB5a- How the product of Onassis Stegi is perceived by stakeholders?	Personal interviews
		RQB5b- How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by stakeholders?	Personal interviews
		RQB5c- What are the similarities and differences between consumers' and stakeholders' perceptions of Stegi's products and communication strategies?	Personal interviews

Table 6. Conceptual Map

## 5.2. Descriptive analysis: Onassis Stegi

The main reasons why this specific case study of Onassis Stegi was chosen were developed at the beginning of this chapter (5.1 Overall design). Before describing how the case study will be analysed, I will briefly mention again the main reasons for this choice. Onassis Stegi in Athens is one of the few organisations in Greece that applies such a wide spectrum of arts marketing tools that theory suggests. Additionally, it is one of the very few that invests in audience research. It has a prominent position in the Athenian cultural scene, a multifaceted and contemporary artistic agenda, international collaborations, and a high percentage of audience attendance.

### 5.2.1. The organisation and its communication strategies

The collection of data derived from in-depth interviews with key personnel of OCC, and content analysis of material mainly provided by the organisation. Moreover, it derived from the 'research of OCC's audiences'. In this case, the audiences that were analysed were consumers of OCC'S performing arts and a few stakeholders.

To get access to OCC, I first approached the gatekeepers, specifically the Communication and Marketing Deputy Director (Marianna Platyrachou) of the organisation, who discussed my research project with the Deputy General Manager of Onassis Stegi (Aphrodite Panagiotakou) at that time and later on Cultural Director and permitted me to conduct the interviews with key personnel, as well as to have access on some inside information of the organisation, such as communication tools it uses,

procedures it follows, etc. Although the beginning of the contact with the gatekeeper was quite easy, later on, as the gatekeeper changed, I needed to put much effort to get access to the organisation. Although the new gatekeeper imposed many restrictions initially, I managed to reopen negotiations later on, as trust and rapport<sup>116</sup> were developed. Nevertheless, I did not manage to get the full spectrum of access that I would like, but the collected data were enough for my research.

To enter the field site and get access to the data, I needed to have good social and communication skills, as well as patience, to handle the denial of people, their dissatisfaction with and fear of sharing inside info, as well as their hesitation for being audio-recorded. Moreover, all the personal characteristics of the researcher, as well as his/her emotional condition affect the research task (Holton & Walsh, 2017; Neuman, 2014). Taylor and Bogdan (1998) advise researchers to consider the interview as a form of social interaction. "Like other skilled interviewers, grounded theorists must remain active in the interview and alert for interesting leads" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 97).

All the marketing strategies of the organisation were investigated, but the focus was put on communication strategies. For the first part of the research, the interviews with the key personnel of Onassis Stegi followed a flexible framework that was used as a guide<sup>117</sup>. But not all the questions were prescheduled and the participant had some control. The sampling techniques were purposeful, "based on judgments directly related to the purpose of the research" (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 209). Hence, the decisions regarding whom, where and when the interviews took place, are justified and guided by the purpose of the research (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

All the interviews with Onassis Stegi were conducted at the administrative building of the organisation (2, Galaxia Street & Evridamantos, Athens), which is located at the back side of the main building. Initially, at the first stage of the research, the interviews with the communication and marketing department of OCC were conducted, and the ones with the rest of the key personnel followed; the research population was small as it was related to a single organisation and a specific group of people. Besides, in qualitative analysis, the quality of the analysis is more important than the size of the sample (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). The type of interview that was mostly used is the one-to-one interview, either in a single encounter or in several meetings. Only in the case of the educational programs department and communication and marketing team, did group interviews happen, consisting of two people. For the educational department, because of the busy schedule of the Educational Programs Curator (Myrto Lavda), the two Educational Program Assistants (Eleanna Semitellou & Leonidas

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<sup>116</sup> Trust and rapport are necessary ingredients for successful qualitative interviews (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

<sup>117</sup> "The interview guide serves solely to remind the interviewer to ask about certain things" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 105).

Panagopoulos) replaced her. For the communication and marketing team, as the media office consisted of three people -two media officers and one assistant- was considered right to interview the two Media officers (Vaso Vasilatou & Katerina Chortaria Tamvaki) together. Again for the communication and marketing department, the Campaign Manager (Haris Giakoumakis) along with the Communication and Marketing Director (Demetres Drivas) were interviewed as a group twice; the latter happened mainly because the Communication and Marketing Deputy Director (Marianna Platyrachou) I had met when I started my research, was replaced by a new person (Demetres Drivas) with a new job title (Communication and Marketing Director), and the Campaign Manager was the one that was mainly bridging the communication between the researcher and the new director. The key personnel with which I had one -to one interview is mentioned below: Campaign Manager (Haris Giakoumakis), Commercial Director (Nikos Rossolatos), Performing Arts Curator (Katia Arfara), Events Management (Daniel Vergiadis), Social Media Manager (Alexandros Roukoutakis), Head of Touring (Christina Liata). Additionally, I interviewed the Communications Editor (Nikos Athanasopoulos) who later on changed job title and became Creative Leader. Following Daymon & Holloway (2011), the interviews were conducted face-to-face and online. For the online ones, programs such as Skype were used, which “enable text-, audio- or video-based interviews” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 223). Additionally, written asynchronous online communication occurred by e-mail, where the interviewees were replying to my supplementary questions. Most of the interviews were not one-offs, as I needed to re-examine certain issues and conduct follow-up interviews (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). The only one was one-off was with the Performing Arts Curator (Katia Arfara), and this was mainly because of her limited time as she is constantly travelling, but also because I collected the necessary information in one interview. Regarding the logistics, the average duration of the interviews was approximately 1 hour (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Morgan, 1997; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Below, a detailed table (Table 7) regarding the interviews is presented. The table consists of the names of the interviewees, their positions, the dates the interviews took place, and their duration.

Name	Position	Date/s	Duration
Haris Giakoumakis	Campaign Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 6/10/2017 In-person</li> <li>● 13/12/2018 In-person</li> <li>● 8/3/2019 In-person</li> <li>● 26/6/2019 Skype/Phone-interview</li> <li>● Mail communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 58'</li> <li>● 65'</li> <li>● 45'</li> <li>● 70'</li> </ul>

Nikos Athanasopoulos	Communications Editor (Later on: Creative Leader)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 10/10/2017 In-person</li> <li>● Mail communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 40'</li> </ul>
Nikos Rossolatos	Commercial Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 10/10/2017 In-person</li> <li>● 5/3/2019 In-person</li> <li>● Mail communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 80'</li> <li>● 65'</li> </ul>
Alexandros Roukoutakis	Social Media Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 10/10/2017 In-person</li> <li>● 14/06/2019 Skype/Phone interview</li> <li>● 11/7/2019 Skype/Phone interview</li> <li>● Mail communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 30'</li> <li>● 38'</li> <li>● 10'</li> </ul>
<i>*Group interview</i> Vaso Vasilatou & Katerina Chortaria-Tamvaki	Media officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 11/10/2017 In-person</li> <li>● Mail communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 75'</li> </ul>
<i>*Group interview</i> Demetres Drivas & Haris Giakoumakis	Communication and Marketing Director & Campaign Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 12/12/2018 In-person</li> <li>● 8/03/2019 In-person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 105'</li> <li>● 38'</li> </ul>
Daniel Vergiadis	Events Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 17/12/2018 In-person</li> <li>● Mail communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 37'</li> </ul>
<i>*Group interview</i> Eleanna Semitellou & Leonidas Panagopoulos	Educational Program Assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 5/3/2019 In-person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 58'</li> </ul>
Katia Arfara	Performing Arts Curator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 6/03/2019 In-person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 30'</li> </ul>
Christina Liata	Head of Touring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 8/05/2019 In-person</li> <li>● Mail communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 40'</li> </ul>

Table 7. Interviews with OCC

In this case, interviews are an appropriate method firstly because the subject matter is confidential, as none of the organisations likes to share their strategic plans or marketing and communication approaches. That's why the interviewees may be reluctant to give all the information needed other than in a one-to-one interview and only if they know more details about the aims of the research (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). Secondly, the interview is the preferred method when the aim "is to

develop an understanding of the participant's working 'world' so that you might influence it" (Easterby-Smith, Thrope, & Jackson, 2008, p. 144).

The interviews were not structured, but mostly semi-structured and unstructured. The latter, where minimal guidance is given to the interviewees, were used less as, although they normally give the richest data, they have the highest "drop rate" and they are time-consuming. Semi-structured interviews were more useful for this research. This kind of interview needs an interview guide and developed questions prior to interviewing, but there is no need to be followed strictly, depending on the process of each interview and the participants' answers (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). What was used in this research was the in-depth interviewing {"nondirective, unstructured, non-standardised, and open-ended interviewing" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 88)} (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The researcher has some questions (semi-structured), and the research subject has some answers, but at the same time the interviewing is flexible and dynamic and it is "modelled after a conversation between equals", with the interviewer to become a research tool, "far from being an impersonal data collector" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 88). The target is to understand informants' perspectives and in OCC's key personnel case is to understand perspectives on professional experiences or situations; it could be said that it comes under the second type of "in-depth interviewing (that) is directed toward learning about events and activities that cannot be observed directly {...} (and) the people being interviewed are informants in the truest sense of the word. They act as observers –eyes and ears in the field- for the researcher" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 89). However, it could be said that it also comes under the third type of in-depth interviewing that intends "to yield a picture of a range of settings, situations, or people", in this case, a range of settings (How OCC functions? What is the philosophy that forms these settings?), situations (How it handles them?), and people (Who is Onassis Stegi? Who are the people behind the strategies?).

In-depth interviews were chosen as "the research interests are relatively clear and well defined" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 90)-marketing strategies of Onassis Stegi-, "the researcher is interested in understanding a broad range of settings or people" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 91), and the organisation and its key personnel were not otherwise accessible; the latter means that as a researcher, I could not gain access in their daily work environment, to be able to understand how things work.

The drawback of these interviews is that "people say and do different things in different situations" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 90) which means in this case that the key personnel I interviewed may prettify their daily working routine (e.g. complaint handling). Moreover, "you cannot assume that what a person says during an interview is what that person" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 91) does. For



instance, one of the campaign managers of Stegi told me during one of the interviews that he and his colleagues fill in the 'campaign tool' before they start preparing a campaign. This tool helps them to design the strategy. Nevertheless, interacting with this person later on, I discovered that the 'campaign tool' was a habit the campaign managers used to have especially when the organisation was established. With time though, and as the cultural agenda was growing along with the workload, they started completing the 'campaign tool' in their minds, so there was no file of campaign tools for recent past events. This came up when I insisted several times to get a filled-in campaign tool.

As mentioned above, except for the face-to-face interviews, online and phone interviews were also used. These were consisting of text-, audio- or video chats. The text-based were asynchronous, that is e-mails. This method was used with the participants that were too distant for me to reach face-to-face because of the different locations (I was located in Oman and the interviewees were in Greece); with most of them consequently, we had a different time zone, so asynchronous interviews were facilitating the process, in specific cases. At the first interviews (face-to-face) the questions were grand tour (broad) and later on, the majority were mini tour (more specific) questions (Davis, 1997; Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Spradley, 1979; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Audio recording and transcribing, as well as note-taking during the interview, were used. For the online interviews, copying and saving digital files was preferred, but also Skype interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed afterwards.

To briefly give some examples of the interview guides I used during the face-to-face interviews I prepared the below table (Table 8). Nevertheless, a full guide for interviews can be found in the appendices.

Position of Interviewees	Part of the interview guide
<p><i>Communication and Marketing Director</i></p> <p>&amp;</p> <p><i>Campaign Manager</i></p>	<p>-What are the procedures you are following at the marketing department?</p> <p>-What is your target audience and which strategies you are using to approach it?</p> <p>-Are you using informal market tests, such as pre-performance audience surveys, pre-test of campaign messages, etc.?</p> <p>-Are you using with your products the full procedure of product development? (i.e. Identify the audience, identify and enhance the selling points, differentiate from competitors, package the product effectively, pricing, distribution, etc.)</p> <p>-How are you handling community relations?</p> <p>-What is the role of influencers in your communication strategy?</p> <p>-How are you handling the communication crisis?</p> <p>-Are you using giveaways?</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-How do you evaluate your strategies?</li> <li>-Are you branding Onassis Stegi itself?</li> </ul>
<i>Communications Editor - Creative Leader</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-How do you decide about the content of your communication and marketing campaigns?</li> <li>-How do you manage to have a social impact through your content?</li> <li>-How you approach different communities through your content</li> </ul>
<i>Commercial Director</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-How are you choosing the media you use for advertisement?</li> <li>-Are you using sponsors or sponsorships?</li> <li>-Could you describe in detail your ticketing policy?</li> <li>-What are your tools for online advertisement?</li> <li>-How are you handling the newsletters (audience targeting, opening rates etc. ?)</li> <li>-Are you using personal selling?</li> </ul>
<i>Social Media Manager</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Which social media platforms are your favourite ones?</li> <li>-What are the strategies you are using in social media to promote Onassis Stegi's cultural products and Onassis Stegi itself?</li> <li>-How are you handling community management?</li> <li>-How do you interact and engage with your audiences?</li> </ul>
<i>Media officers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Who represents your organization in the media?</li> <li>-What are your media relationships and how do you build them?</li> <li>-What is the content of your press releases and their frequency and why?</li> <li>-Many of your cultural products travel abroad. How are approaching the foreign media?</li> </ul>
<i>Events Manager</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To whom you address the events you organise</li> </ul>
<i>Educational Program Assistants</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-What do your educational products consist of?</li> </ul>
<i>Performing Arts Curator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-How are you choosing the national and international performances Onassis Stegi will host?</li> </ul>
<i>Head of Touring</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-What is your department doing in detail?</li> <li>-How do you decide which of your performances will travel abroad?</li> <li>-How do you choose the countries your cultural product will travel to?</li> </ul>

Table 8. Part of the interview guide

Except for the interviews, I also conducted a study of material that Onassis Stegi people shared with me in hard or soft copy, such as statistics for their social media performance (soft copy), the campaign tool they use for marketing campaigns (soft copy) or leaflets, brochures and the similar about their annual programming; the latter includes also the educational programs, on which they devote special booklets. More specifically, they shared with me brochures for the international networks they participate in, publications they have done in collaboration with other institutions (e.g. conferences) etc. The majority of these documents (soft copies) can be found on Stegi’s social platform [Issuu](https://issuu.com) (Figure 15), which will be mentioned in the chapter that regards Stegi’s social media platforms (6.5.2.d).

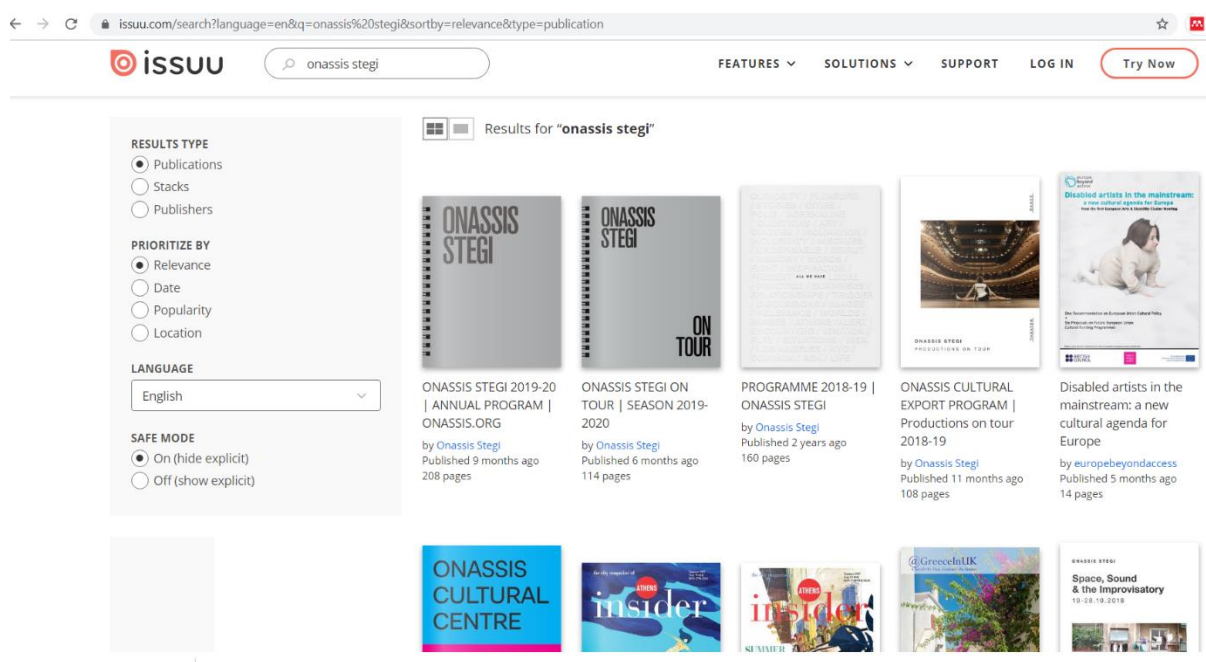


Figure 15. Soft copies of Stegi’s documents on Issuu

### 5.3. Qualitative approach

Although the case study method is broadly “recognised among the array of qualitative research choices”, it “is not just a form of ‘qualitative research’”, as “some case study research goes beyond being a type of qualitative research, by using a mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence” (Yin, 2009, p. 19). Hence, this case study research is conducted through descriptive analysis, as explained in the previous section.

This research applies a qualitative approach to study the communication strategies of Onassis Stegi and its audiences’ cultural consumption of its products, as well as its audiences’ perceptions of its communication strategies. Each case study research has its own traits. “Qualitative methodologies are in fact commonly perceived as a better option when analysing complex objects of research, those cases in which the researcher needs to understand and interpret, rather than establish causal relations between factors” (Suau, 2015, p. 108).

Qualitative research is a flexible approach (Charmaz, 2014), criticized mainly for the researcher's reflexivity, problems of generalisation (due to the small size of the sample), and lack of transparency in the analysis and interpretation of data (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Charmaz, 2014; Daymon & Holloway, 2011). On the other side, quantitative researches tend to "isolate variables from their natural context" (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 11) and lack in the description, compared to qualitative ones (Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

As mentioned each methodology can give different aspects of the same research problem, but the choice of the researcher is finally the one that defines the plan to be followed. This choice should depend mainly on which methodology will give the best possible results for this research. Nevertheless, the methodology that suits the researcher, or the one that is more convenient or allowed to use, considering the restrictions the case study organisation might put or any legal restrictions, is finally the chosen one.

To conclude, in choosing a qualitative approach to study the main research objectives of this research, "I am consciously favouring an approach that gives more importance to digging deeper into the research problem" (Suau, 2015, p. 111). I am trying to understand the 'how' and 'why' of Onassis Stegi's communication strategies, as well as the 'how' and 'why' of audiences' cultural consumption. I am following a similar approach ('how' and 'why') for audiences' perceptions about the communications strategies of Onassis Stegi. Except for the type of research question (how? why?), as an investigator, I do not need to control behavioural events, and the focus is on contemporary events (Yin, 2009).

### 5.3.1. The audiences of Onassis Stegi

For the study of the audiences of Stegi, I used two qualitative techniques. One was the focus groups for the active consumers, and the other was personal interviews with some stakeholders.

The Covid-19 pandemic slowed down and changed many aspects of our lives. Personally, I faced some problems with the conduct of the fieldwork due to the pandemic. The main difficulty was the reluctance of the participants of focus groups to attend the gatherings in September-October 2020, as they were afraid of the pandemic. Moreover, due to Covid-19, there was a ban at that time in Greece on gathering more than six people. Hence, the size of my focus groups was affected. Additionally, the alternative of online focus groups via Zoom or other similar tools, was not an option for me, as I was a novice in focus groups. Hence, we decided with my supervisor at that time Pere Masip that it was wiser and it would be more effective to conduct them in person. Nevertheless, two of the interviews with the stakeholders were done through Skype.

One of the goals of this part of the research was to get comparable answers from consumers and stakeholders on the same main topic, which is the communication strategies of OCC (comparable answers on the perceptions of audiences about the cultural product is a precondition). The research aimed at understanding how specific audiences, consumers and stakeholders, perceive the communication strategy of Onassis Stegi and its brand image. The way of execution though was different, as in the first case of consumers the methodology of focus groups was used, while in the case of stakeholders, one-to-one interviews were conducted. As mentioned also at the beginning of this chapter, focus groups were considered the best technique to use for the groups of Stegi's consumers, mainly as a way to get more fruitful results through the interaction of participants during the process. Moreover, it helped to handle the high number of consumers, compared to the number of stakeholders.

#### 5.4. Focus Groups

The focus group (FG) approach "puts the focus onto research participants, through motivating their own reflexivity about the issues under study" (Suau, 2015, p. 112), the communication strategies of Onassis Stegi in this case, "trying to find general trends and behavioural patterns among research participants" (Suau, 2015, p. 112). Furthermore, it could also be a good springboard for further research into the topic, the successful communication strategies of cultural organisations; using the findings of this study, future researchers can use quantitative methods to generalise their findings.

The main point here is that focus groups are especially useful in promoting interaction among research participants by encouraging people "to engage with one another, verbally formulate their ideas and draw out the cognitive structures which previously have been unarticulated" (Kitzinger, 1994, p. 106) (Kitzinger, 1994; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). This is an important reason to choose focus groups for this research, as something similar could not easily happen via interviews. The interaction of participants during the process of focus groups generates key ideas for the research topic. The "Focus groups could reveal dimensions of understanding that often remain untapped by the more conventional one-to-one interview" (Suau, 2015, p. 112). Focus groups are less time-consuming, compared to one-to-one interviews, and inexpensive (Acocella, 2012). In other words "quick and easy" mainly because they produce data that rely on the researcher's focus, and they gather equivalent amounts of data in a shorter time (at least more than other techniques, e.g. individual interviews) (Morgan, 1997). Nevertheless, Morgan (1997) claims that the reputation focus groups have as "quick and cheap" (p. 33) is a myth. "Focus groups demand the same attention to detail as any other means of data collection. As is always the case, the quality of the data depends on the quality of the preparation" (Morgan, 1997, p. 33). As Arksey & Knight (1999) note "focus groups are a low-cost way of getting the range of the informants' perspectives and of getting, some, tentative purchase on who holds them"

(p. 77). In other words, focus groups are inexpensive compared to other methods and consider the quality of results they produce (Acocella, 2012; Arksey & Knight, 1999; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2019; Morgan, 1997). As this is individual research, which is not subsidised by any institution, the low-cost characteristic of focus groups was seriously considered.

The interaction between the members of the focus group that leads to fruitful discussion/results, and the fact that the information source is the focus group itself- as the data come from the group interaction -, are “the two main characteristics that differentiate the FG from other techniques of information gathering in social research” (Acocella, 2012, p. 1125) (Acocella, 2012; Morgan, 1997), and two of the reasons the researcher chose this specific technique. Nevertheless, FG is not as strong as participant observation or individual interviewing is “within their specialised domain” (Morgan, 1997, p. 16). As Acocella (2012) mentions “the focus group (FG) is a ‘non-standard’ technique of information gathering based on an apparently informal discussion among a group of people” (p. 1126). Or in other words, as Neuman (2014) describes, it is an informal study of a group discussion.

Nevertheless, whenever individuals are asked to answer a question, like in one-to-one interviews or focus groups, they can never fully control their answers, due to the different phases during the response elaboration process. “Knowledge and social meanings are constructed during the” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 98) process. How the participants attribute meanings to the terms used during the discussion (cognitive issues)<sup>118</sup>, how they retrieve and organise the information and how finally they form an opinion, can all be affected by different types of distortion, which affect the final result. During the focus groups, and as different types of participants co-exist, miscommunication can happen. Additionally, the participants should be considered narrators instead of reporters of experience; this means the version of the story they narrate each time, might be a bit different (Acocella, 2012; Arksey & Knight, 1999; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Taylor and Bogdan (1998), referring to a drawback of in depth-interviews, mention that there is a “difference between what people say and what people do” (p. 92). Although focus groups are not interviews but discussions, people talk in these discussions, and still, there might be a difference between what they say and what they do in reality, hence it can be also considered as a drawback of focus groups (Suau, 2015).

Focus groups might be often adopted because researchers consider them easy to organise (but it is not really, as it has more logistical factors to consider and it needs skills and effort to create groups with the right people), or they can be often adapted because it has become a fashionable technique.

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<sup>118</sup> The cognitive problem can be partially faced (or limited) though, if the moderator clarifies at least the basic “terms and expressions that are likely to be used during the discussion” (Acocella, 2012, p. 1131), but this can also “impose the researcher’s conceptual and linguistic categories to the participants” (Acocella, 2012, p. 1131). So the best practice is to encourage participants “to explain themselves the meaning of the terms and expressions they use” (Acocella, 2012, p. 1131).

In reality, it is research that can provide detailed information for the analysis of little-known social phenomena, or it can provide new answers and unexpected opinions from the participants, that the moderators can interpret accordingly (Acocella, 2012; Neuman, 2014). But, an intrinsic limit of the focus group technique is that participants might not express experiences or opinions that the rest of the members do not share, and this is connected to the fact that the more participants the less the quality of individual performance<sup>119</sup> (Acocella, 2012; Latane, Williams, & Harkins, 1979). Moderators should encourage participants to share their own unique perspectives (either at the stage of retrieval and organisation of information or at the stage of formation of opinion). An effective way to accomplish this is to avoid the oral embarrassment or confusion of others' ideas that some of the participants might feel and ask them to write down some reflections on the main topics (Acocella, 2012) (e.g. "Describe Stegi with three words" or "Describe with two words Onassis Stegi's advertisements on the radio". Once all have noted down these words or ideas, an interactive discussion can happen). But the latter is a technique that should be used carefully and not continuously, as it can affect negatively the interaction of the group, one of the main advantages of focus groups. Moreover, as a moderator, during the focus group sessions, I had to ask questions that helped jar participants' memory (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

Additionally, the speed of interaction between the participants and the association of ideas are determinant factors for the topics that will be analysed more (hence the information that will be collected), even if they are not the priority of the researcher (it is better not to give many aspects to the members of the group to deal with and make the selective topic as specific as possible, and of course as interesting and familiar as possible) (Acocella, 2012).

A good interaction among the members of the focus group allows participants<sup>120</sup> to enrich their points of view, think about aspects they were not considered as important until that time and express their opinions even in a more precise way than before (Acocella, 2012; Neuman, 2014). However, inhibition can happen and influence answers, as well as people with low self-esteem or people without a clear opinion, might be decisively affected by the opinions expressed by other participants (e.g. they might conform to the most popular opinion). As Stewart et al. (2007) mention, "personality characteristics interact with demographic variables to influence the behaviour of individuals in groups" (p. 23). Even participants with adult attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)<sup>121</sup> (Mayo Clinic, 2019; National

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<sup>119</sup> This is why my focus groups were consisted of maximum five people, as will be described below. Although my initial intention to have maximum six participants, the pandemic affected this plan, as gatherings could not exceed five people. Additionally, because of the pandemic, there was a general fear and reluctance to group gathering.

<sup>120</sup> The terms "snowballing" "synergism", "stimulation" are used for participants' interaction advantages (Acocella, 2012; Stewart et al., 2007).

<sup>121</sup> A disorder that affects focus, attention and behaviour (National Institute of Mental Health, 2003).

Institute of Mental Health, 2003) may give answers that do not represent them. What participants share with the rest of the group is influenced by the context, which is: the other participants, the broader social context, the institutional and the status context (Neuman, 2014); as mentioned above homogeneity helps in these cases. This can also be translated to social psychology, which has mentioned classic issues that might arise in a group, such as conformity or polarisation (Acocella, 2012; Morgan, 1997). Moderators should not lead participants to conformism, asking them for the desirable answers that serve the research. If only expected answers are given, this means that the FG doesn't offer what it was supposed to, that is -as mentioned above- new answers and unexpected opinions. The technique of writing the answers on a piece of paper that was mentioned above can help even here, with the condition the answers will be anonymous. Another way to avoid conformism is to "undermine the legitimacy of social norms and general consensus or to ask questions in the third person" (Acocella, 2012, p. 1134), or to have a member in the group with subversive ideas. Finally, a big concern for focus group researchers and a potential criticism to them is the moderator's influence on the data, like in almost all qualitative research (Morgan, 1997).

Overall, focus groups are a flexible research tool that fits best this part of this research, as they can "provide a rich and detailed set of data about perceptions, thoughts, feelings and impressions of group members in the members' own words" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 140).

#### 5.4.1. Planning and Design of Focus groups

"FGs are distinguished from the broader category of group interviews by the explicit use of group interaction to generate data" (Acocella, 2012, p. 1129). Focus group should be seen as group discussions instead of group interviews. Nevertheless, Croucher and Cronn-Mills (2019) consider it a research method where participants are collectively interviewed about a specific subject (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2019). In 1994 though, Morgan was supporting that a typology should be created where a focus group could be defined as a specific form of group interview, that indeed generates data due to the interaction between the members (Morgan, 1997; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). "Group interviews must be interpreted in terms of group dynamics" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 114).

To facilitate the interaction among the focus group, the latter should be characterised by homogeneity, but not excessive, and without including close friends or relatives; the participants should have similar characteristics and interests, so they can feel equal to each other and express their thoughts more freely, without inhibitions, but it is also important to have a wide range of perspectives, to get a dynamic conversation (group dynamics). Ideally, researchers should try to balance homogeneity and heterogeneity when it comes to participants' most important and relevant to the research characteristics (Acocella, 2012; Arksey & Knight, 1999; Morgan, 1997; Neuman, 2014; Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2007; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). As Acocella (2012) claims, the groups



should consist of no participants with “too distant cultural levels, social status and hierarchical positions” (Acocella, 2012, p. 1127), or with “wide gaps in social background or lifestyle” (Morgan, 1997, p. 36). “Shared characteristics are likely to contribute to an immediate feeling of rapport” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 246). Nevertheless, “the goal is homogeneity in background and not homogeneity in attitudes” (Morgan, 1997, p. 36). When Morgan (1997) says background, he basically means the variables of “sex, race, age, and social class” (p. 36). The most important though is not how much different (if they are actually different) the participants are, but how much they feel they are, in other words, the perception of themselves and others (Morgan, 1997). Therefore, this is a general concern, and when it comes to perceptions things become complicated.

When the focus groups are structured according to the above, and the moderator encourages a collective debate, creating a comfortable environment for the members of the group, the interaction between the group members can reach such high levels that can lead to a very informative source. The intervention of the moderators should be as little as possible (Acocella, 2012).

The consumers of Onassis Stegi, active ones, were researched in focus groups. The focus groups consisted of acquaintances. As the field research aims at observing over months or even years the people the researcher studies, acquaintances sound like an ideal focus group, as the researchers usually know for a long time their acquaintances than simple strangers. They know more about “their life histories, their hobbies and interests, and their habits, hopes, fears, and dreams” (Neuman, 2014, p. 310).

Morgan (1997) claims that the rule that focus groups should consist of strangers is a myth. Acquaintanceship can be also helpful. The key to this decision is to consider whether the chosen participants can discuss the subject comfortably or not (Morgan, 1997). In essence, my focus groups consist of acquaintances and acquaintances of acquaintances -snowball sampling or snowballing) (Acocella, 2012; Arksey & Knight, 1999; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998)-, so for me, half of the participants are kind of strangers. Nevertheless, all the participants should meet the specific criteria mentioned above (age, educational level, etc.). It is worth mentioning here that “a potential drawback of the snowball technique is that it can limit the diversity of” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 93) the informants, but as a researcher, I tried to identify as diverse people as I could.

#### 5.4.2. Participants Selection

Focus groups usually consist of 6-12 people (Neuman, 2014) or 6-10 and 3-5 groups per project (Morgan, 1997) or of about 7 people (Arksey & Knight, 1999); but as Morgan (1997) notes, this is “how they often are done” (p. 34), and it is not usual or necessary for a project to match all the criteria

considered as “rules of thumb”<sup>122</sup>. Daymon & Holloway (2011) support that “six members is about right for most research purposes associated with traditional focus groups” (p. 247). It was mentioned above that the more participants in a focus group, the less the quality of individual performance (Acocella, 2012; Latane et al., 1979); the size of the group should be large enough “to provide a variety of perspectives but small enough not to become disorderly or fragmented” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 247). This is why my focus groups consisted of a maximum of 5 people<sup>123</sup>, so along with my help as an inexperienced moderator, the interaction between them was productive and all individuals expressed their points of view; this way I could get more detailed data from each participant (Morgan, 1997). Nevertheless, there is also the opinion that larger groups produce a wider range of ideas, but this really depends on the needs and the nature of each project. In this case, I support that this research needed in-depth discussions, while I got a wider range from the total number of groups, which was 5.

According to OCC’s audiences research in 2015 by MRB (detailed data in chapter 6.4.2) the overwhelming majority (84%) of the active consumers had higher education, and the percentage of women was 73% and of men 27%. These characteristics were respected and followed for the creation of the focus groups for this research. Regarding the educational level, this means that all the participants will be university students or graduates. Special attention has been made to ensuring gender representation in the overall participants in focus groups. Nevertheless, this research will not take 50% women and 50% men, because according to scientific research (e.g. Hill, O’Sullivan, & O’Sullivan, 1995; Myer, 2009) –as mentioned in chapter 3- women, compared to men, are more often culture attendees. Hence, as the gender ratios of OCC’s audience research were also respected, the focus groups consisted of 70% women and 30% men.

The main criterion used to separate members of the research in focus groups was age. The same research of MRB (2015) mentioned above, separates the audiences into the below age categories: 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65+. The most active audiences of the organisation age between 25-44 years old; this is why I created 3 focus groups for this target age and 2 for the other target ages. In detail, the consumers are divided into normal users and OCC Friends. For normal users, there is 1 group of 18-24 years old, 1 group of age 25-34, 1 of age 35-44, and 1 of 45+. For OCC Friends, there is 1 group of 35-44 (Table 9). The total number of focus groups will be 5 and more details will be given in the section on recruitment.

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<sup>122</sup> For Morgan (1997), these criteria for the focus group design concern the homogeneity of participants (preferably strangers), the use of “relatively structured interview with high moderator involvement” (Morgan, 1997, p. 34), the size of each group and the total of groups.

<sup>123</sup> My initial plan to have maximum 6 participants at each focus group was affected by the regulations imposed due to the pandemic, and the reluctance of people to participate in bigger groups.

<b>Focus Groups</b>	<b>Age Criteria</b>	<b>Consumption Frequency of Onassis Stegi's Products</b>
1.	18-24	Frequent and non-frequent users
2.	25-34	Frequent and non-frequent users
3.	35-44	Frequent and non-frequent users
4.	35-44	OCC Friends (Frequent users)
5.	45+	Frequent and non-frequent users

Table 9. Age criteria of focus groups

It is necessary to mention at this point the initial objective of the researcher, which was the formation of an additional focus group of non-users, in order not to limit the research only to Stegi's consumers (users). For the focus groups that concern non-users (of age 25-44), the purpose was to discuss with people that have similar characteristics- again in terms of education, sex and age- with the most frequent visitors of OCC, but they are non-consumers of OCC products, although they have a satisfactory level of cultural consumption in general. This different group would reply to different questions. For instance, it would give its perspective on what is missing from the organisation's strategy to reach other potential audiences, and it would express the non-audience stereotypes and common sense about Stegi and its products. It could finally give suggestions for the improvement of Onassis Stegi's marketing strategies. Although initially, the design of the testing focus group of non-users was considered to introduce a broader scope of the study, it did not provide interesting information and has been decided not to include in this thesis. More accurately, adding another layer of focus groups was behind our goals for this thesis project.

Nevertheless, except for education, sex, age, and consumption frequency, the level of familiarity with the organisation was also applied as a criterion, as well as some additional criteria that will be discussed immediately afterwards. The people involved were interested in the topic, as they should be according to the criteria of setting up focus groups, in the sense that they were willing and able to participate in the focus group and elaborate on the topic (Acocella, 2012; Arksey & Knight, 1999; Morgan, 1997; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Nevertheless, this does not mean they should have a remarkable level of knowledge in arts, but the knowledge that serves the purposes of the research. The purpose of this research was to discuss with people that match the profile of the most frequent visitors of OCC in terms of age, sex and education and that are consumers of the organisation's products, which means they have direct experience of the topic, that is Stegi<sup>124</sup>. "Spradley (1979) (in Taylor & Bogdan, 1998) suggests that one of the requirements for good informants is 'thorough enculturation'; that is, knowing a culture (or subculture, group, or organisation) so well that they no

<sup>124</sup> As Acocella (2012) writes, people "whose point of view emerges from the familiarity" with Stegi, in this case (p. 1127).

longer think about it” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 94). The latter is definitely happening with the OCC Friends. It is important the members of each group to “have similar experiences towards the topic discussed” (Acocella, 2012, p. 1128), or in other words, the participants’ level of involvement for the topics discussed should match (Morgan, 1997); but, as mentioned above discussing homogeneity, the level of involvement doesn’t need to be the same. The important is that the participants can “easily discuss this topic in normal, day-to-day interaction” (Morgan, 1997, p. 36).

The main criteria of age, frequency of cultural consumption, frequency of consumption of Stegi’s products, and participants’ level of involvement/familiarity with Stegi, were chosen as they define the character of each focus group and eliminate cases where members of the group feel uncomfortable to express themselves or they feel they don’t fit in this group. The role of the moderator though is also important to minimize these kinds of situations, where participants feel uncomfortable. Sometimes though the unwillingness to participate actively in the focus group might be attributed to factors such as personality (Acocella, 2012; Morgan, 1997; Stewart et al., 2007)

In these focus groups, I will not set as criteria the marital status or the lifecycle in general, as most lifecycle is linked to age, and the age categorisation that has already been done can cover these. Nevertheless, the residency of the participants and their media consumption related to arts (frequency & specific media) were recorded and mentioned in the analysis of the data. The residency of the participants was used in the analysis as an index of the cultural habits of people who live in the suburbs (although they have the same educational level), but also as a pediment or not for reaching the organisation that is located close to the city centre. According to the MRB (2015), research on behalf of Stegi, the majority of the audience resides in the city centre (35%), while the North (20%) and South (19%) suburbs follow. This is most probably linked to the educational level of people living in different areas, as well as their economic status. For instance, in Athens, the North and South suburbs are considered posh, and residents usually have a higher social status and educational level. Apparently, rich people have high salaries, good jobs, and high educational levels, or wealthy family backgrounds with high social and educational levels. According to attendance patterns mentioned in chapter 3 (Audience and Culture) (Hill et al., 1995; Myer, 2009), kids that grow up in families with high social and educational status, tend to be regular attenders of highbrow culture. On the other hand, the city centre is considered a cool area, where alternative people (like artists), but also poor people (like immigrants) reside. According to research conducted on the human capabilities per geographical unit in Greece, the North and South suburbs of Attica (Athens) have the highest rates of student admission to universities, as well as the highest rates of excellent students (Psycharis et al., 2015). As mentioned above, at this point, the educational level of the family might play an important role or the economic situation of the family as it leads to the choice of a private or public school, and private

schools usually have higher rates of success. Additionally, the research supports that the richer the municipality is, the higher the rates of students' admission to universities (Psycharis et al., 2015).

The next decision concerns "how structured the groups will be, including the level of moderator involvement" (Morgan, 1997, p. 34). My focus groups relied "on a relatively structured interview with high moderator involvement" (Morgan, 1997, p. 34) which is what often happens with focus groups. This happened mainly because there was a strong, pre-existing set of topics for the research. Although the group discussions were structured (standardised set of topics for all), and the content of the interviews was predetermined, there were two different contents of interviews; one for the normal users, and one for the OCC Friends, who are also users. This is necessary for consistent comparison across all the groups. If the researcher chooses to use the predetermined content for one group, he/she should use it also for the others, so that the conversation does not deviate and gives different results in each case. The high level of moderator involvement has been used to "keep the discussion concentrated on the topics that interest" (Morgan, 1997, p. 40) the researcher.

The target for all groups is to discuss and discover things related to the research questions. As I didn't want to alert the participants of the users' groups to the research questions, so they wouldn't feel they needed to study and be prepared before the focus group (this concerns mainly the screening questionnaires), or they needed to give specific answers during the discussion- answers that would be for instance in favour of Onassis Stegi- I tried to "confuse" them using two more organisations (Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center & National Theatre of Greece) at the recruitment stage. These are mainly organisations that I consider competitors, based on common sense. Nevertheless, one of these organisations (National Theatre of Greece) is considered a competitor also from the audiences of Stegi, based on the MRB (2015) research. The first cultural organisation that was used is the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center (SNFCC), which was not included in the MRB research of 2015, as it was established in 2017. SNFCC includes also the Greek National Opera, the National Library of Greece and the 210,000 m<sup>2</sup> Stavros Niarchos Park. The main point is that there are two powerful foundations, Onassis Foundation and Stavros Niarchos Foundation, that both have established cultural centres, OCC and SNFCC respectively. Stavros Niarchos was also a Greek shipping tycoon, such as Aristotle Onassis. S. Niarchos and A. Onassis were great shipping rivals in their times of success, as well as brothers-in-law for some time<sup>125</sup>. The Stavros Niarchos Foundation was established in 1996, after Stavros Niarchos' death, to honour the Greek shipping magnate. "The Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) is one of the world's leading private, international philanthropic organizations,

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<sup>125</sup> Except for rivals in professional life, the two magnates were also rivals in love life, as Onassis married to Tina Livanou, the woman with which Niarchos was in love. Nevertheless, 13years later, when Tina divorced Onassis, she got married Niarchos, who was her sister Eugenia's widower (Vasilopoulos, Papaioannou, & Pantazopoulou, 2006).

making grants to non-profit organizations in the areas of arts and culture, education, health and sports, and social welfare. SNF funds organizations and projects worldwide that aim to achieve a broad, lasting, and positive impact on greater society, and exhibit strong leadership and sound management. The Foundation also supports projects that facilitate the formation of public-private partnerships as an effective means for serving public welfare” (Niarchos Foundation, n.d.)([www.snf.org](http://www.snf.org)). The construction of SNFCC was funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (€566 million) and, after its completion in 2016, was donated to the Greek state in 2017. Nevertheless, Alexander S. Onassis Foundation was created almost two decades earlier by Aristotle Onassis to honour the memory of his son Alexander, who died at age of 25 in a plane crash in 1973 (Onassis Foundation, n.d.) (<https://www.onassis.org/people/aristotle-onassis>). Both foundations are active abroad.

The second cultural organisation was the National Theatre of Greece, the theatre that the majority of audiences perceive as a competitor of Onassis Stegi, most probably based on the quality of the spectacles. The aim of giving the two extra organisations was for the participants of focus groups not to feel obliged to support or not a specific cultural organisation. Nevertheless, this could not happen with the group of OCC Friends (35-44 years old), as the participants knew in advance they had to talk about their favourite or one of their favourite’s cultural organisations, as they are loyal consumers of Stegi’s cultural products.

#### 5.4.3. Recruitment

The groups of this research were researcher-constituted; although the OCC Friends were members of the same cultural club and could be considered as pre-constituted, I support that they are not, as the OCC Friends are over 5.000 people and the OCC Friends I chose were not close to each other, hence the group interaction was the same as a researcher-constituted group’s interaction, that is it “may take some time to ‘warm up’” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 245). On the contrary, one could claim that the groups with acquaintances can be considered pre-constituted groups, as participants may be comfortable with each other (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). For the groups that consisted of acquaintances (they were all of this kind), to elude the danger of the functioning of the groups being disrupted by friendship pairs, I tried not to include close friends in the same group, and I also pre-set where each participant would sit, using handmade name plates. In the pre-setting of the groups of acquaintances, I placed those who are more talkative or have more dominant personalities close to the moderator and those who are quiter directly across (Krueger, 2015). My participants were all interested in the topic and respectful of each other. The small group helped to understand each participant better, giving her/him more time to express an opinion.

As the participants were acquaintances and acquaintances of acquaintances, I did not consider it necessary to recruit backup participants, as the chances of non-shows were less, given the relationship that exists between the researcher and participants or participants and their acquaintances. Indeed, there were no no-shows. Nevertheless, even if they were some, I could conduct the focus groups with smaller sizes; besides, “sometimes groups may consist of as few as three members” (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 247).

The number of participants who were recruited was 22, and none of them got any incentive in order to participate<sup>126</sup>. The rule of thumb as per Morgan (1997) supports that the usual number is 3 to 5 focus groups in total, so the research can avoid collecting repeated data. Hence, in this research, there were 5 focus groups in total, as mentioned above, and the groups consisted mostly of 4-5 participants. Normal consumers of OCC’s products consisted of 4 groups, and OCC Friends, the loyal consumers, constitute 1 group. Someone might claim that the total number of focus groups is small if we consider that they are groups of two different categories of users. But “projects that use less standardised interviews and lower levels of moderator involvement require more groups”(Morgan, 1997, p. 44), something that does not apply in this case, as the set of topics will be standardised, the content predetermined and moderator’s involvement high, as mentioned above.

Morgan claims that there should be “more than one group in each segment” (Morgan, 1997, p. 44) when the researcher uses multiple segments. In my case, I do use multiple age segments but, if we consider these segments as sub-segments of the segment “audiences with high educational level” then we have in total 5 groups of the same segment. The below table (Table 10) presents the basic criteria used for the composition of focus groups (Criteria: sex, age range, educational level, residency, frequency of cultural consumption, and level of familiarity with OCC). Nevertheless, regarding the criterion of residency, I recorded it but it was not necessary to include people from all areas proportionally in the focus groups.

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Focus groups make-up</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 78% females and 22% males in total</li> </ul>	The initial aim was 70% females and 30% males in each group and it partially succeeded.
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 group aged 18-24</li> <li>● 1 group aged 25-34</li> </ul>	One of the groups aged 35-44 consisted of OCC Friends.

<sup>126</sup> It is true that in interviewer-informant relationship, the informant usually has “few tangible rewards to gain” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 110), while the interviewer might get status and rewards with the completion of a dissertation or a published article. The informants though spend a considerable amount of time and energy. As the relationship’s nature is one-sided, “interviewers often {...} have to work hard in maintaining informants’ motivation in the interviewing” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 110) or focus group in this case. The good point with acquaintances is that they have already a relationship with the interviewer/moderator/facilitator/researcher and this fact prevents them from seeing themselves as “merely sources of data” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 110). In addition, discussing what the informants gain, the results of a focus groups where the participants would be paid for the views, “would not prove anything” (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 77).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 groups aged 35-44</li> <li>● 1 group aged 35-44</li> <li>● 1 group aged 45+</li> </ul>	
<b>Education</b>	All groups consisted of university students or graduates	The group consisted of university students was the age group 18-24
<b>Residency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 59% North &amp; South Suburbs</li> <li>● 36% City centre</li> <li>● 5% West &amp; East Suburbs</li> </ul>	Where do the participants reside in Athens?
<b>Frequency of Cultural Consumption</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 75% of the participants said they were consuming arts Frequently</li> <li>● 25% of the participants said they were consuming arts Non-Frequently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Frequently</b> Every week Twice per month Every month</li> <li>● <b>Non Frequently</b> Every three months Twice per year At least once per year</li> </ul>
<b>Level of familiarity with OCC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The OCC Friends group consisted of OCC Friends only</li> <li>● The rest of the groups consisted mainly of people who have visited Stegi a few times (3-5 in general), people who have visited 1-2 in general, and people who visit it regularly (at least once per month)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I am an OCC Friend (several times per year)</li> <li>● I am a regular consumer (at least once per month)</li> <li>● I have visited many times (at least once per two or three months)</li> <li>● I have visited it a few times (3-5 in general)</li> <li>● I have visited it once or twice (1-2 in general)</li> </ul>

Table 10. Basic Criteria for Focus Groups' Composition

The media consumption habits of Stegi's consumers (Table 11), although were not used as a criterion for the focus groups' composition, it was an extra characteristic that helped the researcher to have a better picture of the participants. The variable of frequency of media consumption related to arts is linked to the Frequency of Cultural Consumption of the participants. It is linked to but not necessarily dependable on it. This is because, audiences might search for cultural events for many different reasons, such as in order to keep themselves updated or to attend a cultural event if the circumstances permit it.



Media consumption related to arts	Comments	Description
Where are they checking information about cultural events?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 100% Online</li> <li>● 14% Online &amp; Offline</li> </ul>	Prevailing Media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 48% Athinorama</li> <li>● 35% Social Media</li> <li>● 24% Websites of cultural organisations</li> <li>● 23% Viva</li> </ul>
Frequency of media consumption related to arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 100% Frequently</li> <li>● 40% Few times per month</li> <li>● 25% Every week</li> <li>● 15% Every day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Every day</li> <li>● Every week</li> <li>● Few times per week</li> <li>● Few times per month</li> <li>● Every month</li> <li>● Few times per year</li> </ul>
Reasons of the media search	77% of the participants replied that their search for cultural events does not result always in attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 57% Keep themselves updated,</li> <li>● 39% Attend a cultural event if the circumstances permit</li> <li>● 13% Attend a performance</li> </ul>

Table 11. Media consumption habits of Stegi's consumers

As a reminder, I need to mention again that the sex and the educational level have been pre-decided for all the participants of the focus groups. The proportion of women and men was 78% and 22% respectively, for the total number of participants, while regarding their educational level, I need to clarify that only the first focus group (18-24) was including university students as the age target was permitting that. Regarding the rest of the groups, all the participants were university graduates.

Below (Table 12), I present the basic questions I needed to know for the members of the research (focus groups) before I categorised them in focus groups (name and e-mail were also asked for communication purposes). All the below information helped the researcher to make the profile of participants.

<b>Age</b>	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	
<b>Sex</b>	Male	Female				
<b>Residency</b>	City centre	North & South Suburbs	West and East Suburbs			
<b>Occupation</b>	Student	Self-Employed	Private Employee	Civil Servant	Retired	Unemployed
<b>Family Status</b>	Single	Engaged	No kids	With kids below 18 years old	With kids above 18 years old	

<b>Frequency of Cultural Consumption</b>	<b>Frequently</b> Every week Twice per month Every month	<b>Non Frequently</b> Every three months Twice per year At least once per year				
<b>Level of familiarity with OCC</b>	Check the Table 13 below					
<b>Level of familiarity with Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center</b>	Check the Table 13 below					
<b>Level of familiarity with the National Theatre of Greece</b>	Check the Table 13 below					

Table 12. Information for the categorisation of FG

<b>Level of familiarity with OCC</b>	<b>Level of familiarity with Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center</b>	<b>Level of familiarity with the National Theatre of Greece</b>
I am an OCC Friend (several times per year)	I am an SNFCC Member (several times per year)	I visit it several times per year
I am a regular consumer (at least once per month)	I am a regular consumer (at least once per month)	I am a regular consumer (at least once per month)
I have visited many times (at least once per two or three months)	I have visited many times (at least once per two or three months)	I have visited many times (at least once per two or three months)
I have visited many times (at least once per two or three months)	I have visited many times (at least once per two or three months)	I have visited many times (at least once per two or three months)
I have visited it a few times (3-5 in general)	I have visited it a few times (3-5 in general)	I have visited it a few times (3-5 in general)
I have visited it once or twice (1-2 in general)	I have visited it once or twice (1-2 in general)	I have visited it once or twice (1-2 in general)
I know about it but I have never been there	I know about it but I have never been there	I know about it but I have never been there
I never heard it before	I never heard it before	I never heard it before

Table 13. Level of familiarity with cultural organisations

Inspired by Morgan (1997), I claim that the use of any qualitative or quantitative technique as a preliminary technique in the primary method of specific research, “can guide one’s work, not determine it” (p. 27) that means it can be used as a supplement. As mentioned above, one group of people was used for the focus groups, acquaintances, which include also acquaintances of acquaintances, but they are also kind of strangers to me. Hence, based on that, I started the process

of the acquaintances' research with short phone calls to get their full contact details (more interested in the email addresses), and an online screening questionnaire (mostly closed questions), which I created on Google Forms, followed (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). I also used Doodle (<https://doodle.com/en/>) to schedule the meetings with the participants. The preliminary communication with the participants over the phone showed “whether the various participants’ ways of speaking” (Morgan, 1997, p. 23) in general but also “about the topic would allow for a comfortable conversation” (Morgan, 1997, p. 23). The fact that the participants should express their similarities in compatible ways and interact is as important as the group homogeneity (similar experiences or perspectives). The forwarded survey also included extra questions -less related to the focus subject of the research- that helped me to learn better the participants and find a better way to direct the discussion during the focus group. Besides, “the goal of combining research methods is to strengthen the total research project, regardless of which method is the primary means of data collection” (Morgan, 1997, p. 23). The categorisation of the focus groups though did not depend on the extra questions of the survey, which are presented below (Table 14):

<b>Media consumption related to arts (frequency &amp; specific media)</b>			
<b>Where are you checking information about cultural events?</b>	<b>How often you are checking information about cultural events?</b>	<b>Does your search for cultural events result always in attendance/consumption?</b>	<b>If not, what are the different reasons that make you search for ongoing/current cultural events?</b>
Online -Where exactly?	Every day	Yes	Keep myself up to date
Offline -Where exactly?	Every week	Not	Attend an event if the circumstances permit it
	Few times per week		Other -Please Specify
	Few times per month		
	Every month		
	Few times per year		

Table 14. Survey's extra questions

I preferred to ask about media consumption habits through the survey because I wanted to give the interviewees some extra time to think about it, instead of getting stressed during the focus group and forgetting their real habits (such as the website they are regularly using) or even give them the chance to rethink their answer and give one closer to the reality, instead of one closer to their perceptions about reality. This tool though has the risk of participants making up habits, in order to show a different profile.

Additionally, I considered it wise to ask them a few more questions that concern their cultural consumption during the lockdown for the COVID-19 virus<sup>127</sup>, but again without guiding or influencing their answers. This is because Onassis Stegi's communication strategies and its relationship with audiences are connected directly to the organisation's reaction during that global pandemic crisis. In Greece, the announcement of the suspension of all the events due to safety measures for public health happened on 13 March 2019. One country after the other was taking the same measures if it had not happened yet. Immediately, many cultural organisations in Greece, but also worldwide, uploaded performances, exhibitions, operas etc. online for free, to support people in quarantine. Onassis Stegi was late at that and until the beginning of April had not announced any action related to shows/spectacles available for streaming online that sounds a bit strange for an organisation that under normal circumstances does live streaming or hosts free-entrance events. But, when it finally took action three weeks after the lockdown, it did it very professionally. Firstly, from the beneficiary point of view, the Onassis foundation donated 13.5 million medical masks to the Greek National Health System, spending 7.75 million euros. After that, Stegi announced the below on its website and social media and advertised it very actively in several media, and on TV as well (although it is not usually advertised on TV).

*"We stay home. But we insist on going out, through our digital channel. In Athens, New York, Los Angeles, all around the world. From Friday April 3rd, we upload and share in our YouTube channel instances, images, discussions, sounds, emotions. Sold-out shows, new podcasts, educational programs, virtual cinematic experiences, online courses, secret concerts. The reality of the Onassis Foundation becomes digital. One Stegi in every house, in a place that doesn't exist in the map, to entertain, educate, unite, trigger discussions. We come close again, we take the best seat on the sofa and tune into the digital channel of the Onassis Foundation where you can find something different today and every day. Check out all new releases, free of charge and with no time constraints every Friday. Learn more at <https://www.onassis.org/channel/about>".*

Some days after they edited this text, which took its final form, and they also created categories of spectacles (available at: <https://www.onassis.org/channel/about>).

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<sup>127</sup> These data can help the researcher in future research.

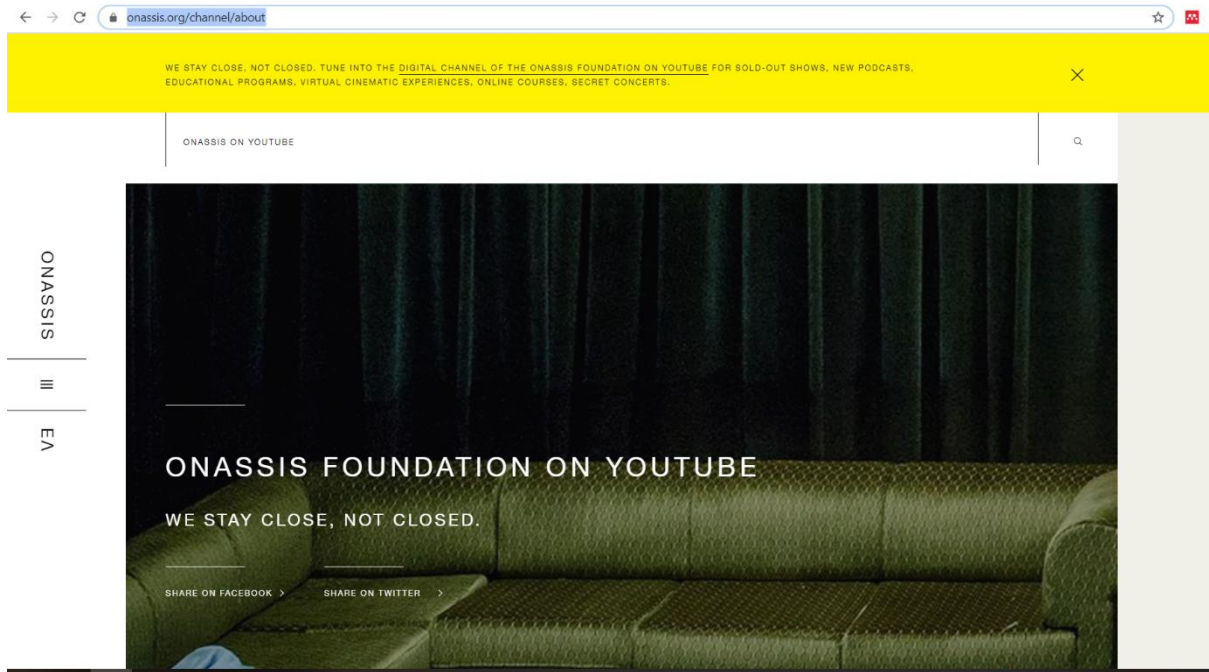


Figure 16. Website during Covid19 (1)

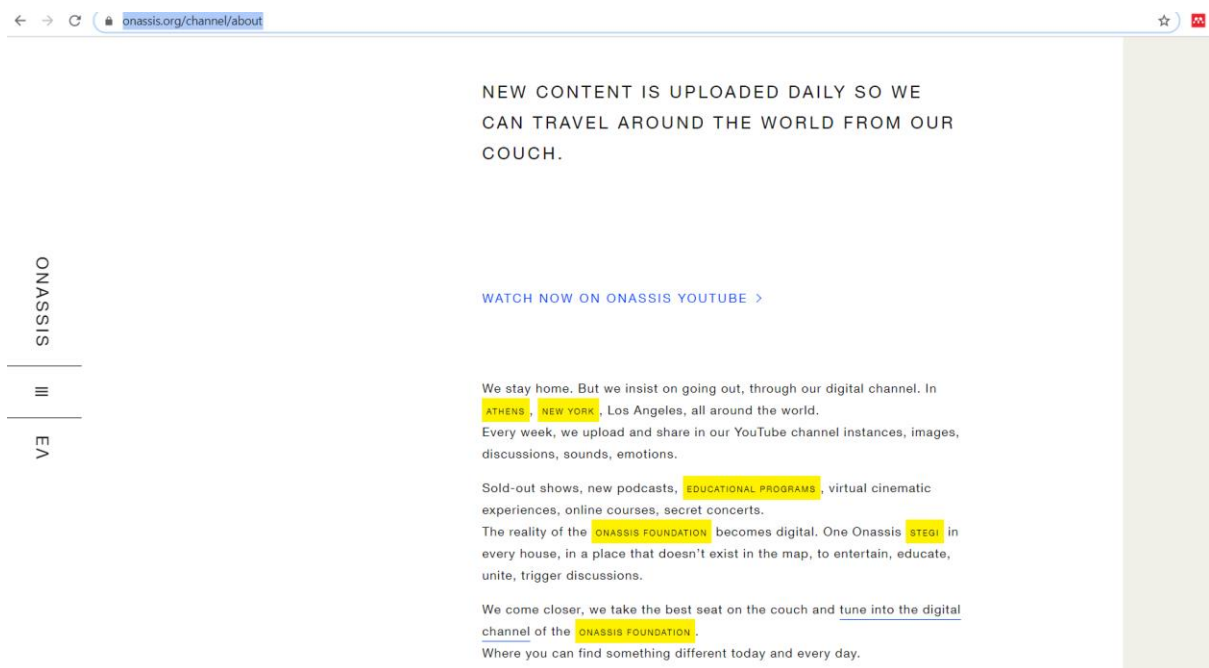


Figure 17. Website during Covid19 (2)

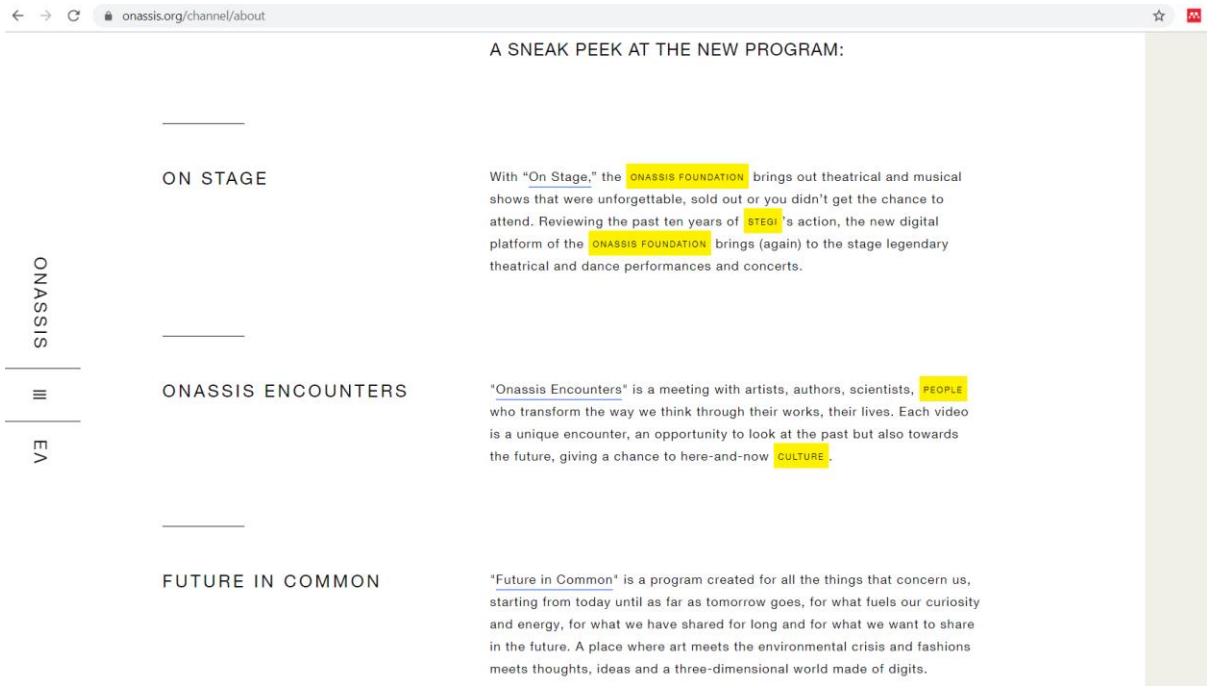


Figure 18. Website during Covid19 (3)

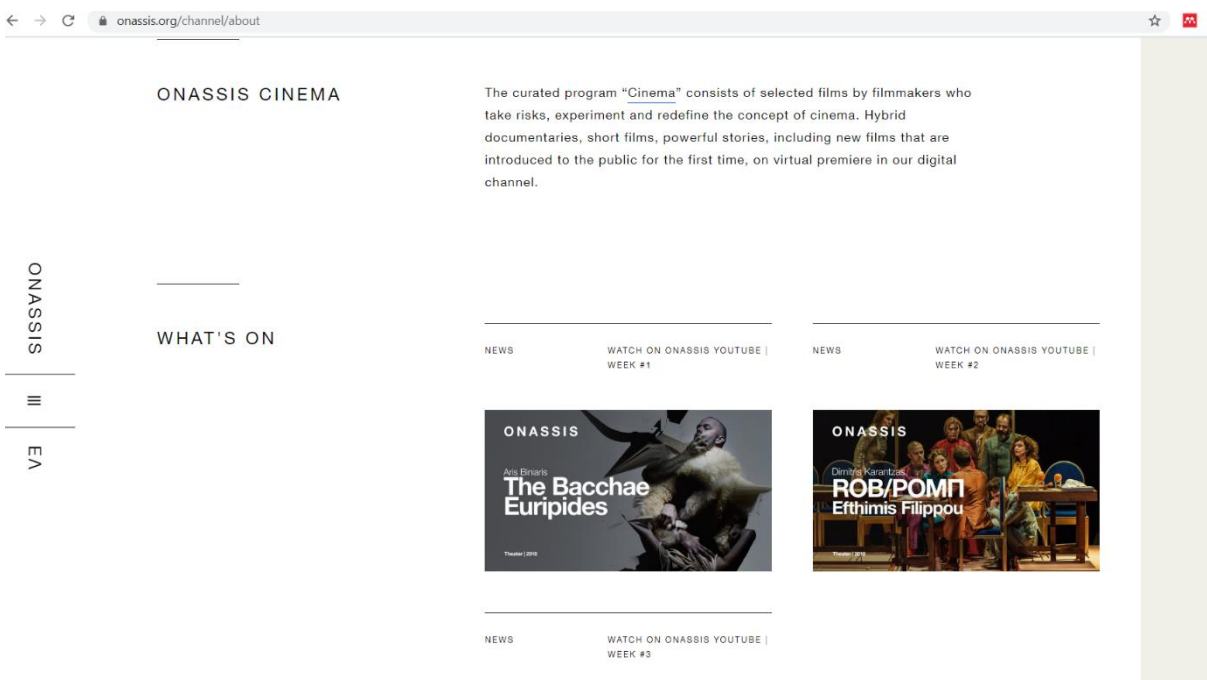


Figure 19. Website during Covid19 (4)

The communication strategies of an organisation function under normal circumstances, but also under crisis. I considered it interesting to see how the policy of Onassis Stegi during COVID-19 affected the audiences. Some people maybe had never visited physically Stegi before, but they might attend online

a few of its products during the lockdown. Additionally, it is interesting to see how and if the cultural consumption of people changed during this lockdown. The related questions that I asked them were the below:

Questions related to cultural consumption during the COVID-19 lockdown	Potential answers
Did you attend any online cultural event during the period of COVID-19 lockdown other than movies (e.g. museum visits, theatrical performances, opera etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> </ul>
If Yes, how often you were doing it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every day</li> <li>• Few times per week</li> <li>• Few times during the whole period of lockdown</li> </ul>
If Yes, which organisations you were choosing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National organisations (Please specify)</li> <li>• International organisations (Please specify)</li> </ul>

Table 15. Questions related to cultural consumption during the COVID-19 lockdown

For OCC Friends, the procedure and the questions were slightly different. For instance, in the screening questionnaire, I did not need to ask them about their level of familiarity with OCC, so the questions were formulated as follows (Table 16):

Age	Sex	Residency	Occupation	Family Status	Frequency of Cultural Consumption	Duration of friendship with OCC
18-24	Male	City centre	Student	Single	<b>Frequently</b> Every week Twice per month Every month	I am a new OCC Friend (two years or less)
25-34	Female	North & South Suburbs	Self-Employed	Engaged	<b>Non Frequently</b> Every three months Twice per year At least once per year	I am an OCC Friend for many years (approximately five)
35-44		West and East Suburbs	Private Employee	No kids		I am an OCC Friend since the beginning
45-54			Civil Servant	With kids below 18 years old		
55+			Retired	With kids above 18 years old		

			Unemployed			

Table 16. A screening questionnaire for OCC Friends

I forwarded to them the link for the online short questionnaire (Google Forms), which was including the above and information related to their media consumption habits (Table 14), as well as their cultural consumption during the lockdown (Table 15). As a researcher, I was aware that the latter might not give me rich data about the consumption of Onassis Stegi’s products, as these participants know and have attended already these products, but it could give me general data during this pandemic crisis.

The recruitment of FG was quite time-consuming, as I had to compare multiple categories of participants (frequent consumers, non-frequent, familiar with OCC, non-familiar). The design procedure lasted two weeks.

#### 5.4.4. Execution of Focus Groups

According to Morgan (1997) (based on Kirk Jerome & Miller Marc L., 1986) there are four phases of qualitative research: planning, observation, analysis and reporting. The planning phase was described above and it is very important as it is “the area where focus groups depart most from standard practices in other qualitative methods” (Morgan, 1997, p. 31). Morgan (1997) though describes the planning needs, perceiving FG as group interviews. Attention should be given to “who the participants are and how the researcher will interact” (Morgan, 1997, p. 31) with the group. As a researcher, I faced the unique ethical issue with focus groups in that the participants do not share their opinion only with the researcher but with the rest of the group as well. This can create diffidence and other reactions as mentioned above. Additionally, the audio recording that was used was accessed only by the research staff (myself); when the analysis was conducted the names changed and the participants are presented by gender, combined with their age, to keep anonymity; so even if the findings of a focus group will be discussed in other settings and situations in the future, such as conferences, no privacy issues will arise. Additionally, by giving the right information, I prevented, as a researcher, the participants to reproduce what happened during the focus groups (confidentiality issues) (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Morgan, 1997; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Furthermore, as a researcher and moderator, I tried to keep impartiality during the moderation of focus groups. Finally, for ethical and legal reasons, participants had to sign an informed consent (Table 17) document that is presented below (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2019).



## INFORMED CONSENT

You are invited to participate in a research study about the communication strategies of Onassis Stegi, because you are part of its audiences. This study is being conducted by Chrysoula Bousiouta, a PhD student of Blanquerna at Ramon Llull University in Barcelona. The study is part of her PhD Thesis entitled "The impacts of Communication strategies of cultural organisations on cultural consumption". The project is self-funded and independent.

Participation is voluntary and anonymity will be kept. The results of the research will be analysed and presented using pseudonyms. If you agree to participate in this study, you will participate in a group discussion, as appropriate to the study sample, with other consumers of Onassis Stegi's products.

Your participation in this study is more than valuable since it will provide important insight into the ways members of Stegi's audiences perceive its marketing strategies and will enlighten the decision-making process one follows when consuming a cultural product.

The total duration of the focus group will not exceed 120 minutes and it will be audio-recorded. The information shared within its limits will be kept completely confidential to the full extent of the law (RGPD). However, please be advised that although the researchers will take every precaution to maintain the confidentiality of the data, the nature of group discussions prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. The researchers would like to remind participants to respect the privacy of their fellow participants and not repeat what is said in the group discussion to others. Reports of study findings will not include any identifying information.

Audio recordings of the group discussion and the typed transcription will be kept on a password-protected computer. The author, Chrysoula Bousiouta and the supervisor of the PhD thesis, Dr Pere Masip Masip, will be able to read the typed version of the recording.

I, Chrysoula Bousiouta, remain at your disposal for any further inquiries. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at the following email address: [cbousiouta@gmail.com](mailto:cbousiouta@gmail.com).

Your signature on this consent form indicates your agreement to participate in this study. You will be given a copy of this form for your personal archive. A second signed form will be kept by the researcher.

I have read the consent form and all of my questions about the study have been answered. I understand that the focus group will be recorded. I agree to participate in this study.

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Table 17. Informed Consent

Regarding logistics, three co-working spaces were rented as research sites, in three different areas of Athens, to ensure the convenience of the participants in each focus group. The first space is called *The Cube* (<https://thecube.gr/>) and is located in the city centre of Athens, 73 Aiolou Str, the second one is called *Quality Brand Offices* (<https://qbspaces.com/en/>) and is located in the south suburbs of Athens, Glyfada, 16 Grig. Lampraki & Metaxa, while the third one is called *F by  $\Phi$*  (<https://f-by-f.com/>) and is located in the city centre, quite close to Onassis Stegi, 65-67 Dimitrakopoulou, Koukaki. Two of the focus groups were conducted at *Quality Brand Offices*, two at *The Cube*, and one at *F by  $\Phi$*  (Table 18). The spaces were comfortable with no distractions. The focus groups were scheduled according to the respective schedules of the participants; for all the focus groups I was the researcher, the recruiter of the participants and the moderator (conduct the groups and analyse the data). The participants were not paid and they were not offered any incentive. (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Morgan, 1997; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

Co-working Spaces	Focus Groups
<i>The Cube</i> ( <a href="https://thecube.gr/">https://thecube.gr/</a> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FG aged 18-24</li><li>• FG aged 35-44</li></ul>
<i>Quality Brand Offices</i> ( <a href="https://qbspaces.com/en/">https://qbspaces.com/en/</a> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FG aged 25-34</li><li>• FG aged 45+</li></ul>
<i>F by <math>\Phi</math></i> ( <a href="https://f-by-f.com/">https://f-by-f.com/</a> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OCC Friends aged 35-44</li></ul>

Table 18. Conduct of FG

The FGs were not conducted in a tight timeline, but in two week-time, between September 2020 and October 2020, respecting the availability of the participants. Their average duration was one hour and a half.

For the structure of the focus group sessions, I followed all the tips and guidelines I have read about the execution of focus groups. I was giving few seconds to the members to think about the answers, I was interrupting with courtesy if needed -refraining from nodding my head or taking notes-, those who were over-consuming the time allotted to them, and I was encouraging the others who were not very talkative (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2019; Krueger, 2015; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). I was not judgmental, I was letting people talk and I was paying attention to what they were saying (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Based almost exclusively on the YouTube video of Richard Krueger (2015), at the beginning of the sessions, I included the below:

1. *Welcome and introduction to the topic*

*I thanked the participants for coming, I explained a bit about myself and my PhD thesis for those who were not aware. For the OCC Friends, I mentioned also my case study.*

## *2. Background*

*I informed them that we would talk about their own experiences on communication strategies and cultural consumption –positive or negative-, their habits, as well as the way they would like things to function (e.g. communication of cultural organisations, quality of spectacles). The cultural consumption habits focused on the season 2019-2020.*

*I also made clear that the research is anonymous and I can forward them a copy of the report once it is published if they are interested. I asked them though to keep the content of the focus group confidential.*

*I reminded them why they were selected for this group. Some of the participants were selected because they belong to a group of people who consume culture regularly; some of them have a good level of familiarity with OCC, while some others were selected because they are OCC Friends.*

*Moreover, I reminded them that the focus groups would be audio recorded, as the researcher would not be able to take notes during the whole discussion, so the recording will help in the analysis and will help not to miss any of the comments (Krueger, 2015; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).*

## *3. Opening question*

*Tell us which cultural organisations you visited during the season 2019-2020 and give us the first 2-3 titles that pop into your mind of performances you attended.*

The focus groups' questions (or else the discussion guide), which can be found in Appendix 2, were designed to explore beliefs and experiences and emerged from the literature and informed pre-coding, covering: the decision-making process, cultural consumption, and reflection on the focus group.

### 5.4.5. Analysis and Reporting

The analysis and the reporting of the focus groups were also done by me. The transcription of the recordings was the first step of the analysis. Because the focus groups were conducted in Greek, the transcription is also in Greek, and this is why they are not included in the appendix. Nevertheless, all the recordings can be translated into English upon request (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Morgan, 1997; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The initial transcription was performed directly after the first focus group, for the researcher to check if there is room for improvement in the structure and the execution of the following focus groups. As a transcriptionist, I tried to transcribe both words and emotions (Morrison-Beedy, Côté-Arsenault, & Feinstein, 2001).

The methodologies and strategies used to analyse the focus group sessions depend on the nature of the study and the overall research design. This research followed a deductive content analysis, connecting literature to the findings. Very occasionally, the researcher used the quantification of the qualitative data collected during the FG sessions.

The cut-and-paste technique, a quick and cost-effective method, was used for the analysis of the focus groups' discussions. Firstly, I identified the sections of the transcript that were relevant to the research questions. A classification system for major topics was developed and the transcribed material was coded for the respective topics. After the coding process "the transcribed materials are used as supporting materials and incorporated within an interpretative analysis" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 105). "Every effort to interpret a focus group represents analysis of content" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 105,106). The type of content analysis used was the pragmatic one, trying to understand the perceptions and beliefs of a group of cultural consumers in general, and consumers of Onassis Stegi's cultural products in particular. As words by themselves can be misleading, their true meaning was "reconstructed through the integration of the written transcript, listening to the tape, field notes" (Morrison-Beedy et al., 2001, p. 52), and researcher's verification.

After the examination of each intragroup transcript, the intergroup analysis followed, and the groups were compared and contrasted at intragroup and intergroup levels. Although the group similarities are considered more interesting, the group differences were also noted; the latter was attributed to different ages, cultural experience, familiarity with the case study organisation, perceptions about society and culture, and individual experiences, and led to a higher-level analysis (Morrison-Beedy et al., 2001). Careful readings of the transcripts were performed to establish and then apply codes. "Once a template for coding is generated, the researcher systematically applies the coding template to the data, adding additional codes as needed to capture categories that may have been missed initially, when the template was created (Miller & Crabtree, 1992). After coding is complete, the codes are summarized along with recontextualizing of the data to identify patterns (Tesch, 1990)" (Rothwell, 2010, p. 176).

As "the goal of qualitative research is transferability rather than statistical generalizability" (Barbour, 2005, p. 747), for reporting purposes, "qualitative expressions, such as 'almost all', 'half of' or 'two thirds' were used, rather than percentages" (Walden, 2019, p. 3). Recorded quotes were used to add life to the report.

### 5.5. Stakeholders' interviews

The Onassis Stegi audiences' research is mainly divided into two parts, the consumers and the stakeholders. Above, the methodology used with the consumers was described. Focus groups though

were not considered the ideal methodology for the stakeholders, as many issues such as equality, non-homogeneity, non-intimacy and/or shyness might arise. The stakeholders, which are the insiders/professionals of the cultural and communication field, will be researched with in-depth interviews; many or all of them can be considered as 'elites', as they are leaders, experts or "people used to exercising power and influence" (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 122) and "elites are used to being asked what they think" (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 124)<sup>128</sup>. These members of the study belong to this professional setting, and they hold a personal opinion on the communication strategies of OCC, which I, as an "outsider" field researcher, wants to learn about. The outside observer though should try to "empathize with and enter into the subjective meanings and social reality of members" (Neuman, 2014, pt. 313). Stakeholders "come in touch with the same phenomenon for different reasons and in different ways {...} therefore, they may develop different perspectives over the same phenomenon" (Acocella, 2012, p. 1128). In this case, the phenomenon is Stegi and its communication strategies.

The target of in-depth interviews (as mentioned in Stegi's key personnel interviews) is to understand informants' perspectives. In the stakeholders' case to understand perspectives on experiences that have been created by the personal but also professional life-such as their perspective on the communication strategies of OCC seen through their personal and professional spectrum- and as "in-depth interviewing has much in common with participant observation<sup>129</sup>, like observers, interviewers 'come on slow' initially" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 88). As mentioned in the methodology of in-depth interviews with Stegi's key personnel, the drawback of these interviews is that "people say and do different things in different situations" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 90) and "you cannot assume that what a person says during an interview is what that person believes or will say" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 91) in other situations. Additionally, the interviewer should always try to ask questions that "help jar a person's memory" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 107).

In detail, as the stakeholders were asked to share their opinion about the communication strategy of Onassis Stegi, the information should be confidential, so the participants could feel free to express their real opinion; hence, one-to-one interviews were considered the right tool. In the case of focus groups, people might avoid mentioning the disadvantages of the strategy or criticising it in any way. Additionally, as the stakeholders consisted of professionals related to culture and communication, problems such as social status and hierarchical positions could arise in the case of focus groups. Moreover, these stakeholders were people with different backgrounds in many cases and different

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<sup>128</sup> When interviewing elites it is very useful –not to say necessary–to have a satisfactory background information for the interviewees (Arksey & Knight, 1999).

<sup>129</sup> "The primary difference between participant observation and in-depth interviewing lies in the settings and situations in which the research takes place" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 88).

perspectives. For instance, the opinion of a professor of communication with that of a radio producer might be so distant that cannot even be compared; additionally, the different backgrounds might impede the interaction of these people in a focus group. To avoid these conflicts/issues, the stakeholders were researched through one-to-one interviews, “designed along the lines of everyday conversation (so) the interviewer can learn about what is important to people”(Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 99), “what matters to them” (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 34); these understandings and meanings are explored in depth with qualitative interviews (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). To create the desired tone during the interviews, I let people talk, being non-judgmental, and paying attention to what they say (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

In the description of the interviews conducted with the key personnel of OCC, all the theory of this specific methodology was covered. Hence, it only makes sense to repeat a few very basic pieces of information that will help elaborate on the interviews with the stakeholders. Firstly, these stakeholders consisted of college professors in fields related to communication and/or culture, journalists, radio producers, and communication experts. The size of the sample of stakeholders was 4 (interviewees), and it was decided after the execution of the first interviews, checking the collected data and calculating the total amount of information the researcher needed to know (Charmaz, 2014; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The composition of stakeholders is such (the one mentioned above) because all these professionals come in touch with Onassis Stegi and its communication strategies “for different reasons and in different ways. Therefore, they may develop different perspectives {...} and attribute different meanings” (Acocella, 2012, p. 1128). When the analysis of the interviews was conducted, the participants were presented by the acronym of the word *Stakeholder*, which is *Stkh*, accompanied by the interviewee number (the stakeholders that were interviewed first had the number one, therefore *Stkh1*, etc.), to keep anonymity; so even if the findings of the in-depth interviews will be discussed in other settings and situations in the future, such as conferences, no privacy issues will arise. Additionally, this tactic will make participants to free express their opinions, hiding behind anonymity (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Morgan, 1997; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

Same as with the interviews of the key personnel of Onassis Stegi, the interviews were conducted following a flexible framework that was used as a guide. But not all the questions were prescheduled and the participants had some control. The decisions regarding whom, where (e.g. in a neutral or professional environment or online) and when the interviews took place, were justified and guided by the purpose of the research.

The type of interview that was used was the one-to-one interview, in a single encounter. The total number of interviews was 4, of which 2 were conducted face-to-face, and 2 online. Briefly, the first stakeholder was a journalist, radio producer and communication specialist oriented to arts and

culture. Besides communication and media, she has also studied theatre and she knows very well the Greek cultural market. Onassis Stegi's advertising spots were running through the entire program of the radio station she worked in the past. She was interviewed at a quiet café chosen by her. The second stakeholder was an experienced Radio Producer for the last 20 years and she mainly deals with culture. She has also worked as a journalist, and music curator on TV, but also as a communication specialist. She is currently working at a municipal Greek radio, with which Onassis Stegi has collaborated in the past. The interview took place at a café in her professional environment, a couple of hours before starting her radio show. The third stakeholder was a Program Coordinator for an MA in Advertising Communications and an Assistant Professor at a College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. He is simultaneously a freelance marketing consultant for approximately 10 years and he also deals with projects that are related to culture. The interview with him was online, using Skype. The third stakeholder was an Assistant Professor at the Department of Communication at a College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. She has published several scientific articles and she has teaching experience at Greek Universities. She is a freelance communications consultant and she has worked as such with Onassis Stegi for a short-term project.

Hence, also for this part of the research, interviews were an appropriate method for the reasons mentioned above, such as the confidentiality of the subject matter, and homogeneity, but also the technical reasons such as the tight schedules all these professionals most probably have, and the difficulty to find timings that suit everybody. Additionally, these people, belonging to the elite sector, have little spare time, and the interviewer usually needs to negotiate access to them (Arksey & Knight, 1999).

The interviews were not structured, but semi-structured, to give the participants the freedom to express themselves, but also avoid time-consuming procedures with high 'drop rate', such as unstructured interviews. An interview guide and developed questions before interviewing (Appendix 3) were used for these interviews, but they were not followed strictly, as the process of each interview and the participants' answers were varied (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), as mentioned also in the OCC's key personnel interviews.

The questions for the face-to-face interviews were broad (grand tour) at the beginning and more specific (mini tour) later on. The audio recording (digital voice recorder) was used, and the archives were saved in digital format and transcribed afterwards. For the online audio/video chats, Skype was used, while the audio recorder was recording the conversation, and the procedure discussed above was followed. The online interviews were conducted online firstly because of the physical distance between the researcher and the participants –different countries of residence- and secondly because of circumstances such as COVID-19.

## SECTION II – RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION



## 6. Chapter 6\_Descriptive analysis: Onassis Stegi

The present chapter concerns the research conducted with the cultural organisation Onassis Stegi, the case study of this research. The research questions that concern this chapter are related to the marketing strategies of the organisation and are investigated through in-depth interviews with key personnel of OCC and content analysis. All the marketing strategies of the organisation were investigated, with a focus stressed on communication strategies. The types of interviews that were used are the one-to-one interview and group interviews (maximum two participants), either in a single encounter or in several meetings. The interviews were mostly semi-structured and unstructured. The content that was analysed was mainly provided by Onassis Stegi. The chapter presents the results of this investigation, combining them with theory. Concerning the structure of the chapter, at first, the researcher provides important information regarding the establishment of the cultural organisation Onassis Stegi, and the foundation behind it (Onassis Foundation). The function, the mission and the international presence interest us here. Subsequently, positioning and segmentation strategies follow. As the focus of this research is on performing arts, as mentioned in the methodology chapter (5), the cultural product of Onassis Stegi that concerns performing arts is analysed. Additionally, the educational programs linked to the performing arts department are mentioned. Moving on, the marketing strategies of the cultural organisation are presented, through the data collected from the interviews with key personnel and the content analysis. Based on and influenced by the Arts Communication Model introduced in chapter 2, the communication strategies for the performing arts agenda are analysed. Starting from the Communication and Marketing Department's chart, the procedures followed are described, as well as the offline and online communication and marketing tools.

<b>MAIN RESEARCH OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>Secondary Objectives</b>	<b>Research Questions</b>
A- Improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption	A1- Comprehend the marketing mix tools (4Ps) that Onassis Stegi applies	RQA1a- What are the product, price and place strategies OCC uses?
		RQA1b- What are the communication strategies (4 <sup>th</sup> P) OCC uses to promote its cultural programming and the brand of Onassis Stegi itself?

Table 19. Research Questions A1

## 6.1. Introduction

Onassis Stegi<sup>130</sup> comes under the category of cultural organisations and it will be the case study of this research. As it was mentioned in the presentation of this study, it is a “cultural space hosting events and actions across the whole spectrum of the arts from theatre, dance, music, cinema and the visual arts to the written word” (Onassis Stegi, 2017). Its mission is the promotion of contemporary cultural expression, the support of Greek artists, the cultivation of international collaborations, the education of children and people of all ages through lifelong learning, as well as the support of the co-existence and interaction of sciences, innovation and arts (Onassis Foundation, n.d.; Onassis Stegi, 2017).

Onassis Cultural Centre (from now on OCC) was inaugurated in December 2010, although the foundations of the Centre were laid in the year 2000. Its construction was exclusively funded by Onassis Foundation. The design of the building was made by the French architectural practice “Architecture Studio”, after an international architecture competition that the Foundation staged. It is a contemporary building located very close to the city centre of Athens, on Syngrou Avenue. “The Centre boasts 18,000 sq. m. of interior space” (Onassis Stegi, 2019). The interior of the Onassis Cultural Center building extends over seven floors and nine underground levels. “The building includes two main auditoria, seating 880 and 220 respectively, which are suited to a wide range of events including theatre and dance performances, concerts, film screenings (multimedia, virtual reality), lectures and conferences” (Onassis Stegi, 2017) and seminars. The biggest auditorium used to be called “Aristotle Onassis”, while the smaller one was “Christa Onassis”. Nowadays though these names have been abolished and they are called main stage and upper stage respectively (the latter is located on the 5th floor). There is also the Alexander Onassis Exhibition Hall -the name has been again abolished-, covering 700 sq. m. on the building’s underground level. One extra room on the 5th floor can seat up to hundred persons on free-standing chairs and “it is ideal for lectures, educational programs and round-table discussions” (Onassis Stegi, 2019 & Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/06/2019). “The top storey is home to the Onassis Cultural Centre restaurant, called Hytra<sup>131</sup>, which extends out onto the rooftop terrace during the summer months and offers breath-taking views” of Athens (OCC, 2017). It is also available for private functions and corporate events. Additionally, in the building exists an open-air theatre that has not been used until today, a bar and an underground parking space.

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<sup>130</sup> <https://www.onassis.org/initiatives/onassis-stegi>

<sup>131</sup> The restaurant has a contract with the organisation and if the contract not renewed the name of the restaurant will change (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/06/2019).

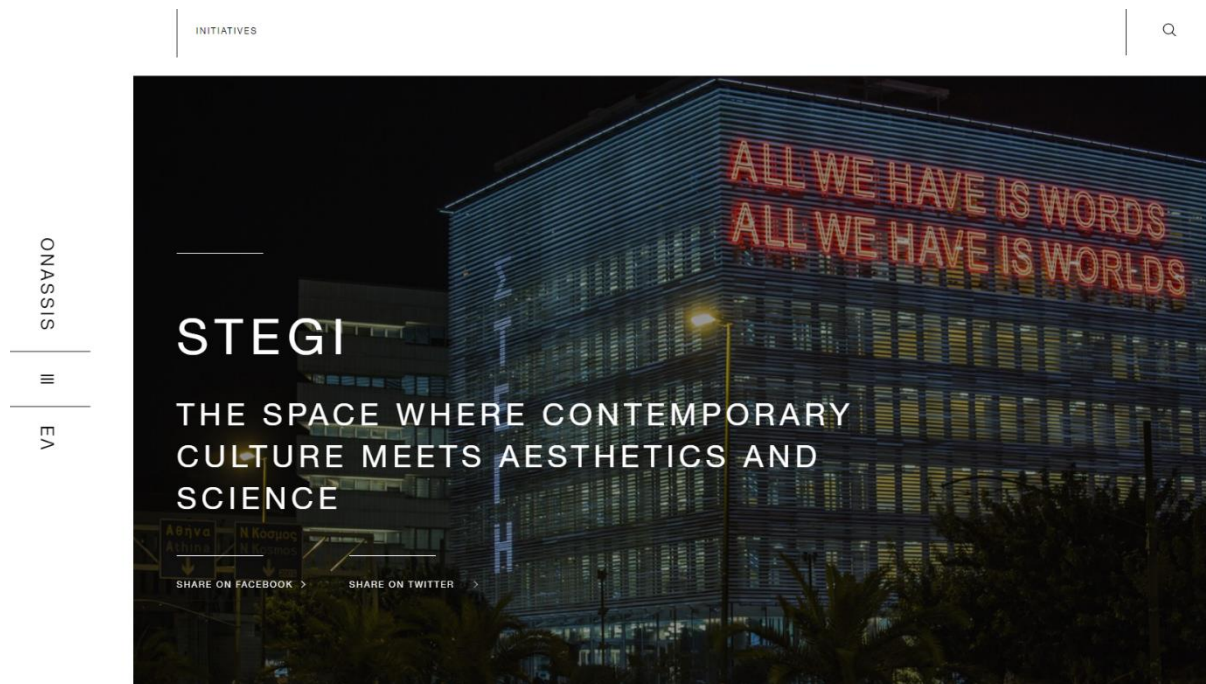


Figure 20. Home Page

The outside of the building has currently on show Tim Etchells’s “All We Have” (Double line) project. The project is an installation with neon letters that decorates the façade of the organisation. It was originally commissioned by OCC. The projection of this visual art work started in November 2016 and was supposed to end up in July 2019, but finally, it did not; on the contrary, it became part of Onassis Stegi’s identity. “Etchells’ All We Have (Double Line) echoes Beckett to present two almost-identical phrases” (Onassis Stegi, 2017): ‘All we have is words, All we have is worlds’. “The simple, punning shift in the text from one line to the next creates a loop of apparent contradiction, inviting the viewer to reflect on the question of what it is that makes up and comprises our lives; the concrete material of a world or the ephemeral material of language and ideas” (Onassis Stegi, 2017). The artist and OCC believe that ‘we are our words, we are our worlds’; in fact, *the* organisation has created some giveaway material for the audiences decorated either by the phrase “ALL I HAVE” or by the below-scattered words: pleasure, stories, questions, art, culture, inclusivity, undefinable, memory, words, fight, inspiration, trigger, discussions, images, relevance, encounters, ignition, play, situations, risk, common, ask, life, NYC, practice, worlds, risk, curiosity, Athens, unexpected, political, people, free, mistakes, polis, rituals, pleasure, emotion, cities, fearless, local, beauty, memory, New York, dialogue, international, adrenaline, Beirut, contemporary, adventure, impact, research, city, daring, Los Angeles, relationships, relevant, London, surprise, challenge, alert. These words and phrases represent OCC, its content and its mission, as well as its positioning. As the director of culture for Onassis Foundation, Afroditi Panagiotakou writes on the first page of the season’s projects presentation: “We like to ignite discussions for the important issues that are not self-evident, for

democracy, freedom and justice” (Onassis Stegi, Annual Cultural Programming, 2018-2019). With these words (positioning) Stegi inspires people and appeals to the customers’ social identification, self-image, self-perception, feelings, ideas and fashions they embrace (Lathrop, 2003).

For the purposes of this research, the organisation will be mentioned as OCC (Onassis Cultural Centre), Centre, Onassis Stegi and Stegi. The organisation is called at a local level *Stegi Grammaton kai Technon*<sup>132</sup> or just *Stegi (Στέγη)*<sup>133</sup>. The latter is the most common, and it is a Greek word that means roof, ceiling and by extension roofed place, shelter, house, dwelling (It comes from the verb *stégō*, “to cover”). The full name refers to an organisation that is the house of letters (*grammáton*) and arts (*tékhnōn*) in Greece. Although the organisation used to be called internationally as OCC, in 2019, after the launch of the new website and some internal changes regarding the communication of the Onassis Foundation, the organisation’s brand name is Onassis Stegi or Stegi, nationally and internationally. The technical name though of the organisation can still be considered OCC, as it is still the cultural centre of the Onassis Foundation. So, in this research, all the above-mentioned names will be used.

## 6.2. Onassis Stegi and Onassis Foundation

The Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation was “established in 1975 in accordance with Aristotle Onassis’ last wish to honour the memory of his son, Alexander” (Onassis Foundation, 2019). Foundation’s “headquarters are located in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, as was directed in Aristotle Onassis’ will” (Onassis Foundation, 2019) (<https://www.onassis.org/en/>). Based on the will, when Onassis died, his daughter and only heir, Christina, inherited 55% of her father’s fortune, and the rest 45% was disposed of for the creation of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018). The latter is represented in Greece by ARIONA HELLAS S.A.<sup>134</sup>. The Company<sup>135</sup> runs the Onassis Stegi and is active in the field of investment in real estate. Although this is the legal framework of Onassis Stegi, the organisation is a Public Benefit Organisation.

In an effort to meet the needs of the present and take on the challenges of the future, the five pillars of the Onassis Foundation are culture, education, environment, health, and social solidarity (Figure 21) (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018 & Onassis Foundation, 2019). These pillars come first on its agenda, but it is mainly active in the fields of culture, education and health. All projects of this Public Benefit organisation relate to Greece or Greek Culture and Civilisation; all activities of the foundation “are funded exclusively by the profits of an autonomous and institutionally independent

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<sup>132</sup> In Greek, “grammaton” means letters and “technon” means arts.

<sup>133</sup> However, some people might refer to it as Stegi Grammaton or Onassis’s (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/06/2019).

<sup>134</sup> [www.ariona.gr](http://www.ariona.gr).

<sup>135</sup> Under this company’s tax identification number, all the trade agreements are made (e.g. advertising) (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 5/3/2019).

Business Foundation named Alexander S. Onassis Foundation, also based in Vaduz, Liechtenstein. The Business Foundation engages mainly in shipping, real estate and financial products investments” (Onassis Foundation, 2019). Around 40% of the net annual profits of the Business Foundation are offered to the Public Benefit Foundation, while the rest are invested over again. The business part exists to support the public benefit. The more dynamic and evolving the business part, the more money goes to the public benefit (Onassis Foundation, 2019), and by extension to Onassis Stegi.

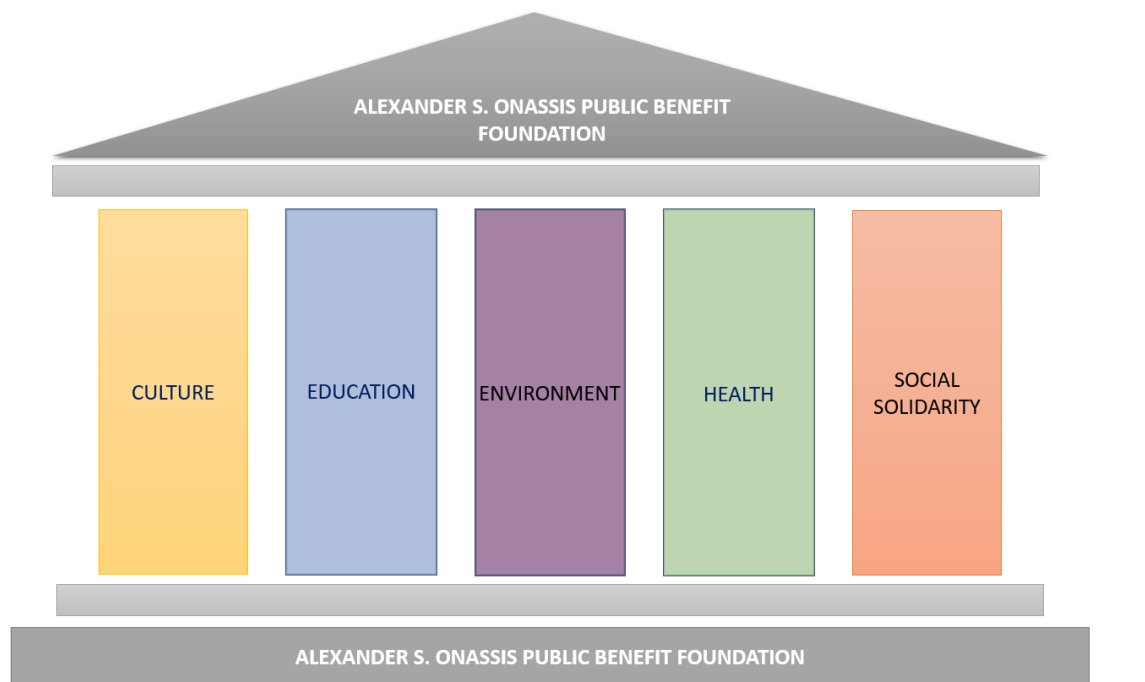


Figure 21. Onassis Foundation Pillars

For the promotion of culture, the Foundation created the Onassis Cultural Centre, dedicated to arts and culture. Nevertheless, Onassis Foundation does not limit its cultural activities to Onassis Stegi but undertakes countless other endeavours related to the arts and culture, such as the Cavafy Archive<sup>136</sup>, the establishment of the Onassis Library for Hellenic and Roman Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, “the architectural preservation and restoration of sites and buildings around the world” (Onassis Foundation, 2019), or other activities through the Affiliate Foundation at the Olympic Tower in New York or the Scholars’ Association (Figure 22).

<sup>136</sup> Constantine Petro Cavafy or Konstantinos Petrou Kavafis was an important poet, writer and journalist born in Egypt from Greek parents (<http://www.kavafis.org/kavafology/bio.asp>). “The Cavafy archive was acquired by the Onassis Foundation at the end of 2012” (Onassis Foundation, 2019).

## OVERALL WORK OF ONASSIS PUBLIC BENEFIT FOUNDATION

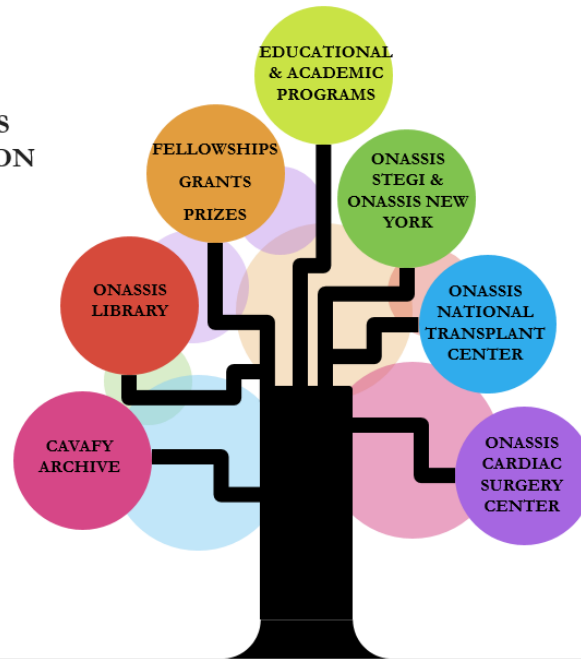


Figure 22. Overall Work of Onassis Foundation

Onassis Stegi as a public benefit organisation is not a profitable organisation, although it has a good financial capacity and does not cut back on the services it offers (Zaharie, 2014). By nature the organisation spends money aiming at the public benefit, hence the costs are not proportional to the income. “For example, a project might cost one hundred euros and the income from the tickets might be twenty-five euros; and we should count in also the operating costs, such as the personnel, the electricity, the internet etc. But, the purpose of this organisation is not to be profitable but to offer to the society” (Daniel Vergiadis, personal interview, 17/12/2018). Onassis Stegi though wants and works towards the direction of sold-out projects or full auditoria, but not with a profitable objective, with the objective that society will meet the culture it presents and the objective to educate people. Hence, Onassis Stegi acts as a non-profit institution, without the “purpose to generate financial benefits for the founding members”, and it is an organisation created by its founder for the expressive purposes mentioned above, being associated with the values mentioned above (Zaharie, 2014). Nevertheless, Onassis Stegi produces “substantive reports concerning the results of its activities” (Zaharie, 2014, p. 70) -something that non-profit organisations are not doing- because it is run by the company ARIONA HELLAS S.A. Funding plays an integral role for non-profit organisations, but in the case of Onassis Stegi, funding is stable and continuous by Onassis Foundation. Stegi is identical with non-profit organisations in the principal value, as in both cases this is the “achievement of their social purpose and the satisfaction of donor’s desire to contribute to the cause the organisation embodies” (Zaharie, 2014, p. 72). In the case of Stegi, the donor is the Onassis Foundation. Additionally, another element that shows Stegi is acting as a non-profit organisation is “the motivation for undertaking activity” (Zaharie, 2014,

p. 72), something that clearly distinguishes for-profit and non-profit organisations. The value of an activity to society and its members is the valuable goal of non-profit organisations and it is considered more precious than the generation of monetary profits; the same applies to Onassis Stegi. For both cases (non-profit and Onassis Stegi) “profit can mean many things, including bringing good; making progress; or being gainful, useful, advantageous, or productive {...} showing the selfless purposes and activities of the organisation” (Blazek, 2008, p. 8).

Based on Zaharie (2014), one could claim that Onassis Stegi fulfils a double mission, this of a non-profit organisation, which provides “enrichment for communities through art and education”, and that of a for-profit, which provides “business and employment to a community” (p. 73).

### 6.3. International presence

Onassis Cultural Centre or Onassis Stegi is “an active participant in international networks for the exchange of the ideas and artistic practices and collaborates with international organisations (mainly in Europe) seeking to encourage creativity and innovation in the cultural sphere” (Onassis Stegi Brochure, 2018-2019).

These networks are dealing with: audience development in contemporary music in Europe (Interfaces-Network coordinator: Onassis Stegi) and in jazz music through educational initiatives (Europe Jazz Network), access to disabled performing artists into the mainstream of the European cultural scene (Europe Beyond Access), access to contemporary dance education for people with disabilities (iDance-Coordinating institution: Onassis Stegi), improvement of the quality of music for children in Europe (Big Bang), support of media artists (European Media Art Platform-EMAP), artificial intelligence (European ARTificial Intelligence Lab), reshaping of performing arts (RESHAPE) and support of jazz music and audience development for. All networks are supported and funded or co-funded by the European Union.

Except for the above, the organisation has the Onassis Cultural Export Program, which is a program characterised by outward turn. In an effort to export the very best Greece has to offer, “more than fifty productions by Greek artists are being presented at various theatres and festivals across Europe and even further” (Onassis Foundation, 2019). Onassis Stegi plays an active role in international networks and works together “with cultural institutions around the world in order to promote intercultural interaction. {...} (It) produces and co-produces new works by Greek artists; promotes its productions across the international community through the production of exceptional promotional materials; arranges for Greek and international artists to join forces; and, last but not least, covers the necessary travel costs for selected productions to tour the world” (Onassis Foundation, 2019).



Additionally, in 2000, the Onassis Foundation USA was founded and it was the first international affiliate of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation. “Onassis Foundation USA runs through two major initiatives, one cultural for the general public through its Onassis Cultural Centre New York, and the other educational for scholars and students in partnership with educational institutions through the Onassis Humanities Impact Program” (Onassis Foundation, 2019). The Onassis Cultural Centre New York, by collaborating with Onassis Stegi in Athens and other cultural organisations throughout the USA “presents theatrical and dance productions, art exhibits, conversations, lectures, and other initiatives, triggering discussions about democratic values, human rights, civil rights, and the ever-changing realities facing today’s citizens on a global scale” (Onassis Foundation, 2019). Nevertheless, OCC in New York is currently inactive (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 08/03/2019). Its participation in international networks, its partnerships with cultural institutions around the world, the fact that it hosts or co-produces international productions, it uses supertitles in foreign languages for its Greek productions and the latter travel internationally, plus the fact it has an English version for its website and many of its printed materials, make Onassis Stegi an international organisation.

## 6.4. Positioning, Segmentation and the Cultural Product

### 6.4.1. Positioning and Segmentation

Wondering whether OCC focuses its communication strategies on the cultural products or the brand itself, one could claim there is an interaction between these two. The consistency of the organisation all these years in its cultural choices and the subjects it deals with, and the consistency in the communication style it uses (that is the image it presents through the communication), create and maintain a compact profile for the organisation. The image of the organisation is not an end in itself but it results from the choices of the Centre and the work it presents; the communication and marketing department works on the image through the cultural products and the initiatives of the organisation. Nevertheless, when the organisation started back in 2010, it started with strong branding, as it was a brand-new cultural centre and wanted to establish itself in the market. The collaborations with printed media were much more and with greater variety. Additionally, the generic outdoor campaigns were many; this changed later on and the outdoor campaigns started concerning specific projects (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/6/2019).

Nevertheless, according to its people (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018), Onassis Stegi doesn’t really care about its image, if people will like it or not, if people will agree or not with its edgy opinions, or the controversial issues it presents through its projects. It doesn’t really care about that as it doesn’t really need the people (the public) to support it in order to survive. It is fully funded by Onassis Foundation and its reason for being is to defend contemporary culture, defend the right of



people to express their opinions no matter what, awaken and improve society, trying to be “agitators of public curiosity” as they were writing in one of their giveaways. Besides, as Demetres Drivas (group interview, 12/12/2018) says, the desired image of a public benefit organisation is to be appreciated by the public and recognised as an organisation that offers to society and takes it forward. Nevertheless, I believe that they do care about an image that does not consist only of the public benefit organisations’ characteristics but includes also adjectives such as contemporary, edgy, innovative, avant-garde, highbrow and quality culture. All these concepts derive from the cultural programming of the organisation, and the branding is done through it and the attitude of the organisation (such as consistency in opinions and cultural choices). The agenda choices, as mentioned in the previous section, are not conventional and they have a special character. They might not be always excellent in terms of artistic result, but they are in terms of the quality, of meaning, of the message they pass to society. Onassis Stegi wants to be identified as innovative, bold, self-confident, useful for society and as the one that opens or continues the discussion for important issues; as the one that believes in excellence and tries to communicate this through its content and experiences it offers to the audiences (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018). The communication and marketing manager says characteristically: “we don’t care if the dancer raises the leg too high, but we are interested in presenting this performance that is related to refugees. So it puts a subject on the table, shows another perspective, sparks the curiosity of the public” (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018). Nevertheless, on the other hand, the curator of theatre and dance claims, that she will never bring artists because of what they say through arts, but because of what they are doing as artists (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019). When I tried to cross-check this internal inconsistency, Demetres Drivas’ answer was: “consider as right what Katia Arfara told you, she is the curator”.

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the installation “All We Have” (Tim Etchells’s, Double line- ‘All we have is words, All we have is worlds’) adorns the outside of the OCC building. The organisation has created some giveaway material for the audiences decorated either by the phrase “ALL I HAVE” or by scattered words, which both represent OCC’s content and mission, as well as its positioning<sup>137</sup>, inspiring people and appealing to the customers’ social identification, self-image, self-perception, feeling, ideas and fashions they embrace (Lathrop, 2003).

According to OCC, the segmentation of the Athenian market has shown that there is no other organisation that competes with them. They consider themselves to have unique characteristics, such as contemporary and innovative, that show a culture with more messages for society. “We have

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<sup>137</sup> Diversification positioning as we will see in conclusions.

succeeded in this and we maintain it” (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018). In audiences’ minds though Stegi competes with theatrical stages, festivals (e.g. Festival of Athens), Epidaurus theatre, other Foundations that are active in the field of arts, museums, the Opera House, as well as cinemas, at a small percentage though (MRB, 2015).

Onassis Stegi conducts audience surveys every two to five years, collaborating with research agencies to be able to gauge the Athenian audiences, the audiences of Stegi, as well as the audiences’ perceptions towards Stegi and the other cultural organisations that the individuals consider as competitors of Stegi. These surveys help Onassis Stegi to understand audiences, create more targeted communication campaigns or address them to the right segments. Except for these surveys though, Stegi uses in-house the tools that social media offer to find important information about audiences (e.g. demographics). Additionally, Stegi, by monitoring consumption patterns, introduces improved marketing policies (e.g. group tickets as pricing policy, in chapter 6.4.2).

#### 6.4.2. Cultural Product

“The Onassis STEGI building hosts theatrical and musical productions, film screenings, art and digital shows” (Onassis Stegi, 2019). Its content is dedicated to contemporary arts. As it is written on the organisation’s website, Stegi is “the space where contemporary culture meets aesthetics and science” (Onassis Stegi, 2019). Additionally, one of Stegi’s missions is to educate children and people of all ages through lifelong learning (Onassis Foundation, 2018 & Onassis Stegi, 2017). Hence, in this section, educational programs will be also described, as part of the cultural products of the organisation. From the rest, only the performing arts (or else theatrical) productions will be analysed. Table 20 below presents all the cultural products of OCC, clustered into 7 groups.

<b>Stegi’s Cultural Products</b>
Theatrical productions
Musical productions
Film screenings
Art and digital shows
Educational programs
Festivals
Parallel or not activities

Table 20. Stegi’s Cultural Products

Moreover, Stegi organises five festivals (Table 21) every year, which are an integral part of cultural programming. The Fast Forward Festival (FFF) (6<sup>th</sup>–started 2014) concerns contemporary forms of arts, hybrid performances and installations, and includes site-specific works in Athens’ city centre; the artists that participate are international and local. The Borderline Festival (9<sup>th</sup>– started 2010) is a music festival that relates to sound art and music, including though different kinds of arts. The festival is international, which means it includes collaborations between Greek and foreign artists and collaborates with foreign festivals as well. Young Choreographers Festival (6<sup>th</sup>–started 2014) is a showcase and incubator for young creators and artistic propositions. The other two festivals are for kids and teenagers, and they are coordinated by the educational department. The one is the Onassis Youth Festival (2018), which started as a theatre festival, but currently, includes more kinds of arts. The participants are students (school groups) that are “taught” by artists, and the rehearsals are done at the participating schools each year. The last one is the Big Bang Festival (2015), a children’s music festival, and it is dedicated to contemporary music styles. This festival is a coproduction of Onassis Stegi and it is part of the European Network of Big Bang Music Festivals, of which Stegi is a member. These are fixed festivals every year, but more annual festivals may arise and be incorporated into the cultural agenda (Onassis Stegi, Annual Cultural Programming, 2018-2019 & Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 08/03/2019).

<b>Stegi’s Festivals</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Starting Year</b>
Fast Forward Festival	An international festival that concerns contemporary forms of arts, hybrid performances and installations, and includes site-specific works in Athens’ city centre.	2014
Borderline Festival	An international music festival that relates to sound art and music, including though different kinds of arts.	2010
Young Choreographers Festival	A festival that acts as a showcase and incubator for young creators and artistic propositions.	2014
Onassis Youth Festival	Started as a theatre festival, but currently, it includes more kinds of arts. The participants are students (school groups) that are “taught” by artists.	2018
Big Bang Festival	A music festival for kids, which is dedicated to contemporary music styles.	2015

Table 21. Stegi’s Festivals

Stegi is “the stage on which the boundaries between science, art, society, education, learning and politics are renegotiated” (Onassis Stegi, 2019). Except for its artistic programming though, it hosts parallel or not activities such as educational workshops, conferences, presentations, conversations, and lectures. Stegi “begins the conversation about what’s happening, what should be happening, what

we'd like to see happening all over the world" (Onassis Stegi, 2019). Through its cultural programming, Stegi "speaks up, disagrees, advocates and takes a position regarding anything that stands in the way of freedom, democracy, life" (Onassis Stegi, 2019). For Onassis Culture which made Onassis Stegi its hub, "culture is not just art; it's a way of life" (Onassis Foundation, 2019). Hence, it acts "in ways beyond the performances and art experiences it offers" (Onassis Foundation, 2019).

The Centre is not only hosting productions, but it also produces and coproduces. Regarding the Greek productions, it produces only original artworks by Greek artists and never something that has been presented somewhere else already (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019 & Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/06/2019). The procedures of producing and coproducing always carry a risk; OCC tries very innovative projects that have equal chances to succeed or fail. "We wanted since the beginning to participate actively in the whole cultural production and not just to become a place that hosts and presents" (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019). OCC hosts Greek and international productions. The selection process differs. For the Greek projects, which are 60% of the programming, the organisation announces an open call each year in autumn and receives and accesses proposals.

Onassis Stegi, as a cultural organisation, started from scratch; so since the very beginning, its team considered as a priority to build a very strong and clear profile and start some collaborations and synergies with other actors in the same field abroad (such as theatres, festivals, organizations etc.) that became partners. The International programming is built through these synergies, and through key personnel's choice and interest to work with Europe and with the wider neighbourhood of Greece, that is Middle East, and Balkan countries, but also to get out of the borders of the Western world, something that was one of the organisation's main goals since the outset.

Onassis Stegi functions with a global outreach. Many of its productions travel every year, inside and outside Greece, in several different contexts (e.g. educational context). All these years "more than fifty productions by Greek artists are being presented at various theatres and festivals across Europe and even further" (Onassis Stegi, 2019). OCC promotes equally all its productions across the international community, but the preferences of the inviting organisations decide which productions will finally travel abroad. Once the artistic directors decide on the annual programming, they give the necessary information to the Head of Touring<sup>138</sup>, Christina Liata, who shares it with professionals who might be interested to present their productions or become also co-producers. These professionals are usually working for theatres, cultural spaces or festivals. The main focus of the organisation is to promote its projects and establish Onassis Stegi in Europe, which is undoubtedly the world's centre of dance and theatre, as Christina Liata (personal interview, 08/05/2019) states. Additionally, very few

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<sup>138</sup> Administratively, touring is not a department but a budget. This is because it has only one person working for it.

of the organisation’s performing arts projects have travelled in Australia, Asia, North Africa, Latin America and America (Table 22). The latter is happening mainly because of the affiliate foundation in New York. Nevertheless, the people of OCC are thinking about starting touring in other continents, but they believe it is still early for this. “We are touring since June 2012. We are still young. The main target is to make Europe understand that there is a remarkable Greek artistic production, not necessarily produced only by Stegi, because when Greek artists travel abroad with Stegi, they start building their own network and create their own careers. Every production that travels to Europe contributes to the dissemination of Greek artistic production. Once we succeed in this, we can start thinking about other continents” (Christina Liata, personal interview, 08/05/2019). The target of the dissemination is identical to the reason for creating “Touring”. Unlike other countries, ten years back when Onassis Stegi started functioning, in Greece there were no organisations, agencies or sponsors to help new artists to promote their work abroad. Hence, Onassis Stegi wanted to fill in this gap. The touring budget is spent on the communication of the projects, (e.g. trailer, printed material, photo shooting etc.) and in cases that the hosting/inviting organisations cannot afford all the expenses, Stegi subsidises artists' travel costs, and in some cases the shipping costs of the scenery. The interesting fact is that there are productions that are active on touring since 2012 (e.g. Late Night- Blitz theatre group, Clean City-Anestis Azas & Prodromos Tsinikoris).

<b>United States of America</b>	<b>North Africa</b>	<b>Latin America</b>	<b>Asia</b>	<b>Australia</b>
BIRDS by Aristophanes (2018, New York)	“mneme – [action] 21” by Maria Koliopoulou/ Proxima (2013, Algeria)	STILL LIFE by Dimitris Papaioannou (2016, Brazil & Chile)	EUROPIUM by RootlessRoot (2016, Hong Kong)	STILL LIFE by Dimitris Papaioannou (2017, Sydney)
ANTIGONE- LONELY PLANET by Lena Kitsopoulou (2019, New York)		THE MERCHANTS OF NATIONS by Alexandros Papadiamantis Directed by Thodoris Abazis and ΟΠΕΡΑ Theatre Company (2016, Brazil)		
		LATE NIGHT by Blitz Theatre Group (2018, Colombia/ Bogota)		

Table 22. Stegi on Touring

The Head of touring except for the productions that travel abroad is also involved in the communication of the seasonal performance at the youth theatre stage. This travels within Greece (e.g. theatres or cultural spaces in big Greek cities), but also abroad and Christina Liata follows the same procedure, as she does for the other touring projects. She is not involved though in the performances that travel inside Greece, but are organised by the educational department, and are mainly not presented at theatres or cultural spaces, but at informal spaces (atypical places), such as schools, stadiums, and yards. These projects are usually addressing all age groups.

Although Onassis Stegi is dealing with all the above-mentioned, performing arts only is the focus of this research and will be described in detail below. For international projects, the curator of performing arts Katia Arfara travels abroad, whether because she is invited by other organisations, networks or artists, or because she is choosing her destination, based on artists, festivals, and places she wants to research. All the projects of the season are decided during the previous artistic period. The suggestions of the curators are approved by the board of directors and are communicated internally around spring.

#### *6.4.2.a. Performing arts programming*

Onassis Stegi is devoted to contemporary dramaturgy, with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and experimental creations. The cultural programming of the organisation derives from what is happening in Greek society, in the neighbourhood of Greece and the rest of the world, and from the trends that dominate the international performing arts scene. The artistic criteria are a priority for shaping the artistic agenda but it is equally important to have a reason to host and present a production in Athens, at a given time. Some productions might be chosen as artworks that are carrying a big history. Some others because their creators (or the artists who were identified with these artworks) are historical figures of art (e.g. an important choreographer, director, etc.). Stegi considers it necessary to introduce these artworks to Athenian audiences, or re-introduce them through other perspectives. Nevertheless, OCC chooses to present also socially engaged art that concerns what is happening in the socio-political sphere. The Performing Arts Curator, Katia Arfara (personal interview, 6/03/2019), mentions: “I will never bring artists because of what they say through arts, but because of what they are doing as artists. I am not bringing artists-activists or artists-politicians, I am bringing artists. If an artist though is sensitised and we can work together on social issues is the best combination. At the artistic level and with the tools of art, we enter into what we call ‘wider socio-political space’; but we are not doing either politics or social work”.

The trends in performing arts are also part of the selection criteria, but without this meaning that Stegi will host a production only because is popular abroad, “because for example, something that concerns

one European city at a given time, might not concern at all Athens” (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019).

Onassis Stegi is a non-commercial cultural space, and although it wants to attract the maximum possible audience to communicate what it has to say and open up a discussion in society, it does not have as its primary purpose to fill its theatre halls, therefore to "sold out" in the strict sense of the word. By extension, the selection criteria of the artistic programming do not concern the preferences of the audiences. Nevertheless, Stegi's audiences, which have been gradually shaped over the years, trust and support the organisation's choices, and share with it the same curiosity and passion to discover new things and fresh ideas. "It is very important to be consistent on what you are doing and Stegi has so far and since the beginning a consistent position and opinion on things. This means we are not doing a bit of commercial theatre and a bit of experimental. Even when we are doing Shakespeare, we are doing it from another perspective, more experimental, and not just because it has a very good cast or an excellent director. And it has been proved over the years that what we consider experimental concerns many people" (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019). Stegi hosts non-mainstream culture and artists who are bold, keeping always an "awry viewpoint", and the audiences support it (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018).

In addition, as the head of the programming of performing arts analyses, audiences will choose Stegi, not because Stegi chose according to their preferences, but on the contrary, because it dared to support new creators, to take the risk of production and co-production because it is active on an international level, has stable partnerships, it is not afraid to experiment, and it is engaged in what is now happening artistically and socially (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019).

The cultural programming of OCC is cohesive and expresses a clear position. Each year, several axes are running through the whole programming (Greek and international), and some dialogues are created without being clarified, leaving open all possible ways of understanding from the public. However, the themes of programming are not predetermined but result from what is happening today, through socio-political changes, performances, trends, interests and concerns. "It is a parallel combination of many things, but definitely we never start with a specific concept we want to apply to the programming because this would give a non-interesting for our audiences. Stegi is an open organisation that listens to what is happening around it. When for example we face nationalistic phenomena, or issues of xenophobia, homophobia, etc., obviously we will talk about gender issues, and at the same time, this issue will be also dominating the international performing arts scene" (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019).

Onassis Stegi's and by extension cultural programming's objective is to present contemporary art to a broader audience, to make it accessible to everybody, and through art, and not only, to talk about issues it considers fundamental, issues that concern society at a given time, but also issues that society forgets while it should not, sparking up a conversation, firing the curiosity of the public and questioning the stereotypes (Onassis Foundation, 2019).

The duration of the performances at Stegi derives from and is in perfect harmony with the mission of the organisation. The latter is to form a cultural landscape for Greeks, to present as many projects as possible, to raise as many issues as possible, and give new perspectives, instead of acting as a for-profit organisation and hosting one of two block-busters all year round (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 08/03/2019). Hence, its projects can be from one-off up to one month, except for the performance of the youth stage that runs almost the whole season. For the season '18-'19 the duration of each project is not more than three weeks, as Stegi's team has tried to create a broad agenda. Moreover, the duration of the projects is multifactorial. It might depend also on the availability of international artists to stay in Greece (as most of them are touring). For the season 2018-2019, Onassis Stegi hosts around one hundred projects. The number is quite big because one main project might include ten more side projects (e.g. on the occasion of a specific performance, they will organise a talk on the same thematic or a workshop or both) (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 08/03/2019).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the communication and marketing department is not involved in the decision-making for the core content of the artistic programming; the people of the department might initiate though some side projects of the programming, projects that will either support the image of the organisation or boost some of the main products.

#### *6.4.2.b. Educational Programs*

Part of the cultural programming of Onassis Stegi can be also considered some projects that are the result of educational workshops and are presented at the stages of the Centre. Moreover, two of the five established festivals of the organisation (Onassis Youth and Big Bang Music Festival) run through the educational department and the participants are students of primary and secondary education. Finally, many educational workshops or master classes are planned as parallel activities of the main cultural programming.

As the educational programs leave their artistic footprint on Onassis Stegi, it is worth explaining them in detail and understanding how the educational department works. Firstly it divides its projects into three categories: for kids, teenagers and adults. The projects for kids are for ages 0-12 years old, and they are divided into projects for schools and projects for private individuals. One of the established



festivals mentioned before is the Big Bang Festival that concerns primary school students. Regarding private individuals, Onassis Stegi organises small-scale or one-off family workshops.

The educational programs for teenagers (12- 18 or 13-17 years old) are the focus of the organisation and include again the ones organised for and with schools, and those for private individuals. The first concerns the youth theatre stage that can be visited by schools on weekdays, the Onassis Youth Festival (theatre) and the Dancing to Connect Program (contemporary dancing), where students from schools all over Greece participate (five schools from Attica and five from the rest of Greece). The youth stage though can be also attended on weekends by private individuals. For the latter, educational workshops are organised on fixed weekdays for five or six meetings. The performance in the youth stage is the only project of OCC that is seasonal. This means it lasts almost five months.

The educational programs for schools deal with the thematics chosen by the organisation each year, combined with the school curriculum. Moreover, Onassis Stegi tries to include projects related to shipping, as it is the main occupation of the business part of the Onassis Foundation. Additionally, when students enter Stegi for educational programs, they get a brief regarding the organisation, its mission and its founder. The design of the educational programs is done by the internal team of Stegi, which consults though different kinds of specialists like school counsellors, historians, etc. when needed. All the educational programs of Onassis Stegi are assessed and approved by the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP).

Usually, the projects that are hosted by Stegi and visited by schools have a low price ticket (five euros), but depending on social circumstances and economic condition of each school, class or student, the organisation sponsors tickets, assessing each circumstance. The projects though that are done by Stegi at schools, such as the festivals, are for free. In fact, as in these projects, the participants are schools not only from the wider area of Athens but also from all over Greece, the expenses for the transport and the accommodation of the students from places outside Athens are paid by Onassis Stegi.

Stegi addresses all kinds of schools, public, private, special schools, technical schools, schools of a second chance and all kinds of school communities. The data collection for their educational database is a continuous process, and until now it has been created through personal research on the internet, through collaboration with the Institute of Educational Policy, and also through personal contact with teachers that attend projects of Stegi and are interested in the organisation.

Additionally, as part of the educational programs for all types of schools, the Centre has “a performance that travels” all over Greece, in remote areas as well, which have no access to arts in general and theatre in particular.

The third category of educational programs is that for adults and it consists of education for adults up to sixty-five years old, education for adults aged sixty-five plus, and educational programs for professionals (e.g. teachers, actors, directors).

The educational department through contemporary art wants to help people of all ages express themselves and question stereotypes, to build an open and accessible space where participants are not censored, foster lifelong learning and stimulate curiosity. Onassis Stegi supports strongly inclusive cultural activities and that is why it designs and hosts projects without exclusions and many times mention them as 'projects for people with or without disabilities'. As mentioned above, many of Stegi's educational projects end up with a cultural event that becomes part of the cultural programming, is open to a broader audience and sometimes has also an entrance fee (e.g. dance performance from ladies 65+, exhibition etc.). Hence, the educational department contributes to the agenda of Stegi in its own way (Educational department, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

#### *6.4.2.c. Target audience and agenda*

OCC is not driven by the audience but by itself. It shapes its DNA and its core and based on these, it decides what it wants to say and how it will shape its image. Thereafter, the core target audiences are defined, but not in traditional demographic ways (e.g. age, social class). "Our core target is the 'restless or uneasy minds' as we call them, that means people keen on culture, that generally consume culture, either books, or music, or cinema etc. -women usually prevail and the culture lovers in general usually have higher educational level- and they mostly reside in Athens" (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018). The director though of the department explains that by "consumption of culture" he means mostly highbrow culture or a culture that makes you a better person or the non-commercial culture. He puts a quality dimension to the consumed culture, which should take people a little further, evolve them and stir up their interest. These are data consistent with the results of the MRB (2015) research, according to which 73% of Stegi's audience are women and 84% have higher educational attainment (Bachelor's degree 47%, Master's degree 30%, PhD 7%, High School 16%) (MRB, 2015). These cultural attendance patterns converge with the general trends that exist in Greece and Europe, meaning that more men tend to belong to inactive cultural consumer groups and that the higher the educational level the higher the frequency of cultural consumption (Avdikos et al., 2016; Hill et al., 1995). The campaign manager Haris Giakoumakis (group interview, 12/12/2018) defines the age range of the core target audiences, or else the 'restless minds': "They are between twenty-five and forty-five years old. Audience research has shown that the people that mostly consume our products are in their thirties. Besides, our content is by nature addressed to specific people. The rest of the people are welcome and invited to give our products a try. Nevertheless, in the context of our educational projects, these age ranges change and we address special age groups. Our general target

audience starts from twelve years old and has no maximum age limit". In detail, MRB's research shows that 54% of the audiences age between 25-44 years old (MPB, 2015)<sup>139</sup>.

In Onassis Stegi all starts from within. Otherwise, its people consider they would lose their contemporary and innovative character. It seems they choose a product or mission-driven strategy and they align with the theory (Voss & Voss, 2000) that wants organisations to decide about the agenda, as audiences are not "experts in doing this"; you can never be sure how well informed the consumers are so they can creatively suggest a new input. Besides, frequent theatregoers usually trust the selection criteria and suggestions of their favourite cultural organisation. Considering these, the organisation is not applying any pre-tests for the content of the agenda.

OCC doesn't start with the concept of inventing ways to be likeable to the audiences, to sell tickets and be profitable. As a public benefit organisation, it starts from "what the organisation wants to say to the society and how it will raise concerns, preserving the artistic and aesthetic integrity. There are people out there willing to listen or accept what we have to say or show. The people who will appreciate our products will become our core audience. This is how we work since the day we started" (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018). OCC follows the vision of the people who created the organisation, and their ideas on what culture should do and what stories it should say.

Onassis Stegi works usually with two target audiences, the core and the broader. The director of the communication and marketing department supports that the majority of the core target group would attend several performances even if there was no campaign. Nevertheless, they do campaigns for this audience. But, they also do mass campaigns for the broader audience, because they want to attract it, they want to create social awareness, and they wish more people to learn about the culture OCC presents and the concerns it raises. "Even if the broader audience doesn't come to attend, we want our campaigns to touch them or make them think at least".

As OCC is a multi-venue with a variety of short-term projects, sometimes, specific projects address specific audiences, depending on the genre, the theme, etc. These audiences are called special audiences and OCC is looking for them when circumstances call for it. This can be done through data bases from past events (or a data bank on a specific category with people that have either attended or expressed interest) or through specific organisations, depending on the event. For example, if it is an electro-music event, they will address the groups that are keen on this genre, or if it is a dance performance, except for the rest of the audiences, they might approach also dance schools. "It's a

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<sup>139</sup> MRB's research shows that 19% of the audiences age between 18-24 years old, 15% age between 45-54 years old, 7% between 55-64 years old and 5% age 65+ years old (MRB, 2015).

searching process that needs imagination and creativity” (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018).

Wondering if OCC knows where (in which media) to find its audiences (core, broader or special), the answer comes through the broader picture of the media market in Greece. The latter is not so fragmented<sup>140</sup>, like possibly in other European countries. Therefore, print, electronic and visual mass media, usually address bigger bulks of audiences. This is why they are not helpful for the cultural organisations, Onassis Stegi in this case, to address the specific target audiences they wish. But, at the same time, this fact makes it easier for OCC to select which media it will approach (paid or unpaid advertising). The Centre believes that targeting can be more effective through social media, and applies this belief. “Through social media, we know individuals’ interests, nevertheless, we don’t really know to which degree these data are true, as they are found by the algorithm and given to us by the respective companies” (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018).

#### 6.4.3. Price

Each project has its own communication plan and communication budget. But, many factors are playing a role either in the plan or in the budget. The dates of each project and the projects that are running simultaneously, the importance of each project and the unpredicted needs a project might have, are some of these factors. Therefore, Onassis Stegi tries firstly not to have many big projects on air at the same time. Furthermore, when for example a project has bigger needs than the other ones or when it needs a communication boost, its budget can be increased, decreasing the budget of another project.

OCC functions in the context of overall agreements with media groups; therefore, it is complicated to isolate the exact budget spend for each project. Nevertheless, Onassis Stegi, for the purposes of this research, has done a separation of its budget into media and content, considering media as a communication campaign. Hence, it can be said that the organisation spends 45% of its budget on the communication campaign, which includes fixed or ad hoc collaborations with media (printed, digital, radio, etc.), outdoor campaigns (poster-sticking, metro posters, brochures, etc.) and whatever is considered as communication campaign. The rest 55% is spent on the creation of content; the latter includes a set of things such as writing and editing of texts, videos created for promotional purposes, photo shooting again for promotional purposes, etc. “It is hard to isolate the percentage of the budget

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<sup>140</sup> As mentioned in theory, the job of media planner differs from country to country or continent to continent. Although in other countries, planners can access many data for the circulation of media, costs of different ads, and data on the demographics and psychographics of audiences, Greek media planners face many challenges. They might have access on circulation, but the process of getting pricing of ads can be more complex, while to get the demographics and psychographics of audiences sounds very hard. As the market is smaller in Greece, the planners usually evaluate media based on their professional experience (or by instinct) (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008 & Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017).

that is exclusively spent on media, meaning press, radio, television, and websites. Nevertheless, as the metro campaigns are quite costly, I would deduct 15% for these campaigns, and I could say that 30% of the total budget is spent on commercial agreements with media. In these percentages, I do not include the operating costs, as they are too small” (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/06/2019).

Because Onassis Stegi is a public benefit organisation and is funded exclusively by Onassis Foundation, has different needs compared to the majority of cultural organisations. Except for its public benefit character and the good it wants to offer to society, it doesn’t need to sell tickets in order to survive and it doesn’t need to sell them expensively. Moreover, the tickets are fully subsidised by the Foundation, which also absorbs any tax increase or fees from ticket providers. That is why its pricing policy supports “unlimited access to culture for everyone” (Onassis Stegi, 2018). The tickets are inexpensive and the productions it presents are worth more than the tickets’ cost. In detail, they sell the following: a) a specific number of tickets at seven euros for all the productions for the general public, b) tickets at seven euros for residents of neighbouring areas to the Onassis Stegi, c) tickets for the unemployed and people with disabilities at five euros for all productions, d) reduced ticket prices for several categories in all zones, e) significantly discounted tickets for groups of five to nine individuals (small group) and ten plus (large group), f) early bird tickets for selected productions and g) lower prices for combo tickets (e.g. combinations of productions). In detail, the reduced ticket prices concern students enrolled at educational institutions both public and private in Greece and abroad, young people under twenty-six years old, people aged above sixty-five years old, Onassis Stegi Friends, groups of five plus people, group tickets for societies and institutions, soldiers, holders of the European Youth Card (only for OCC productions), parents of three and more children, unemployed and their children (up to seventeen years old), people with disabilities and their escorts. In most of the performances, for all the above-mentioned categories there are no restrictions for the ticket zones that can be purchased<sup>141</sup> (except for the disabled people whose seats depend on the setup of the performance each time) (Onasis Stegi, 2019).

The general pricing strategy is the above-mentioned. The ticket price is not related to the cost of each performance, and none of the performances of OCC is profitable. Besides, when the team is deciding about the pricing, it does not know yet how much the production will finally cost. Depending on the project though, the ticket price might change slightly. “Usually, we slightly increase the price for the more popular, mass products” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019). Nevertheless, as the tickets are subsidised by the Foundation, the most expensive ticket, without any discounts applied,

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<sup>141</sup> For example, in some theatres in Greece, the unemployed people can purchase only the zone that is usually far away from the scene.

that someone can find at OCC for the most expensive productions of the year, does not exceed forty-eight euros<sup>142</sup>. The organisation intends to keep a balance between full halls and maximization of its income from tickets, in a context that does not conflict with the public benefit of Onassis Stegi (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017), which wants to make culture accessible to anybody, or at least to as many as possible. OCC always checks the box office data for previous productions that can reveal if a pricing strategy performed well or not and adjusts the ticket pricing for future projects. Additionally, the commercial department of the organisation keeps an eye on the market's prices and pricing trends just to have a benchmark; "this though does not affect our commercial policy to a great extent. What really matters is to offer an affordable ticket, as a public benefit organisation" (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

Moreover, Onassis Stegi offers many events with free entrance. These are usually music events, exhibitions, installations and very rarely performances. Many of these projects are expensive productions, created by famous artists; "in any other organisation visitors would pay a costly ticket to attend them" (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

Although the pricing policy of OCC is an affordable one, comparing it to the average price of cultural events in Athens (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019), the communication and marketing director believes that "there is room for improvement" (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 08/03/2019). The commercial director (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017) adds that through the ticketing system, the organisation knows for example that an individual visits the Centre three times per year, and it can create loyalty programs or personalised offers for three tickets per year.

Considering all the above, someone can note that Stegi wants to encourage cultural consumption, "providing art-related goods and services" at such prices so that to maintain "their availability to all regardless of rising price levels or other market dynamics" (Zaharie, 2014, p. 72); this is a tactic adopted also by governments in many cases.

#### 6.4.4. Place/Distribution

The 'place' consists of the channels used to distribute the cultural product to the public. These channels refer to variations in performing venues, ticket distribution and creative distribution concepts. Onassis Stegi works as a producer, an intermediary and a distributor, as it presents productions of other creators, it does produce itself, and finally, it distributes some of its products to entities other than final consumers, such as other cultural organisations, inside and outside Greece.

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<sup>142</sup> Similar productions in other cultural organisations in Athens might cost double price, as Nikos Rossolatos (personal interview, 10/10/2017) said.

The commercial location, as part of the distribution, is also linked to how much effort the consumer will expend to reach the venue and attend the performance or buy the tickets. The location of OCC is quite central, opposite a University (Panteion University), relatively close to Acropolis that is considered downtown. It has easy access by public transportation, although it is not close to the subway on foot. Nevertheless, it has private parking with low prices for customers (five euros for three hours) and tickets can be also purchased online; occasionally, depending on the event, it might charter minivans to transfer the public from the closest subway station (Syggrou Fix). In general, it could be said that the place has easy access, the area is a quiet and not dangerous one and it is in close proximity to the city centre. Especially when Onassis Stegi opened, the area in which is located was not an entertainment or artistic hub. Besides, OCC always wanted and wants to be something different that stands out of the crowd and this location fits this philosophy. Nevertheless, almost 3 km away from OCC, the Eugenides Foundation exists, which hosts the Planetarium since 1966, and the New Digital Planetarium since 2003 (Eugenides Foundation, 2019) (<https://www.eef.edu.gr/el/to-idryma/planitario/shetika-me-to-planitario/istoriko/#>). Additionally, behind Panteion University, Semio Theatre was already existing; the same applies to the Gialino Mousiko Theatre (700 m away from Onassis Stegi), and the Neos Kosmos Theatre (1 km away). In the last years, a cultural axis has been created in that area. Another Foundation (Stavros Niarchos) opened a cultural centre (SNFCC) in 2016 (that was donated to the Greek state in 2017), at the end of Syggrou Avenue, where Onassis Stegi is located as well (SNFCC, 2019) (<https://www.snfcc.org/en/snfcc/timeline>). The distance though between the two foundations is 3.3 km. Additionally, the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens (EMST) moved in 2016 to a building opposite the subway station Syggrou Fix, from which Onassis Stegi is 850 m away. Although the museum for the first years had hosted some events and exhibitions, it had not fully opened yet, and the pandemic delayed its opening; nowadays though it is fully active (EMST, 2019) (<http://www.emst.gr/en/museum>). Onassis Stegi has contributed to the creation of this cultural axis, and the broader area can be considered a cultural hub. It is worth mentioning that Onassis Stegi is 2.6 km away from the Onassis Cardiac Surgery Centre- which was donated to the Greek State in 1992- and around 2 km away from the Onassis Scholarships Building (Onassis Stegi,2019).





Figure 23. Onassis Stegi's broader area

As mentioned in theory (1.4.3), apart from the fixed venues, location refers also to all the possible places an organisation can perform (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). It is necessary to add at this point that Stegi is using many alternative/atypical/unusual places as venues (e.g. universities, parks, music halls, and remote or international places in the context of touring or educational programs). Usually, these alternative performance locations arise through collaborations with other institutions, but not only (e.g. Agriculture University of Athens, Pedion Areos Park, etc.).

The distribution of OCC tickets is done through four channels: 1) over the phone 2) online 3) at the box office 4) third-party points of sale. It is worth mentioning that online ticket purchase is increasing over time, while the box office purchase rate is declining. For the current period, it is estimated that over 45% of tickets will be bought online and a similar percentage will be bought at the Box Office. The call centre share remains at around 5%, while other points of sale have a share of about 1% (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019). The phone ticket lines are two: one for the general public and one for OCC's Friends. The first one is open Monday to Sunday 9:00-21:00, and the second the same days, but from 9:00-20:00. The box office is working the same hours with the ticket phone line for the general public (9:00- 21:00). All timings seem to be quite flexible. The online ticket sales of Onassis Stegi are powered only by Ticketmaster.

The decision to collaborate with this ticket provider is a strategic one. In OCC they very much use ticketing as a tool to come closer to the audiences, offer them what they need, and enhance their experience. That is why they choose Ticketmaster that works towards these directions. The



commercial department that mainly deals with ticketing, wants to have the full picture of purchasing for each production, daily and in real-time, with information such as how the zones are purchased, which zones are going better etc., so it can even do last minute adjustments or take corrective actions. Ticketmaster gives Stegi these opportunities, as well as the chance to create customised 'ticket offers' for its consumers, such as combo offers, group tickets, and two-for-one promotions. "When we noticed for example that we had groups of ten plus people visiting the organisation, we created the group tickets that we include until today in our pricing policy. Another example could be that through the Ticketmaster platform, we also have the chance to offer productions as a combo if we think it is necessary", Nikos Rossolatos (personal interview, 10/10/2017) mentions. On the contrary, according to the commercial manager of the organisation, the biggest competitor of Ticketmaster in Greece (Viva. gr) offers one-dimensional tickets; for OCC this fact is more important, instead of the fact that the competitive ticket-provider offers better distribution, as people can find it in more places, and does not have a fee (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019). They have tried though to collaborate also with the competitor company but the latter could not cover their needs (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). The Centre, through Ticketmaster, has a ticketing service designed to coordinate with its own software. Hence, the buyers are "unaware they are going to another site when they click on 'Buy tickets'" (Bernstein, p. 175). Through this service, the organisation can access all the information about purchasers and keep track of their behaviours; based on these and its own needs, the organisation develops Ticketmaster's system and applications, to finally use the ticket as a powerful tool (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). Onassis Stegi Friends can buy tickets through their electronic profile, and they can unlock discounts and presale opportunities. Nevertheless, even the general public needs an electronic user account to use the ticketing system. Finally, the ticket distribution strategy of OCC seems to be a selective one, as selected outlets are chosen to sell tickets: the Public stores network and the IANOS book store at Stadiou Street. Public stores are the largest Greek chain of stores for technology and entertainment products, has eighteen chain stores in Athens and fifty-five in total in Greece; the reason why the organisation collaborates with it is that its provider (Ticketmaster) does since 2018. Nevertheless, I consider this a good strategy, as many consumers find convenience in the big stores from which they can buy different types of products (Blackwell et al, 2001), but I will comment on this in the last chapter of this thesis, where the conclusions are presented.

Considering the description of Stegi's venues in the introduction of this chapter, the analysis of its cultural products later on, and Kronenburg's (2014) distinctions<sup>143</sup>, Stegi could be characterised as a

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<sup>143</sup> Small, big and mythic venues (Martinez et al., 2018).

'big venue', which are the "well-known venues with medium-to-large- capacity where the emphasis is on the 'show' "(Martinez et al., 2018, p. 63).

#### 6.4.5. Communication and Marketing Department

The below organisation chart (Figure 24) presents the position of each organisational unit within Onassis Stegi, the official position of each person within the organisation, and it is mainly used to contextualise the Communication and Marketing Department in the whole organisation. Directly after, the chart of the department this research focuses on will be presented.

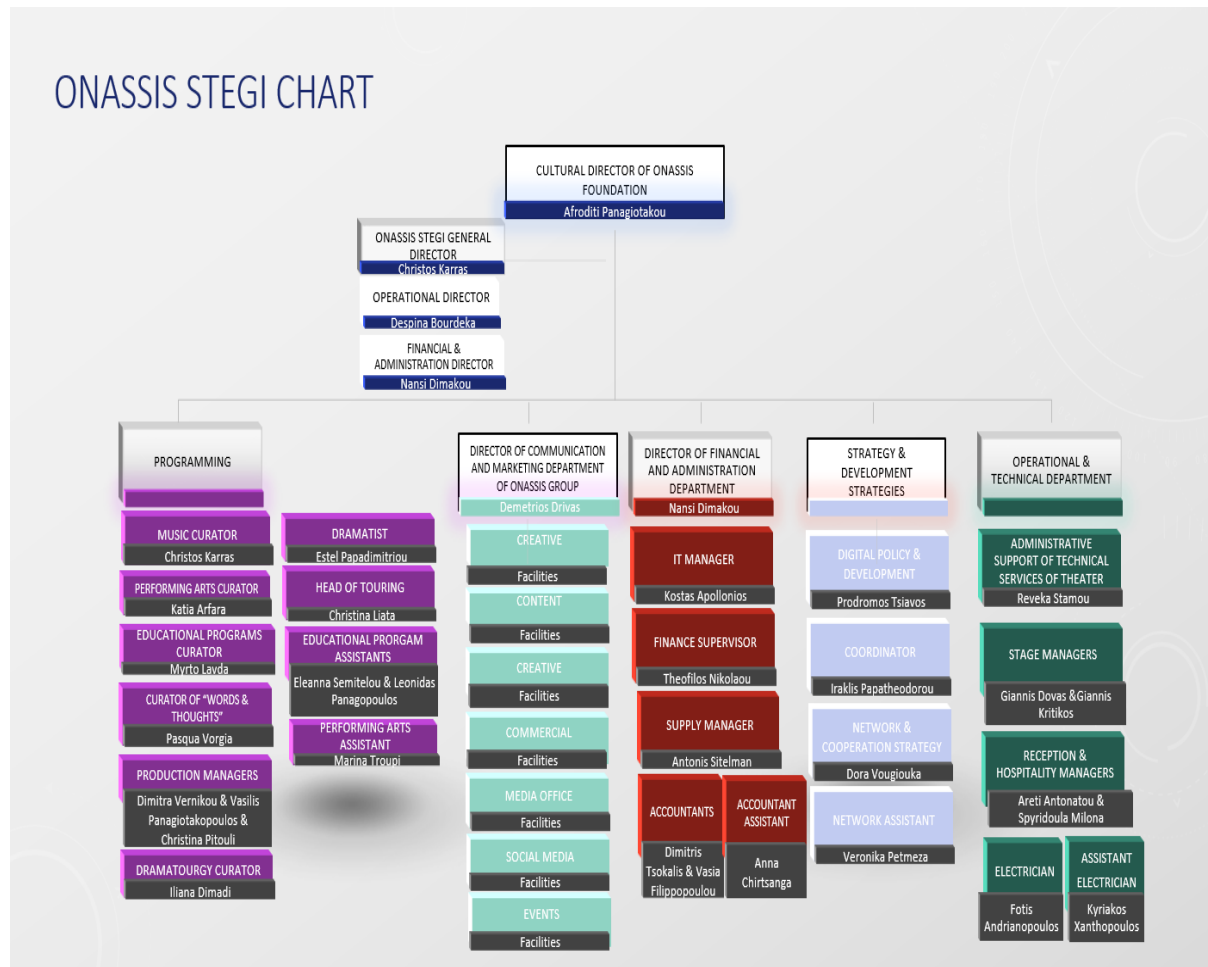


Figure 24. Onassis Stegi Chart

# Marketing & Communication Department Chart

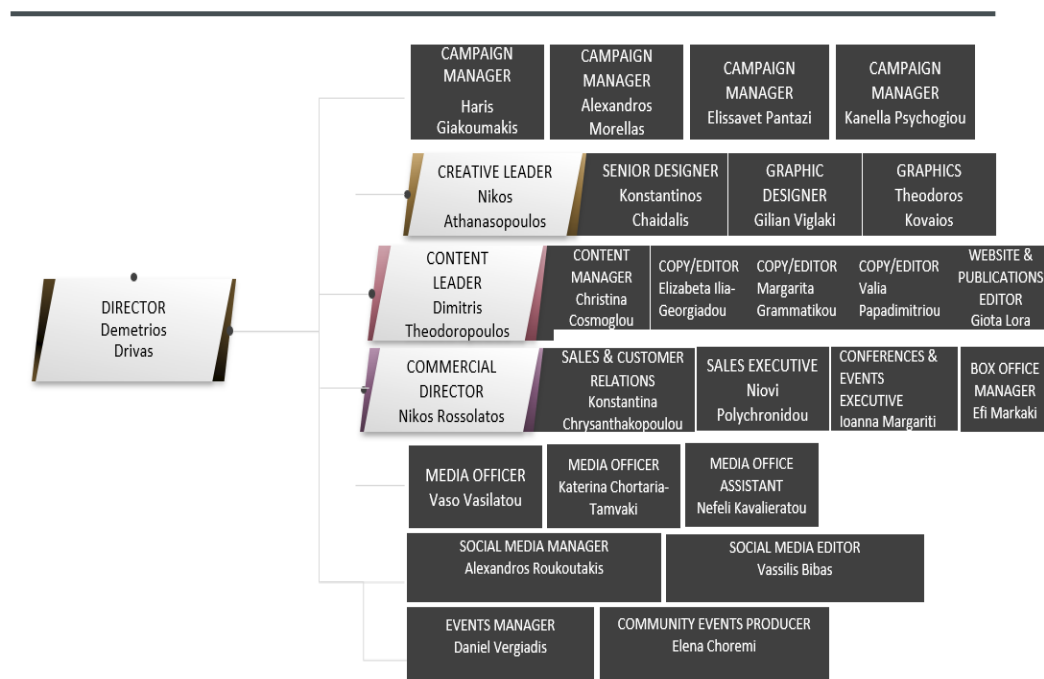


Figure 25. Marketing & Communication Department Chart

The special characteristic of the Communication and Marketing Department of Onassis Stegi is that it takes over all the communication and marketing activities of Onassis Group. This means that it is responsible for all the related activities for the Business Foundation, which engages mainly in shipping, real estate and financial products investments, as well as for the Public Benefit Foundation. It is dealing mainly though with Onassis Stegi, its biggest internal customer, which is why the department is housed in the offices of the Cultural Centre and employs 27 permanent employees.<sup>144</sup> Additionally, it takes over also the biggest part of communication for the Onassis Cultural Centre in New York, although until now the latter was quite independent, and currently quite inactive as well. Nevertheless, until mid-2018, the marketing and communication department was dedicated only to Onassis Stegi. This research will analyse the duties and responsibilities of the communication and marketing department that concern the Onassis Stegi only.

<sup>144</sup> As mentioned in methodology, the size of the organisation and its communication and marketing department, show a high degree of professionalism, comparing to cultural organisations who have zero or a small number of employees trained to deal effectively with marketing. One more reason I chose Onassis Stegi as a case study is its fully boarded Communication and Marketing Department, which gives more chances to the organisation to apply the full spectrum of marketing tools and strategies, targeting a high quality result.

The objective of this department is primarily to highlight the organisation's products using the most successful and efficient way; through this, it also builds a strong brand name. But, at the same time, except for communicating all the initiatives, the department is also involved in the shaping of the products. "In this organisation, the marketing and communication department doesn't take something ready-made and just communicate it. In many projects, it co-modifies the product; possibly not in a theatrical performance, but when we are discussing for example an arts exhibition and its setup, we are actively involved, trying also to create what the visitor expects to experience" (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018).

Onassis Stegi believes much in the experience economy, which shows that people are interested in buying experiences instead of goods. Experience is "the next step in what we call the progression of economic value", as Pine and Gilmore state in their book *The Experience Economy: Work is theatre and every business a stage* (1999). The experience came, after the industrial and service economy, to be the fourth economic offering. The experience economy may seem strange as a genre but its creation happened in the same way as the transition from the industrial to the service economy; the needs of people and the creativity of the inventors can lead to the articulation of an economic genre. Experiences involve the "guests" in a story that has a specific duration. The stager, who can be regarded as the seller, tries to satisfy the sensations of the customer -as we would call it in a service or industrial economy. Nevertheless, experience is something non-tangible and its value is memorable. The work of the individual responsible for orchestrating the experience come to an end once it is presented and what is left is the memory of the experience a long time afterwards. Performing arts as ephemeral arts have the same qualities as experiences; the performance lasts only for the time performed and then passes in memory (Bousiouta, 2010). Except for the actual performance though, the whole experience at the cultural organisation stays in memory too, for a long time afterwards. The team of the marketing and communication department of Onassis Stegi is focusing on the total experience, even before the audiences reach the venue. They work towards the best experience they can give to the audiences. "The space should be nice, the access easy, the engagement necessary; the convenience we offer to the consumers is important – no queues or crowded places-, as well as the way they will purchase the tickets (e-tickets for performances or parking). Online strategies help to enhance experiences" (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). This comes in convergence with what Martinez et al. (2018) (influenced by Derbaix, 2008) write: "A venue is not selling a show but selling a multifaceted experience, whose value is based on hedonic, cognitive, discovery and emotional dimensions, and the opportunity to share an experience with the artist and other audience members" (p.68). Hence there is a need to promote the venue in a creative and complex way, reflecting the experience of being there, and not just

communicating mere facts such as capacity or services, providing images of empty theatres. Nevertheless, Stegi has a YouTube channel that “helps to maintain a link with the audience” (Martinez et al., 2018, p. 68); this channel presents videos that “reflect the experience of being there”, helping audiences to reduce the perceived risks. Videos with past events, videos where audience members interact with the artists during interesting discussions, or backstage videos are only part of the content of Stegi’s YouTube channel.

Onassis Stegi’s Communication and Marketing Department consists of the director, the campaign managers, the creative department, the content department, the commercial department, the media office, the social media department and the events department. In the table below (Table 23) the duties of each department are described.

<b>Communication &amp; Marketing Department</b>	<b>Duties</b>
Director	He has the general supervision of all the projects
Campaign Managers	They are four and they are responsible for the coordination of the campaigns for the projects assigned to each one.
Creative Department	Designs the creative campaigns of the projects for any medium needed. The graphic designers supervised by the creative leader, design any visual material that can appeal to the targeted audiences, defending the aesthetics of the organisation.
Content Department	They delegate the load of work to the external partners-editors depending on their expertise. They are responsible for the final edit of all the written material (including translations), they write the texts that concern exclusively the organisation of Onassis Stegi and the Onassis Foundation, they adjust the size of texts when needed, and they write texts for different uses (e.g. website, social media etc.).
Commercial Department	Takes care of all the commercial agreements of the organisation, controls the ticketing system and the statistics of the newsletters, it forwards the newsletters to the audiences (except for the Friends of OCC). Moreover, it organises events related to commercial customers.
Media Office	This department develops and maintains media relationships. It is responsible for all the communication with media and journalists, regarding the projects of the organisation. It sends press releases to the journalists, making slight additions or alterations to the content it

	receives from the content department. It is supervised by the commercial director.
Social Media Department	Monitors all the activities in social media in coordination with a social media company and creates social media campaigns, co-creating the content with the content department.
Events Department	Organises the events in the context of communication, public relations and community relations. These events might be for Onassis Stegi, Onassis Foundation or events of social nature. Additionally, the department forwards the newsletters to the group of Friends of OCC.

Table 23. Communication & Marketing Department

#### 6.4.5.a. Procedures followed

The organisation chart above shows clearly that Onassis Stegi is using Integrated Marketing and Communication. This is obvious as all the departments function in the context of the communication and marketing department. In other words, they are all part of this department and are coordinated by it. The Communication and Marketing Department includes the below departments: Creative, Content<sup>145</sup>, Commercial, Media Office, Social Media, and Events. Nevertheless, as the Communication and Marketing Director of the organisation, Demetres Drivas (group interview, 12/12/2018), says: “We are integrated but not in a traditional way, where the same message plays everywhere. We customise the message many times, depending on the media we use. In media where we have the chance to include video, we are more expanded. Moreover, in the big initiatives we use multidisciplinary campaigns; we use multimedia as well, but the important here is the multidisciplinary, which means that for one performance we might create three different pictures that are stylistically close, they have the same message, but they are three different project photos” (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018).

Moreover, the multidisciplinary or multimedia campaigns do not depend on the duration of each project, but on its importance. The Campaign Manager, Haris Giakoumakis (group interview, 12/12/2018), gave the example of the “I am positive”, a two-day project with information about HIV and ways to fight prejudice around it. Although it was a short-term project, OCC considered it and its message of great significance and run campaigns before and after the event. The underlying objective of the project was to pass the message of a more open and receptive society. OCC, because is part of the Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, and all its activities are funded exclusively by the profits of the

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<sup>145</sup>As the content of Stegi is very special and hardly anyone can express it better than us, we have staffed an internal strong content team, so they can be content providers whether directly to media or the companies we collaborate with and have undertaken to promote our productions (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

autonomous and institutionally independent Alexander S. Onassis Business Foundation, is not seeking a communication that will fill the theatrical halls with spectators. It is not doing communication depending on the capacity of each hall or the duration of each performance (Demetres Drivas & Haris Giakoumakis, group interview, 12/12/2018).

Onassis Stegi always adjusts its communication strategies depending on the needs, as its people believe that if they use one single strategy, most of the time they will not succeed. They believe that the more flexible they are, the better results they have. Additionally, they are always using ticketing as a tool that gives them daily and real-time information about the box office; in this way, if the results from the box office are not satisfactory, they can react and correct choices they have made but proved non-effective. The feedback the audiences give through ticketing directs them.

The communication and marketing department is the umbrella of all the departments involved in a communication or marketing campaign, such as the content department, the commercial and so on. The annual projects are assigned to the four campaign managers, who are responsible for the coordination of the campaigns for each project. Haris Giakoumakis is responsible for all the music projects, Elisavet Pantazi and Kanella Psychogiou share the performing arts projects, and the rest of the projects are shared between the three of them, depending on the workload. Alexandros Morellas<sup>146</sup> takes over only the health projects that concern Onassis Foundation, such as the Onassis National Transplant Centre (ONTRC). The content department and the creative department have the know-how of the content of the messages and the aesthetic appeal of the campaigns, but they always act in cooperation with the rest of the team. Usually, the cultural product itself and the product story guide the experts of these departments, respecting always the attitude, aesthetics and style of OCC. For example, the character itself of the Borderline festival -an international music festival that brings sound artists, and musicians that deal with experimental kinds of music, and that connects people with different perspectives on sound- led the team to create the tagline “no borders, no barriers, just sound” or the radio spots that were describing that this festival allows people to experiment and listen to something that has no borders and connect people that until now considered they did not have similar perspectives on sound. Respectively acted the media office. Another example is *The Three Sisters* of Anton Chekhov that was presented at Stegi at the beginning of 2019 and was directed by Dimitris Xanthopoulos. In this play, the central heroines-three sisters- nurture a burning desire to return to Moscow, the idealized city of their childhoods, but they are not in a position to make this happen. The content of this play, its symbolism, and the director’s perspective led the communication

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<sup>146</sup> He holds the double role of campaign manager and media officer for these kind of projects.

team to create the tagline “No Moscow will save us”<sup>147</sup> (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/06/2019).

It is important to mention that because OCC is not a commercial brand, but it is dealing with culture, it doesn't follow the standard practices of the market for a commercial brand. Nevertheless, although it is a cultural centre, it is not following faithfully not even the practices of cultural organisations, which might still have as an objective the profit in order to survive. Onassis Stegi is a Public Benefit organisation, funded by Onassis Foundations, with the main objective the public benefit.

The communication and marketing department learns about the approved artistic programming of the next season around spring, and it starts the communication and marketing plan in the summer. They all meet with the curators, to get a clear idea of the artwork. After the brief meeting of the team, the content department contacts the artistic teams, it collects the photo and video material, the projects' abstracts, the contributors, and any other important information and shares it with the rest of the department (campaign managers, creative team, graphic designers, etc.). Before the promotional campaign of each project starts, the Campaign Managers discuss if necessary with the curators and the creators of the artistic works. Thereafter, the campaign managers fill in the campaign tool. This tool includes the necessary analysis for each project and the guidelines for the communication campaign the manager suggests. Firstly, it describes the identity of the project. It gives background information, such as the periodicity (e.g. ad hoc, one-off, annual), way of selection, its crucial political dimensions if any, and the people involved in it (e.g. artists, curators, etc.). Then, it describes the project (e.g. theatre performance, talk, workshop, etc.), what it includes and the unique element that distinguishes it, its location or locations, the dates and timings, and if it has a ticket fee or free entrance. Moreover, in this section, the campaign managers find the connection of the projects with the Culture or Education strategy of the organisation and how each project reflects the strategy (e.g. it might be an urban project, a mind-opening, an innovative one or one that changes attitudes). One more crucial question for managers is the reason why for this project (e.g. why this and not something else, how it fits with the brand?). Finally, they want to know how important the project is, effort and budget-wise.

After these informative sections, the campaign tool asks for the reasons to communicate this project. Are they communicating this project to sell tickets, or to increase awareness? Is it related to the brand image (improve/boost/strengthen) or to any legal requirements (e.g. part of a funded project)? Moreover, at this stage, managers analyse what exactly this campaign asks the viewer to do. There are possible answers to these questions. Some examples are the below: learn more (e.g. visit the

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<sup>147</sup> <https://www.onassis.org/whats-on/dimitris-xanthopoulos>



website), buy tickets, adopt a cause, change beliefs, understand the brand's philosophy etc. The next step is to decide to whom the campaign will be communicated, setting priorities and explaining. The receivers/audiences are described in detail at this stage. Managers want to know the core target audiences and their characteristics. They describe their interests (e.g. electronic music, modern dance, digital art, etc.), attitudes (e.g. are they seeking the different, are they political, do they like to be part of the content<sup>148</sup>), socio-demographics (e.g. age/education/sex/social class etc.), the type of media they assume audiences consume, the relationship status with the brand so far, where else they go for respective projects (competition favourites), how aware they are of this event (e.g. if it is a regular event it is probably anticipated. Festivals that happen 8 years in a row, can be anticipated). Finally, they decide on the secondary target audience(s).

Afterwards, they continue with the core communication strategy. Firstly they decide on the message, then the creative directions, the branding, and the media plan. The message should help audiences to understand "what and why", and not be confused with the slogan. As Onassis Stegi's team mentions in the campaign tool, "If we had to inform a friend about this, what would we say in a sentence"? The creative directions are useful for the creative team to get a clear picture. The campaign manager though does not give the creative idea, but information related to if it is a new campaign or not (e.g. the material already exists -photos, messages, etc.), if there is a required element that should be definitely included in the creative (e.g. info, call to action line, unique element, etc.) if the creative should be descriptive or implying. Moreover, campaign managers mention the key feeling the creative should have, the "tone-of-voice" (e.g. fun, happy, sophisticated, uplifting, etc.), and in which media/materials the creative must be adapted (e.g. video, ad, poster, social, invitation, web-banners, branding, t-shirts etc.).

The campaign tool (Figure 26) helps the manager to find the branding of each project. The below questions are answered at this stage: Do we need a tailor-made name for this project (key dimensions)? Do we need a tailor-made logo for this project (key dimensions and where will it appear)? How the creative will be branded (main signature, partners, and sponsors)? The next step is to plan the media strategy. According to the target audiences, the right media will be selected. To select the media though, managers should consider why these media and how they complement each other. They should also synchronize the publication/advertisement dates, consider if there are any special media, and finally split the media budget accordingly.

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<sup>148</sup> Many of the projects of OCC have a political dimension, so this categorisation helps campaign managers to identify the audiences. If for example a project concerns the human rights, the department will consider to approach also NGOs that work on this field, or if it concerns refugees, they will consider to approach accordingly refugee associations, human rights organisations etc. The people who like to be part of the content are those who like to be co-creators, in a sense that attending a project they get informed, they get inspired to create something themselves, they might artists etc.

Thereafter, the managers set the campaign’s milestones that means the important dates, such as the date of the first teaser, the date of the main video or the metro posters, the date of the press event, the follow-up date etc. Then they make a time plan for creative development. This plan includes the dates of: the briefing, the first round of ideas, the final creative with fine-tunings, the approvals, the photo shooting or video production if required and the adaptation of ‘key visual’ to other materials. Finally, they decide on the “on air” date, considering other key dates.

During this process, campaign managers should consider also other key assets, such as the total budget of each project (creative, production and media), the partnerships, the actors, and the ambassadors; as well as if there is a unique way of promoting this project and how this campaign drives the brand forward. Moreover, they should think carefully if there are any special watch-outs, such as permissions needed, copyrights, politics, approvals (internally & externally), special production needs with time cost implications, etc.



Figure 26. Campaign Tool

After the completion of the campaign tool, the latter is communicated to the whole Communication and Marketing Team. Hence, all the heads of the departments included in Marketing and Communication department and all the parts involved (e.g. Copy/Editors) attend a brief meeting with the campaign managers to get a deep knowledge about the concept and the narration of the performance, the size of the communication, the commercial needs etc.; hence they jointly decide the final messages to be communicated. These messages are differently developed depending on the medium used. For example, they are differently developed in a poster, a social media post, a brochure,

a press release or in an advertisement in a newspaper. Afterwards, the fruitful dialogue of the team leads to the shaping of specific messages and decisions on the way of expressing them (words and design), as well as decisions on the media strategy to be followed (strategic marketing). Actually, there is a think tank that decides, and the campaign managers come first.

Until 2018 Onassis Stegi did not have a creative team satisfactory in size, hence it had several external partners (e.g. Beetroot Design). Since 2018 though the organisation has staffed the creative department and most of the design happens inside the organisation. Nevertheless, Onassis Stegi collaborates also with external partners, as there might be design groups that are a “better fit” for specific projects. This happens currently with the theatrical performance “Birds” by Aristophanes. The performance was first presented in September 2016, and currently, Onassis Stegi prepares a vinyl with the music of this performance. The design team -Beetroot Design in this case- that had undertaken the specific project back in 2016, will be again responsible for the design; the organisation believes that as this creative team initiated this project is part of the identity of the project and therefore the best fit for the creative design. For future projects though, Onassis Stegi plans to assign the design to the internal creative team. Although in the context of integrated marketing Onassis Stegi staffed the creative and content department, to be able to create and/or manage all the material in the house, this cannot happen always as the volume of the projects and by extension of the texts needed is very big to be handled exclusively by the internal content department. Besides, the people who form the content team are experts in writing, and they know very well the way of writing that suits Stegi, but they do not have the technical knowledge of arts. Hence, the responsibilities of the content department are to delegate the load of work to the stable external collaborators-editors<sup>149</sup> depending on their expertise (e.g. dance, theatre, music), to do the corrections as well as the final edit of these texts and their translations, and write the texts that concern exclusively the organisation and not its projects, as well as shorten or add information when it is needed to present a different format of the same text (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/06/2019).

In September they have already come up with the identity of the artistic season, they work on any material they have and fine-tune it. The first communication material, such as press releases, ads, banners, and posters, is on air mid of September. Although all this process mentioned is the collective work of the team, the coordinator is the Communication and Marketing Director, Demetres Drivas. In OCC they use almost all the categories of mass media depending on what they want to succeed with each campaign. Each media offers specific possibilities and benefits

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<sup>149</sup> These partners, after so many years of collaboration with Onassis Stegi are considered part of the team. Besides, they are the ones who created the writing style of the organisation.

## 6.5. Integrated Marketing Communication

Communication, and by extension advertising, starts always with what the organisation wants to succeed, therefore what is the objective of each performance, or the objective of the organisation through the performance. If the objective is to communicate a message to a broader audience or to make one performance the “talk of the town”, to sell out or to make the majority believe that is sold out no matter what happens in reality, the communication will be mass. The organisation will check the characteristics of each medium (e.g. outdoor advertising needs good creative and easy messages) and it will communicate the project to the maximum it can. If the objective is to present something mainly for special audiences and to have a full auditorium but not to spread the word to the masses, the organisation will use targeted communication for targeted audiences. It will not do outdoor advertising or mass advertising in print, but it will use special radio programs, social media and newsletters. In OCC they believe that mass communication and advertising for special audiences is a waste of energy and money because special audiences can be easily tracked/found via digital tools. But, if they want to fill the main auditorium for three weeks, they will do something mass, following a completely different approach. For the Commercial Director of the organisation, advertising is part of marketing when its content concerns the receiver. “The problem with advertising is when they bombard you with content that is not in the scope of your interests. Advertising should be targeted and to succeed in this you should first apply digital marketing” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

### 6.5.1. Offline Communication & Marketing Tools

In the campaign tool mentioned before there is a section that asks campaign managers to describe the reason why for each project. This is a very crucial question as per the Commercial Director, Nikos Rossolatos, who mentions that if you answer this, you can easily find the creative campaign you will do and the media you will choose. There is a plethora of offline and online advertising tools that OCC uses, depending on the impact and benefits each medium offers and the needs of each campaign. Nevertheless, the people in Stegi are supporters of digital. They believe that individuals can easily and in many ways find online what they are looking for, and for companies and organisations, it is way cheaper to advertise online, instead of offline (TV, radio, print). This does not mean though they do not use traditional tools of communication. However, according to Hausmann (2012), nowadays, the credibility of traditional communication tools is declining. The core collaborations of Stegi are generally stable, but corrective actions are made depending on the performance of each medium and the organisation’s communication needs (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

#### *6.5.1.a. Television*

For Onassis Stegi and its Commercial Director, television is not a priority when it comes to advertising. This is because they consider it a less flexible medium, compared to other ones, which are not developing and progressing quickly. Additionally, the moving picture is not just a TV privilege anymore, and with the advent of the internet, the moving picture on TV has not had the same impact as it used to have. Therefore, Onassis Stegi is using very rarely advertisements on TV. Nevertheless, it does not exclude this medium from its communication and marketing toolkit; it might use television via interviews of key personnel of the organisation or through advertising when it is necessary, but usually not more than once per year (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017).

#### *6.5.1.b. Radio*

Radio is one of the organisation's favourites. They consider it offers repetition and is appropriate when they want to pass a message or to sell. But except for ads they use also influencers, and radio producers that audiences trust (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). The texts for the radio productions are created internally by the team of Onassis Stegi. With radio, the organisation has both commercial and sponsorship relationships, separately or combined. For example, it has a pure sponsorship relationship with the state-owned public radio. It also makes ad-hoc collaborations with radio stations. "We will check the statistics of each radio station if we consider that suits us, and if we like the station itself and the producers, we will choose it. For example, 'en leuko' and 'pepper' radio stations suit us best and they attract young audiences" (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 06/10/2017). The Greek market has a big number of radio stations proportionately to the size of the country. Stegi collaborates with the most important music radio stations, as well as with news radio stations (En Lefko, Red, Melodia, Pepper, Menta, Kiss, Easy, Rock, Diesi, Best, Athens Voice Radio, Real FM, Thema FM) (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 24/04/2019).

#### *6.5.1.c. Print*

As mentioned above OCC has some strategic collaborations with media; these collaborations depend on many factors, such as the reach of each media, the target audience of each project, the uniqueness of a medium (media), the collaborations of Onassis Foundation, and so on. For example, they have commercial agreements with free newspapers (e.g. Athens Voice, Lifo) that have a wide reach and they have printed and electronic versions; they work with the city guide "Athinorama" (printed and electronic) that is unique in its kind, and they continue the collaboration of the Onassis Foundation with the publishing group "Kathimerini Publishing S.A" (Kathimerines Ekdoseis) (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 06/10/2017 & Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017).

OCC uses the advertisement in newspapers, although the latter do not have the same prestige as they used to have (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017; Hausmann, 2012), and they have

plunged into the Greek market for many reasons. It is worth mentioning though that Onassis Stegi is not advertised in women's magazines, although many times these might be part of a publishing group with which it collaborates. This is because it has chosen not to be advertised at all to media with exclusively female content (not only women's magazines, but also websites), mainly because it is a 'noisy environment' (that needs big effort and money to get a dominant position, and it is a very big market as well. Besides, if they start advertising to one of those, all the others will chase Stegi for advertisement too, and it will be forced to deny it. To avoid any negative publicity because of that, the team tries to keep a balance and prefers not to enter a segment that will not be able to support it. When Stegi needs to attract a female audience, it can find it in more relevant and less expensive environments (e.g. magazines of general interest, radio, free of charge press, cultural websites etc.). Nevertheless, they will not deny a proposal for an interview of the Cultural Director of the Onassis Foundation, Afroditi Panagiotakou, for a women's magazine (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017).

In terms of the size of advertising turnover, the Greek market is very small. However, the number of media (per type of media) is usually disproportionately large. Regarding the allocation of the advertising budget, careful handling is needed, because the pressure exerted by the media to get a bigger part of the (relatively small) advertising pie is very big, and in this context, the "expanding" of the advertising presence into more media typologies increases the above pressure (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 24/04/2019). "We are quite selective and we are trying not to start collaborations with many media, as we will end up spending money and time without knowing where the good results are coming from" (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 06/10/2017). The press pool Stegi works with is changing over time. In the current period, its collaborations are mainly running with the newspapers Kathimerini, Proto Thema, Real News, Ethnos, Eleftheros Typos, Documento, Efimerida ton Syntakton, Athens Voice (free of charge press) and Lifo (free of charge press), and with the magazine-city guide Athinorama (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 24/04/2019).

The below table (Table 24) presents the research conducted by the company Focus Bari (2019) about the weekly newspapers. There were two categorisations based on the day of circulation, no matter if the content of the newspapers differs: The Sunday Newspapers and the weekly newspapers. Although many of the Sunday newspapers have also a daily circulation, the survey focused on Sunday circulation. And although all the newspapers that participate in both categories might not circulate on the same day (Sunday, Saturday or Thursday) can be all considered weekly newspapers. It should be mentioned though that two of the participating newspapers (Athens Voice and Lifo) are free of charge, and although they cannot be totally comparable with the rest of the newspapers, this survey examines the number of people that consume each newspaper, without considering other factors.

NEWSPAPER	CIRCULATION (printed version)	CITY OF DISTRIBUTION	KIND OF NEWSPAPER	FREQUENCY
<b>Kathimerini</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (7.2 %)	National Publication	-Quality Press (Broadsheets) -General Interest (political, cultural)	Daily
<b>Proto Thema</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (4.6 %)	National Publication	-Quality Press (Broadsheets) -General Interest (political, cultural)	Weekly-Sunday
<b>Real News</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (4.2 %)	National Publication	-Quality Press (Broadsheets) -General Interest (political, cultural)	Daily
<b>Eleftheros Typos</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (1.9 %)	National Publication	-Quality Press (Broadsheets) -General Interest (political, cultural)	Daily
<b>Documento</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (1.7 %)	National Publication	-Quality Press (Broadsheets) -General Interest (political, cultural)	Weekly-Sunday
<b>Ethnos</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (2.8 %)	National Publication	-Quality Press (Broadsheets) -General Interest (political, cultural)	Daily
<b>Efimerida ton Syntakton</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (2.7 %)	National Publication	-Quality Press (Broadsheets) -General Interest (political, cultural)	Daily
<b>Athens Voice</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (1.8 %)	Athens & Thessaloniki (In August is also distributed to all the Greek Islands)	Alternative Quality Press -General Interest Free of charge press	Weekly/Thursday
<b>Lifo</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> in circulation for the period June-December 2018 (1.6 %)	Athens & Thessaloniki	Free of charge press	Weekly/Thursday

Table 24. Circulation of Newspapers (Source: Focus Bari 2019)

“We have a special identity as a cultural organisation, and especially because we are part of a public benefit foundation; our message is of much greater public interest than it would be if we would sell any other product. Therefore, it is easier for us to choose which media we will use, as we will not look for the printed media with the demographics that suit us best, as our audience is broader; we will not ignore the demographics though. Normally we should decide according to the circulation of newspapers, the ratings of radio stations and so on. But, all these are in their infancy in Greece, compared to practices abroad. We decide which media suits us by experience and deep knowledge of the media market, combined with some media demographics that exist from market research companies (mainly from the company called [Focus Bari](#)), and also combined with the qualitative characteristics of each media that are obvious, especially with the press. We work like this as the market is very specific when you need to advertise a cultural product the options are not many. We will search for decent cultural sections of all kinds of media because when this section has some standards, we know that its audience is hot for us. In case we do not find the standards we are looking for, we will not put advertising there, as its audience is not ready to be exposed to it; but we will try to communicate through articles” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017).

Although many advertising companies provide organisations with media circulation and demographic data, Onassis Stegi is not collaborating with any similar company. Instead, it is doing the media evaluation in-house, although it is not an easy task, given the fact that there are no official sources for this kind of data in Greece (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

#### *6.5.1.d. Outdoor advertising campaign*

The outdoor campaign is decided in advance, as the designers should know if their creations will be used only digitally or outdoors as well, on billboards at bus stations or metro stations. Stegi decides when it wants to launch an outdoor campaign, and it has to book long in advance if the campaign is related to public transportation<sup>150</sup>. It might create flyers that will be used inside the organisation, but also outside, at distribution points in the city. “We decide the content (text, tag lines, etc.) and mainly the creative department (or rarely external design companies we collaborate with) design the outdoor campaign. When the materials are printed, we discuss them with our colleague, who is doing the poster sticking and distribution of the promotional material, where we want to distribute them. Anyway, he has a very good mapping of the city and his suggestions are valuable. He does the poster sticking only at clothing stores, cafes, bars and so on, but never in the streets. We are not following

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<sup>150</sup> “It is quite complicated though and time consuming to be advertised in the subway in Greece. Although the people who run this process do have the mapping of advertising spots, they do not let customers choose their desired spot. The latter can only ask for ad density at three specific stations. Instead of the advertising panels in the subway stations, we better prefer the advertising stickers inside the subway wagons, because in this case we can choose at least the stations by which our advertisements will pass” (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 6/10/2017).



this kind of practice, as it does not have a legal framework in Greece. The same applies to the display signs” (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 06/10/2017). All the outdoor campaign of Onassis Stegi concerns mainly specific projects. Only in some foreign language institutes, the organisation distributes its annual programming and its educational programs, so this is considered as advertising of the whole organisation.

#### 6.5.2. Online communication and marketing tools

Onassis Stegi believes very much in online media, especially when it wants to approach special audiences. The team supports that digital communication and marketing can be more targeted and cheaper as well. Special audiences can be located/tracked down directly and categorised through social media (likes, shares, posts etc.) or even through their online searches; based on these, there are digital tools that promote to the users, products similar to their likings. In digital communication, the director of the commercial department of OCC, Nikos Rossolatos (personal interview, 10/10/2017), includes the communication through content (articles, interviews, etc.), which in some cases he considers preferable to online advertisement or banners. This though can apply also to non-digital (offline) communication. He also includes newsletters, as well as influencers. The latter is used by the organisation not only with the typical concept of the word, which is the important personalities that convey messages. They use as influencers entities/bodies/communities who convey their messages to the individuals that are in touch with them. These can be foreign language institutes, embassies - as many of their productions come from or relate to personalities from abroad or to foreign countries - , entities or groups that deal with dance, visual arts, gaming etc. Sometimes they even approach forums or groups that deal with animation or science fiction. “We have done our research and we have discovered a big number of this kind of communities. We contact the operators or the head of the communities and we try to convey the information/message through them. We are doing the research in many ways. Sometimes, we even ask our colleagues, if we know they have a hobby or they are part of a group, such as gaming” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). Nikos Rossolatos (personal interview, 10/10/2017) classifies in digital communication the non-conventional influencers they use because these kinds of communities/groups are almost impossible to be met via traditional media, as most of them do not consume traditional media. Digital though makes communication very targeted, as he mentions. He also includes ticketing in digital marketing and believes that the latter enhances experiences (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). Finally, he believes that digital marketing can enhance visitors’ experience in many ways and facilitate customers’ journey, from the moment they start buying the ticket until the moment they will leave the organisation. “We can enhance the experience non-digitally as well, by offering for example a welcome drink to the visitors. But we can do plenty of things digitally as well. We can have a platform

through which the customers can book their tickets and their taxicab or their parking slot. The whole experience will be smoother. Additionally, with digital, we have the chance to know when the visitors arrive at Stegi and suggest activities inside the building, until their scheduled event starts, according to their personalised preferences, which will have been recorded from previous visits and ticketing system (e.g. an exhibition in the building that might interest them until the performance they will attend will start).” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

#### 6.5.2.a. Onassis Stegi Website

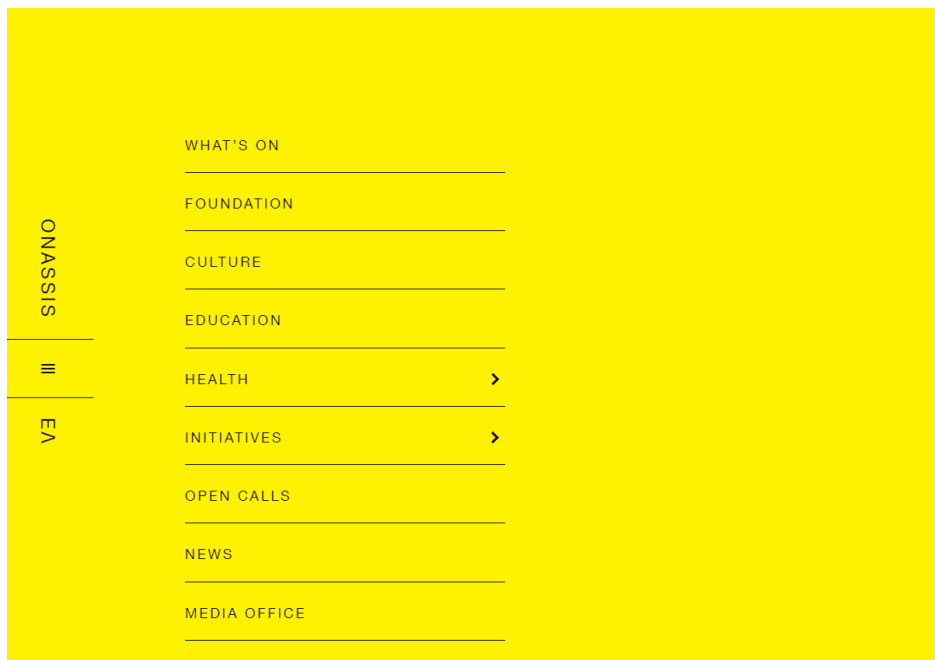


Figure 27. Website Menu

Until January 2019, Onassis Foundation and Onassis Stegi had two separate websites. Since February 2019 though they share a new website, which includes all the activities of the Onassis Foundation. The new website has merged the old web addresses under [www.onassis.org](http://www.onassis.org). It is based on the five pillars (culture, education, environment, health, and social solidarity) mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (6.2) and it includes a “What’s on” section with the current projects of the foundation, it has information about the *Foundation*, it has a *Culture* and an *Education* section where it presents the projects running by both Onassis Cultural Centres, in Athens and in New York, a *Health* section where it gives information about the Onassis National Transplant Centre and the Onassis Cardiac Surgery Centre. Additionally, it has the tab “*Initiatives*”, which includes detailed information about Onassis Stegi, educational programs, Onassis future, Cavafy archive, scholarships, grants, special education, Onassis library, academic programs, communities (Stegi Friends and Onassis Scholars’ Association), Onassis prizes, New York and Vaduz. The last tabs are *Open Calls*, *News* and *Media Office*.

This new merged website is an effort from the Onassis Foundation to provide detailed and complete information about all the activities and the overall work of the foundation. All the necessary information is concentrated in a single website that can describe and present. It is also an effort to come closer to the audiences, as the new website follows different and more modern aesthetics compared to the old ones. This is linked also to the fact that the Communication and Marketing department represents the whole Foundation and its activities. Until now, the Foundation was communicating very little information about its work, and it was mainly communicating subjects concerning culture, with Onassis Stegi as spokesman. Stegi was also taking a stand on social issues, maintaining the characteristic of being provocative and bold. Now, they put everything under one umbrella, and except for culture, two more pillars mainly (health and education) will come to the fore. Onassis Health and Onassis Education will talk about the respective projects. The final plan is for Stegi to talk about what is happening to Stegi, while for social and cultural issues, Onassis Culture will be the spokesman. All these will be implemented in due time, as with careful steps and different language they need to mingle the audiences of Stegi that embraces pioneer ideas, with the more traditional audiences of the Foundation.

The philosophy of OCC is ruled by the motto “easy access”. Easy access to culture by everybody, easy access to the building, easy access to the website and so on. Hence, they try to make access easy to all potential visitors, such as random users, first-timers or old users, users of different age groups or with different backgrounds and so on. But access in the case of a website might mean content, design, performance and usability.

Website management, which means the management of content and design, is not done by the techies of the organisation, therefore the digital development department, but by the communication and marketing department. The digital development department though provides the know-how. The content of the website is decided by the communication and marketing department. The Content and Creative department play again an important role here, likewise to the offline campaign. The transition from the old website to the new one was a long-term procedure, during which the communication and marketing department presented its needs, and afterwards, a technical negotiation started with the digital development department. The website is very informative, it includes detailed information about the Centre and its projects, photos and videos, as well as interviews of artists (coming soon); the latter will include videos with content such as “five minutes with this artist” or “backstage with the director” or “five artists talk about the festival” etc. Moreover, the website does not include posts of entire reviews or short extracts from them or links to the reviews (but they plan to do it in the future). This is done though through social media platforms. Additionally, the website does not have interactive educative activities to engage people, links to useful resources about the works it presents

and/or produces or sites for purchasing further readings, watching or listening to material related to the performances. It does not include backstage videos either, although they upload similar content on some of its social media. Nevertheless, Onassis Stegi uses live streaming for many events it hosts and for different reasons.

The design of the website aims at grasping the attention and providing the information the visitor is looking for. It performs on all browsers and it is fast and responsive with a personal computer, laptop or mobile device.

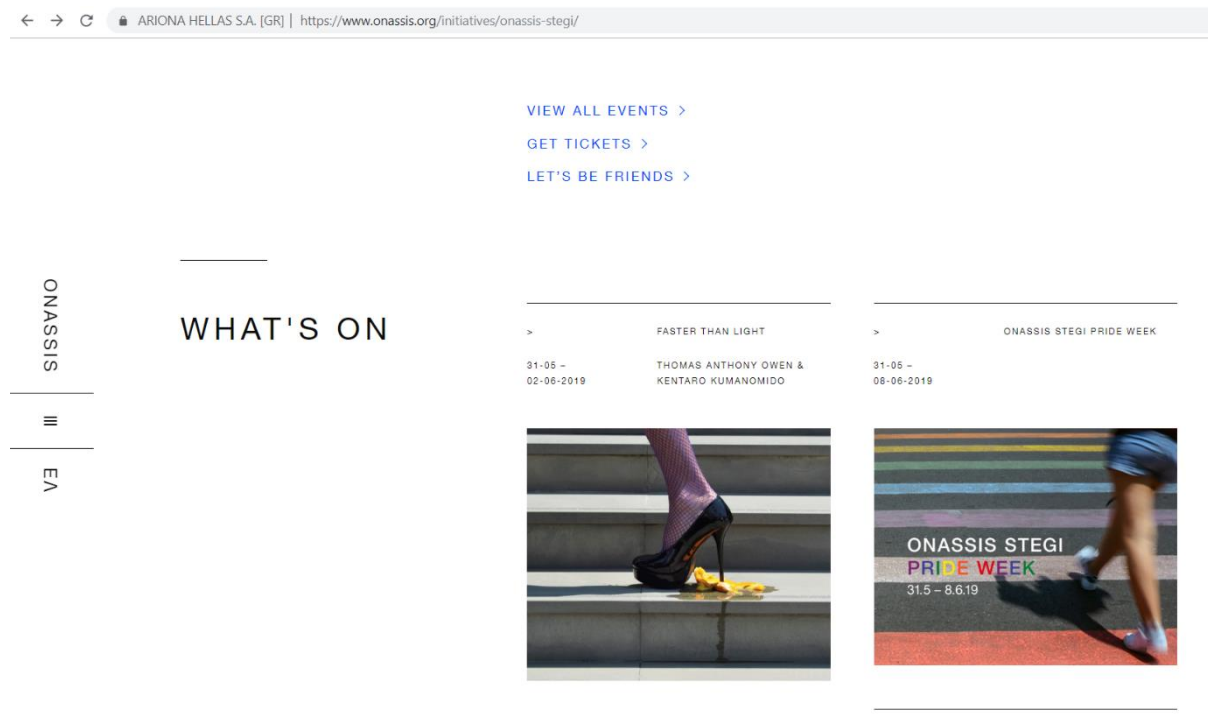


Figure 28. Onassis Stegi Webpage (What's on)

For now, the users can check with one click the running projects and they can book tickets with one click, depending if they enter directly the Onassis Stegi webpage ([www.onassis.org/initiatives/onassis-stegi](https://www.onassis.org/initiatives/onassis-stegi)) (Figure 28) or three clicks from the Onassis Foundation webpage ([www.onassis.org](https://www.onassis.org)) (Figure 29). Bernstein (2007) says that schedules, ticket purchase pages and special promotions should be accessible with one click. But this is not so easy if the webpage of Onassis Stegi is part of the webpage of the Onassis Foundation.

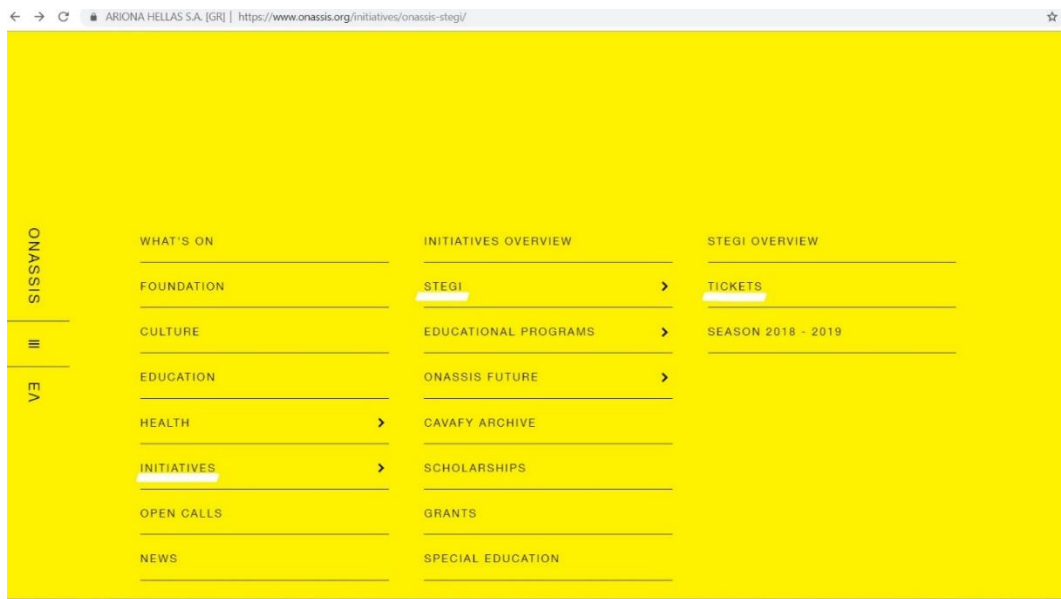


Figure 29. Onassis Foundation Webpage

The commerce on OCC's website is provided by the third-party ticketing service Ticketmaster, and it offers real-time online ticket sales. E-commerce eliminates the need for printed event tickets, as the purchasers can save their e-ticket on their smartphone and can proceed straight to the auditorium.<sup>151</sup>

The new website is a work in progress. It will be improved and enriched, giving also some time to the audiences to familiarise themselves with it. "We noticed that navigation is difficult as there is a big bounce rate. This is because the new website has way more information, especially compared to the old one, as it is under the umbrella of the Onassis Foundation. But we are working on it and we are also giving time to the users to familiarise themselves. It is a website though that follows the trends and it is developed as a grid, at the same time though these kinds of websites are more difficult in navigation" (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

The organisation has multiple URL addresses that drive to the same site, so it will be easier for visitors to find the organisation, especially after the transition from the old website to the new one; users, even if they type [www.sgt.gr](http://www.sgt.gr), will be redirected to <https://www.onassis.org/initiatives/onassis-stegi/>. Moreover, it has link partners, which are relevant organisations or not that set up a link to Onassis Stegi<sup>152</sup>, but they do not have a list that included all the partners. Additionally, the website address is printed on publicity and sales materials, especially now that the organisation has a new URL. Finally, the e-mail address of Onassis Stegi is managed by the administrative staff of the organisation, which forwards the e-mails to the responsible person inside the organisation.

<sup>151</sup> This service is not available for certain types of reduced-price tickets.

<sup>152</sup> One example is <https://www.thisisathens.org/place/attraction/onassis-stegi/>.

#### *6.5.2.b. E-mail Marketing*

OCC has its own e-mail lists (database), acquired by subscriptions from Friends of OCC, subscriptions in the newsletter online or offline, purchase of tickets (online or at the box office), through paid posts on Facebook that were providing an opportunity to keep up to date with Onassis Stegi's projects, or through e-mails asking for subscription or replacement of old e-mail address. Sign-up pop-up screens for first-time visitors do not exist on the website of the organisation. Stegi's e-mail lists are quite segmented. Firstly, except for the general lists of consumers, there are lists categorised according to consumers' interests-type or style of spectacle-, which are collected from the purchases of the tickets or the mini-surveys on the website upon subscription. To purchase a ticket online, purchasers have to create a login account. During this process, there is a mini-survey for the consumers, asking for their preferences in the products of OCC (theatre, dance, music, visual arts, educational programs, talks and thoughts, youth theatre, jazz, events on "design", cinema), and basic demographic data (address and age). These e-mail addresses are saved in the database of the organisation, and the individuals start receiving also the newsletters<sup>153</sup> of Onassis Stegi, only on the categories they have chosen upon registration, provided that the individuals have ticked the box that opts them in. Someone can subscribe by providing at least the e-mail address and the postcode because the organisation believes that with this particular information, it can identify the individuals. "If someone is willing to give more information, for example about its interests -and people usually do it for cultural organisations, because it is beneficial for both sides- is even better; we need this, as well as the track of the behaviours of our audiences from the ticketing department, to reach as much as possible personalised communication", Nikos Rossolatos (personal interview, 10/10/2017) says. Secondly, there is a list of the Friends of the organisation, who enjoy different privileges (such as advance notice of performances or presales). The commercial department is dealing with the targeting of audiences of the newsletters.

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<sup>153</sup> For the newsletters, Onassis Stegi is using the international platform "Campaign Monitor" (Rossolatos, 2019).

ONASSIS  
STEGI



ONASSIS STEGI PRIDE WEEK 2019

## Faster than Light

31 ΜΑΪΟΥ - 2 ΙΟΥΝΙΟΥ 2019 | ΣΤΕΓΗ ΙΔΡΥΜΑΤΟΣ ΩΝΑΣΗ

"Και τώρα, πρέπει να φανούμε δυνατές/οι."

Το Onassis Stegi Pride Week 2019 ξεκινά με την ταινία *Faster than Light*.  
Σε συνέχεια ενός έργου σε εξέλιξη, ο Thomas Anthony Owen και

Figure 30. Monothematic Newsletter

**Tinos World Music Festival**  
Μουσική  
Tinos World Music Festival  
Pre-festival concert στη Στέγη  
24 Μαΐου | 21:00 | Μικρή Σκηνή

Μια ημέρα πριν από την έναρξη του μουσικού και ατμόσφαιρα από το φεστιβάλ της Τήνου στην Μικρή Σκηνή της Στέγης.  
Το 5ο Tinos World Music Festival, που διοργανώνει το Ίδρυμα Τηνακού Πολιτισμού σε συνεργασία με τη Στέγη του Ίδρυματος Ωνάση, θα μας ταξιδέψει φέτος από τον Εξέλινο Πάντο και τη Μούρη θάλασσα μέχρι την Ανατολική Μεσόγειο, το Άγιαιο και την Κρήτη.

Μάθετε περισσότερα  
Εισιτήρια

**Γεωμετρίας Αφιέρωμα στη Γη**  
Έκθεση | παράλληλες δράσεις  
27 Μαΐου | 12:00-23:00 | Γεωπονικό Πανεπιστήμιο

Η έκθεση Γεωμετρίας συνεχίζεται και αυτή την Κυριακή φιλοκαρπώντας στο Γεωπονικό Πανεπιστήμιο με δράσεις αφιερωμένες στη Γη. Με ομιλίες, εργαστήρια, τικ νικ και προβολές ταινιών, μικροί και μεγάλοι σφουγκραζόμαστε τη Γη και ανακαλύπτουμε το μυστικό της.

Η έκθεση και όλες οι παράλληλες δράσεις είναι δωρεάν.

Μάθετε περισσότερα

Figure 31. Multi-thematic Newsletter

The content of the newsletters -written only in Greek at the moment- is created by the content department. The intention of the organisation is not to give too much information in the newsletters, as long attention spans do not exist online and audiences are exposed to a big amount of information every day {Hausmann (2012) agrees with information overflow}. OCC's newsletters present briefly important information. Haris Giakoumakis (group interview, 12/12/2018) mentions: "We create newsletters that we, ourselves, would like to read. They should be comprehensive, and short, give us a good flavour of what it is communicating to us, and give us the option to buy or learn more. That's how our newsletters are built". The content of the newsletter is based on the existing written material for each project. They are developed a little differently in terms of the language they use, they are more friendly and simple, avoiding jargon. The creative part of the newsletters is pre-decided, as the visual material for each project already exists. Once the newsletter is ready, the campaign manager

does the final check of details such as dates, sponsors' information, etc. The newsletters are sent by the commercial department.

The frequency of the newsletters that are sent and their exact timing are both determined by the campaign manager of each project, who is the one who decides as well if there is a need for a newsletter. The frequency varies depending on the needs of each project, for example, if it is going well if it is sold out or if it needs a boost. If the timing a campaign manager considers as appropriate coincides with another project, after internal communication the team decides whether it will send a newsletter that includes both or it will set priorities, trying always to keep a distance-couple of days at least- between the newsletters it sends. For the organisation's team, the monothematic newsletters (Figure 30) are preferable, as the multi-thematic ones (Figure 31) might give more information, but they are neither very targeted nor efficient and they might be confusing. They use only the combined newsletters when they have a time limit or when there is a parallel event, so it will be sent along with the main event. The periodicity of Onassis Stegi's newsletters is not fixed. The latter are sent only when it is necessary. Nevertheless, this is a practice that evolves based on listening to the needs of the audience and/or testing new ways of communication more suited to its audience. In the past, there was a monthly newsletter and later on a weekly one.

These decisions are taken after the evaluation of the sent newsletters and the brainstorming of the team, which checks the open rates of the newsletters and discusses the possible reasons for low open rates<sup>154</sup> (e.g. difficult language, tiring text, non-appealing subject line) as well as the possible ways of improvement. The practices they apply currently seem to be more effective than past ones, as the open rates are improving, according to the Campaign Manager, Haris Giakoumakis (personal interview, 08/03/2019).

The newsletters are sent on working days only, and the usual timings are 10:00-10:30 in the morning or 17:00 in the afternoon, following studies for the most efficient timings to send newsletters and marketing material.

Except for the newsletters for the general public, there are also the ones for the Friends of OCC. Until November 2018 the newsletters for this special audience were prepared by the Events department. Currently, in an effort towards integrated marketing, (also) the newsletters for Friends are written by the content department, like all the publicity material of the organisation. When the texts are ready, the Events Manager adds the last details, such as links, and sends the newsletters to the list of Friends.

### *Other Websites*

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<sup>154</sup> The commercial department controls the open rates of the newsletters (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).



Onassis Stegi is using websites as communication and marketing tools, either under commercial or sponsorship agreements or a combination of these, usually on a regular basis. The types of sites it uses are: 1) Cultural websites (e.g. [elculture.gr](http://elculture.gr), [culturenow.gr](http://culturenow.gr), [monopoli.gr](http://monopoli.gr), [clickatlife.gr](http://clickatlife.gr)<sup>155</sup>). 2) Pop culture websites (e.g. [propaganda.gr](http://propaganda.gr)). In these, the electronic versions of free newspapers are included, such as Athens Voice and Lifo. The organisation pursues these kinds of collaborations, as they are nice synergies, especially with Athens Voice, that apart from the printed version and the website, recently started being also on the radio. 3) News-sites that are the electronic version of newspapers, with which the organisation is collaborating (e.g. Kathimerini, Proto Thema, Real News). 4) News-sites with online versions only (e.g. [iefimerida.gr](http://iefimerida.gr), [thetoc.gr](http://thetoc.gr)). 5) Websites for special audiences that are dealing with a specific type of art (e.g. jazz music, dance) 6) City-guide [Athinorama.gr](http://Athinorama.gr) that is unique in its kind and it is the electronic platform of the printed magazine (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

#### *6.5.2.c. Mobile Communication*

The organisation's website is mobile responsive, hence individuals can search for information or purchase tickets online through their mobile devices. The same applies to Ticketmaster, the third-party ticketing service, through which individuals can purchase tickets for OCC. Apart from this fact though, Onassis Stegi is not doing mobile marketing and it does not have a mobile application. It used though in the past few applications, in the context of some projects<sup>156</sup>. Nevertheless, at the moment there is an internal debate about whether the organisation should design an app, or make its website fully responsive. The latter means not just mobile responsive but means that the users can log in and get a "customised website" without needing the app. "This is the new trend, instead of a closed environment app that the organisation should feed constantly with separate content" (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

#### *6.5.2.d. Social Media Communication*

The internal Social media department of Onassis Stegi, managed by Alexandros Roukoutakis, runs on a daily basis the social media of Onassis Stegi and Onassis Group. It produces content in collaboration with the content department, interacts with the audiences, learns about trends or searches for interesting formulas that might suit the organisation. "As the content of the organisation is much specialised and hardly anyone can express it better than us, we staffed an internal strong team that feeds with content our social media" (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017).

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<sup>155</sup> Clickatlife.gr is a cultural website that belongs to Naftemporiki Group. The latter has also a newspaper under the name of the Group and its electronic version.

<sup>156</sup> e.g. The Soundscapes Landscapes project: "Artists who work in sound and images explore a new form of digital art-mapping in downtown Athens' neighbourhoods" and invite the audiences on a real-time stroll through an app (Onassis Stegi, 2018).

Nevertheless, the social media manager has the lead when it comes to content, as he is the one that knows better what suits every social media platform. Additionally, Stegi collaborates with the social media company ISOBAR, which has a consulting role in the design of its social media strategy. “If for example, Facebook is the new TV, we are doing internally the program flow, what shows we will include etc. The rest is done by the social media agency” (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 10/10/2017). The Social Media Manager is in constant touch with ISOBAR; the latter, has expertise on the technical side of social media platforms, and among other services, it also provides Search Engine Optimisation services. Additionally, the company does audience targeting and it can easily locate special audiences. “It deals with the digital performance and buys ready-made internet audiences<sup>157</sup>” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). ISOBAR also takes care of advertising in social media and suggests more effective formats. Both the add metrics and the insights (e.g. organic reach, paid reach) are jointly managed by ISOBAR and the Social Media department of the organisation. The reports Stegi receives monthly from ISOBAR focus on the below metrics: reach, frequency, page post analysis, content performance, page likes, engagement rate, engaged users, demographic metrics, negative feedback, next strategy steps, trending social media topics (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview 26/06/2019 & Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 11/07/2019).

“A very big part of our communication, or maybe the whole part of our communication is on social media. Social media is the flagship of our communication”, says Haris Giakoumakis (group interview, 12/12/2018). And by this, he means that on print media they will not advertise all their projects, but on social media, they will have organic posts for all of them. Stegi has a channel on YouTube and it has also profiles on Facebook<sup>158</sup>, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Issuu. The latter (Figure 34) is a digital publishing platform for magazines, catalogues and more, where they upload any material they produce in physical copy. All the published materials can be found there, even if the physical copies are over<sup>159</sup>. “Similar social media networks are used by many organizations to serve the needs of their websites. That is, many websites do not upload a program or a catalogue on their webpages, they use platforms that become embedded within these pages” (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 21/06/2019). Nevertheless, on the website of the Centre, no button guides visitors to the Issuu platform (although on the old website, there was). They are planning though to start adding the Issuu link for each project separately. All the printed material though that exists in Issuu is uploaded also on the website. The rest of the social media platforms are clearly mentioned on the website in the

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<sup>157</sup> Stegi though does not buy ready-made internet audiences, but it does target through Facebook (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

<sup>158</sup> Except for the account for Onassis Cultural Centre Athens they maintain on Facebook, they have also created a group under this account for the Onassis Cultural Centre Friends.

<sup>159</sup> To check this material on Issuu, individuals do not need to have an account. If they want to upload something themselves though, they need.

Stegi Social Media section (website footer<sup>160</sup>) (Figure 32), while on the top of the webpage, clicking on the *Read More* section, users can find two buttons that encourage them to share the information on Facebook and Twitter (Figure 33). There are though some more accounts of Onassis Stegi on other social media, which are not used much anymore and will be sooner or later abolished, but they had been created in the past, to serve the needs of that time period. For example, a Vimeo account was created as Vimeo videos are up to a size of 500MB and could be easily embedded on the previous version of the Onassis Stegi website. The organisation pays for advertising only on Facebook (80%), Instagram (5%), Youtube (10%) and Google Search Network (5%) (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 11/07/2019).



Figure 32. Website Footer

<sup>160</sup> A good website footer should further engage the user, link to social media, include a CTA (Call to Action), and provide more resources (“Website Footer Design Examples | Mailchimp,” n.d.).

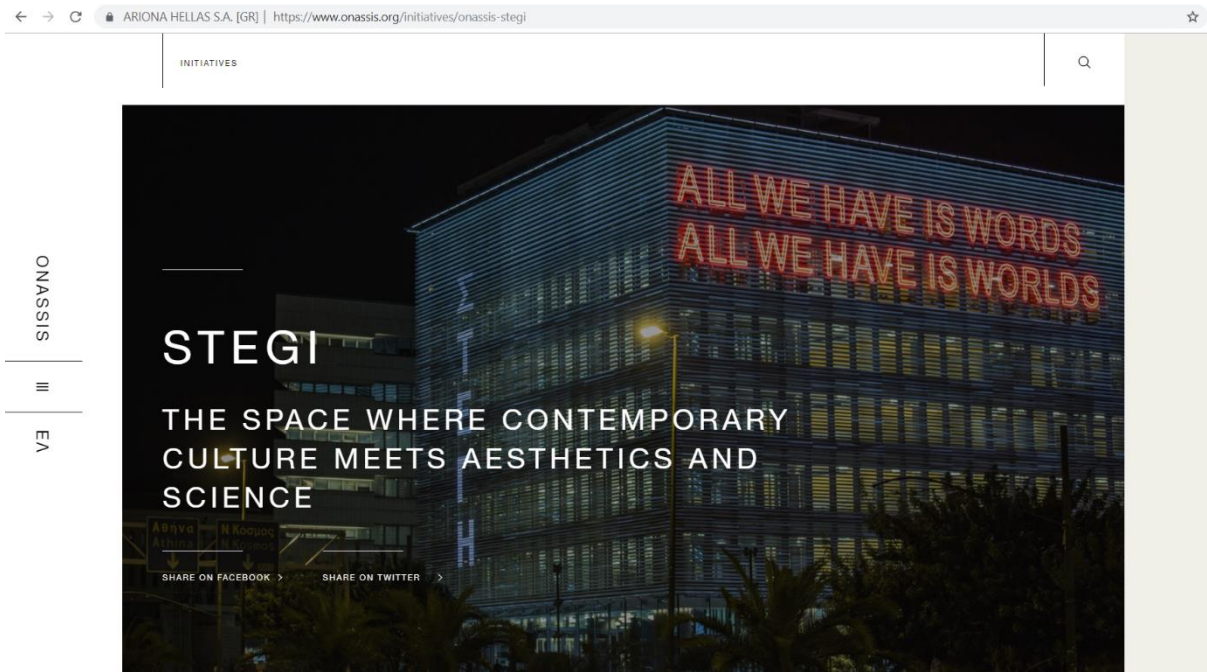


Figure 33. Share on Social

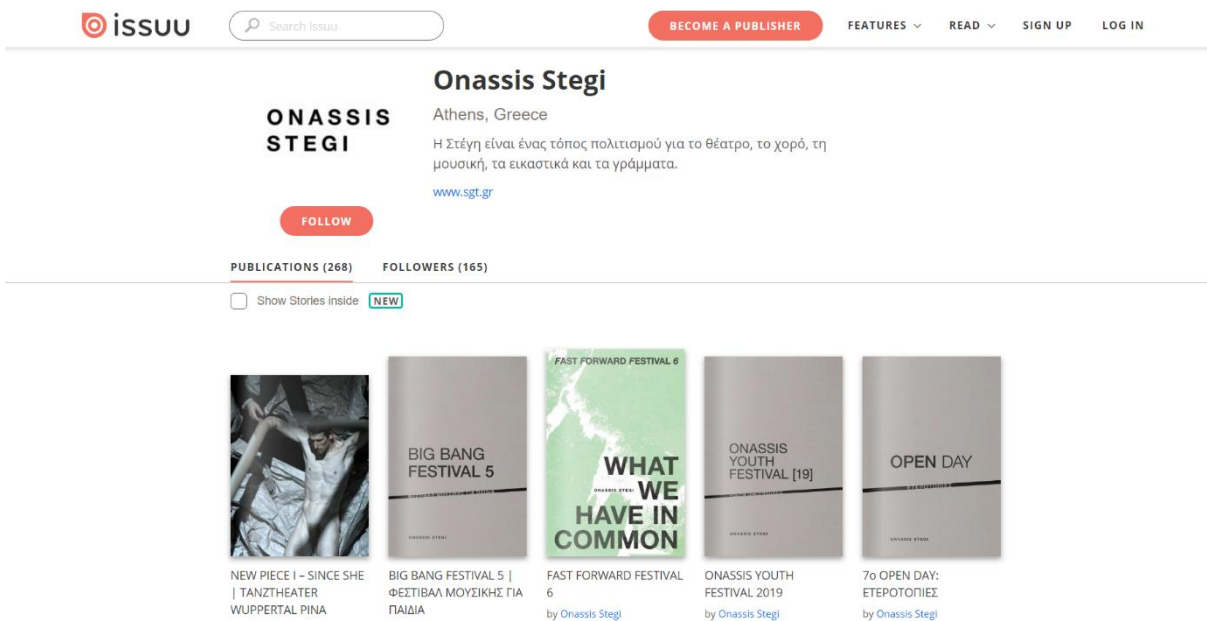


Figure 34. Issuu

The social media manager of Stegi, Alexandros Roukoutakis (personal interview, 21/06/2019), clearly mentions that the content of the organisation, and by extension its nature, determine the choice of the social media platform. “Content is the king. You choose the appropriate platform to properly present and highlight this content. Each social network has been created for specific purposes. If these purposes satisfy you or not, determine if and in which way you will use the platform. Hence, the degree of satisfaction is consistent with the goals of each platform and the strategic choices of the

organisation. In the case of Onassis Stegi, our strategy is that the content determines which platforms suit us better”, Alexandros Roukoutakis (personal interview, 21/06/2019) says. The nature of each media platform though and the tools it offers, guide them to upload the respective format of the content on each platform or the respective content. “We use social media platforms according to their nature. The content we post on Facebook, LinkedIn and the other social networks we use is not the same; the content that is hosted on them is optimized to get the best performance for each medium” (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 21/06/2019). In other words, the content of Onassis Stegi determines the social media strategy and the social media platforms that will be used. Then, after a specific project has been presented to the social network that best suits it, the published material will be formatted to fit the other social media platforms of the organisation. For example, for a specific theatrical performance, the initial post of its photos might be done on Instagram. Afterwards, the trailer of the performance will be (organically) posted on Facebook and YouTube, and then, it will be formatted to be posted as and Instagram story. Respectively, if Onassis Stegi presents a conference that lasts eight hours, the best useable social network is YouTube. Then, the video can be edited and post a three-minute segment of it on Facebook. Finally, to post on Instagram a one-minute segment, the video will be further edited. So the content itself gets different forms by travelling through the social networks in which the organisation is active (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 21/06/2019).

<b>Social Media</b>	<b>User Account</b>	<b>Followers/ Subscribers</b>	<b>Extra Information</b>	<b>Joined/Created</b>
Facebook Onassis Cultural Centre Athens	@Stegi.Onassis.Cul tural.Centre	334k	4,149 check-ins	19 April 2011
Facebook Onassis Cultural Centre Friends (Group)	(Private Group)	N/A	12,561 Members	19 April 2012
Twitter	@OnassisStegi	24,2k	19,5k Tweets 8,243 Photos and Videos 1,591 Likes	October 2010
Instagram	onassis.stegi	47,4k	1,493 Posts	September 2013
LinkedIn	ONASSIS FOUNDATION	9,840	N/A	September 2013
YouTube	Onassis Foundation	2,746	2,428,033 views	01/02/2011
Issuu	Onassis Stegi	165	268 Publications	February 2012

*Table 25. Social Media Overview (Information retrieval on 11/06/19)*

Stegi is taking advantage of the default characteristics of social media and embracing the common social media goals such as brand awareness, community engagement, content distribution, lead generation and customer support (<https://buffer.com/library/social-media-goals>). Social media, similarly to the other tools of the communication strategy, is used according to the priorities the organisation sets and the degree of intensity that each project will have on social media platforms. The advantage of social media though is that it can fill in gaps that might be created from the rest of the communication strategies, even last minute (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019, Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 08/03/2019). The goals of Stegi's social media are identical though to the goals of the organisation itself and its mission. In social media platforms, Stegi does not present only the cultural programming of the organisation, but it also expresses opinions and its position on various issues, following the mission of the organisation that is to bring up and defend core values and moral issues and freely express its opinion, defending also the right to freedom of opinion and expression. Onassis Stegi team aims at influencing and inspiring people through contemporary cultural expression, lifelong learning and not only, and this is something reflected in the social media platforms of the organisation.

In the social media posts, Stegi focuses on the emotion of the people, their experiences and what is happening right now. It tries to give the audiences the right stimuli each time and it presents things through a different, non-conventional perspective. "We do not want people to think we are robots. We change constantly the way we communicate on social media and we try to do things that audiences are not expecting; I believe that this is a success. Because artistic programming is very broad and with high diversity, we have the chance to use many different techniques. For example, we address the audiences in singular and plural. It is a game. When we have a playful concept, an audio-visual material let's say, we will post the link and two lines of explanatory text (the so-called 'copy') that is to the point and addresses the audiences directly. The text must always be relevant and directly linked to the audio-visual material. In this way, the post will be successful. In general, we try to be up-to-date with the international trends in social media" (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 10/10/2017). For the social media team of Onassis Stegi, which is part of the marketing and communication department, equally important to the above is the rule of "no spamming".

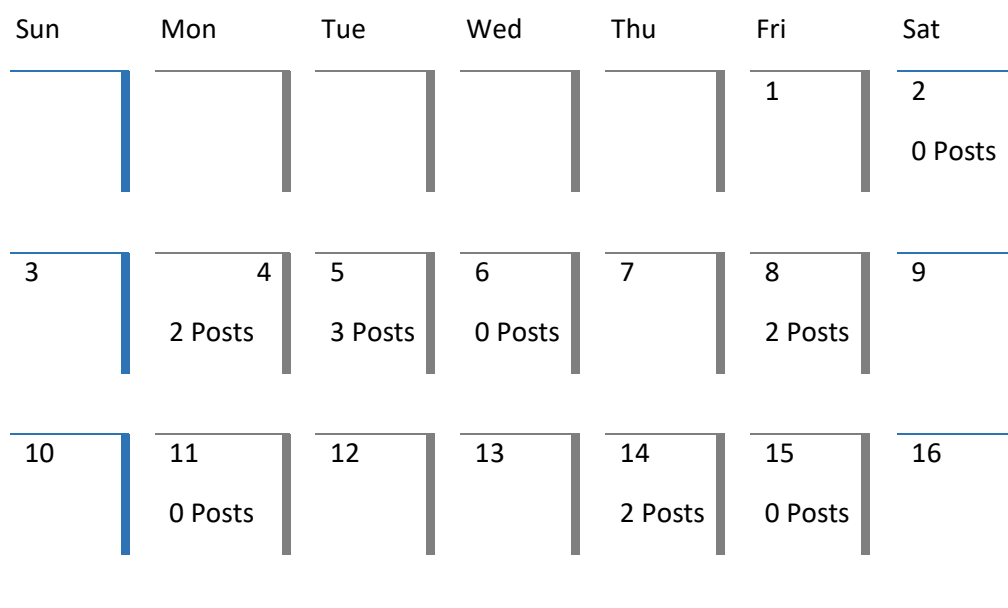
Onassis Stegi on its social media does not post only content related to the cultural centre, but content related also to the activities and news of the Onassis Foundation, although the foundation has also its own social media accounts (Facebook and YouTube). OCC many times might share content that Onassis Foundation uploads on its account. The content of social media is co-decided by the social media department, the content, and the creative department. The campaign managers suggest how

intense the presence of a project on social media will be (e.g. it will need only three posts) and cross-check the traffic of the posts with the social media team, which makes its suggestions.

As mentioned above, each social media has unique characteristics and purpose and this fact guides Onassis Stegi to upload the respective content on each platform or the same content in the respective format. “Nowadays, trends and researches show that video prevails and it is the most important tool for engagement. Facebook and Instagram are under the same ownership, which creates the trends. We, as Onassis Stegi, invest in social media, we follow the trends and we are more active on Facebook and Instagram” (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 21/06/2019). The total demographics of the fans of Onassis Stegi on social media are the below: women 55%, men 45%, and the strongest age target group for both sexes is 35-44 years old (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 11/07/2019).

In detail, Onassis Stegi uses Facebook to communicate its projects, provide detailed information about them, share interviews with people related to the projects and reviews, express its opinions and interact with audiences. Onassis Stegi posts on Facebook almost daily, and when it is needed it might post twice or thrice per day. The figures below are indicative of the posts of the organisation on Facebook for the months of February (Figure 35) and March 2019 (Figure 36). When the number of posts is not mentioned, it should be considered as one post. The observation showed that for ten days in February, Stegi had zero posts, while in March, zero posts were only for seven days. In February, four days had two posts and one day had three posts. In March, six days had two posts and one day had three.

## February 2019



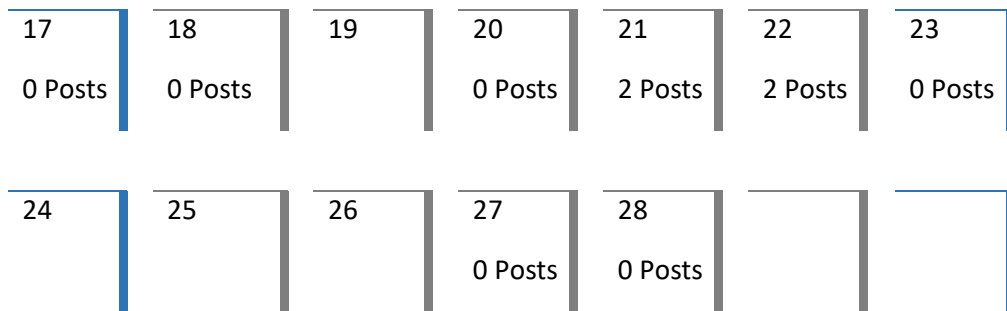


Figure 35. February Facebook Posts

## March 2019

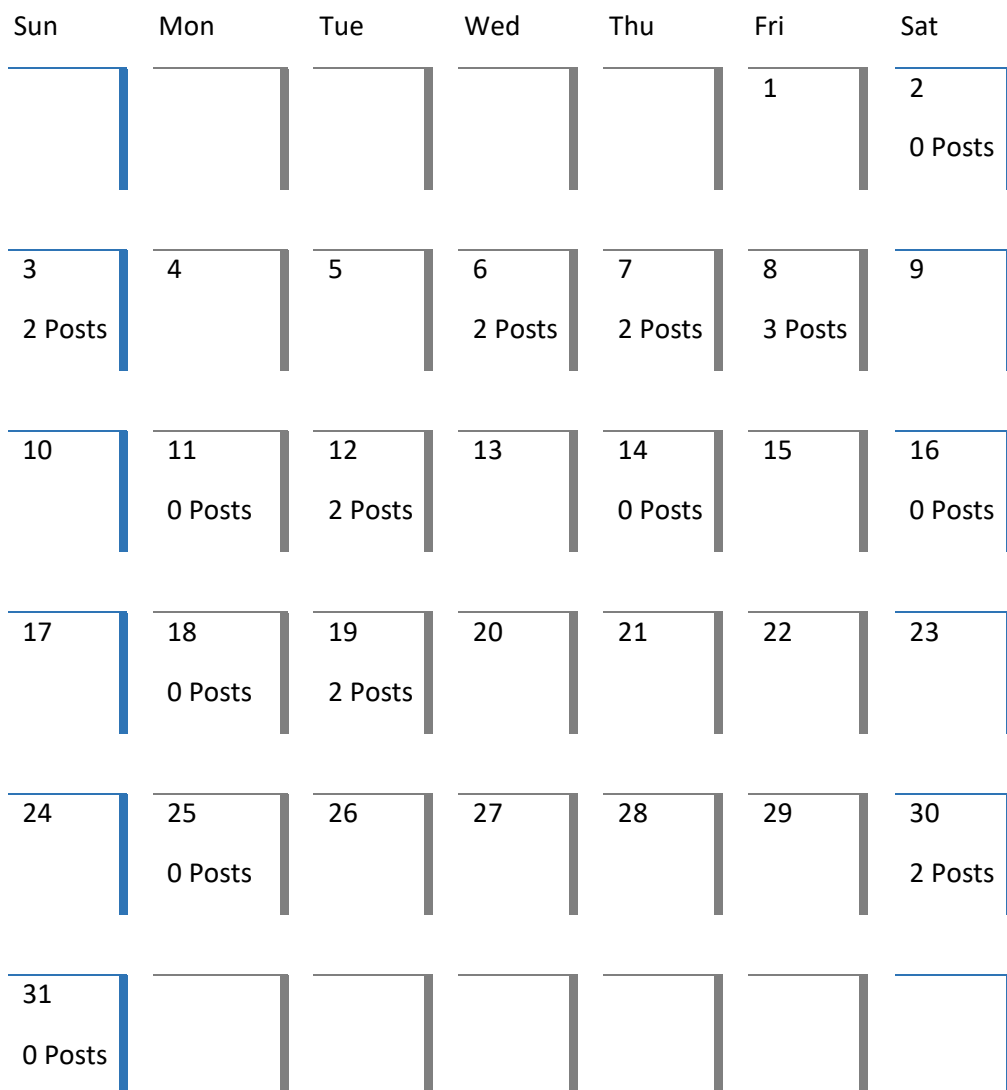


Figure 36. March Facebook Posts

To have an overview of different months in different years, the figure below (Figure 37) shows the total Facebook posts per month, for five random months. The particular condition of the pandemic, and the ban on the live attendance of shows, have definitely affected the number of posts.



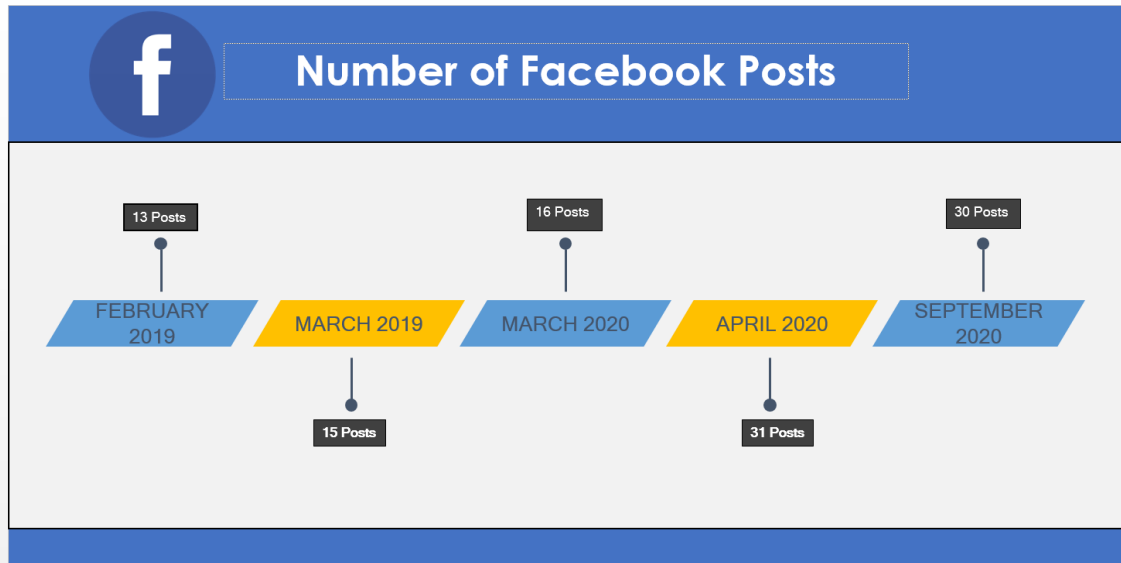


Figure 37. Total Facebook Posts for Five Months

The Onassis Stegi Facebook page is a global one (default page). Global pages allow organisations to “provide localized versions of their content for their customers all over the world, but with one universal brand name, total fan count, vanity URL, and global insights across their entire fan base” (“Meta Business Help Centre,” n.d.). Nevertheless, as Alexandros Roukoutakis (personal interview, 21/06/2019) says, the Facebook page of Onassis Stegi is more oriented to the Greek market. It has 334,742 followers (retrieved on 11/06/2019). Regarding the insights, the percentage of women who are following the page is 57%, higher than the percentage of men. The age group 35-44 is the most active and the most positive in engagement (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 21/06/2019). The recorded impressions are over 50 million and the unique video views are 1,3 million (retrieval on 11/07/2019). The Facebook account, as can be seen on the left side of the figure below (Figure 38), is connected to the Twitter and Instagram accounts of the organisation. Onassis Stegi, except for the account for Onassis Cultural Centre Athens maintains on Facebook, has also created a group under this account for the Onassis Cultural Centre Friends. Through this official group, Onassis Stegi keeps Friends up to date on the organisation’s and Friends’ news. To become a member of this group, individuals do not need to have registered as Friends or to register in the future.

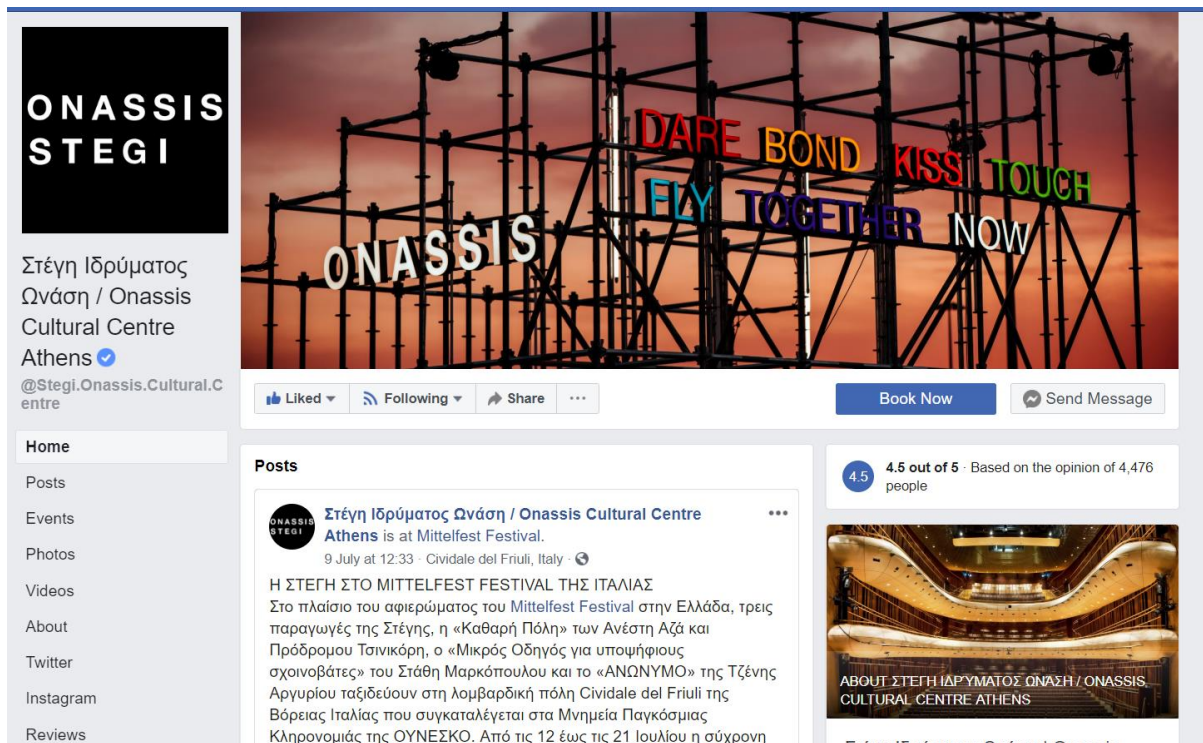


Figure 38. Stegi's Facebook Page

Alexandros Roukoutakis (personal interview, 21/06/2019) states that as Onassis Stegi embraces, in general, innovation, pioneer ideas and global trends, it applies the same to social media. Following the global trends where Instagram is used as the main social platform by many organisations, Onassis Stegi uses its profile on Instagram (Figure 39) as its international profile; that is why all the posts are in English, with Greek to follow. The nature of each platform guides the social media team of Onassis Stegi. On this visual platform, as the picture and the videos predominate, they pay attention to aesthetics. Moreover, they also create stories on Instagram that concern backstages, rehearsals, artists and so on; these stories offer immediacy (Haris Giakoumakis, group interview, 12/12/2018).

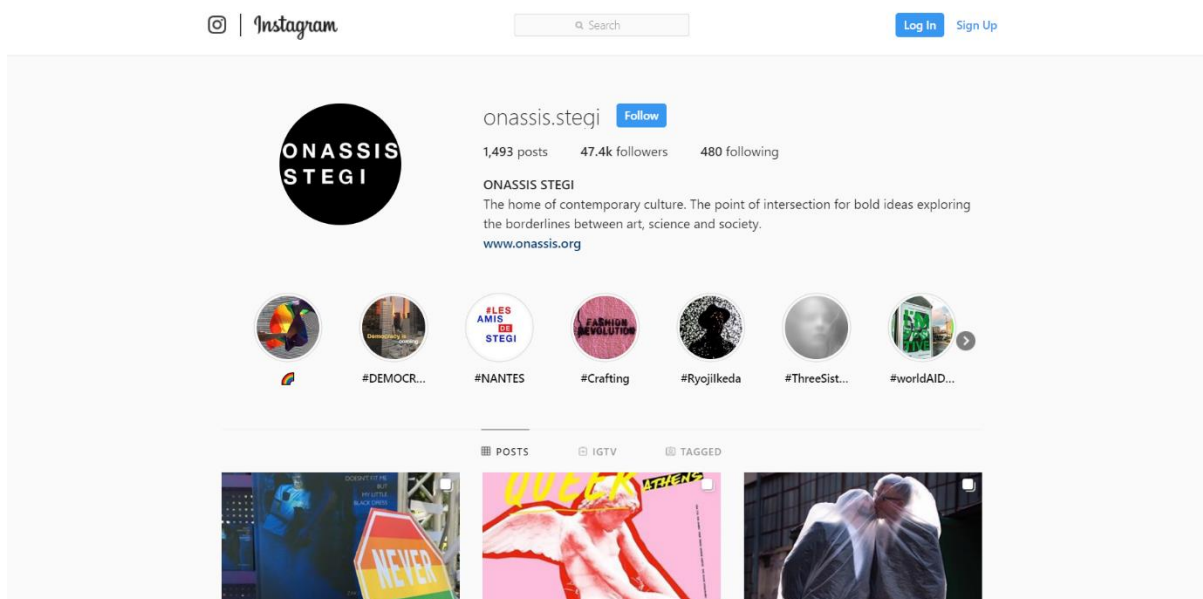


Figure 39. Stegi's Instagram Page

“Each social network has different characteristics and has been created for specific purposes. Each one has its own advantages and drawbacks. Personally, I am more Instagram oriented. I believe it will be the main social network in the near future. Instagram and YouTube will dominate, while Facebook will be used more as an advertising platform. Instagram will have the biggest engagement in the next years, and this is not only my personal opinion, but it is a result based on reports, the global trends and the importance they attach to Instagram its creators” (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 21/06/2019). Indeed, Voorveld’s research in 2019, showed that media agencies believe that the dominant platform in the next few years to be used for brand communication is Instagram (Voorveld, 2019). The Instagram page of the organisation has 47,4 k followers (retrieved on 11/06/2019). The percentage of women is overwhelmingly high compared to that of men; 65% of women and 35% of men. The most active age group and more open in engagement is similar to that of Facebook, and it is 25-44. In the below figure (Figure 40) the frequency of Instagram posts is presented briefly and it seems to remain relatively constant.

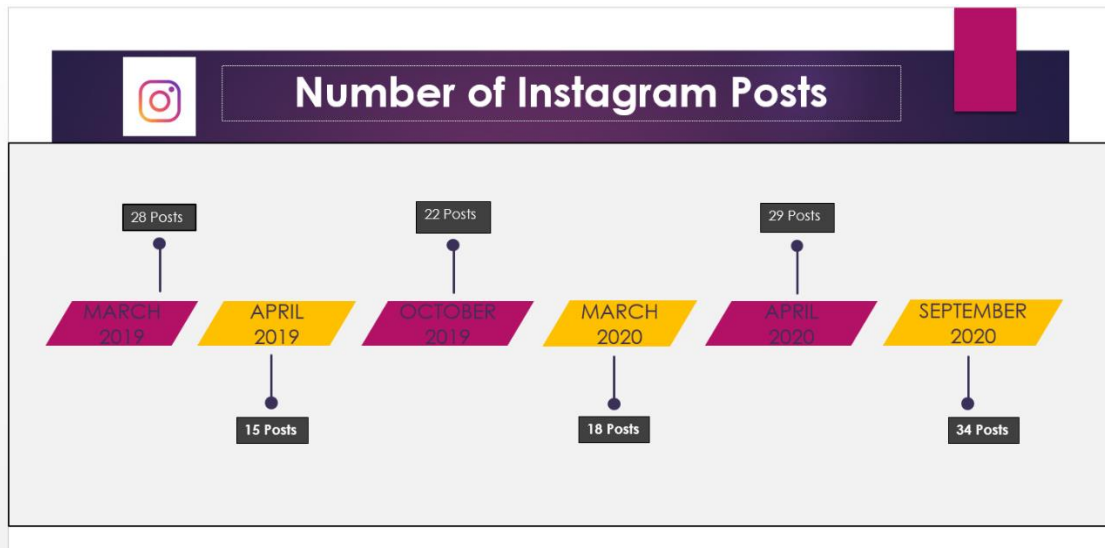


Figure 40. Number of Instagram Posts

On Twitter (Figure 41), Onassis Stegi is posting content in Greek and English, respecting again the nature of the platform, which asks for short posts or shorter versions of videos. A hashtag symbol is a popular tool on Twitter that Stegi also uses. As Twitter has a more political dimension (Karlsen & Enjolras, 2016; Morales, 2020), it can be the floor to express a tagline like “Dare to be different”, but on Facebook, Stegi will have the chance to elaborate more on that. The impressions on Twitter are over 200k per month and the audience type is 62% women and 38% men. In the diagram below the number of tweets, including retweets, in some specific months is presented.

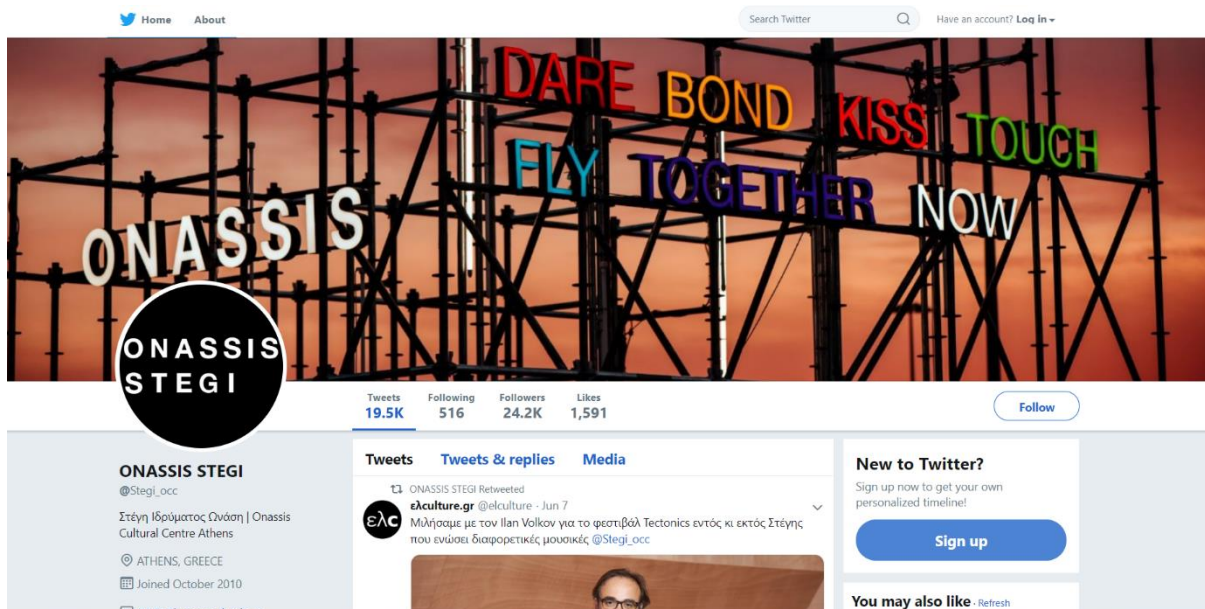


Figure 41. Stegi’s Twitter Profile

LinkedIn is a professional social networking site that mostly focuses on b2b marketing. OCC’s LinkedIn profile (Figure 42) has mainly English content and this is because Stegi is using it as a social network

that connects the organisation with its collaborators from all over the world. “Onassis Stegi and Onassis Foundation have an international profile and orientation. We are embracing universal ideals and think globally” (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 21/06/2019). The top job functions of visitors’ demographics on LinkedIn are the below: Arts and Design, Operations, Media and Communication, Marketing, Business Development, Finance, Education, Administrative, Sales Program, and Project Management (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 11/07/2019).

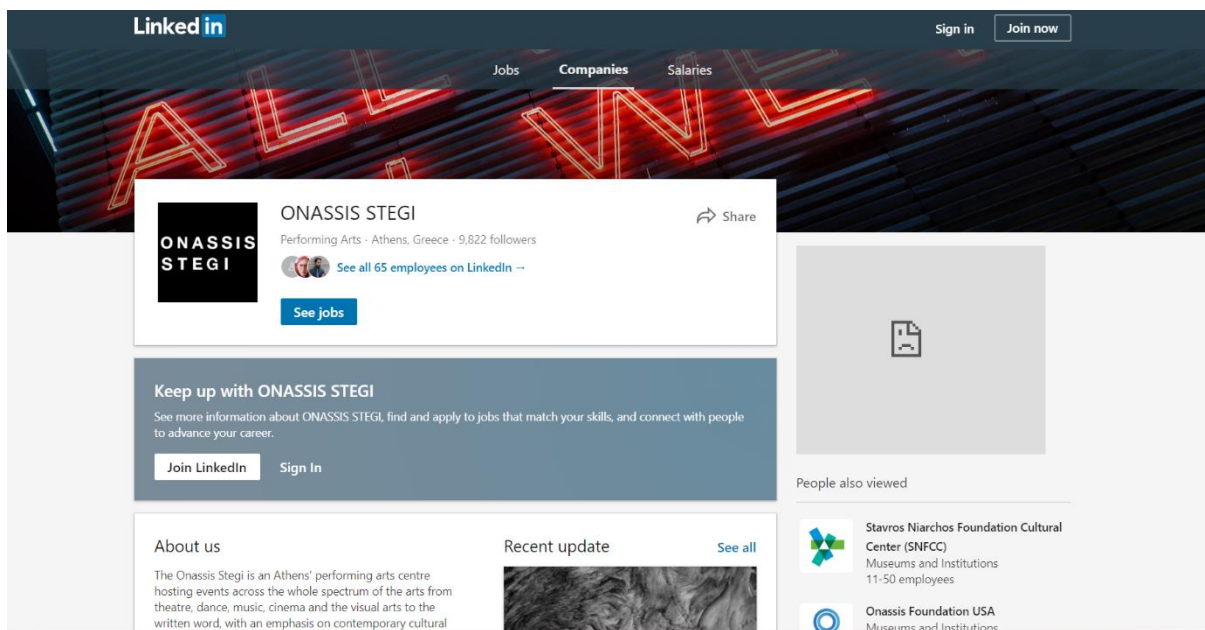


Figure 42. Stegi’s LinkedIn Profile

As mentioned above, YouTube is used as a medium to present long videos for both Onassis Stegi and Onassis Foundation (e.g. Onassis Health Day 2019-Duration:5h 17m, Discussions at Stegi, Events outdoor and indoor, Educational projects). Nevertheless, this does not mean that Stegi is not posting on YouTube videos of shorter duration, such as trailers, short presentations of future projects, music videos that are part of presented projects at Stegi, interviews or explanatory videos with artists and not only that participate in projects. YouTube allows its users to upload high-quality videos up to 20GB and Stegi takes advantage of this characteristic (“The Difference Between YouTube And Vimeo [INFOGRAPHIC] | Online file conversion blog,” n.d.). Finally, YouTube links are used in other social media of Stegi to redirect to relevant videos, or they are embedded in the main website of the organisation. Nevertheless, the use of YouTube links is not so often on Stegi’s Facebook page, as the team is not satisfied with the format in that Facebook shows these links. “The YouTube links on Facebook look very small, and we consider that it cannot be given to them the desired value” (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 26/06/2019). Onassis Stegi YouTube account has 2,746 subscribers, of which, 55% are women and 45% are men. The completed views on YouTube are over 30% of the total views (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 11/07/2019).



“Anything posted on the social media of the organisation leads somewhere. The landing page is Onassis.org, and we want all our actions to make the audiences more familiar with the different aspects of Onassis Universe; that is why our new website serves our goal to have more interaction with social media, compared to the old website. The latter though is structured based on the developments were existing at the time it was made. On the contrary, social media platforms are continuously evolving. We should be always agile to successfully meet the new requirements” (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 21/06/2019).

Finally, Onassis Stegi except for the demographics is also using the evaluation tools that exist in social media, as well as Google Analytics to track and report the website traffic and which social media platform gave the highest traffic. Regarding the latter, Facebook prevails. Apart from the reports and the insights though, even the views, likes, shares or videos that become viral can show if a post did well or not, and then the team can brainstorm on the reasons for success or not (e.g. very emotional, very to the point, interesting subject). Nevertheless, they do not spend much time on it, as a team in a corporate environment would do. “Metrics is an index and we use it as such. We never decide on our content based on the metrics and insights. We create content based on what we want to talk about, otherwise, it is like we censor ourselves” (Alexandros Roukoutakis, personal interview, 10/10/2017 & 21/06/2019 & 11/07/2019). The formula of a successful post might be used again in the future but differentiated and improved. “Once, we posted for example a video for the LGBTQ community that had a great appeal to the public. Hence, once it is time to talk about disabled people, we might follow the same formula, but this is not the only criterion. It is multifactorial” (Haris Giakoumakis, group interview, 12/12/2018).

### 6.5.3. Personal Selling

In the theoretical framework it was mentioned that for Andreasen & Kotler (2008), personal selling is included in personal marketing, which can achieve more goals based on personal communication. Personal communicators can be the fundraisers, the lobbyists, the volunteers, the telemarketers or the security clerks. Nevertheless, OCC considers that the box office employees, the security clerks and the rest of the people who do not personally sell but only communicate with the audiences, are part of the experience of the consumer and not part strictly of the personal selling. Nevertheless, the communication and marketing department does not intervene in the selection of these people, as this is largely a process of another department; but, there is definitely an internal collaboration, and the rules that govern a proper experience are also known in all departments (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018). The Director of the Communication and Marketing Department agrees with the theory that the personal communication style of these people can influence negatively or positively the target audiences {supported by many, e.g. Kim & Tucker (2016)}; he mentions that

Onassis Stegi wants its experiences to be characterised by excellence, so the personal communicators play an important role in this process, and they are aware of the rules that govern a superior experience (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018).

OCC might not be using personal selling (sales presentations, telemarketing, incentive programs and special sales events) to a great extent, but it does when it is necessary. This happens when the organisation seeks sponsorship, such as in cases where it needs to cover some transportation, hospitality or medical expenses, in cases where it throws a party and needs a sponsor for beverages or in cases of big and costly productions that it approaches for example a telecommunications company. “We have some big customers that we visit at least once per year, we do our sales presentations for productions that might interest them and we get sponsorships. This is the simplest type of personal selling. In general, the latter is used in most of our commercial agreements, such as agreements with media, sponsors, etc.” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019)<sup>161</sup>. Moreover, it will use telemarketing to promote some special productions, such as performances of educational programs for schools, or to approach communities that quite possibly are interested in a production of Stegi in Epidaurus Theatre. In the latter case, they had also sold incentive programs. “We were offering a subsidized ticket, which was including the performance and the round trip to Epidaurus” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

#### 6.5.4. Sales Promotion

Onassis Stegi is not using the full range of sales promotion tools, but it does use some incentives selectively and is very targeted. It is not a fun of premiums, contests, coupons, rebates, or exchange privileges, but it does use them as appropriate, with a non-fixed frequency, and not as a regular policy. “We use free tickets through contests on radio or cultural websites, but we do it very selectively and in specific cases to create a buzz for a project. For example, we might have a production with a two-week duration; the short duration makes it harder to sold-out it or fast-sell it. Therefore, if we use this kind of sales promotion in the first week, ticketing will perform better (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019). The campaign manager Haris Giakoumakis (group interview, 12/12/2018) adds that rarely and after the necessary approvals, free tickets might be given also if a partner (like a cultural website) asks for it.

The organisation might use offers (one plus one) to target audiences. “If we have a ‘difficult’ dance performance that is not selling much, we will check our ticketing database, we will find the customers that visited similar performances (e.g. similar type of dance or the same choreographer etc.) last year

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<sup>161</sup> It happens though many times that the brands are coming to Stegi and offer sponsorship, as they want to be identified with the organisation and attract its audiences (Demetres Drivas, personal interview, 12/12/2018).

and we will send them the offers” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019). Except for the corrective and preventive action through sales promotion tools, Stegi might use also combo offers, in specific cases where two or three of its projects can be combined -content-wise- under a discounted ticket. “We don’t do it often but it can happen twice per year” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019)<sup>162</sup>.

Moreover, although there are many promotional websites with ticket offers for cultural events, OCC is not participating in these<sup>163</sup>. Nevertheless, it uses loyalty programs and giveaways. The latter might happen during a party that the Centre organises either to present the annual program or to inaugurate a visual arts exhibition etc. In the first case, it might include a bag with all the brochures about the annual projects, while in the second it might include material related to the artist and the exhibition (e.g. books, posters, objects related to the artistic work). The giveaway might be given also to the journalists at press conferences (bags, pens, USB sticks) and participants of educational projects (hoodies, USB sticks with music that has been created for Stegi, under an extended agreement). They are not given though at performances. In these cases the organisation might do a giveaway for the contributors of the project (e.g. t-shirts); this giveaway can be also transformed into merchandise if they decide to make it available for selling, but this does not happen often.

The loyalty programs concern the Friends of Onassis Stegi. The package offered to them is extremely advantageous. It is a lifetime subscription that costs fifty euros. It comes as a box to the subscriber and includes four tickets A and B zone, for any production of Onassis Stegi, for five years since the subscription date. As Daniel Vergiadis (personal interview, 17/12/2018) says if an individual would buy these tickets outside the context of OCC Friends it might cost one hundred euros. By buying this package, an individual becomes a Friend of the organisation and enjoys the below privileges: Friends have their own box office<sup>164</sup>, telephone line<sup>165</sup>, their own contact e-mail addresses<sup>166</sup> (where they can also send their feedback), and their own Facebook group. They have a 20%-30% discount on tickets for them and their friends or family<sup>167</sup>, they earn points by purchasing tickets and with 100 points they get a free ticket (point system for each euro they spend), they enjoy a 10% discount in STEGI's

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<sup>162</sup> These database practices remind the scanner data used for consumer goods (Bradley, Cook, Leaver, & Moulton, n.d.; Phríomh & Staidrimh, n.d.).

<sup>163</sup> They had participated few times at the very beginning of the organisation (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 8/3/2019).

<sup>164</sup> Opens daily 9:00-21:00.

<sup>165</sup> Works daily 9:00-20:00.

<sup>166</sup> They have three e-mail addresses, one for new registrations, questions and comments on organisation's services ([friends@sgt.gr](mailto:friends@sgt.gr)), one for tickets, bookings of free events, redemption of open tickets and points ([friendsboxoffice@sgt.gr](mailto:friendsboxoffice@sgt.gr)), and one for social media issues ([e-friends@sgt.gr](mailto:e-friends@sgt.gr)) (Onassis Stegi, 2019).

<sup>167</sup> The number of tickets that Friends can buy depends on the performance. In some cases this number might be unlimited, whether in other cases like popular productions, it might be maximum three, otherwise no tickets would be left for the rest of the audiences, considering especially the pre-sales privilege of Friends (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 8/3/2019).



restaurant and bar, they have earlier access to sales (one week before the early bird for the general public), they can pre-book seats for "Talks & Thoughts" cycle, and they have access on exclusive activities for friends, such as travelling abroad with Onassis Stegi's productions. Moreover, a few lucky Friends (after a draw) have access behind the scenes- especially in the Greek productions, where the directors are more flexible- and they have the chance to attend rehearsals, discuss with the artists and meet the director (Daniel Vergiadis, personal interview, 17/12/2018). Friends have online profiles through which they can purchase tickets or redeem open tickets and points, print or download e-tickets onto their mobile phones, update personal information when necessary, and view their points and their purchase history (Onassis Stegi, 2019). Friends can be registered by phone, at the box office or via e-mail, and upon registration, they receive information on all the productions and activities they may be interested in, instructions they might need to follow in the future and a membership card with a personal code on it. The latter identifies Friends so they can enjoy their exclusive privileges. Additionally, Friends can sign their children up as Friends of Onassis Stegi free of charge, so they can enjoy privileges related to children's events and educational programs. Finally, a Friends membership can be also gifted.

OCC's Friends is a strong audience, as it is the one that is more interested in the organisation's cultural products. They are the people who will support the productions and they will become ambassadors of what they attended. Onassis Stegi is very much interested in this audience, as it considers Friends as "the best form of advertising and personal evaluation", as Daniel Vergiadis (personal interview, 17/12/2018) mentions. These are the people who will attend many productions each year and they will contact the organisation to give their feedback; Stegi builds with them an interpersonal relationship. Usually, Friends of OCC are buying 20% of the tickets for each performance. If this number changes dramatically, goes for example 10% or 4%, this will make the organisation wonders why and find an answer. The number of tickets the Friends will buy can be also considered as an informal audience survey. The age range of OCC Friends is very open, it starts with teenagers that can be subscribed using their parents' contact details and it goes up to eighty-plus years old. The Friends are approximately 5.400, but they are not all equally active; from them, around 4.300 are subscribed to the newsletter of the Centre. As mentioned in the e-mail marketing section, OCC Friends are receiving a different newsletter than the general one of the organisation. This special newsletter, except for the updates on the projects of Onassis Stegi, includes also advance notice of performances, presales or information for other exclusive privileges the Friends of OCC enjoy, as well as any updates on the Friends scheme. It is worth mentioning that on the Onassis Stegi website, the director of culture of the Onassis Foundation, Afroditi Panagiotakou, addresses a special message to the Friends of OCC.

## 6.6. Public Relations & Crisis Communication

For OCC, PR has two aspects, one of Media Relations, and the other of Events. They consider media relations as an integral part of PR, and the media office exists to serve this purpose; it consists of three employees, two main Media Officers (Vaso Vasilatou and Katerina Chortaria-Tamvaki) and one assistant (Nefeli Kavalieratou). The events department consists of the Events Manager (Daniel Vergiadis) and the Community Events Producer (Elena Choremi). A person from the Commercial department (Ioanna Margariti) though is taking care of the “third party events” (e.g. commercial collaborations or renting an auditorium for corporate events). “We hold events to create publicity”, says the Director of the Communication and Marketing department, Demetres Drivas (group interview, 12/12/2018). The Events department though may take over several events not necessarily in the context of PR.

### 6.6.1. Events

In detail, the Events department (in collaboration with the production department in most cases) is dealing with three categories of events. Firstly, the internal events of OCC, such as events for employees (although some of them are organised by Human Resources), events for customers/partners, sponsors and media (but in the case of media the department deals only with the setup of the event and not with the contact with the journalists), events for special audiences (like artists), and events for consumers. For the latter category, the events organised concern the opening party of the season every year, the inauguration of exhibitions-the organisation usually hosts two big exhibitions each year-, and some occasional parties that might take place (all initiated by the communication and marketing department). These events are open to the public, media, partners, sponsors, employees and all the people related to OCC. There are though some other events that are addressed only to specific audiences, such as the one that was organised for the artists of Biennale and the people involved in this, to celebrate the collaboration of Onassis Stegi and Biennale. The second category of events is those of the Onassis Foundation, such as the events for scholars. The department deals with the events of the whole foundation except for the shipping company, which organises only a few events in the context of the public relations of its chairman (organised by the chairman’s office). The last category of the events the department takes care of is those of social nature, individually or in the context of a project, such as blood donation at Onassis Stegi’s building, collaboration with Athens Pride and awareness campaign for people living with HIV.

In a nutshell, the Events department organises events for all the audiences of Onassis Group. But, the communication of all these events is the responsibility of campaign managers, as they are part of the annual agenda of the organisation and they are assigned to them. The projects though with social nature, as well as the projects related to cinema, have as campaign manager the Events Manager

Daniel Vergiadis, in cooperation with the campaign managers. The social events arise from the annual thematic targets of Onassis Stegi and the non-profit organisations that approach the Centre. But, if the thematic of these organisations does not match with the annual target of the Centre, the discussion might not end up in a collaboration, as Onassis Stegi is a “public benefit organisation and not a philanthropic one” (Daniel Vergiadis, personal interview, 17/12/2018).

#### 6.6.2. Media Relations

Media relations can be considered unpaid advertising, as it gives publicity but with zero or much less money than advertising. Nevertheless, as Demetres Drivas (group interview, 12/12/2018) explains, “the communication of OCC is mostly paid because even the media relations are paid, but in the long term; the organisation will offer a gift to the journalists, or a paid trip, so at the end nothing is unpaid”.

As mentioned in theory, the relationship between the media and cultural organisations is reciprocal and beneficial for both parties. Organisations cover their need for publicity, while media their need for content (Lathrop, 2003; Pedersen et al., 2017). OCC has a regular presence in the media. This is either because it has commercial agreements with this media or because of good media relations. The latter is very common and derives from the fact that Onassis Stegi has a rich annual agenda, so it produces rich and quality content that is very useful for media. Additionally, the people who create this content, and create and maintain relationships with media, are professionals and dedicated to this field. Besides, there are two departments consisting of experts, the Creative and the Content department, that fully support the Media Office department.

Media Officers in OCC use all three styles mentioned by Pedersen et al. (2017): reactive, proactive, and interactive; therefore, they are responding to enquiries from media and provide information, they take the initiative to contact media to emphasize specific stories or events, and they build long-term relationships, mutually beneficial. Additionally, they upload on the website useful information for media and not only.

Through media relations and good programming and professional job, the media officers of OCC inform on time the media for the upcoming events, and many times the content of their press releases is published by the media in its original form (Media officers, personal interview, group interview 11/10/2017).

As mentioned, all the events that concern media and journalists, such as rehearsals for journalists<sup>168</sup>, press conferences, and project presentations, are organised by two departments, the Media Office

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<sup>168</sup> As for the performances there are no previews, journalists know that they are always welcome to the premieres, so they contact the media office and they declare they want to attend. Media officers invite journalists only under specific circumstances, such as attending a rehearsal. The idea of an open rehearsal for journalists might be initiated by the communication and marketing department or an artist (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 8/3/2019).

and the Events department. The first is responsible for the coordination of the events, hence it contacts the journalists and the artists, sets the date and sends the invitations, while the second takes over the setup of the event (chairs, microphones, food, etc.). Additionally, the media office undertakes to communicate with journalists about any gifts that Onassis Stegi offers to them (e.g. journeys) (Daniel Vergiadis, personal interview, 17/12/2018).

#### *6.6.2.a. Press Release*

The media office, in coordination with the content department and the marketing and communication department, prepares the press releases. None of the departments of the organisation acts independently. In the context of integrated marketing communication, the content of the press releases of Onassis Stegi should be consistent with the material uploaded on the website or the content of the brochures, the catalogues and so on. All the published material has coherence.

The organisation wants to produce quite informative and detailed press releases, which include concepts or information more complex than what it presents in advertising texts. Depending on the material they can collect for each project, the media officers are usually including in the press releases information about the artists, their professional achievements and collaborations, their relationship with Greece (e.g. if they are coming for the first time), information about the performance and if it has been presented abroad, and reviews for their works. In terms of writing style, they do not exaggerate using adjectives such as “multi-award-winning, excellent etc.” Additionally, they respect all the rules that exist for the writing of press releases (e.g. no jargon, sensitivity to semantics, etc.). “Stegi is an organisation with a clear identity and not self-censored, nevertheless, through press releases we are not trying to provoke the journalists or the audiences” (Media officers, personal interview, 11/10/2017).

Finally, the media office of Stegi is not doing after-event press releases; even though, some media take the initiative to present an after-event photo album or article for Stegi, without the latter being involved in this though.

#### *6.6.2.b. Press Conference*

The organisation holds press conferences for productions that have unique characteristics and will attract journalists (e.g. a well-known artist, a new production, socially engaged art, original or innovative production, or a unique technical characteristic). The team of Stegi is evaluating project-by-project and decides accordingly. In general, the people of the organisation try to do selective press conferences, as they do not want journalists to get used to them and lose their interest.

#### *6.6.2.c. Media/Press Kit*

Stegi uses press kits for some occasions when it is necessary. These kits used to be more tangible (e.g. printed material with a USB stick that includes the press release), but nowadays they are usually sent by e-mail to the journalists along with the photographs, after each event. They can be also given as giveaways to the journalists, but the electronic form of the information will be also sent by e-mail.

#### *6.6.2.d. Fact sheets*

Onassis Stegi is not using fact sheets, and as Demetres Drivas (group interview, 12/12/2018) mentions this is because the organisation is already known to the public. Onassis Foundation though uses for some parts of the foundation some background information, facts and figures, at the end of the press releases. For example, when the communication and marketing department creates press releases for the affiliate Onassis Cultural Centre in New York, it will give some background information regarding its date of foundation, the exhibitions it has hosted until now, the number of people that have visited it and so on.

#### *6.6.2.e. Interviews with artists and key personnel*

In the context of media relations, OCC organises, when necessary, interviews with the cast of productions and key personnel. Each September, the media officers discuss with the media about the annual programming, the artists who are willing to give an interview and any other important elements. The press representatives of OCC are three: Xristos Karras-General Director of Stegi and Music Curator, Katia Arfara-Performing Arts Curator and Afroditi Panagiotakou-Cultural Director of Onassis Foundation.

### *6.6.3. Sponsorship*

The organisation has a commercial relationship with some media, while with others it has either a sponsorship relationship, or it combines commercial with sponsorship (Figure 43-Figure 46); the latter means that Stegi will get very special prices for advertisements in specific media that will be also sponsors (e.g. websites, radio stations). “These media sponsors will have preferential treatment in getting content from us; the latter is important for them to attract their audiences” (Rossolatos, 2019). With other media though, Stegi has a non-paid sponsorship relationship. This means that the organisation does not pay anything, it provides media with content (again with preferential treatment), and media provides promotion, whether through articles or through banners, or any other advertising tool. “With these sponsors, we have agreed in advance on promotion tools that will be used. In some special cases, we might also have an agreement of offering them some space in our building for their corporate events, but we do not do this often” (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019). In both sponsorship agreements, the organisation will promote the sponsors through its

own published material and on its website (in the description of each project separately, as well as in the sponsors' page), to drive traffic to sponsors' websites.

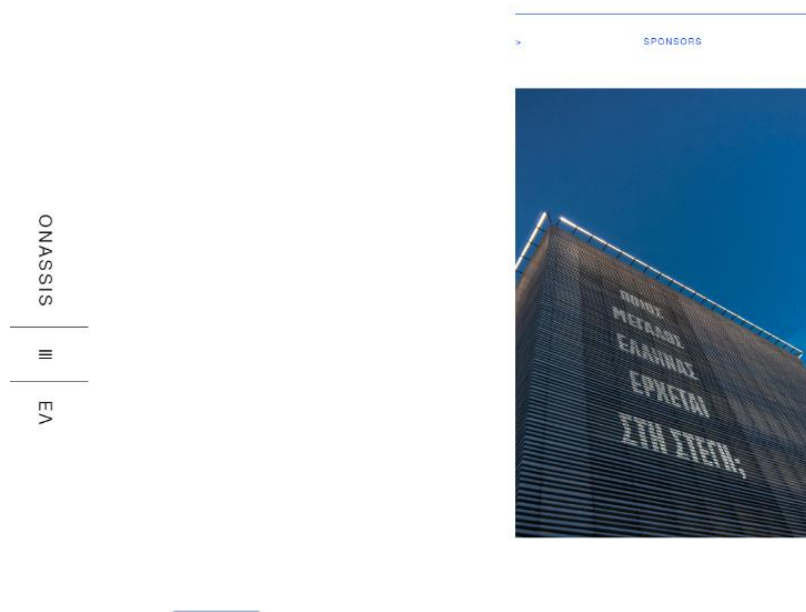


Figure 43. Media Sponsors 1

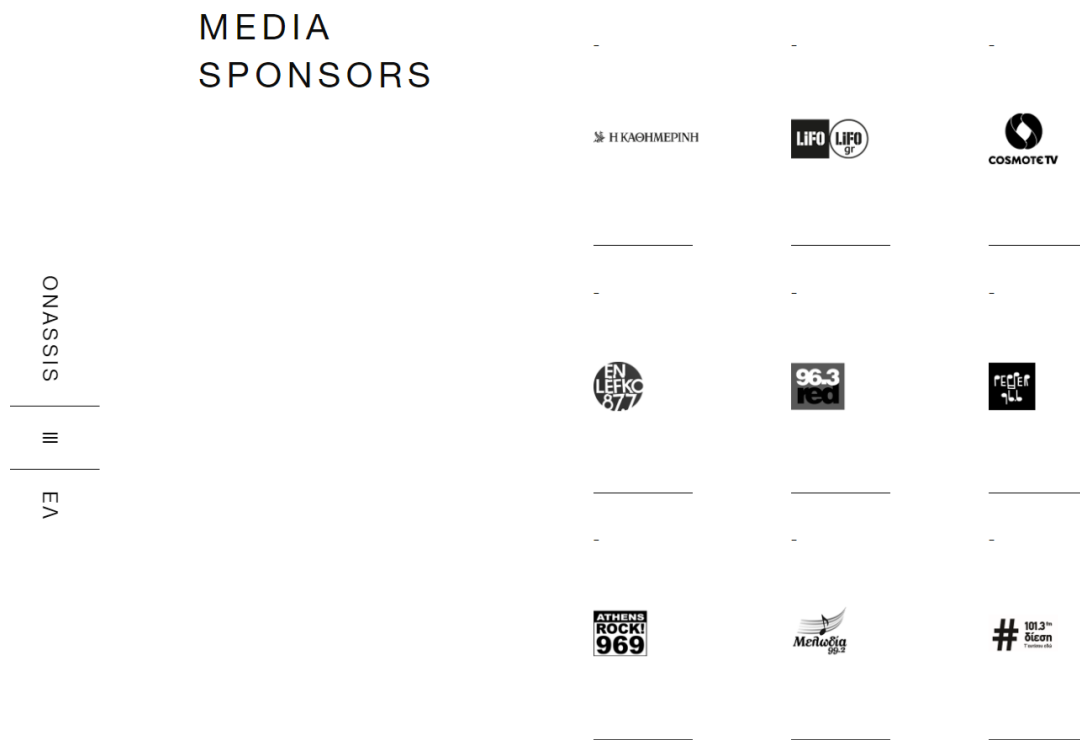


Figure 44. Media Sponsors 2

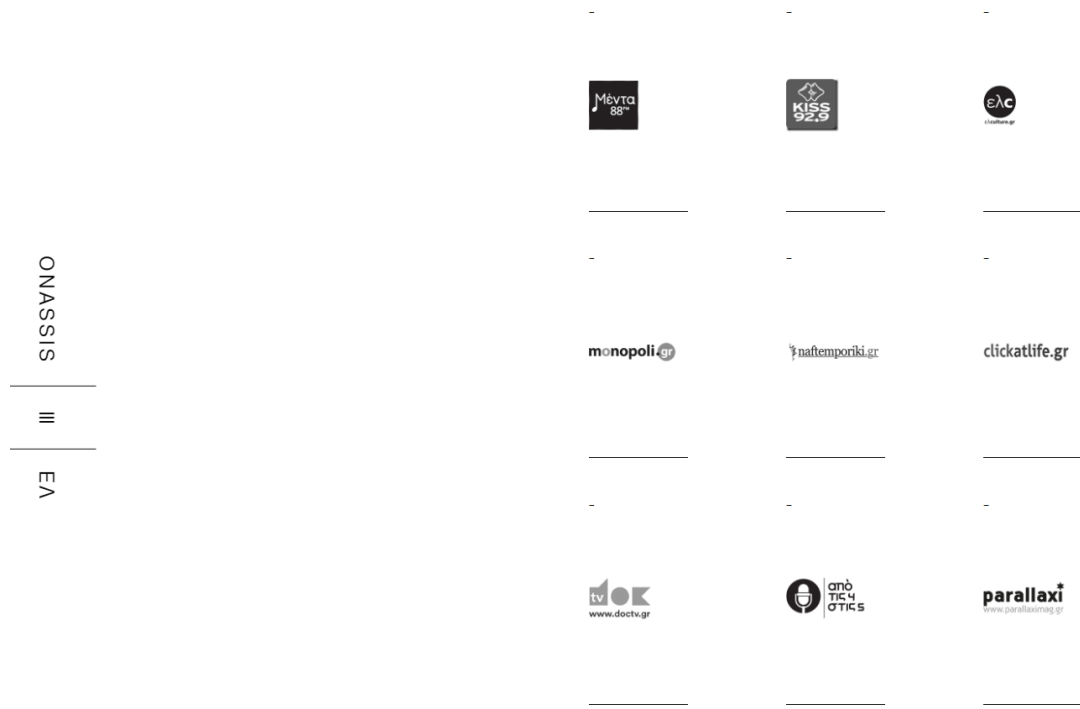


Figure 45. Media Sponsors 3

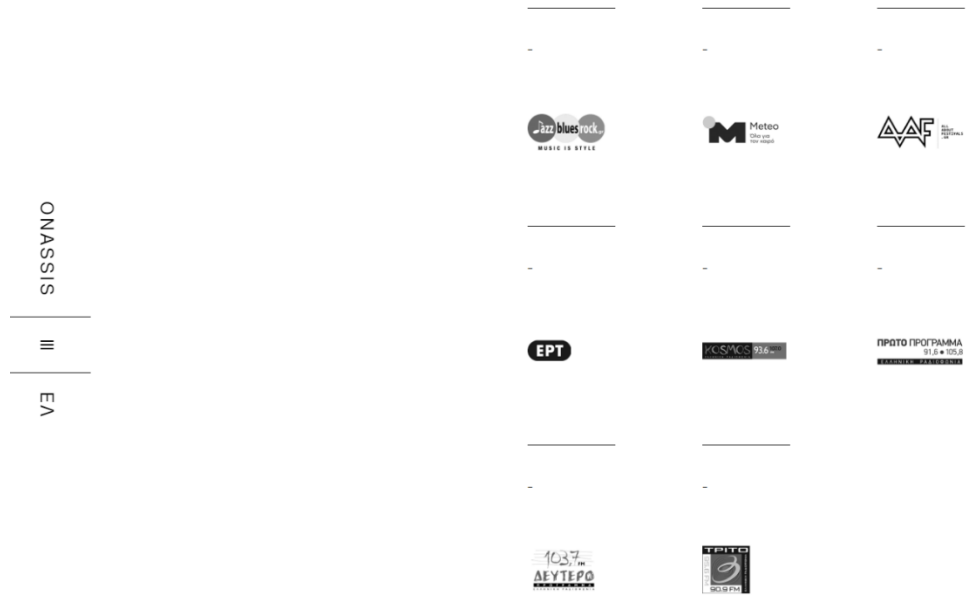


Figure 46. Media Sponsors 4

Kinds of sponsorship used by OCC	Description	Sponsors/Supporters	
<b>Media Sponsors</b>	Media support for brand awareness and communication of Onassis Stegi and its projects with zero cost or with a cost much less than the real value of the advertising these media provide to the organisation. These media are mentioned as media sponsors. Media provide promotion through different advertising tools that have been pre-agreed and the organisation provides media with content with preferential treatment, and it promotes the sponsors through its own published material and on its website, with a link that drives traffic to sponsors' websites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kathimerini</li> <li>• Lifo.gr</li> <li>• Cosmote TV</li> <li>• En Lefko 87.7</li> <li>• Pepper 96.6</li> <li>• Athens Rock!969</li> <li>• Melodia 99.2</li> <li>• 101.3 Diesi</li> <li>• Menta 88FM</li> <li>• Kiss 92.9</li> <li>• Elculture.gr</li> <li>• Monopoli.gr</li> <li>• Naftemporiki.gr</li> <li>• Clickatlife.gr</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.doctv.gr">www.doctv.gr</a></li> <li>• Webradio.ert.gr (From 4 to 5)</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.parallaximag.gr">www.parallaximag.gr</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.exostispress.gr">www.exostispress.gr</a></li> <li>• Dancepress.gr</li> <li>• In2life.gr</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.jazzbluesrock.gr">www.jazzbluesrock.gr</a></li> <li>• Meteo</li> <li>• All About Festivals</li> <li>• ERT</li> <li>• Kosmos 93.6</li> <li>• Proto programma 91.6*105.7</li> <li>• Deutero programm 103.7 FM</li> <li>• Trito 90.9 FM</li> </ul>
<b>Special Supporters</b>	A special collaborative relationship with media that combines a large volume of advertising and indirect promotion (articles). There is a financial contribution, but the overall partnership is such that it differentiates it from other Media Sponsors; basically, it has to do with the total volume of collaboration and the leading position of the media. In return, Onassis Stegi provides this media with content with preferential treatment, and it promotes it through its own published material. Additionally, on Stegi's website, there is a link that drives traffic to the supporter's website.	Currently, the only media under this category is the leading city guide Athinorama, which provides information for activities related to culture and leisure.	
<b>Commercial Sponsors or Supporters</b>	Funding to support an event or a costly project or to cover some expenses (e.g. transportation, medical cover, hospitality expenses). These companies-sponsors support Onassis Stegi either financially or in kind. They are identified as Sponsors or Supporters depending on the size (value) of their support and their importance in the implementation of the relevant production/action. In return for the company supporters' contribution, the company's name is mentioned in advertisements for the specific event/project/action and/or its logo is presented in promotional material. All sponsors are	<b>Stable Sponsors/Supporters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AEGEAN Airlines</li> <li>• Athenaeum INTERCONTINENTAL Athens</li> <li>• METROPOLITAN Hospital</li> </ul> Sponsor/Supporters per event/project (e.g. Estrella, Heineken, Fischer, Bombay Sapphire, Drambuie, Stolichnaya, Absolut etc.)	



	mentioned on the Onassis Stegi website, with a link that drives traffic to sponsors' websites.	
<b>Cause-related Sponsorship</b>	This does not apply to Onassis Stegi, as it is part of the Onassis Public Benefit Foundation. Both are by default seeking public benefit. In cases where they respond positively to requests for sponsorship or support, Onassis Foundation has the decision-making and becomes or not sponsor or supporter.	

Table 26. Overview of Sponsorship

Apart from the media sponsors, there are also commercial sponsors, which were mentioned also in the section on personal selling, and a special form of sponsorship called cause-related marketing. A good example can be cause-related concerts, in which revenues or part of them will be disposed to a good cause (Table 26). As explained above (in the introduction of this chapter), Onassis Stegi is part of the Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, which has the public benefit as its main goal. Hence, asking if OCC is dealing with cause-related events or events related to public benefit it would not be correct, as Onassis Foundation and Onassis Stegi are by default seeking public benefit. The Communication and Marketing Director of OCC, Demetres Drivas (group interview, 12/12/2018), mentioned: “The culture that flows through OCC is a culture that intends not simply to entertain, it is a culture that wants to bring to light and highlight important issues for society. This means that we deal with value issues, with moral issues such as democracy, equality, the LGBT, such as being open, and so on. We invest in these. This is our basic strategic narrative, and in this context, we design educational programs or we choose projects or activities. Again in this context, we are doing community relations with specific communities that are related to specific ideas or concrete events or concrete actions”.

#### 6.6.4. Communication abroad

Until now I have described the communication and marketing strategies that OCC follows to promote its projects in Greece, whether they are local or international projects. Nevertheless, the department is also working on the communication and marketing of Greek performances that travel abroad, but also, the promotion of the collaborations the organisation builds abroad. For example, it will send a press release in British media to present the collaboration of Onassis Stegi with Barbican (London) on a specific project. In this way, the organisation notifies of the international collaborations that take place in Greece and makes Stegi well-known internationally. For the Greek performances, OCC supports the communication needs of a touring project, such as content, photographic material, creative material for the printed program in which it will be included, press releases in foreign languages for media, and it takes any extra actions needed with the host of the production. The

organisation also builds relationships with the media that expressed interest in its touring performances. Nevertheless, the hosting organisation of the touring project is mainly dealing with its communication at the final destination. But, the Head of touring is communicating the annual programming of OCC to the potential hosting organisations, while the artistic directors are in personal contact with professionals in the artistic field during their travels. So the communication is formal and informal. Christina Liata, once the annual agenda is decided, is getting the necessary information from the artistic directors, and starts sharing it with professionals who might be interested to present their productions or become also co-producers. She creates newsletters with the basic information (mass communication) around May -when the annual programming is internally announced- way before the Content department creates the approved material for publishing. When the official material is ready (around September), the head of touring uses it, reducing the volume. As mentioned in the cultural product section (Chapter 6.4.2), these professionals are usually working for theatres, cultural spaces or festivals (e.g. directors, curators etc.). Depending on their interests, their profile and their annual programming, the head of touring shares different artistic portfolios with different people, along with an invitation to attend the performances once they are formally presented at OCC (one-to-one communication). The professionals who will accept the invitations, attend the performances and show interest to only host or to host and co-produce<sup>169</sup>, will receive the technical specification document/technical sheet<sup>170</sup> and financial spreadsheet<sup>171</sup> for the respective project, the after-performance trailer (it has been filmed on the premiere and it differs from the promo trailer), the photos (shot at the final rehearsal/dress rehearsal), and the detailed and updated curriculum of the artists, so the new audiences can be familiarised with the artist more easily. The communication between touring and potentially inviting theatres/organisations is always online, with slight exceptions, such as the special edition that present the chronicle of touring since 2015 (Christina Liata, personal interview, 08/05/2019).

Hence, although the communication department is working on the communication of the annual programming to the media and the consumers, the head of touring, in cooperation with the artistic director of performing arts Katia Arfara, and the communication department (content and creative) is working on the same thing, but addressing the professionals of the artistic field (e.g. directors of

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<sup>169</sup> The organisations that can contribute as co-producers and work as production venues are usually the most developed, institutional, and mainly public organisations in Europe (Christina Liata, personal interview, 08/05/2019).

<sup>170</sup> Technical details such as description of the scenery and the costumes, instructions of taking care both of them, what are the costumes and the props of each actor, how is the lighting, the sound etc. (Christina Liata, personal interview, 08/05/2019).

<sup>171</sup> Anything that can make future hosts understand how much it will cost to present a specific performance. This mainly depends on the number of people participating. It is usually quite costly to present performing arts, mainly because of the shipping costs of the scenery, the accommodation of the artists and the per diems (Christina Liata, personal interview, 08/05/2019).

theatres, festivals, cultural organisations such as Stegi). Usually, when a performance has been presented already at OCC, the head of touring takes over, editing the material and starting communicating it to the professionals that have already shown interest to host a production. It is not a communication that is identical to the general communication plan of the organisation, as it addresses a different kind of audience (non-consumers), providing different types of information in a different communication style. As Christina Liata (personal interview, 08/05/2019) said, it is not identical to the commercial department either, as it does not try to get money out of this, as the commercial department would do, seeking sponsorship and selling an idea/project. The aim of the touring department is the dissemination of Greek artistic production. I could say that the Head of Touring is playing the role of the content department -in the beginning when the final material is not yet prepared by the content team, the role of commercial department-sending newsletters to the lists of professionals, and the role of campaign manager –the collection of material and coordination of the whole process. The head of touring collaborates also with the communication department in case of the production of materials that present the chronicle of the touring projects of Onassis Stegi.

#### 6.6.5. Community relations

Community relations for OCC are related to special audiences. They use them when they want to come closer to a community on the occasion of a project or a subject they want to highlight, and the other way round. For example, when Onassis Stegi holds a project on racism, it will contact communities related to that, such as foreigners who live in Greece. Another example can be an event devoted to HIV. Communities related to HIV will be approached accordingly. They meet these communities on this occasion, they get to know them, and later on, they might create and present a collaborative project. To reach these communities they use their own research or their references. They might contact individuals, heads of non-profit organisations, and so on. As mentioned above (5.6.b), OCC considers these people as influencers. They do not have a specific pattern they use when they try to come closer to communities. It always depends on the circumstances and the purposes. Their target is to bring this community or else this special audience, to OCC, but not just for a one-off. They want to meet this audience and keep it as part of their core target audience. As Demetres Drivas (group interview, 12/12/2018) mentions: “Usually, the people that come to know OCC for a cause, afterwards they become fans of the Centre. They realise that what interests Onassis Stegi interests them as well”. “They might also be fascinated by the whole experience, from the people at the box office up to the ushers. Moreover, they might start feeling more familiar with the Centre” (Haris Giakoumakis, group interview, 12/12/2018). Stegi’s team’s way of thinking is in convergence with theory {e.g. (Kim & Tucker, 2016)}.

#### 6.6.6. Crisis Communication

For Onassis Stegi, crisis communication is part of crisis management. For the latter, which might concern several subjects that need to be managed (e.g. inefficiency to satisfy the crowds waiting to attend a specific event), there is a think tank that handles unexpected and/or difficult situations. The think tank consists of senior members of the communication department, members of the board of directors, and some members of the rest of the organisation, depending on the type of crisis; these people can act individually or in combination. Although Demetres Drivas (group interview, 12/12/2018) says there is no crisis kit because there are many different kinds of crises, he contradicts himself adding that the team has predicted and analysed possible scenarios for unexpected and continuous situations that might end up in a crisis and damage the organisation's reputation. These scenarios and the possible ways of handling them step by step, accompanied by questions and answers (Q&A), have been discussed and recorded. These scenarios though cannot foresee the whole range of issues that might arise. When a crisis point is reached, the think tank intervenes to smoothen the process. Depending on what kind of crisis comes up, the team can be enriched with some more experts to handle it the soonest as possible and in the most effective way. When there is crisis communication, the media office team, and afterwards, if need be, the senior team of the organisation's communication department take action to minimise the damage to the organisation's reputation. Nevertheless, OCC supports by default the freedom of expression, it is not self-censored and takes a firm stand on specific topics (e.g. human rights, politics); hence it posts on social media what expresses the organisation and its people that both have clear beliefs and political positions, and it does not consider as crisis communication any negative comments, or opposite opinions might be expressed in these platforms. In fact, it does not take any action on these comments, even if they are against the organisation's beliefs or if they are harshly expressed<sup>172</sup>; it does though filter them out, without this meaning that it does not show the negative ones. It seems like that Onassis Stegi does not want to participate in a dialogue with the audiences, but it just wants to create a dialogue out there, between the audiences, showing aspects that some individuals might never have seen or imagined, and some might completely disagree with.

Additionally, when there are negative reviews for performances presented by Onassis Stegi, although this happens rarely<sup>173</sup> the Centre does not respond unless the bad review concerns the whole organisation or the Onassis Foundation; but, this has never happened until now, except for very few times. For example, once, due to the high popularity of a speaker the Centre was hosting, and the

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<sup>172</sup> This happens quite often either for political opinions that Onassis Stegi expresses, or for projects that were not considered of good quality by some members of the audiences.

<sup>173</sup> This can be attributed to facts such as the short term productions of the Centre and the fact that cultural critics do not have time to attend them all, the high quality of the productions or the good media relations.

inefficiency of the latter to satisfy the crowds waiting to attend the specific event. In this case, the organisation took some action on the spot (e.g. attending the speech through monitors), but after that, it did not publish any official announcement. Instead, the complaint handling team was informing the audience that was calling for feedback that Stegi intends to host again this person under better conditions. Another time, when Onassis Stegi had used isolated lyrics from Cavafy's poems to present to the audiences, it had been accused of distorting the work of the poet. In the next public presentation on the same subject, the organisation prepared answers for all the possible questions or comments from the journalists and not only, and it assigned every response to the appropriate representative of the organisation; this is considered a crisis management approach. Nevertheless, in case of negative reviews for specific productions, the senior team of the Centre will take action in order to communicate these reviews to the creators of the performances, so they can give it a try to improve the artistic result along the way, if possible, or they can use the information for their future work<sup>174</sup>.

Onassis Stegi is collaborating with a company that collects daily all the publications that concern OCC and its projects, using some keywords the organisation has given it. The media office department screens these results (as some might not be related directly to the organisation), archives them by category (e.g. reviews, interviews etc.) and forwards the reviews to specific recipients in the organisation, who will communicate any performance reviews to the creators of performances or will take action if the reviews concern the organisation.

### 6.7. Arts Communication Research

As mentioned in chapter 2.3, the research in arts communication can be of two kinds. One is done by industry practitioners and the other by academic researchers. Both types of research are important to support and promote arts communication. In the same chapter and based on Pedersen's et al. (2017), I defined arts communication research as the process by which arts "communication practitioners and scholars initiate, discover and expand knowledge" (p. 278) of arts communication texts, audiences and institutions. This definition applies to the media industry, arts organisations, academics and students.

Onassis Stegi is an arts organisation that invests a lot in audience research, which explores audiences' preferences and consumption habits, combined with the organisation's performance. For this purpose, OCC is hiring research companies such as MRB HELLAS S.A. One of these research, specifically

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<sup>174</sup> Stegi will never contact the journalist or the media from which the review came. Any contact with the journalist might happen in the context of clarifying what he or she did not like. Besides, OCC, as a public benefit organisation, tries, dares and risks to present artistic works with which people might not be familiar, or works that might shock or be disliked. In this context of trying new things and risking, some of the presented works might indeed not be as good as expected (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019, & Drivas, 2018).

the MRB research conducted in 2015, helped us in this doctoral thesis to make the participants' selection for focus groups, as mentioned in the methodology subchapter 5.4.2. Through this, the organisation contributes to arts communication research. Another part of the research that key personnel at Onassis Stegi are doing is the evaluation, through measurement, of the strategies used by the organisation. Although they are not usually testing their messages by giving sample material to target audiences, they do try to better understand the needs of audiences, by doing more in-depth research. Moreover, they use all the tools that technology gives them to "apply readability and comprehension formulas" (Wilcox, Cameron & Reber, 2015, p. 209) to the messages.

Additionally, Onassis Foundation, and by extension Onassis Stegi, invests on artistic research. And although there is a distinction between arts-based research and artistic research (Carpentier & Sumiala, 2021), I would say that the acquired knowledge from artistic research can support or even initiate arts communication research.

A brief description of the research that Onassis Foundation supports will be given below. Onassis Air is an (inter)national artistic research residency program in Athens. It is a year-round program with the mission to support the "artistic process, towards a less product-obsessed arts eco-system. {...} It is being born in 2019 and is established by the Onassis Foundation. ONASSIS AIR will support: Greek and international artists, curators and thinkers working in time-based artistic disciplines, who wish to deepen, reconsider, or transform their practice or methodology without expectations or restraints of the production frenzy" (Onassis Foundation, 2019).

To sum up, we could say that Onassis Stegi is actively involved in arts communication research, but also in other kinds of artistic research that can help or even become the reason to initiate research on audiences' preferences, consumption habits, or even perceptions of audiences about new forms of art.

#### 6.7.1. Onassis Stegi and Social Responsibility

It is clear that Onassis Stegi is part of a Public Benefit Foundation, dedicated to acting in favour of public benefit, as its name declares. Hence, the Foundation, by nature, includes social responsibility, which in a corporate environment is called Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). As Onassis Stegi is one of the actions of a Public Benefit Foundation, in the context of public benefit or social responsibility, it cannot include a CSR department in its organisation chart. Nevertheless, Stegi decided to set up a CSR department in 2017, which lasted though about a year, when the organisation considered that this department is not needed. Stegi though keeps hosting, organising and sponsoring many projects of social responsibility with the help of the rest of the departments and mostly the Events department.

Moreover, Onassis Stegi tries to be sustainable in every way. The building of Stegi tries to reduce the emission of pollutants and energy consumption. The latter applies also to the building where the staff of the organisation is hosted (opposite the main building of Stegi). The people of the organisation have changed power provider, so the electricity will come from renewable energy sources (although in Greece the sources are not exactly renewable), they have replaced the regular bulbs with low power consumption LED bulbs, they have placed recycling bins inside the building and they are no longer using water dispensers that need bottled water, but they have bought dispensers that are fed directly by the water supply, filtering the hot or cold water. Moreover, they have set the printers to print by default double-sided and black and white, they have installed a water reservoir in Stegi that collects the rainwater, with which they water the plants. Additionally, the technical service department of the theatre launched a new initiative to reconstruct old sceneries for new productions (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 8/3/2019). Regarding the communication material, Stegi has started printing posters and flyers on FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)<sup>175</sup> certified paper. They did not use though this certified paper for the published booklets of 2019, as the printing procedures had already started when they took this decision. Moreover, the freelance partner of the organisation that is doing part of the outdoor campaign (poster-sticking) takes the initiative to recycle all the paper he uses in his job, and this is one of the reasons they collaborate with him (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 8/3/2019).

Additionally, Onassis Stegi is trying to reduce printed communication to the degree that this is feasible, and focus more on digital. Finally, the Centre encourages consumers to avoid printing their tickets, as it has contactless machines for scanning e-tickets, and it highlights and carefully promotes sustainability issues through awareness campaigns included in its cultural programming. Nevertheless, until now, Stegi has not communicated its sustainability practices and its effort to be eco-friendly, but it is working on it. The team has already planned to add a sustainability tab on the newly launched website, and it is also thinking of probably publishing a booklet that will include the organisation's mission on sustainability and the actions it takes<sup>176</sup>. At the moment, within the Onassis Foundation, Onassis Stegi is the only one applying sustainability strategies, as the latter is part of the organisation's values, plus the fact that because of the nature of the organisation, it produces huge amounts of material (e.g. brochures, posters etc.). Nevertheless, the campaign manager, Haris Giakoumakis (personal interview, 8/3/2019), mentions that these practices will most probably spread to the rest of the Foundation soon.

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<sup>175</sup> This council encourages responsible forest management, certifies and labels forest products that follow the set standards to ensure responsible production and consumption (<file:///C:/Users/Goldy/Downloads/About%20FSC.pdf>).

<sup>176</sup> Both actions recently took place. The tab on the website is called "Stegi goes green", and the green handbook is presented there.

To sum up the analysis of the case study, Onassis Cultural Centre (OCC) or else Onassis Stegi was inaugurated in December 2010, with the main mission to promote contemporary culture, influence and inspire people, by defending core values and moral issues. The support of Greek artists, the cultivation of international collaborations, the lifelong learning, as well as the support of the co-existence and interaction of sciences are entailed. Stegi is a beneficiary organisation fully funded by Onassis Foundation, which has designed its function on five pillars: culture, education, environment, health, and social solidarity. The majority of its communication and marketing strategies are aligned with its missions. Despite the strong branding of the organisation in its beginnings, nowadays the focus is on the branding of each product, focusing on the needs of two or more segments. Although Stegi's personnel supports that the organisation is an advocate of inclusivity in all senses, Stegi's identity is mainly contemporary, edgy and avant-garde. The cultural programming of the organisation derives from what is happening in Greek society, in the neighbourhood of Greece and the rest of the world, and from the trends that dominate the international performing arts scene. Although Stegi hosts and produces a wide range of cultural products, this research is focused on its performing arts programming. The product choices and the product life-cycle of Stegi are so unique that the main competition the organisation faces in the Athenian market concerns the broader field of the leisure industry. The pricing policy of the organisation is wide and the variety of price categories it offers supports unlimited access to culture for everyone. Additionally, the ticket distribution strategy of OCC is a selective one. Stegi is using Integrated Marketing Communication, with radio and social media being the team's favourite mediums to reach audiences. The organisation has multiple URL addresses that drive to the same site, which follows European trends (design, aesthetics, etc.) and it is developed as a grid. At the same time, these kinds of websites are more difficult to navigate, at least at the beginning. Nevertheless, Stegi's website is very particular for Greek standards. For OCC, PR has two aspects, one of Media Relations, and the other of Events, but they consider media relations as an integral part of PR. The organisation has a commercial relationship with some media, while with others it has either a sponsorship relationship, or it combines commercial with sponsorship. Community relations for OCC are related to special audiences. They use them when they want to come closer to a community on the occasion of a project or a subject they want to highlight, and the other way round. For Onassis Stegi, crisis communication is part of crisis management. For the latter, which might concern several subjects that need to be managed there is a think tank that handles unexpected and/or difficult situations. Finally, it is clear that Onassis Stegi is part of a Public Benefit Foundation, dedicated to acting in favour of public benefit, as its name declares. Hence, the Foundation, by nature, includes social responsibility.



## 7. Chapter 7\_Consumers' Research

The present chapter concerns the research conducted with the consumers of Onassis Stegi. It presents the results of the focus groups with the participants, focusing attention on their opinion about Onassis Stegi's marketing strategies, and trying to investigate their motivations for cultural consumption, as well as how the latter is affected by the marketing strategies of cultural organisations. As explained in the methodology, participants' opinions regarding Stegi's strategies are presented in correlation with their opinions regarding the marketing strategies of cultural organisations in general. In the whole chapter, the different issues are analysed together with participants' answers or dialogues during the focus group sessions, as is usual in this kind of research.

The main aim of this section is to analyse how the research participants' general cultural consumption is affected by the 4Ps of cultural organisations, and how they perceive the 4Ps of Onassis Stegi. After this analysis, the aim is to understand if the perceptions about Onassis Stegi's product, price, place and promotion (communication) affect their consumption of the organisation's cultural products.

MAIN RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	Secondary Objectives	Research Questions
A- Improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption	A1- Chapter 6	RQA1a- Chapter 6
		RQA1b- Chapter 6
	A2- Improve knowledge on how the 4Ps of a cultural organisation affect audiences' cultural consumption, including the decision-making process that leads to it.	RQA2a- Do the product, price and place influence audiences during their decision-making process to consume arts?
		RQA2b- How do the communication strategies (4 <sup>th</sup> P) of a cultural organisation affect audiences' decision-making process for cultural consumption?
B- Study attitudes, motivations and perceptions of Onassis Stegi's audiences	B1- Comprehend the motivations of Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture in general	RQB1- What motivates Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture?
	B2- Understand the opinion of OCC's consumers about the product, price and place strategies of Onassis Stegi	RQB2- How the product, price and place of OCC are perceived by consumers?
	B3- Gain knowledge of the opinion of Onassis Stegi's consumers regarding the	RQB3- How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by consumers?

	organisation's communication strategies	
	B4- Comprehend the link between the perceptions of OCC's consumers and their consumption of OCC's products	RQB4- How do consumers' perceptions affect their consumption behaviour regarding Onassis Stegi's products?

Table 27. Research Questions of Chapter 7

### 7.1. Motivations for cultural consumption

As mentioned in the methodology chapter (5), in this research we are not entering into the distinction between general and specific audiences. Although the initial plan was to investigate Stegi's audiences and general audiences, a test focus group with a general audience proved that this would not give fruitful results for this research. Therefore, we only investigated the specific audiences of Onassis Stegi's consumers. As mentioned in the research design, Onassis Stegi's case study helped us to better understand the general picture of cultural organisations. The letter "F" will be used to refer to the female participants of the focus groups, while for the male ones the letter "M". The letters will be followed by a number that indicates the age of each participant. This method of naming has been used by previous researchers and proved functional. Only one focus group will be excluded from this type of naming, the group of OCC Friends. The participants of this group will be mentioned with the letters "SF", meaning Stegi's Friends, followed by a number that indicates the age of each participant. Finally, I will refer to the participants aged 18-34 as "Young", the participants aged 35-44 as "Middle age", and the ones above 45 years old as "Old".

The results of this research showed focus group participants' main motivation to attend cultural events is to get stimuli. The second is an alternative outing and socialising, which are considered in the same category by participants. Another motivation is to consume art just for the sake of art or the spectacle or look for entertainment. Finally, some of the participants follow some artists or specific contributors to performances (e.g. directors) or they are looking for education.

There were (young) participants in this research that when they were asked why they attend cultural events, recalled memories from their childhood. They remember themselves since they were little/very young, being introduced to art. It seems to be for them a habit since their childhood, which became second nature when they grew up and started to make their own choices. They present this as the primary reason for their consumption, but they give also extra ones; pleasure, inspiration for creativity, entertainment and educational reasons, hence edutainment. F22 seems not to be able to define herself in a context other than culture:

“I can’t define myself without culture. I feel more complete when I attend to culture. Every theatre experience, even if the performance is not good, is a nice experience, it is something special, something beyond me”.

This statement though seems like an exaggeration from a 22-year-old girl or a socially acceptable answer (distorted motivation). The fact is that she feels different when she consumes culture and she definitely needs that (unconscious motivation: self-actualisation) we can claim it is the need for self-actualisation. She also mentions entertainment and experience. In the experience economy, audiences are seeking experiences and, according to Pine and Gilmore (1999), the experience is met where the realms of aesthetics, escapism, education and entertainment overlap. Experience is something non-tangible and its value is memorable. As F22 states:

“Every theatrical experience, even if the final product is not satisfying, it is a nice experience, something special and beyond itself”.

F24 refers to her need to discover a different perspective or to understand/decode artists’ way of thinking. F62 notes she loves contemporary culture:

“I am very interested in the perspective of young artists, I want to understand them, and of course many times they give me a hard time”.

F21 mentions:

“Performing arts and theatre in particular is the ultimate expression of the human soul, something that makes me feel complete as a human being”.

She refers to the need for ‘belonging’ or “existing as a part of the audience, the people who attend the performance at the same time with her”. Additionally, for her, it is a way of de-stress/relaxation, but expression as well; “a thought of mine is successfully captured on stage, or it is expressed verbally”. Interestingly, F21, as a student of theatre at Athens University, also needs to be updated on the performing arts that take place in the city, and many times she needs to have an opinion for specific ones. Some participants state ‘groupies’, in the sense that they will follow specific artists, directors and contributors in general because they are fans of their work. The dictionary though gives ‘groupie’- slang- the definition of an ardent fan, especially a young woman, of a celebrity, especially a pop star, who follows the celebrities in the hope of meeting or getting to know them, or even having sexual relations with them. Therefore, it would be wiser, for the purposes of this research, to use the word “fan”, which describes a person who has a strong interest in or admiration for a particular person or thing. The participants said:

F22: "I will follow some artists and attend their new artworks because I am passionate about their work or I had a good time attending their previous work. Certainly, there is a relative risk reduction, but again it is a new artwork for me".

F24: "I will mainly attend spectacles of artists or contributors I already know, trust and appreciate their work. In this way, apart from expectations, I reduce also the financial risk that is to spend money on something I will not like in the end. The only reason not to follow the artists I like and choose another spectacle is to have a strong recommendation for a performance; the recommendation can come from anywhere".

F21: "I will always give priority to the artists I like and follow. In this way, I reduce the risk of spending my money for nothing, or the risk of not meeting my expectations".

Hence, it seems that the group of "fans", apart from following an artist, director or an art contributor because of a strong interest in or admiration for their work, might also do it to reduce the risk they take when they choose a performance; this risk might be either economic or expectations' risk. The reasons can be interconnected. This does not mean though that a person who belongs to the group of "fans" cannot or do not belong to other groups such as "entertainers", "socialisers" etc. Being a fan can be the main characteristic or motive of a consumer and affect the first stage of the decision-making process, "information search". But it can also be an extra characteristic that some consumers have and contributes mainly at the stage of the decision-making process that is called "evaluation of alternatives". As mentioned in theory, the attributes of products and brands<sup>177</sup> play an important role in the evaluation of alternatives. They are separated into salient and determinant, with the first ones to be considered potentially the most important and the second ones those who determine the choice, especially when the salient attributes are considered equivalent (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2001; Ciceo, 2012; McGuire, 1976). Therefore, depending on the needs/motivations' priority of each consumer, being a fan can affect the choice of the salient and the determinant attributes. The hierarchy of the motivations of each consumer and the choice of the relevant attributes distinguish the groups of consumers (fans from entertainers, entertainers from socialisers). If the need for socialising is the priority, the information search stage will be completely different than the one of the consumers that have as a priority to follow a specific artist.

Other consumers seem to have similar needs but they use different words, putting their needs in broader categories. Cultural consumption is an occasion for an outing or socialising for them. They mention also pleasure, entertainment and escaping, in combination with educational reasons, while

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<sup>177</sup> It is important to remember that the product is formed by the artists and the contributors, and the branding applies also to art workers.

F27 notes that culture is an essential part of her education; “art for me is mandatory”. They get stimuli when they attend arts and this is a motivation for them (F34, M33, M34). M33 likes sharing a spectacle with friends, sharing the stimuli, which will lead to a fruitful discussion afterwards. F62 and F59 agree that sharing the experience and the discussion afterwards can also be a motive for them. F27 refers first to the motivation of belonging to an artistic social or family circle, and the need to attend spectacles in which the people you know participate.

Older consumers (35-44 years old) mention socialising as an important factor. We see though similarities with the motivations for cultural attending of younger people, such as to discover a different perspective or to understand/decode artists’ way of thinking. A male participant M42 notes as motivation the sharing of the experience. F41 shares socialising as a motive, but she also adds the interaction with the actors during the performance. F35 mentions escaping, stimuli and education, but she also adds her passion for dance as a motivation to attend pure dance performances.

There are participants whose consumption seems more qualitative. They note they even attend spectacles alone (lonely escapists), so the main incentive is related to the arts. F59 and F62 are art seekers and are interested in contemporary/modern spectacles. SF40 adds she attends dance performances with her dance school mates; SF36 and SF35 mention they get stimuli while attending culture, and they might cover sometimes their need for socialising.

M64 focuses more on the outing, or following an artist, a contributor or a genre. M50 is focused more on Greek theatre and catharsis, and the latter is what he is looking for when he consumes culture. He never seeks contemporary art, but a more conventional one; “theatre relieves me, calms me down”, he states.

Although I have applied coding methodology for the motivations of Stegi’s audiences for cultural consumption, it works partially for this part of the research, as the patterns are mixing, but the categorization is compulsory. Nevertheless, I will present below (Table 28) the definitions according to the prevailing motivations, even if the consumers do not fit only in one category and usually have multiple needs at the same time.

Categories	Definitions
Get stimuli	This group, via cultural consumption, discovers different perspectives, gets inspiration for creativity, decodes artists’ way of thinking, and/or watches their own thoughts successfully captured or verbally expressed on stage.
Socialiser	For them, cultural consumption is an occasion for an outing or socialising, which are considered synonyms by participants. The semantic

	extension of this concerns sharing; sharing the experience and the discussion, drinks and/or food afterwards can be also a motive for them. Moreover, socialising concerns also an outing and sharing of experiences with people that belong in the same circle, whether this is a social, artistic, or any other type of circle.
Art Seeker	For this group, the main incentive is related to the arts. Their cultural consumption seems more qualitative and they even attend spectacles alone (lonely escapists), as the primary motivation concerns arts. Connoisseurs also fall into this category.
Entertainer	Entertainers are those who through cultural consumption feel relaxation, pleasure, and escape reality. (*Those who combine entertainment with educational purposes, belong to the so-called category “edutainment”.)
Fans (Groupies)	Fans are consuming arts primarily motivated by a strong interest in or admiration for the work of an artist, director or any art contributor. Consciously or unconsciously they make specific choices of cultural spectacles also to reduce the risk they take; this risk might be either economic or expectations risk.
Education Seekers	This group consumes culture, as they consider it an integral part of their education. Additionally, for them, every occasion of cultural consumption is an occasion for education, an occasion for learning something new or enhancing existing knowledge.

Table 28. Motivations' Categories

Below I present a figure (Figure 47) that shows the multiple motivations/needs of one participant (F34) at the same time. It also shows the overlapping of the categories: Socialiser, Education Seeker, Get Stimuli, and Entertainer. The funnel of cultural consumption depicted in the graphic below is formed by the combination of motivations. The final colour of the cultural consumption each time depends on the quantity of each motivation. Sometimes the yellow colour might be less, while the blue might prevail.



Figure 47. Simultaneous Motivations of One Consumer

As participant F32 mentions:

“I always consume arts because I feel the need for an outing and the need to attend the work of a specific artist or art contributor”.

Apart from the overlapping motivations though, there are times that cultural consumption derives from the urge of one only motivation. This condition would resemble the below figure (Figure 48), where the consumer belongs to an isolated category, that of Entertainer in this case.

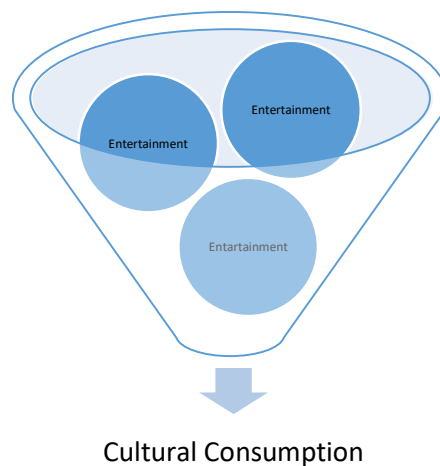


Figure 48. Entertainer’s Cultural Consumption

**Summary**

According to the analysis of this part of the research, the main motivation of the participants to attend cultural events is to get stimuli. The category “Get Stimuli” follows the “Entertainers/Socialisers”, who are seeking an alternative outing and/or socialising, and the “Fans”, who are following art contributors, reducing simultaneously their risk when they choose a performance. It is clear from the

analysis that there is a motivational conflict and multiple motivations at the same time, but in the end, the group to which a consumer belongs can be distinguished by the hierarchy of motivations of each consumer, and their choice of the salient and determinant attributes of cultural products and brands. The cultural consumption with increased quality is usually attributed to art seekers and lonely escapists.

## 7.2. Product and Cultural Consumption

### 7.2.1. General Product and Decision Making

The fieldwork research of focus groups showed clearly that the product itself, the content of the performance and its contributors, play the most important role in their decision-making. All the participants had to fill in a ranking sheet and define which element has more importance to them, and all had ranked the product very high, along with their specific needs at the specific time.

The quantitative ranking sheet was used as a way to help me to allocate the results, without any intention for generalisation or statistical relevance. The below table (Table 29) shows all participants' responses aggregated. The numbers listed in the ranking sheets are translated as follows: 1 for Not important at all, 2 for A bit important, 3 for Somehow important, 4 for Important, and 5 for Very important.

	SF 40	SF 35	SF 36	SF 41	F2 1	F2 4	F2 2	F2 3	F3 4	M 33	F2 7	M 34	F3 2	M 42	F3 6	F4 2	F3 5	F4 1	F6 2	M 50	F5 9	M 64
<i>Actors</i>	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	3	5	4	2	4	4	3	4	5	3	3	3	5	3	4
<i>Performance's content</i>	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	-	5	5	3	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4
<i>Cultural space</i>	4	3	4	4	2	3	3	2	3	4	3	2	3	3	3	5	2	1	1	4	4	4
<i>Location</i>	2	3	2	1	4	3	3	2	2	3	3	1	3	3	2	3	2	4	1	1	3	3
<i>Ticket price</i>	2	2	1	2	4	3	4	5	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3
<i>Advertisement</i>	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	4	2	3	-	2	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	4
<i>My specific need the specific time</i>	2	4	3	2	5	1	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	3	5	5	5	5	1	4	2	4
<i>Communication messages of the organisation (send out)</i>	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	1	1	1	1	3
<i>Director</i>	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	2	4	4	4	4	5	3	3	3	5	3	4

Table 29. Ranking Sheets Overview

Below (Table 30), the factors of actors, performance content and director will be isolated. The ranking sheets will be presented through focus group sessions. The group of OCC Friends is the group that



rates a performance's contributors with the highest number, and a performance's content almost with the highest. The cultural product is the most important factor in their decision-making.

<b>Focus Group 5_OCC Friends_Age: 35-44</b>	<b>SF40</b>	<b>SF35</b>	<b>SF36</b>	<b>SF41</b>
<b>Actors</b>	5	5	5	5
<b>Performance's content</b>	5	5	4	5
<b>Director</b>	5	5	5	5

Table 30. Ranking Sheets for Focus Group 5

For the age group 18-25, the product is also ranked highly (Table 31).

<b>Focus Group 1_Age: 18-25</b>	<b>F21</b>	<b>F24</b>	<b>F22</b>	<b>F23</b>
<b>Actors</b>	3	5	5	3
<b>Performance's content</b>	4	5	5	5
<b>Director</b>	4	5	5	4

Table 31. Ranking Sheets for Focus Group 1

The majority of the age group 26-35 considers products as a very important factor in their decision-making for cultural consumption (Table 32).

<b>Focus Group 2_Age: 26-35</b>	<b>F34</b>	<b>M33</b>	<b>F27</b>	<b>M34</b>
<b>Actors</b>	5	4	2	4
<b>Performance's content</b>	-	5	5	3
<b>Director</b>	5	4	2	4

Table 32. Ranking Sheets for Focus Group 2

For the age group 36-45, the high scoring pattern for the cultural product is repeated (Table 33).

<b>Focus Group 3_Age: 36-45</b>	<b>M42</b>	<b>F36</b>	<b>F42</b>	<b>F35</b>
<b>Actors</b>	3	4	5	3
<b>Performance's content</b>	5	5	4	5
<b>Director</b>	4	4	5	3

Table 33. Ranking Sheets for Focus Group 3

Finally, for the group of consumers that age above 45 years old, the cultural product is seriously considered in the decision-making (Table 34).

<b>Focus Group 4_Age: 45+</b>	<b>F62</b>	<b>M50</b>	<b>F59</b>	<b>M64</b>
<b>Actors</b>	3	5	3	4

<b>Performance's content</b>	5	5	5	4
<b>Director</b>	3	5	3	4

Table 34. Ranking Sheets for Focus Group 4

### 7.2.2. Stegi's Product and Consumers' Perceptions

Participants of focus groups were asked what the first word that comes to their mind when they hear the word "Stegi" is. The words that came up were the below: pioneer, innovative, modern, contemporary, diverse, theatre, dance, sophisticated spectacles, modernist spectacles, variety, Multi-use art space, Onassis, quality, pluralism, alternative, non-conventional. Some also mentioned that Stegi involves different actors-collaborations and deals with current issues. If we would need to cluster these concepts in a table, it would seem like the below (Table 35):

How do people identify Stegi?	Driven by what?	
Pioneer	Product	
Innovative	Product	
Modern, contemporary	Product	Commercial Location (Place) <sup>178</sup>
Diverse	Product	
Theatre, dance	Product	
Sophisticated, modernist spectacles	Product	
Variety	Product	
Multi-use art space	Product	
Onassis	The founder of the Onassis Foundation (Aristotle Onassis)	
Quality	Product	
Pluralism	Product	
Alternative, non-conventional	Product	Commercial Location (Place)

Table 35. Key Concepts about Stegi

As was thoroughly mentioned in the theoretical framework, "product"-one of the 4Ps of the marketing mix-, as it functions in cultural organisations, includes a wide range of concepts. The product is composed of the product itself, the related services, the spin-off products and the consumer's experience of the product, which includes also the value the consumers will attribute to it. Two

<sup>178</sup> Or else physical evidence that is one of the 7Ps and includes all the elements that give the first impressions when customers step inside (physically or virtually). Physical building attributes and the architecture of the building are part of the brand image.

interrelated things are obvious here. Consumers perceive Stegi as a product, which means they identify the cultural organisation with its product. This identification though might stem from or be encouraged by the marketing strategy of the organisation, which has invested in the product and its artistic/symbolic value, as it is perceived by the consumers.

It is interesting that all the participants, apart from two, associate the cultural agenda of Stegi with the art of theatre. How do they do it? Simply by attributing to the word “Stegi” the connotation “theatre”-instead of any other form of art. In other words, they perceive theatre as the main cultural product of Stegi. As a researcher, I can assume that this occurs because the participants of this research have attended more or only theatre performances at Stegi and/or because the Greek audience is more oriented to the theatre when it decides on cultural consumption. Nevertheless, although Stegi’s product includes several art forms, it hosts indeed many performing arts spectacles.

Adding to the above, many participants, if not the majority, express the opinion that Stegi’s agenda is risky and they have attended many spectacles they didn’t like. The reasons why they did not like them are connected to the content of the spectacles, the directorial concept or/and the directorial approach. They mainly characterise the spectacles as incomprehensible, too modern or too contemporary. Some of them keep going though, especially the OCC Friends and some others are very cautious, and they need a strong recommendation for a specific spectacle in order to visit Stegi again. This sounds quite problematic. In detail, F32 mentions that Stegi’s concept is more modernist compared to other cultural organisations and this is usually risky.

“I have attended things that I didn’t like at Stegi and I am quite cautious. I could say that it presents difficult and complicated spectacles”, she says, while M33 and F34 agree.

Many mention also that Stegi’s cultural agenda doesn’t suit them, with F24 noting:

“Stegi concerns me only in terms of the different perspective it presents”.

SF36 adds:

“Although I have mixed feelings about Stegi, it has something that pulls me close to it. Every time I am thinking that because of its diversity, I might find something interesting and different”.

It is really interesting SF40’s opinion:

“To exaggerate, my relationship with Stegi is like an abusive relationship. If I consider all the approximately 20 performances I have attended there, I could say something negative about the 15 of them. Nevertheless, even if I didn’t like some of them, I will think they were interesting. Additionally, as a counterbalance, I will consider all the privileges I have got as an

OCC Friend and they were all a great experience. Stegi is an experience. It makes me open to experimenting, and this is a great achievement”.

She adds:

“For some reason, Stegi intrigues me. It has probably offered me a special experience at some moment in the past, and since then I always give it a chance, as I am thinking it presents progressive and alternative spectacles and it is worthy”.

In the same context SF41 claims:

“I would use the word ‘extreme’ for Stegi. At Stegi, either it will attend something very nice or something I will want to strongly disapprove of. It’s a passionate relationship. It makes you hate it, it makes you want to go again, and it makes you think you will attend either a failure or a piece of art. It is a masochistic relationship”.

F42, supporting Stegi, says:

“It presents many different things that are also different from the things I usually attend, and I like that. Its cultural agenda suits me.”

M50 adds that Stegi’s productions are all paying attention to details. In the same spirit, M64 mentions that Stegi presents spectacles that people never had the chance to attend before, with others agreeing on that.

To sum up, the main words or phrases that participants use to describe their relationship with Stegi are: passionate, abusive, masochistic, intriguing, experimental/exploratory, complicated, and blurred. I would claim that the relationship between the cultural organisation and its consumers can be likened to a solar spectrum, as below (Figure 49).

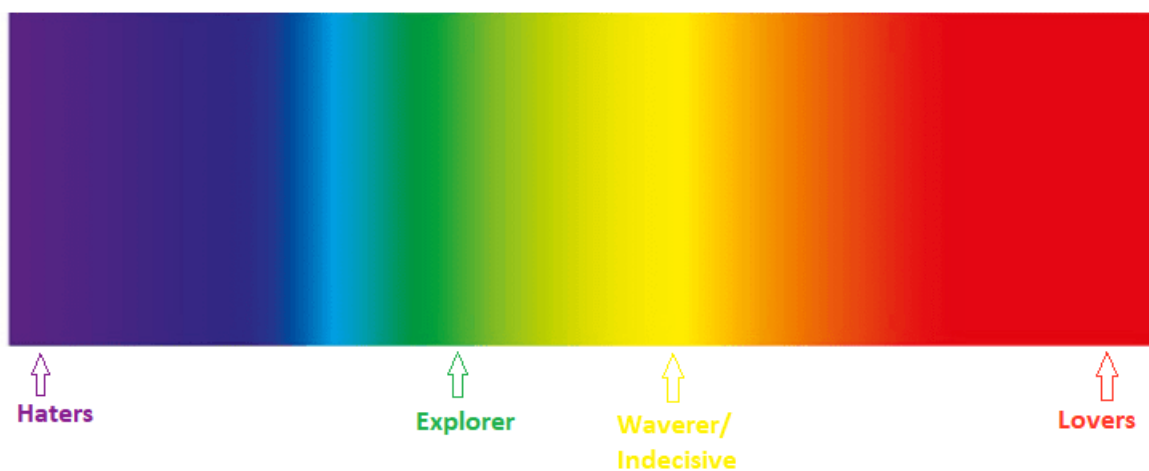


Figure 49. Solar Spectrum of Consumers

The prevailing question here could be why the organisation creates such hate or even a bad reputation. If we analyse the words participants use to describe the spectacles Stegi hosts, words like “extreme, difficult, complicated, risky, progressive, and alternative”, we can end up to the conclusion that Stegi creates such hate/love through its cultural agenda and artistic choices. I would say it actually provokes these relationships, and this is its initial objective, to be provocative, to take consumers out of their comfort zone. Hence, to go back to the above statement that all this situation seems quite problematic, in the end, it is not. Stegi creates mixed feelings because it dares to be edgy and risky through its agenda choices. Contemporary art includes risk, and Stegi is a contemporary cultural organisation par excellence.

To analyse more the profile of the consumers, we first distinguish lovers. Those are so open to diversity and experimentation that they get something positive from every single experience with Stegi. They have great familiarity with arts or they are connoisseurs of arts. They are contemporary art lovers or modern art lovers, in a sense, they associate these terms with (endless) experimentation.

The rest of the consumers most probably had a bad memory/experience with the organisation in the past, but for most of them, this is not an obstacle to their relationship with Stegi. Using the word “hate” in exaggeration, we could say that these people hate it but still go. In reality, it is a hate-love relationship, one that creates mixed feelings, or in other words “they love to hate it”. Consumers confront win and loss at the same time, or they win one time and lose the other. They are people that have been tremendously satisfied by an experience with Stegi in the past and they keep hoping to revive this pleasure through repeated disappointing experiences; that is why they always give it a chance. Good experiences were probably so strong, that consumers, and especially OCC Friends, are feeling/believing that loyalty will reward them sooner or later; they evaluate the counterbalance between value for time, value for money and experiences offered. There are also people who waver and have not decided yet if it is worthy or not (waverer/indecisive). In the past, they have attended spectacles they liked and spectacles they didn't like. They still give it a chance, until they decide to move to another category. Additionally, some people know Stegi's cultural agenda doesn't suit them, but the diversity it offers, as well as the passion for experimentation, suit them (explorer).

Finally, as haters are presented people that have been disappointed by Stegi. It doesn't really matter here how many times they have been disappointed, as this is something related to the limits of each person. It matters though that these people will not visit Stegi again unless they have a strong recommendation from someone they trust. This category of consumers is reaching the limits of a bad reputation for the organisation, and although I mentioned above that Stegi's objective is to be provocative, it seems that they lose control over this target group of consumers.

To continue with the analysis of participants' perceptions about the organisation's cultural product, F27, expressing dissatisfaction, comments on the international content of Stegi's agenda:

"It is negative for me that it brings so many foreign artists, while it could choose among great Greek ones".

Another issue that came up is that consumers perceive Stegi as a non-intimate organisation, and although it tries to cover social issues with its cultural agenda, these issues do not really affect the organisation; this might be linked with the fact that Stegi is a funded organisation that doesn't depend on its survival on audiences' consumption. F33 says it is a distanced organisation, while F34 says:

"It covers a wide range of topics, it deals with important social issues, but I consider it disconnected from reality; it is art for art's sake, it addresses people with a specific cultural or social level and excludes others".

F24 agrees by saying that Stegi's product addresses an audience with a greater familiarity with art. SF35 disagrees claiming that the content is alternative, but because of the massive communication, it becomes mainstream, that is addressing mainstream target groups, instead of alternative ones. F27 adds:

"Stegi has productions that cost money, it can have social implications in its subject matter, but it seems to me that this subject matter doesn't really concern the organisation".

We notice a harsh accusation regarding the character and the beliefs of the cultural organisation and by extension regarding the foundation behind it. Participants link Stegi to capitalism, exclusion, and hypocrisy, and these concepts bother them when we talk about a cultural organisation. These definitely do not sound like the ideal connotations for an arts organisation; it is problematic and needs attention from the decision-makers of Stegi.

Participants also comment on the short duration of Stegi's products. F41 says:

"It is so frequent the alternation of the shows it hosts that whenever I want to attend something at Stegi, it gives me options".

On the contrary, F36 considers the fast alteration as negative as she believes there is no time to attend some interesting spectacles Stegi hosts, plus it is very hard to find tickets as many performances are sold out because they are presented for a short period of time.

It would be interesting at this point to collect all the key concepts participants used for Stegi's cultural agenda in terms of content in the below table (Table 36):

Key concepts for Stegi's cultural agenda	
risky	particular
complicated, incomprehensible	remarkable
too modern or too contemporary	international
current, contemporary	difficult
diverse	wide/broad
different	elitist
interesting	alternative, non-conventional
experimental	disappointing

Table 36. Key Concepts for Cultural Agenda

At this point, I will separate the words the consumers use regarding the duration of Stegi's spectacles (Table 37). These are the below:

Key-words for spectacles' duration
short
fast-alteration
annoying
stressful
interesting
very satisfactory

Table 37. Key-words for Spectacles' Duration

### Summary

Based on the above analysis, it seems that the product plays the most important role in decision-making for cultural consumption. In this case, the product for consumers is translated to the content of the performance and the performance's contributors (actors and directors). In decision-making, the product is followed by the specific need of the consumer, at a specific time. Beyond the general association of the product with the decision-making process, more specifically, Stegi is correlated to consumers' minds primarily to its product. Theatre prevails as the main cultural product of Stegi in consumers' minds, who consider the organisation's product mainly as risky/edgy, extreme/incomprehensible, and too modern/contemporary. The relationship of consumers with Stegi derives mainly from the particular experiences the organisation offers through its product, and can be likened to a solar spectrum, with the ends being haters and lovers, and the in-betweens explorers and waverers/indecisive. These mixed feelings are expected for a cultural organisation that is by default risky and edgy, with an absolute focus on contemporary art. Furthermore, one could claim that these

mixed feelings are the initial objective of Stegi. Lovers are those who appreciate Stegi's cultural agenda, Waveres those who have not decided yet if they like it or not, Explorers those who do not really like the cultural agenda but the diversity it offers, taking them to experimental paths, and Haters those who usually disapprove Stegi's cultural agenda, due to past disappointing experience. There are two points that need Stegi's special attention. Firstly, the group of haters seems to have lost faith in Stegi's cultural product. May the initial objective of the organisation is to be provocative through its cultural choices, but in this case, it has lost control over this group of people, the haters. The second point is that Stegi is accused of hypocrisy by its consumers. The latter support that Stegi's agenda tackles important social issues, but Stegi itself is not really affected by these issues.

### 7.3. Price and Cultural Consumption

#### 7.3.1. General Price and Decision Making

The fieldwork shows that the ticket price affects cultural consumption only if the latter is high or if the consumers are younger than 45 years old. For instance, for people who are consuming an average of 6 performances per year, the price is not an issue, but for frequent consumers, it plays an important role. The average price that people younger than 45 years old are prepared to pay does not exceed 20 euros. Some others even mention the number 15 or 17.

Two figures are presented below. The first one (Figure 50) describes the tendency of the rise of the effect of pricing when cultural consumption rises. The more spectacles the consumers attend, the more they will be affected by the ticket price; this is because their cultural consumption budget is increasing, and they should make choices.



Figure 50. Cultural Consumption and Price Impact Index

The second (Figure 51) indicates that the younger the consumer, the higher the effect of the ticket price. The age of consumers is definitely linked to professional, marital and financial status (e.g.



income, responsibilities, expenses, etc.), but this research will not explore further these statuses.



Figure 51. Consumer Age and Price Impact Index

When both factors, quantity of consumption and age of consumers are involved, then the ticket price impact index tends to be highly increased or decreased. For instance, when a young -for this research, young is considered someone younger than 45 years old- frequent cultural consumer decides to consume culture, her/his choice is highly affected by ticket price. On the contrary, when an old -for this research, old is considered someone older than 45 years old- non-frequent cultural consumer decides to consume culture, ticket price will have a low effect on her/his choice (ticket price will slightly affect her/him).

F41 mentions:

“Price is an important criterion for me, especially in a period I want to attend multiple cultural events, and I need to distribute my money”.

She adds her belief that in Greece, cultural activities are quite economical/reasonable compared to abroad, however, budget is always considered.

F22 says:

“I wish I could attend all the spectacles, but I have a budget too. I even need theatres to give me the option of a discounted student ticket”.

On top of that, when the budget of consumers is specific, we notice a correlation between ticket price and perceived risks. VAS/1824 mentions:

“I have a specific budget and I will choose carefully the performances that possibly will not let me down”.

So in this case the price is also linked to the risk of choosing between alternatives; by choosing a performance with lower risk, consumers avoid the risk of unmet expectations.

In the same context, AL/1824 mentions that there are periods in her life she cannot attend a single spectacle for a few months, so the price is very important to her. When the price impact index is high, the action that cultural consumers usually take is the Early Bird practice (book the tickets way in advance to get extra offers) and/or the evaluation of alternatives in the decision-making process based on price. The quality of the seating view is also playing a role in the ticket purchase. People mention also the fact they will attend an expensive performance they consider good, skipping through another one, to get a financial balance.

Some participants link pricing to the quality of seating views, like F24 and F41. The first mentions:

“I can’t visit ten theatres per month, that’s why I am always checking the offers and especially the early birds. I will prefer though to buy a more expensive ticket with a good sitting, instead of going at two spectacles with a limited or moderated view”.

On the contrary, F41 states: “In order not to miss a cultural event, I will choose a more remote seat to level it”.

Interestingly, international performances are evaluated differently by participants, who declare willingness to pay a higher ticket price, considering transportation expenses and/or production expenses etc. The same willingness- to pay a higher ticket price- is shown about spectacles that will offer to participants a very special or unique experience.

In fact, participant M33 devalues ticket price, if it is to experience something unique or rare; he says:

“If I really want to see something I will go for it. If it is a unique spectacle or a foreign artist I wouldn’t mind paying even 200 euros if I think it is worthy”.

Additionally, they correlate ticket prices with production expenses and organisations’ prestige. F27 expresses the opinion that price matters, but she believes that the production of every performance needs money to be executed:

“Therefore, I don’t expect to pay 5 euros. I would even pay 50 euros for something special, a special experience”, she says.

This statement reminds us of the inherent nature of the arts industry (Chapter 1.3), the rising resource and operating costs that usually prevent them from achieving significant productivity gains; even if the performing arts organisations do achieve productivity gains, they do not benefit from them (Baumol’s cost disease and economies of scale). It is quite hopeful that cultural consumers adopt this way of thinking.

On the other hand, F42 comments on the different prices of different organisations:

“Depending on the cultural space, you expect corresponding prices, of course. For instance, at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, you expect the tickets to be a little expensive but at the Theatre of Neos Kosmos, you expect something cheaper. Depending on the space you know where the prices range, but surely the price plays a role.”

Furthermore, how much they want to attend a spectacle, affects their willingness to pay more but it might also affect the total amount of the cultural spectacles they will attend, by extension their frequency of cultural consumption. The majority of participants will choose to attend a specific performance that interests them much, and skip another one. M42 says:

“Pricing is a deterrent if I have to choose one out of three performances. But if it's something I really want to attend I will go for it, and I will not attend anything else”.

In the same context, M64 claims he may decide to attend an expensive show and skip another one. Nevertheless, there is also the opinion of SF40 who states:

“Price will not play any role in something I really want to attend. If there are two shows I am interested in, I will attend both, and I will reduce the costs of something else”.

Finally, few consumers, specifically younger ones, consider the peripheral expenses. Most peripheral expenses are linked to the location of the cultural space, its accessibility by public transportation (e.g. taxi expenses), and the activities that will follow the cultural event. SF41 says:

“I consider the total expense of an outing that includes a cultural spectacle. It is not only the ticket price but also the bar or the restaurant that will follow”.

The table below (Table 38) concentrates on all the variables that the participants of this research correlate to the ticket price of a cultural event.

<b>Factors correlated to the ticket price</b>
Frequency of cultural consumption
Budget size
Organisations’ prestige
Production expenses
The interest in the spectacle (how much the spectacle interests them)

Table 38. Factors Correlated to the Ticket Price

### 7.3.2. Stegi’s Pricing Policies and Consumers’ Perceptions

Regarding the ticket prices of Onassis Stegi, the participants use words like “reasonable, fair, affordable, and cheap”. M34 states: “The price Stegi asks for is accessible, it is not prohibitive, it has

cheap tickets”, and all his co-participants agree. F59 talks about the tickets for residents of neighbouring areas to the Onassis Stegi that costs 7 euros and notes that Stegi makes the cultural spectacles so accessible, that you prefer “instead of going for a coffee, to consume culture”. F22 says:

“It seems positive to me that there is a wide ticket pricing scale. It would bother me if the theatre does not give me the choice of the reduced ticket for students, even if the price difference is small, but Stegi does”.

In Greece, there is a card for people who study at drama schools or any other schools related to the theatre (e.g. teatrology), which gives them the right to attend any performance for free or at a very small price; but this is always up to the cultural organisation. Hence, one of the participants, F21 complains about Stegi’s policy regarding that.

“Stegi does not make it easily accessible to us. It puts some burdens, like some other organisations. But for me, this is very important, because I cannot pursue my studies, if I do not attend at least three performances per week (for free), and some theatres block me”.

Perceptions for Stegi’s Pricing Policy	
reasonable	fair
affordable	cheap
inexpensive	low
accessible price-wise	not prohibitive
choice of reduced tickets	wide range of ticket prices

Table 39. Perceptions for Stegi’s Pricing Policy

Cross-cutting 7.3.1 that describes the effect of the ticket price of cultural spectacles on decision-making on cultural consumption, with chapter 7.3.2 which focuses on the perceptions of consumers about Stegi’s pricing policy, we reach interesting results.

The variables correlated by participants to cultural events’ ticket prices are the below following:

- Frequency of cultural consumption
- Budget size
- Organisations’ prestige
- Production expenses
- The interest in the spectacle (how much the spectacle interests them)

Onassis Stegi pursues and strongly encourages frequent cultural consumption, as it offers its cultural products at low prices, especially if consumers belong to OCC Friends or Early Birds; but even if they don’t, the regular ticket prices of Stegi are also very fair, especially comparing to other cultural

organisations in Athens. As mentioned above, Onassis Stegi has a wide range of ticket prices (e.g. tickets at seven euros for all the productions for the general public, tickets at seven euros for residents of neighbouring areas, tickets for students, unemployed, disabled, groups etc.) (check Chapter 6.4.2). Hence, it also meets the needs of people with a specific budget<sup>179</sup>.

Although the organisation is considered highly prestigious by the consumers, who recognise its highly expensive productions, they don't classify it among the expensive ones, because of its fair pricing policy [As it has been mentioned in the theory (check Chapter 1.4.3), consumers consider a price as fair, only if it is the one they are prepared to pay (Colbert, 2012)]. Additionally, consumers (consciously and unconsciously) reasonably combine Onassis Stegi with the Onassis Foundation, a wealthy foundation that fully funds the production of the cultural organisation. This implies that Onassis Stegi, as a public benefit organisation, has different needs compared to the majority of cultural organisations in Athens, it doesn't need to apply a high pricing policy to survive. Indeed, the impression consumers have is correct, as on top of the above-mentioned Onassis Foundation also absorbs any tax increase or fees from ticket providers. The ticket price is not related to the cost of each performance, and none of the performances of OCC is profitable.

Although international performances are evaluated differently by participants, who declare willingness to pay a higher ticket price, this is not directly connected to Stegi. The latter does host so many international projects that some consumers even complain about it (check product above-chapter 7.2.2). But, the organisation applies a pricing policy characterised by participants as fair, cheap, reasonable etc. and indeed it is, and even international performances are not excluded from this policy. Similarly, if someone is really interested to attend a specific spectacle at Stegi, she/he will have the chance to buy a ticket at a good price, depending on her/his budget.

### *Summary*

The fieldwork and its analysis show that the ticket price of cultural events in general affects the decision-making of cultural consumption in two cases: a) when the cultural consumption is high, b) when the consumers are younger than 45 years old. When both factors are involved, then the ticket price impact index is highly increased. Consumers, to deal with the ticket price, choose to use the early bird offers, sacrifice or not the seating view, skip a cultural event, and/or evaluate alternatives based on price. Nevertheless, for special or unique experiences, price does not matter for the majority of participants. The peripheral expenses are considered only by a few younger consumers. About Stegi,

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<sup>179</sup> It is also worthy to mention that for all the ticket price categories that Stegi offers, there are no restrictions for the ticket zones that can be purchased, except for the disabled people whose seats depend on the setup of the performance each time. For instance, in some theatres in Greece, the unemployed people can purchase only the zone that is usually far away from the scene.

consumers believe it offers reasonable prices and many options for discounted tickets, policies that seem to encourage frequent cultural consumption. That's why although consumers consider it prestigious, with expensive productions, they don't consider its ticket pricing expensive, but fair. Consumers acknowledge that an important role in why Stegi can afford to keep the ticket prices low plays the fact it is a public benefit organisation, fully funded by Onassis Foundation. Participants' statements confirm what Stegi tries to apply, an inclusive pricing policy that supports unlimited access to culture for everyone.

## 7.4. Place and Cultural Consumption

### 7.4.1. General Commercial Location and Decision Making

In this section, I will analyse if and how the commercial location of a cultural organisation affects the consumers. More specifically, the participants of the focus groups were asked if the physical site where the cultural product is consumed (the venues) affects their decision to consume art. The participants are aware they need to talk about the physical setting, which affects their satisfaction level. They are talking about the geographic proximity (easy access by public transportation), sound quality, the seating facilities, the view of the performance, the venue size, the parking facilities, the related expenses that derive from the location, and the general effort consumers will expend to attend the performance or buy the tickets.

The majority of the participants above 30 years old consider the commercial location, but this does not affect their decision as much as the performance itself. SF35 says:

“I can adjust to the location, except if I am disappointed by the cultural organisation in general”

SF41 mentions she would go everywhere if she wanted to attend something, while M50 states:

“If I have to choose between easily accessible and not, the performance will lead me”.

F34 and F24 agree that location is not a deterrent. The same applies to F62:

“I would attend a performance I wanted to no matter the location, but from the latter would depend if I would go by car or by taxi. In case of a remote location, dangerous area, difficulty in parking the car and so on, I would go by taxi”.

Nevertheless, SF40 states:

“I would go more easily to an organisation located close to my house; it should be a performance that interests me a lot in order to go somewhere far away”.

M64 says:

“Location affects me up to a certain point, but I will choose by the performance. If the performances are of the same level I would choose easy access”.

By this, he means that in the stage of the evaluation of alternatives, the location could play an important role for him. Additionally, F59 claims:

“Parking matters for me, this is why I am moving to specific areas. I would go to a place that is not very convenient in terms of parking, but not very often; though I wouldn’t go to a cultural organisation that is located in a dangerous area, no matter how good the performance is”.

Nevertheless, some younger participants are affected by the related expenses that derive from the location, such as taxi expenses. They don’t mind the time and effort they will spend to reach the place, but they mind the expenses, like F27 and F21. Nevertheless, young participants that drive a car, like F22, do not consider the location. Hence, for young people who are using public transportation and do not have a car, location is a deterrent.

Additionally, the space and its functionality, such as seating facilities, view of the performances and venue size, and the ambient conditions (sound quality) are considered by participants as important elements for a good performance.

### *Summary*

To sum up, location is seen as a deterrent mainly when it is connected to peripheral expenses, specifically transportation expenses. As mentioned in the Price section above (6.3.a), ticket prices, and by extension expenses linked to the location of the cultural space and its accessibility by public transportation affect mainly younger groups of people, such as students and/or people who have junior professional positions and they are not very well paid; both factors are usually connected to age. Additionally, these expenses affect people who do not have a car or motorbike and are forced to use taxis in some cases, when public transportation is not convenient. Not having a means of transport is either a matter of choice or people can’t afford it. Nevertheless, some other reasons why to consider location as a deterrent were mentioned by a minority of participants. These are: how dangerous the location, is and how far away is from their residency. The below table (Table 40) classifies by significance the above-mentioned factors, which are linked to the location.

<b>Location as a deterrent</b>
1)Expenses to reach the cultural space by taxi
2)How much dangerous the surrounding area of the cultural space is considered
3)Proximity of cultural space from the residency

*Table 40. Location as a Deterrent*

#### 7.4.2. Stegi's Distribution Policies and Consumers' Perceptions

To move from the general to the specific, participants of focus groups talked about the commercial location of Onassis Stegi, that is the ticket distribution and the venues. As mentioned in the analysis of the organisation, Stegi is applying a selective strategy of ticket distribution, selling tickets at Public (stores), Ianos, Stegi's box office, phone booking and Stegi's website. The majority of the participants do not even know about other points of sales (Public and Ianos), and they buy tickets mostly online, at the cashiers of Stegi, or over the phone. They find it quite hard to buy the tickets online as the website is a bit complex and in order to buy the tickets, visitors need to register as members of the website, something that consumes time and the majority does not enjoy. SF35 says:

"I will find out how to get to the tickets, but it is not the easiest thing on its website, which is 50% of the reasons you enter the site".

Almost all complain about the lack of tickets and the sold-out performances, something that will be also mentioned later on in the communication strategies section. 2-3 young participants mention also that Stegi makes it hard to book a ticket for those who do not hold a credit card. Many Greek theatres in Athens, give the spectators the option to call and make a reservation without the need for pre-payment, but Stegi doesn't offer that.

Regarding the physical setting of Stegi, where the experience takes place, participants are divided. Some consider the location of the venues a disadvantage as it is located on a bustling boulevard and this creates a sense of noise and insecurity, as F41 says. They also believe it is located away from the trunk of the city, in a sense that is away from the popular nightlife areas (F34, M33). This reminds us of the group of socialisers<sup>180</sup> in chapter 7.1, the motivations for cultural consumption, who link cultural consumption with an outing. It is true though that especially when Onassis Stegi opened, the area in which is located was not an entertainment or artistic hub. Nowadays, at least there are two bars, but they are not enough for this group of people (socialisers). Some other participants though consider Stegi's location as central and the organisation easily accessible by public transportation, car, or even better by motorbike. This means they don't need to spend much time to reach the organisation or money to reach by taxi.

It is interesting that consumers, talking about the commercial location of Onassis Stegi, mention a few extra factors that they had not mentioned when they were asked about the commercial location of cultural organisations in general. These factors concern the feeling of noise and insecurity the

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<sup>180</sup>For them, cultural consumption is an occasion for an outing or socialising, which are considered as synonyms by participants. The semantic extension of this concerns sharing; sharing the experience and the discussion, drinks and/or food afterwards can be also a motive for them. Moreover, socialising concerns also an outing and sharing of experiences with people that belong in the same circle, whether this is a social, artistic, or any other type of circle (check chapter 6.1).



location might create for visitors, as well as the proximity of the organisation to popular for their nightlife areas. The insecurity factor is not connected to how isolated the location is, but on the contrary how central it is, and in this case, it concerns the bustling boulevard on which Stegi is located.

Although Stegi has private paid parking, with low prices for customers (five euros for three hours) and tickets can be also purchased online, the majority of participants say that parking is a disadvantage at Stegi, and they mean free parking around the area. Almost all mention the parking issue, except for a few like M34 and F32 that consider the option of paid parking important. There are also those who do not mention the parking issue, as they perceive Stegi as easily accessible by car, and this is enough for them. Additionally, many consumers are content with the fact they stay close to Stegi and go on foot. This is connected to the close proximity of the cultural space to a residential area, a factor that was reported as important by the participants in chapter 7.4.1. By extension, the consumers consider Onassis Stegi's location as safe, in the sense it is not a remote place but instead, a quiet neighbourhood, close to a central boulevard.

As explained in the theory chapter 1.4.3, the physical setting where the experience takes place affects the satisfaction levels of attendees, as it creates functional and emotional value for them. A few elements that consumers consider important in this case are the ambient conditions, the space and its functionality. From the ambient conditions, the sound quality is very important, and from the space/function, the "seating facilities, view of the performance, venue size, and parking facilities" (Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 116). Regarding the sound quality, the seating facilities, the view of the performance and the venue size, the majority of the participants are very satisfied with Stegi. F35 and M42 say that Stegi has excellent acoustics and this makes the difference. F35 mentions:

"What I like is that it has very good acoustics, and in dance performances, the sound that is heard gives the rhythm".

While F62, F42 and F59 state that almost all the seats of the auditoriums have a good view of the performance, apart from 2-3 specific ones that you learn to avoid if you are a repeat visitor. Finally, SF40 notes that Stegi is overall comfortable.

How consumers perceive Stegi's commercial location	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Its central location makes it easily accessible by public transportation, car, or motorbike	It is located on a bustling boulevard and this creates a sense of noise and insecurity
No expenses for taxi	It is located away from the popular nightlife areas
Stegi's private paid parking	No easy free parking around the area
It is located in a residential area (easily accessed on foot if someone resides in neighbouring areas)	
Safe area/neighbourhood	

Table 41. Perceptions about Stegi's Location

Cross-cutting 7.4.1 that describes the effect of the commercial location of cultural spaces on decision-making on cultural consumption, with chapter 7.4.2 which focuses on the perceptions of consumers about Stegi's commercial location, we reach interesting results.

The opinion of consumers about the location of cultural spaces is affected by the below three factors, classified by significance:

- expenses to reach the cultural space by taxi
- How much dangerous the surrounding area of the cultural space is considered
- The proximity of cultural space from the residency

Even if one of the above factors applies, the participants may consider the location as a deterrent. In the case of Onassis Stegi, the location is considered anything but a deterrent. This is because, it is located quite centrally, opposite Panteion University, relatively close to Acropolis which is considered downtown, and it is easily accessible by public transportation. In detail, there is a bus stop outside the organisation, and the metro station (Syggrou Fix) is relatively close (900m away), but on top of that, Stegi, occasionally, depending on the event, might charter minivans to transfer the public from the closest subway station (check chapter 6.4.2). Therefore, there are no taxi expenses. Additionally, it is located in a residential area and safe neighbourhood. It is also interesting that participants are limited to the above three factors when they are asked about the location of the cultural organisations in general. But, when they are asked for Stegi in particular, they are inspired, adding two more factors: proximity to areas with vibrant nightlife, and proximity to a bustling boulevard; the latter creates consumers a sense of noise and/or insecurity, or using my words, it fails to provide the calmness and serenity consumers look for when they visit a cultural organisation.

As mentioned in the theory chapter (1.4.3), apart from the fixed venues, location refers also to all the possible places an organisation can perform (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Although Onassis Stegi is using many alternative/atypical/unusual places as venues (e.g. universities, parks, music halls, remote or international places in the context of touring or educational programs), it is worth mentioning that

none of the participants refers to these. Usually, these alternative performance locations arise through collaborations with other institutions, but not only (e.g. Agriculture University of Athens, Pedion Areos Park, etc.).

### *Summary*

The physical setting of cultural organisations' venues can affect up to a certain degree the decision-making process of cultural consumption, but performance (product) prevails in this process. Younger consumers consider location as a deterrent when it is connected to pricing and peripheral expenses (e.g. taxi expenses to reach the venue). The participants mention also the good or bad reputation of the organisation's surrounding area, as well as the proximity of cultural space from their residency. Regarding Stegi's physical setting, participants are divided on whether it is central, comfy, and advantageous or not. They all approve though and declare satisfied with the venue size, the sound quality and the seating facilities, describing Stegi as comfortable overall. Regarding the organisation's selective distribution policies, the majority of consumers use Stegi's channels which are online and phone bookings, plus box office purchases. Consumers consider Stegi's online sales not very handy, and they complain about the sold-out tickets, which stems from the short duration (calendar-wise) of its products.

## 7.5. Communication Strategies and Cultural Consumption

### 7.5.1. General Communication Strategies and Decision Making

The majority of participants, when they were asked to fill in the rating scale of the important elements to their decision making, they replied that advertisements and the content of communication messages of cultural organisations do not affect their decision to consume or not culture, or more precisely they are of less importance in their decision-making process for the cultural product they will choose to consume. Some others though replied that the communication messages are somehow important to their decision-making. Nevertheless, none of the participants classifies advertisement and communication messages in the category of the most important elements that motivate them to attend a performance. This is something though we cannot take for granted, as many times in focus groups (mentioned also in the methodology chapter) and similar kind of research, whenever individuals are asked to answer a question, like in one-to-one interviews or focus groups, they can never fully control their answers, due to the different phases during the response elaboration process. The participants should be considered narrators instead of reporters of experience; this means the version of the story they narrate each time, might be a bit different (Acocella, 2012; Arksey & Knight, 1999; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Taylor and Bogdan (1998) mention that there is a "difference between what people say and what people do" (p. 92). This means there is a chance participants are affected

by communication messages and advertising but they do not realise it; it happens unconsciously. Very important to them are the opinion leaders and the word of mouth. Social media and the recommendations in social media play also an important role. In the below table (Table 42), part of the ranking sheet participants filled in (chapter 7.2.1)<sup>181</sup> is presented. I have isolated the part that concerns the communication messages of the cultural organisations and their importance to consumers.

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Communication messages of the organisation (send out)</b>	
SF40	2	A bit important
SF35	3	Somehow important
SF36	2	A bit important
SF41	2	A bit important
F21	3	Somehow important
F24	2	A bit important
F22	3	Somehow important
F23	2	A bit important
F34	2	A bit important
M33	3	Somehow important
F27	2	A bit important
M34	2	A bit important
F32	2	A bit important
M42	2	A bit important
F36	4	Important
F42	2	A bit important
F35	2	A bit important
F41	1	Not important at all
F62	1	Not important at all
M50	1	Not important at all
F59	1	Not important at all
M64	3	Somehow important

Table 42. Ranking Sheet: Importance of Communication Messages

All the participants, when they want to attend a performance, they search online in city guides or websites with cultural content, hence the communication of each organisation needs to ensure the

<sup>181</sup> All the participants had to fill in a ranking sheet and define which element has more importance to them in decision making. The numbers listed in the ranking sheets are translated as follows: 1 for Not important at all, 2 for A bit important, 3 for Somehow important, 4 for Important, and 5 for Very important.

presence of its cultural agenda in this media (preferably media relations and press releases). Furthermore, very few, visit the websites of their favourite cultural organisations. On top of that, many visit spectacles that they have heard about through advertisements, WOM or recommendations. For instance, F22 is clearly a person who is influenced by the communication of the organisation, without this meaning that she is not selective in the messages she receives; she translates them according to her own liking. Radio spots, social media, other ads, something that will catch her attention, sold-out performances or recommendations from friends affect her. In a similar way, F23 follows recommendations of her personal network. F24 adds that the newsletters she receives from several cultural organisations play an important role in her decision-making, as well as the information she gets through the newsletters about the early birds. She says:

“I am doing an active search regarding the cultural events I will consume, but it is a combination; on the occasion of an advertisement I will search a little more about specific spectacles”.

SF41 agrees: “The ads act as reminders to me”. It is interesting though to mention that the majority of the participants are not subscribed to the newsletters of cultural organisations, mainly because it is not something that suits them. M34 said: “I am doing a passive search, that is I am following friends’ recommendations, but friends that I trust” or “friends that I know share the same taste”, as F24 says. F27, F34, and F32 all agree that a combination of communication messages and opinion leaders will affect their decision-making about the spectacle they will attend. The above is summarized in the figure below (Figure 52):

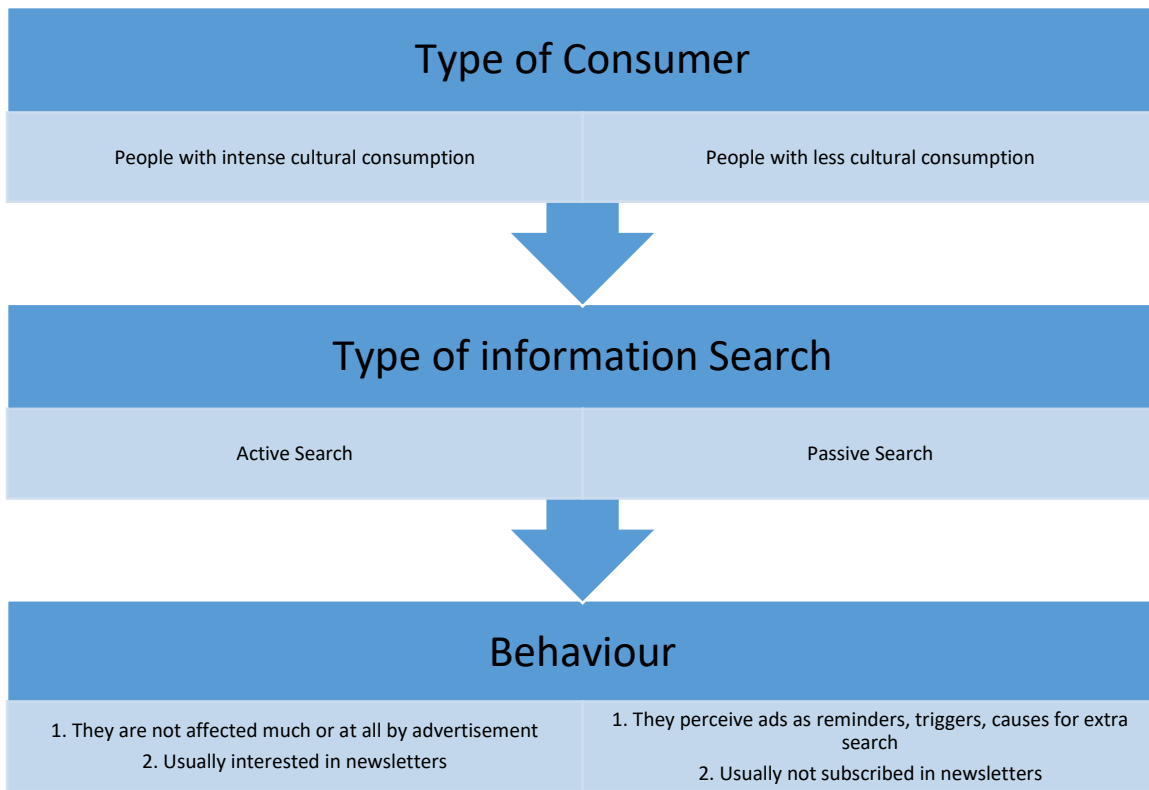


Figure 52. Type of Consumer, Information Search and Behaviour

When the participants were asked if they consider more important the medium or the communication message itself more, younger people mentioned social media as an important medium, whether because it is their medium or because it gives the potentiality of audio-visual material while regarding the content they said:

F22: “It does not matter where I see the communication message, I may not remember the medium, but I remember the content”.

F21: “A communication message will affect me at the degree I let it affect me; it always depends on how much I want to attend a spectacle”.

Regarding the trailers’ material that accompanies the presentation of a performance, opinions differ. F22 in a more conciliatory approach, states:

“Trailers help me to understand if the performance has a classic or a modern style, and decide between performances. But, if I have already decided to attend a show, I won't look for its trailer, because I'll be afraid that it might make me change my decision”.

F24 mentions:

“I do not prefer to watch this kind of material, as I believe it is not very representative of the theatre spectacles.

F35 says interestingly:

“I don’t like to watch trailers before performances, because I feel they limit my imagination.

On the contrary, F36 states she needs the trailers to get a better understanding of the performance, claiming that a well-crafted trailer can fire your imagination. This contrast between the responses of the participants is very interesting and confirms the diversity of people and by extension the multitude of strategies and tools that cultural organizations should use in terms of communication, or the clear decision they should make regarding their target groups.

In general, it seems that people with intense cultural consumption are not affected much or at all by advertising, because they are so active searchers that they will not wait for an advertisement to intrigue them, as they will have pre-decided to attend a specific spectacle or contributor. This came up basically from the focus group of OCC Friends.

### *Summary*

This subchapter deals with the question of if and how much the communication strategies of a cultural organisation affect audiences’ decision-making process for cultural consumption (RQA2b). We notice an inconsistency between what consumers believe about the effect of communication strategies on them and what is really true. As mentioned in the theoretical framework (see chapter 3.4. Arts attendance patterns), consumers’ information search is separated into active and passive; the latter means being receptive to information around you, while active means engaging in an active search behaviour offline and online (Blackwell et al., 2001). The analysis of the results leads us to the conclusion that people with intense cultural consumption, usually adopt the active search pattern, and are not affected much or not at all by advertisements. On the contrary, people with less cultural consumption (check how frequent and non-frequent cultural consumption is defined for this research in the methodology chapter), could more easily adapt a passive search pattern and be affected by different kinds of communication messages.

#### 7.5.2. Stegi’s Communication Strategies and Consumers’ Perceptions

Participants come across OCC advertising very often and in many places. They support Stegi has many outdoor campaigns, in the streets, bus stops and public transportation, many radio spots, as well as sponsored ads online. F34 says:

“You come across the advertisement of a specific event of Stegi for a long time and everywhere, in the whole city. For a while they will boom you with communication messages, to make sure people will be aware of it”.

The majority does pay attention to Stegi's advertisement not only because it is everywhere, as mentioned above, but for many other reasons that consumers consider important and are mentioned below.

Participants said about it:

M50: "Stegi has decent advertising".

F22: "I really like its campaigns, regardless of whether I will eventually attend an event or not, I like their promotional messages, I like their aesthetics".

F36: "I follow Stegi on social media and I like its posts. The frequency is not tiring- 3-4 posts per week-, the content is clever and interesting".

F42: "I pay attention to them because I like the communication style".

M64: "Its advertisement intrigues me to search it further".

F22: "Stegi's campaigns are particular. They have a specific style. And way before I hear it is Stegi's spot or way before I see the logo in a street campaign, I have already understood it is from Stegi. It has a character, a special identity"

SF41: "Stegi's campaigns are unique. They even have a distinct font and design".

M33: "From Stegi's advertisement I'll keep Stegi's logo and I will go and search online. I will never remember the spectacle itself".

The opinion of the majority of participants is quite positive, as their comments indicate successful outdoor, online and radio campaigns, long-lasting ones that catch their attention, nice aesthetics, clever messages, interesting and not tiring, clear identity, good timing and frequency and integrated with the rest of its communication messages.

Positioning is how to best differentiate each brand from competitive brands and Onassis Stegi seems to achieve differentiation, building on the reputation and the image of the organisation. The image and the reputation of the organisation though have been built on Stegi's products and choices throughout the years. The attributes of the products that are highlighted in its campaigns are associated with the organisation and individual productions. Onassis Stegi, as a cultural conglomerate, uses as a positioning strategy the diversification one that focuses on the needs of two or more segments, and the positioning is done for each of the products.

For Andreasen & Kotler (2008, p. 162) "one of the ways organisations effectively position themselves is through branding". And although in the non-profit sector, they are still learning how to use branding, Stegi seems to have mastered it. The successful brand must have distinctiveness, in other words, be



unique and have a personality, and it is obvious from participants' replies that Stegi does this. Consumers characterise its campaigns as recognisable, with a clear identity, unique character, and remarkable communication style, and they even notice small details like its distinct font and design.

Stegi seems to be a successful brand overall. Everything is under the umbrella of Stegi's brand and this is what stays in consumers' minds. Brand building influences the decision-making process of consumers of cultural products (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019) and Stegi seems to do this, as its spectacles are usually sold-out.

F27 agrees on the strong branding of the organisation and believes people are going to Stegi only because of the well-built brand name and not because of specific spectacles. F32 does not believe that this is possible and brings to the surface another important issue, the difficulty to understand Stegi's messages. She says:

“Many times, I find it difficult to understand the content of its advertisement and I am thinking that if I don't understand the advertisement, I will either understand the performance”.

Hence, the advertisement prevents her from attending a spectacle, because it looks difficult to her. M64 agrees that Stegi's communication messages are not clear, and he needs to read them twice and still does not understand them; he would prefer them simpler. The same happens with SF36 who characterises its communication messages as complicated. F34 believes that:

“Although Stegi's ads are mainstream and seem they address a broader audience, its product at the end is not for everybody”.

Therefore, the above might mean at the end that the advertisement is misleading or creates false expectations for a part of the audience.

M64 expresses an interesting position regarding Stegi's advertisement:

“Its advertising tries to create the concept of avant-garde or innovative. ‘What we do is unique and you have never seen it before, join us’. You may consider it a little arrogant”.

The not-so-bright side of Stegi's communication is the point of view of some participants, who observe an undefined arrogance, unclear messages, difficult content, and even misleading advertisement that creates false expectations. It does not matter if the participants who mention these elements are not many, what matters is that there is space for improvement from Stegi's side, and the suggestion is clearer and simpler communication messages and advertising content.

There are few though that do not come across Stegi's advertising very often or they do not pay attention to it. F23 says:

“I am not encountering its advertisement very often, but maybe I do and I do not pay attention. Maybe it has to do with me and not with the advertisement itself”.

F41 adds:

“I have never heard Stegi’s advertisement on the radio and I listen to a lot of radio. So I may have heard and not paid attention”.

F21 says:

“My memory doesn’t help me anyway, but if it is not something that interests me, there is no way I can remember it”.

It is worth mentioning that the group of OCC friends is an audience that will not wait for the advertisement or the communication message to reach them. It has a close relationship with Stegi, and most probably they will have booked their tickets already when the advertisement will be on air. Hence, the higher the level of loyalty, the less the influence of communication/advertising on consumers.

Many prefer the communication messages in social media, as they give the audio-visual option, and Stegi is very active on social as they say. They also encounter many banners for Stegi.

In general, participants believe that Stegi’s communication messages are to the point and its campaigns have nice aesthetics. F41 says:

“I consider Stegi’s messages simple and comprehensive, they do not tire me. I will be interested in them only if there is interest on my part”.

SF35 notes:

“Apart from advertisement and communication messages in general, Stegi has good media relations, because you can find it everywhere; in third-party websites, via articles about its products”.

On the above, SF41 adds:

“Apart from media relations, they have a good media office, which prepares well-written press releases and media re-produce them”.

From the above, the below groups of consumers arise:

- Positive towards Stegi’s overall communication style
- Consider Stegi’s messages difficult, unclear, misleading
- Do not encounter Stegi’s communication messages

- Do not pay attention to Stegi’s communication messages/Do not remember them

Few participants are subscribed to Stegi’s newsletters, and they have a positive viewpoint. They believe OCC’s people have worked well on them; the newsletters are to the point, concise, attractive and “make me feel I want to attend some of the presented spectacles”, as F41 adds.

Regarding the website, the majority of participants say it is user-friendly and responsive. F24 says:

“It is contemporary, non-conventional, with nice aesthetics. It is obvious through the website that Stegi wants to make a difference and promote it”.

She is also pointing out the use of yellow colour and she likes the option of ‘*What’s on*’ it gives, instead of ‘Upcoming events’ or something similar; so the use of slung makes it more modern. F22 adds: “It is obvious they have paid particular attention to it and it suits Stegi”.

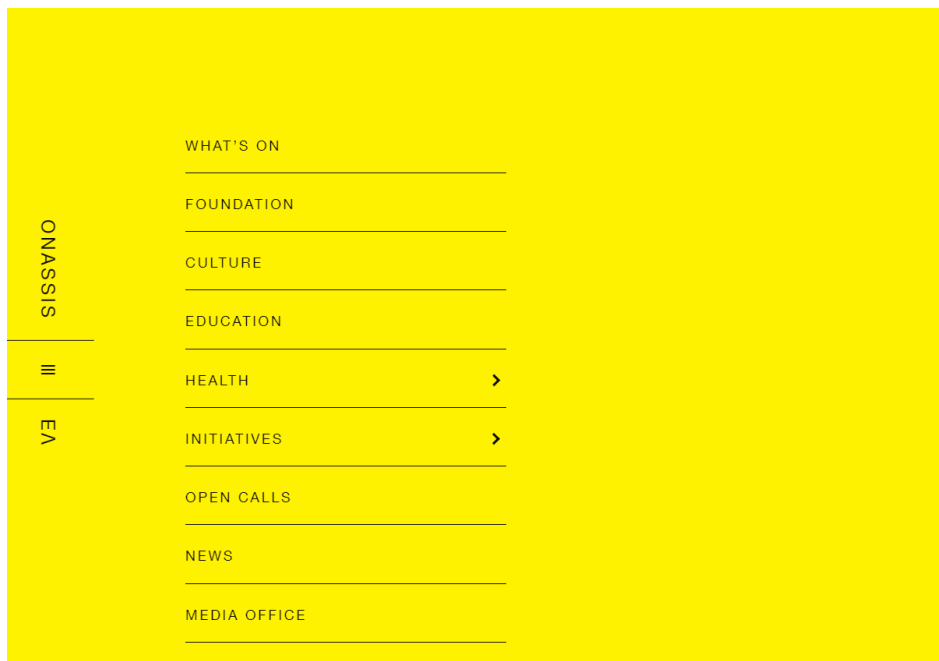


Figure 53. Website Menu

F24 and F36 comment on the toolbar that is on the left side as something modernist that reminds Berlin aesthetics. The majority believe that the website corresponds to Stegi’s identity and gives the information visitors need. Nevertheless, F36 believes that:

“This website is addressed to people with specific characteristics, high educational level and specific background, instead of the average Greek consumer”.

Some consumers say it has minimal aesthetics. Nevertheless, F35 doesn’t like it and doesn’t find it user-friendly and, contrary to F24, points out negatively the use of yellow colour. M42, expressing his

opinion as a consumer, but also as a software engineer, although he agrees Stegi’s website is user-friendly, he says:

“Their financial ability makes me judge more severely. They could have made a way better website. I can’t say I like it”.

The addition of this parameter is really interesting, as it has paramount importance for the above participant. Therefore, such a way of thinking might show the higher expectations consumers have from this organisation. Whether the reason is its financial background or its high prestige, it seems participants are strict when they judge Onassis Stegi.

M33 supports that Stegi’s website provides detailed information and F32 agrees on that:

“I like the fact that Stegi’s website gives me all the information I need, and sometimes even more than that, but not in a sense it provides useless information”.

Nevertheless, F27 calls it confusing and F34 says it has more than enough information. This is probably because Onassis Stegi’s website is under the umbrella of the Onassis Foundation’s website and this might make things complicated for some visitors. To comment on that, many participants consider this as a disadvantage, and I would say I agree with that, although I understand why Onassis Stegi took this decision; the latter is no other than the promotion of the Onassis Foundation, making clear that Stegi is a beneficiary organisation, and even informally compete the other big foundation of Greece, Stavros Niarchos (see Methodology chapter 5.4.2).

<b>Positive Key Concepts used for Stegi’s website</b>	<b>Negative Key Concepts used for Stegi’s website</b>
User-friendly	Non-user-friendly
Contemporary, modernist	Elitist
Non-conventional	It doesn’t address the average Greek consumer
Responsive	Confusing
Nice aesthetics, minimal aesthetics	It has more than enough information
The use of slung makes it more modern	
It is differentiated/It makes the difference	
Attention to details	
Provides Detailed information	
Corresponds to Stegi’s identity and gives the information visitors need	

Table 43. Key Concepts for Stegi’s Website

In the question of whether the general information they have about OCC products through communication messages is enough, the majority of participants say it is. F42 mentions:

“Its messages give me the information I need to be intrigued to search it further”.

M33 agrees and adds:

“You hear and see Stegi everywhere, that at the end you remember what’s on there. You have enough information to go and search it further”.

The above can be considered as positive feedback for the quantity or even the accuracy of information Onassis Stegi’s communication and marketing department shares with audiences, although few participants refer to its bombarding advertising.

### *Summary*

Although the majority of cultural consumers that participated in this research support via ranking sheets that communication strategies of cultural organisations are of less importance in their decision-making process, the analysis of their perceptions shows that people with intense cultural consumption are usually doing an active search and they are not affected much or at all by advertising; instead, they are interested in newsletters. On the contrary, people with less cultural consumption are usually passive searchers, they perceive ads as reminders, triggers and causes for extra search, while usually they are not subscribed to newsletters. Participants consider important in their decision-making, opinion leaders and word of mouth, and by extension recommendations in social media. Moving on to Stegi, people speak positively about the plethora of outdoor campaigns, radio spots and online ads. They comment on their nice aesthetics, clever messages, clear identity and distinctiveness, confirming that Stegi achieves differentiation with its positioning, maintaining strong and successful branding. Additionally, it results that the organisation focuses on the needs of two or more segments (diversification positioning), and positions each of its products. Although the majority of consumers are positive towards Stegi’s overall communication style, for a part of the audience, its messages are incomprehensible, misleading and create false expectations. We also observe a group of participants who do not encounter Stegi’s communication messages or do not pay attention or do not remember them.

## 8. Chapter 8\_Stakeholders’ Research

This chapter concerns the research conducted with the stakeholders of Onassis Stegi. It presents, analyses and interprets the results of the interviews with them, focusing on the opinion of stakeholders regarding Stegi’s cultural product and communication strategies. Both issues are addressed by presenting and analysing stakeholders’ answers. The perceptions of stakeholders are linked to and discussed with those of Stegi’s consumers in the final chapter of this thesis.

B-Study attitudes, motivations and perceptions of Onassis Stegi's audiences	B1- Chapter 7	RQB1- Chapter 7
	B2- Chapter 7	RQB2- Chapter 7
	B3- Chapter 7	RQB3- Chapter 7
	B4- Chapter 7	RQB4- Chapter 7
	B5- Explore the opinion of stakeholders regarding Onassis Stegi's cultural product and communication strategies and link it to consumers' opinions	RQB5a- How the product of Onassis Stegi is perceived by stakeholders?
		RQB5b- How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by stakeholders?
RQB5c- What are the similarities and differences between consumers' and stakeholders' perceptions of Stegi's products and communication strategies?		

Table 44. RQs B5

### 8.1. Stakeholders' Information

Stakeholder 1 is a journalist and communication specialist oriented to arts and culture. Except for communication and media, she has also studied theatre and she knows very well the Greek cultural market. Onassis Stegi's spots were running through the entire program of the radio station she worked in the past.

Stakeholder 2 is a professional radio producer for the last 20 years and she mainly deals with culture. She has also worked as a journalist, and music curator on TV, but also as a communication specialist. She is currently working at a municipal Greek radio, with which Onassis Stegi has collaborated in the past.

Stakeholder 3 is a Program Coordinator for an MA in Advertising Communications, and an Assistant Professor at a college of Liberal Arts & Sciences. He is simultaneously a freelance marketing consultant for approximately 10 years and he also deals with projects that are related to culture.

Stakeholder 4 is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Communication at a college of Liberal Arts & Sciences. She has published several scientific articles and she has teaching experience at Greek Universities. She is a freelance communications consultant and she has worked as such with Onassis Stegi for a short-term project.

## 8.2. Stakeholders' Perceptions of Stegi's Products

In this section, we are interested in what stakeholders believe about Stegi's products. To reach there I used interviews, analysis of interviews, and interpretation of interviews. As an introductory question, participants were asked what is the first word that comes to their mind when they hear the word "Stegi". Apart from words like pioneer, innovative, diversity, and inclusion, when the stakeholders hear the word "Stegi", different things are coming to their minds. "It is a warm place that can host very diverse things", says Stkh4, while Stkh1 considers Stegi as an impersonal and elitist organisation, aligning with Stkh2's opinion regarding elitism. Stkh2 believes also that Stegi is very much related to avant-garde. In detail, Stkh1 says:

"The huge building in Syggrou Avenue and the trademark ALL WE HAVE IS WORDS, ALL WE HAVE IS WORLDS come in my mind when you say 'Stegi'".

One could claim that she is more cynical than the other participants, associating also the word "money" with the word "Stegi". She adds that she relates Stegi to foreign productions and to a large, impressive theatrical stage that shines a lot. "Everything is stylised, the decoration, the people, etc.", she characteristically mentions.

To continue with the product, all participants agree that Stegi is promoting diversity and modernity through its cultural products. Stkh3 mentions:

"Its cultural product itself is diverse; they give through it the floor to alternative voices".

Stk 2 and 3 agree that Stegi is trying to discover the gaps in the Greek cultural market and fill them in with quality products. Nevertheless, some of its products are niche by default and target small or smaller audiences. Stkh4 says though:

"The spectacles it hosts are extremely innovative but also quite massive sometimes. It is a warm place that can host very diverse things. It gives the meaning of hospitality and protection. In the beginning, when I was listening to the word Stegi, I was thinking more about the building, in time I realized that it is *a roof*<sup>182</sup> in currents that are not mainstream, alternative currents, which require a lot of risks because all this will not always have an impact; in fact, when you deal with the now you take risks that you do not take when you deal with the past, which is much safer".

Stkh3 states:

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<sup>182</sup> As mentioned in the analysis of the organisation, the latter is called at local level as Stegi Grammaton kai Technon or just Stegi (Στέγη). The latter is the most common, and it is a Greek word and means roof, ceiling and by extension roofed place, shelter, house, dwelling (It comes from the verb stégō, "to cover"). The full name refers to an organisation that is the house of letters (grammáton) and arts (tékhnon) in Greece.

“Its product is challenging and many times difficult. Its cultural agenda in general aims at making people think from a different perspective”.

Nevertheless, Stkh1 considers Stegi as an impersonal and elitist organisation, aligning with Stkh2's opinion regarding elitism. Specifically, the latter believes that Stegi's products are not for everybody, they might be hypermodern and many times try to relentlessly impress the audience. She mentions:

“I have attended extreme spectacles at Stegi. Its product is risky. It is very much related to the avant-garde; Of course, the audience that will attend quality and non-commercial theatre in Greece is anyway a small audience, it is not sizable, it is very much specific, and I think that the people who attend performances at Stegi are even more specific. Stegi does not give me the impression that it is addressed to a large audience, although you often hear about performances that are sold out”.

Stkh4 states that:

“Onassis Stegi follows a slightly more modern and post-modern logic, although it has in his quiver things like the Cavafy's<sup>183</sup> archive. So I think it serves a cultural vision to push things forward, very consciously”.

She also adds:

“Onassis Stegi may have a much wider visibility, addressing a much wider audience, but the main thing it invests in and is worth investing in is that it is trying to address an audience that has traditionally never entered mainstream art venues that had the theatre sign or the gallery sign. So it tries to form a much younger audience and cultivate in it the desire for art. Hence, it will bring a DJ, it will bring a famous Greek choreographer, it will bring a British show or something like that and it will try in many ways to open the horizons of a younger audience”.

All agree that the performances Stegi hosts have a level of quality and they respect the spectator, but they disagree on if these performances always reach a good artistic result. Stkh2 believes they don't, while Stkh1 mentions:

“People, in general, have associated Stegi with quality. They are excited they went to Stegi, not necessarily excited with what they attended. And that comes from good branding”.

Nevertheless, Stkh4 says:

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<sup>183</sup> Constantine Peter Cavafy was a Greek poet (1863-1933) and Onassis Stegi has digitised a big amount of his archival documents (<https://www.onassis.org/initiatives/cavafy-archive>).



“I like Stegi’s cultural agenda much. I have attended spectacles that were good, and I have attended others that were very good. I have also felt the time of attendance that I dislike something, but after 5-10 days I decided it was amazing. I like this with Stegi, it pulls you by the hair, and I think that's good, so I don’t mind at all going there to attend something for which I even have the impression that I will not like it”.

Stkh2 and 4 characterise Stegi’s products as risky. But, the most important fact for Stkh4 is that even though it is an organisation that is funded by Onassis Foundation, the choices it makes for the cultural products it presents are a success. She mentions:

“Even if it can pay for 50 failures a year, it cannot survive with 50 failures a year, so there is a lot of pressure for them as well. Hence, in reality, whether you are a cultural space with financial capital that you want to have a cultural impact or not, the concept of risk remains the same because apart from the financial income that you will have or will not have, each show builds the reputation of the next and the next one. So the exchange is not just purely financial. If Onassis starts to make one failure after another, yes they will have money, but they will also bear the cost of failure”.

It is interesting to pay attention to Stkh1’s opinion regarding the international products of Stegi. She considers it very important that they are hosting great valuable work from abroad and have introduced to the Greek audience very interesting things that people would not have the opportunity to attend if they do not travel. Additionally, in terms of content, she feels that there is variety. Simultaneously, Stkh4 states the below:

“I find its agenda extremely interesting, but I am not an expert. I know that it has brought me in contact with things that shook me, which I appreciate”.

In all stakeholders’ minds, Stegi deals mainly with theatre. Stkh3 notes: “I connect it mainly to theatre but it is also a space where people can express themselves”. Stakeholders though also mention dance performances, music, as well as exhibitions. In fact, Stkh4 mentions that because Stegi has no outdoor space, decided during the pandemic to open up to outdoor spaces, like parks, and presents its exhibitions or some other products over there. She adds: “I really liked this extroversion and the boldness with which they approached it”.

Regarding the duration of its spectacles, which is short by default, participants express the opinion that it is part of its strategy and something that creates excitement and anticipation in audiences. Stkh1 describes it as a “Delicatessen of art” pointing out the below:

“I remember wanting to attend something at Stegi and I had lost it because I lost the presale. This thing repulses me”.

It is true that this is something that also the participants of focus groups of this research dislike and complain about. It seems though that except for the duration of its spectacles, the bombarding and long in-advance advertisement of the products is also something that creates anticipation in audiences. Regarding the expression that Stkh1 uses “Delicatessen of art”, it is a quite flattering and descriptive characterisation, as it presents Stegi as an organisation that presents high-quality spectacles, in small quantities.

We could cluster in two tables, all the key concepts stakeholders used about Stegi’s cultural agenda content (Table 45), as well as duration (Table 46). Having these tables, in the last chapter of the thesis where conclusions and discussion take place, we can compare stakeholders’ key concepts to consumers’ key concepts, which were mentioned in the previous chapter, the analysis of focus groups.

Key concepts stakeholders use for Stegi's cultural agenda	
Diverse	Alternative, non-mainstream
Risky	Non-commercial
Progressive	Quality content
Quite massive spectacles	Educational
Extremely innovative	Elitist, avant-garde
Modern	Hypermodern
Post-modern	Tries to relentlessly impress the audience
Fill in gaps in the Greek cultural market	Challenging
Extreme	Difficult
Diverse	Respectful towards the spectator
International	Presents the different perspective
Sensational	

Table 45. Stakeholder's Key Concepts for Stegi's Cultural Agenda

<b>Duration of spectacles</b>
Too fast show rotation
Exciting
Creates anticipation
Delicatessen of art

Table 46. Stakeholder's Key Concepts for the Duration of Stegi's Spectacles

### 8.3. Stakeholders' Perceptions of Stegi's Communication Strategies

The general opinion of stakeholders about the communication strategies of Onassis Stegi is that the organisation outperforms other cultural organizations in terms of advertising and its communication is aggressive. Stkh2 says:

"Its policy in the field of advertising is very strong, I think it may be the strongest organization. You see it and hear it everywhere, sometimes its advertisement is bombarding, and this is linked also to the budget they can spend on advertising".

Stkh1 comments on it in a harsher way:

"Stegi's communication is not only aggressive, but I am also noticing an annoying ad storm. Nevertheless, they achieve their purpose, the message is transmitted and imprinted; there is no chance that someone has missed it. They are successful and they affect the audience".

They all believe that Stegi is everywhere in terms of communication, but Stkh1 and 2 approach it in a different way than Stkh3 and 4. Stkh1 says:

“Its campaigns shout. With this communication it is as if it gives no room to other cultural organisations to exist”.

Stkh3 believes that Stegi communicates not only through advertisement but also through its statements and its position on certain things. He says:

“While driving and passing by its building I can see their statements on the facet of the building, statements that usually express their opinion on certain social issues”.

He also claims that Stegi is a pioneer and it runs innovative campaigns, which are not always spot on, but as he mentions none can have 100% successful creative execution. Stkh3 adds:

“I meet a lot of posters in public transportation, bus stops, tube, etc. They are everywhere I would say; I pay attention to their campaigns and I remember them. It has a special communication strategy, and it stands out, especially for its outdoor campaigns. In general, I like its campaigns a lot and their editions are excellent, so I get all their booklets from the foyer, which I will never browse, but just because they are such beautiful objects; on the second level I appreciate them even more because they have spent money with printers, with stationery, etc. to make these editions. They are doing an excellent job”.

Stkh3, among the rest, says, he appreciates the fact that Stegi remains faithful to some traditions, to habits of previous decades, even though the times are changing with great speed, and even though the organization is completely involved in the new era we are going through. His viewpoint can be attributed to his personal experiences which are also related to his age.

Stkh4, doing a more in-depth analysis as a professional, considers that Stegi uses communication practices depending on each product. It does not have a specific communication style that applies everywhere, no matter what. The choices it makes in communication are depending on the project/product each time. She states:

“For instance, when it hosts an innovative but simultaneously mainstream or commercial project that targets a broader audience, it will open up its communication; that is the communication will be massive in a good way, not only to fill the auditorium or cover the production costs but also because Stegi promises people something that is not the typical product they will ever find on a Greek theatre stage. In a nutshell, its communication strategies are related to the product itself”.

At this point, we notice a conflict of opinions, because many consumers and stakeholders until now have expressed the opinion that Stegi is elitist in multiple ways. But, Stkh3 believes that Stegi does not

exclude anybody and is not elitist at all; its communication messages are inclusive. He justifies his opposition:

“They will motivate you to visit it and get an idea of what is happening outside, what art can offer today or what possibilities there are”.

He also claims that even if you did not understand its product, Stegi gives you the impression the only it wants is to give people the opportunity to see something different and new. He adds:

“I think Stegi is very down to earth and very friendly. Its campaigns will attract your attention if you belong to its audience, an audience that attends culture and especially theatre”.

He mentions though that its product is more targeted by default. Nevertheless, both Stkh3 and 4 believe that Stegi states that its product is quite different, but at the same time welcomes everybody to experience it. Stkh4 says characteristically:

“Onassis Stegi is addressing a much wider audience, but also an audience that has traditionally never entered mainstream art venues”.

But, Stkh1 and 2 seem to disagree on that. They believe that Stegi and its communication are elitist and not easily understandable by everyone. Contrary to Stkh3 and 4, they frequently use the word “elitist”, and they express the opinion that Stegi’s products target specific audiences. They both believe that the educational level of its audience is high. Stkh2 notes:

“It seems to me they target specific target groups, experienced consumers with high educational level; they are not necessarily experts but they are people who generally attend theatre”.

Asking the stakeholders about Stegi’s campaigns on several mediums, each one seems to have a favourite medium where he or she encounters Stegi’s communications messages. Overall though, the outdoor and radio campaigns prevail. Stkh3 says:

“I don’t remember the radio campaigns of Stegi. They are not imprinted in my mind. The campaigns that attract me are mostly the outdoor ones, at bus stations or in the street. This is my medium anyway, that is paying attention to advertisements while I am driving. I am not reading magazines, I am not watching TV. And although I am following Stegi on social media, their campaigns over there are not imprinted in my mind”.

Stkh4 remembers Stegi’s campaigns on the tube and radio. She notes:

“Social media is not very representative because I follow the organisation, so it makes a lot of sense for me to be exposed at least once in a while, but the frequency is determined by social

media, so it is completely useless to talk about algorithms. Additionally, I am subscribed to their newsletters”.

Stkh2 mentions:

“I am not using public transportation much but I am encountering Stegi’s outdoor campaigns usually in the bus stops while I am driving or walking. I also hear a lot of its spots on the radio- Pepper Radio is flooded by them. But I also encounter many things related to Stegi on TV, such as spots and presentations of some artists, and definitely online on websites like Lifo, Athensvoice, Propaganda, in.gr, Vima, Nea, Culturenow, Elculture”.

Stkh1 adds:

“I meet a lot of web banners and online advertising about Stegi; I am also coming across many articles regarding Stegi’s products. But radio is the medium flooded by its communication messages, and this is annoying sometimes”.

Stkh2 express the interesting opinion that Stegi’s campaigns are sometimes confusing or fuzzy for the average audience and not only. She claims, they move in the context of Stegi’s particularity, which excites the imagination. Stkh2 adds:

“It all works through the challenge, but the message reaches the audience one way or another”.

Nevertheless, she continues mentioning that sometimes its campaigns create high expectations:

“My only question is if in the end, what you are going to attend at Stegi, will have as much artistic value as you would expect. It has definitely been communicated to the audience, but many times you come out of a show and you are more in the mood to discuss than to admire what you saw; it is more a field of controversy. I think that Stegi finally bets on the controversy, it seems that this is its goal. It supports extreme artistic creation”.

Stkh4 believes that the style of Stegi’s communication messages comes from its identity:

“Onassis Stegi tries to open a bridge with audiences that would not enter this space under normal circumstances, so, happily without parroting, it manages to touch them in terms of language and style. It maintains a modern-contemporary youth style in which, however, it never sacrifices poetry. It always has quality and aesthetic value”.

In other words, Stkh2 and 4 support that as consumers have different perspectives on the spectacles they attend at Stegi and they need to discuss them, in the same way, they comprehend differently the campaigns of the organisation. This happens not only because the campaigns are artistic, hence they

can be translated differently by the audiences, but also because the organisation itself pursues controversy.

All stakeholders believe that Stegi's communication has a clear identity and that its campaigns are of high aesthetics. Specifically, Stkh1 says:

"I have been impressed by their graphics and their aesthetics, I think it stands out. That is, I can see a banner and not notice the logo Onassis Stegi at that time, but I understand that it is from Stegi; this means it has a clear identity".

While Stkh4 adds:

"Stegi's radio spots not only have a strong identity. But this did not happen overnight; it happened years later, when its team got the experience through trial and error, built up the identity and reached the level they are today".

The above opinion is very interesting as it confirms what everybody knows from life experience. Onassis Stegi did not reach this high level of campaign performance overnight; it definitely did mistakes and still does, but it has had a progressive course over the years. One could claim that the most important element of its campaigns is the clear and strong identity. Stakeholders are in general very positive towards Stegi's communication strategies, using respectively positive words about its campaigns, such as "impressive", "stands out", "outperforms" etc.

Regarding the branding of the organisation, Stkh3 claims that Stegi has both product and brand campaigns; in product ones, it promotes the performances, exhibitions, etc., while in brand ones it promotes its missions through its actions, which are considered product as well. They might express it in different ways but it seems that Stkh3 and 4 opinions align regarding the brand of Onassis Stegi. Stkh4 claims that Stegi promotes its brand through its products, actions, and statements on social issues: "You get an image for Stegi by putting the puzzle pieces of its actions and missions together". However, she adds at the end that Stegi does not necessarily have a communication strategy for itself as a brand nowadays:

"Stegi, 9 out of 10 times, communicates to promote one of its products, instead of promoting its brand".

She claims that Stegi invested in branding, mainly through PR instead of advertisement, when it was founded, or at least the first years after its establishment, mostly for people to get acquainted with what they are and what they do. At that time they sought publicity for an audience, but since then they have not spoken much about themselves; they speak through the products. At this point, we notice an opinion clash between stakeholders regarding Stegi's branding. Stkh2 states:

“I generally think that what is projected more via its communication is the brand than the products. It is clear to me that the brand is always above any product or action”.

Stkh1 holds the same opinion. She believes that the brand- Onassis Stegi- always prevails:

“When you see the banners you will pay attention to Onassis Stegi and not to the spectacles it hosts”.

In terms of information, it seems that all the stakeholders get satisfactory information for all of Stegi’s products and actions through its advertising and communication. Stkh1 adds:

“Stegi has well-composed press releases and good media relations, so third-party websites present a clear picture of the organisation and its products”.

Interesting enough is what Stkh3 mentions:

“The information I get from Stegi’s campaigns is often disruptive, like the products it chooses to present”.

In more detail, commenting on the media office of Onassis Stegi, the stakeholders believe that the information it provides is quite good, but as Stkh1 and 2 say they never had a close relationship with its media officers. They are not claiming though that Stegi doesn’t have good media relations, just it didn’t happen to them to have a close relationship with its media office. Stkh1 adds:

“Stegi is very picky or elitist even with media and journalists, and this might be the reason why I was never so close to them. If you ask another journalist or producer, they might tell you they have great media relations. I am not on their list of contacts but I never sought it. The information reaches me without coming to my e-mail. It reaches me very easily through their ads”.

It is very important and interesting that although Stkh1 is not close enough to Stegi’s media office, she fully accepts that information about the organisation reaches her anyway. This is a success for Stegi’s communication.

Stkh2 mentions she is receiving its press releases as a journalist, from which, by the way, she gets the information she needs. The same happens to her browsing Stegi’s website. Stkh2:

“As a journalist, I get enough information from the website, but I can always address the media office to get any extra information I need”.

Stkh1 agrees with that adding that its website has a clear identity and follows the aesthetics of its communication policy; very specific, very intense, one that is imprinted.



Finally, Stkh2 expresses an opinion about Stegi's loyalty programs. She appreciates them and finds them interesting, quite inclusive and with many advantages: "I have thought of being an OCC Friend many times. It hasn't happened yet".

To sum up, stakeholders seem to agree on many points regarding Stegi's communication strategies. They all think its policy aligns with its identity and missions in one or another way. They claim that Stegi's communication stands out and it moves on the axes of successful and aggressive policy. Moreover, they notice Stegi has a resounding presence. Nevertheless, it would be useful to see what experts believe about any room for improvement. It is certain that in professional environments these people are moving, what Stegi hosts and presents is a matter of discussion. It is discussed as a progressive cultural organization and it is considered a good example both in terms of the product it creates and in terms of the way it chooses to communicate. Stkh4 believes that it works more on the communication side instead of marketing. She believes:

"Its brand for the time being works well, it can open up more, but it works well. It will probably need though to adapt to changes that will occur in the coming years".

Stkh2 agrees with that. Stkh1 mentions something that was also clear from the analysis of focus groups, as well as the analysis of Stegi's communication policy:

"It used to have a gap in its communication crisis toolkit but nowadays it has been improved a lot".

She also believes it is a multifarious organisation and it has completely different ways of reacting and preventing each of the issues that come up. Stkh2 expresses the opinion that for a large portion of journalists who deal with culture, Stegi is considered a must. "The same happens with artists; it is considered prestigious to be assigned something by Stegi", she says, and she is the only one who expressed this opinion during this research; there were some participants though, consumers (F27) and stakeholders (Stkh1), who connected the consumption at Stegi with prestige. In all cases though, the connotation "prestige" or "prestigious" has been created through successful branding.

Both Stkh2 and 3 state clearly that Stegi fills a gap in culture with its cultural programming. Stkh2 says:

"One could suggest that Stegi's communication messages should be simpler, more understandable and less elitist, but I am not sure at all that this would work for Stegi. For the agenda it has, it is making appropriate and very successful communication. Its agenda would have to change in order to reach a larger audience. But in essence, this is not needed, because Stegi fills a gap in culture with its cultural programming. Maybe it could try some experiments,

2 or 3 different things, but for now, I notice that its mission and communication go hand in hand clearly and successfully”.

Finally, Stkh1 notes:

“I wouldn’t say it can change much as there is a line running throughout the body of the organisation, from top to bottom, and it is executed properly. The only thing I would suggest is to take care of its relationship with the audiences, consumers and journalists; it can continuously ask for feedback from them, so it can evolve, correcting any failures”.

## SECTION III – CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES BEYOND

## 9. Chapter 9\_Conclusions

This chapter presents the conclusions of this research, combined with theory, previous research, Onassis Stegi’s practices, and the researcher’s perspective. There are two main research objectives, divided into secondary objectives and research questions, and along with conclusions, they will be all summarised in a table at the beginning of the chapter. Afterwards, the conclusions of this research will be approached in a holistic way that will lead to the expected/long-awaited discussion. This means that the narration will be divided into two sections, motivations of consumers and the 4Ps of marketing. The decision was taken because the two aforementioned sections are connected in an organic way. “Understanding the motives for cultural consumption enables policy makers as well as marketers to design more effective strategies” (Manolika et al., 2015, p. 1). Therefore, I will discuss the conclusions firstly on the motives of the consumers for cultural consumption, and then on the marketing mix strategies. The latter conclusion will be developed based on what theory suggests, what Onassis Stegi applies, and how audiences perceive them; additionally, a cross-cut between consumers and stakeholders will be developed. In a similar way, the main perceptions of consumers about the importance of marketing mix tools (4Ps) of cultural organisations, in general, will be discussed. The discussion regarding the motivations will be based only on what the literature mentions, combined with the results detected from the focus group research with the consumers of Onassis Stegi. The main motivations of consumers found in this research will be noted and related to previous research. To conclude this thesis, what it offered to the specific scientific field will be mentioned, suggesting new lines of research that might continue this research project.

### 9.1. Summary of results

The main objectives of this research, divided into secondary objectives and research questions, as well as the conclusions that are derived, are all structured in the detailed below table (Table 47).

MAIN RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	Secondary Objectives	Research Questions	Conclusions
A- Improve understanding of the impact of arts marketing on cultural consumption	A1- Comprehend the marketing mix tools (4Ps) that Onassis Stegi applies	RQA1a- What are the product, price and place strategies OCC uses?	CA1- Onassis Stegi has a strong communication and marketing team, uses a whole range of strategies, devotes a high budget to communication, and its marketing strategies comply with the successful arts marketing strategies that the theory suggests. The clear missions of the organisation are expressed via its marketing policies.
		RQA1b- What are the communication strategies (4 <sup>th</sup> P) OCC uses to promote its cultural programming and the brand of Onassis Stegi itself?	
	A2- Improve knowledge on how the 4Ps of a cultural organisation affect	RQA2a- Do the product, price and place influence audiences during their	CA2- The product of a cultural organisation plays a dominant role in audiences’ consumption. The ticket price affects cultural consumption only if the latter is high or if

	audiences' cultural consumption, including the decision-making process that leads to it.	decision-making process to consume arts? RQA2b- How do the communication strategies (4 <sup>th</sup> P) of a cultural organisation affect audiences' decision-making process for cultural consumption?	the consumers are very young with lower incomes. The same target group can be affected by the commercial location of an organisation and the expenses to reach the venue. The majority though is not affected by the commercial location as much as by the performance itself. Finally, the communication messages in general help consumers to form an opinion about a cultural organisation, while the advertising messages in particular act more as reminders to them.
B-Study attitudes, motivations and perceptions of Onassis Stegi's audiences	B1- Comprehend the motivations of Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture in general	RQB1- What motivates Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture?	CB1- The main motivation of Stegi's consumers to attend a cultural spectacle is to get stimuli, socialise or entertain themselves, while the deciding factors can be the performance's content, the performance's contributors or the cultural organisation. Confirming theory, a motivational conflict and multiple motivations at the same time were noted.
	B2- Understand the opinion of OCC's consumers about the product, price and place strategies of Onassis Stegi	RQB2- How the product, price and place of OCC are perceived by consumers?	CB2- Almost all the consumers identify the cultural agenda of Stegi with theatre, and characterise its products as pioneer, contemporary, diverse and risky. All endorse and appreciate Stegi's pricing policies, and choose its online distribution of tickets, complaining though that Stegi's spectacles are very often sold-out. Regarding the physical setting of Stegi- where the experience takes place-, there is a controversy among participants. Some consider the location of the venues as central and easily accessible, while others consider a disadvantage the fact it is located on a bustling boulevard and away from the trunk of the city.
	B3- Gain knowledge of the opinion of Onassis Stegi's consumers regarding the organisation's communication strategies	RQB3- How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by consumers?	CB3- Consumers consider the radio and outdoor campaigns of the organisation very strong, with nice aesthetics and content that intrigues them. Nevertheless, some consider the content misleading or difficult to be understood. The majority approves the full spectrum of Stegi's communication strategies, such as social media, e-mail marketing, media relations, loyalty programs, etc. There is a controversy between participants regarding the fact that Stegi expresses clearly its opinion on certain social issues. Finally, some perceive the communication messages of Stegi as incompatible with the perceived real identity of the organisation.
	B4- Comprehend the link between the perceptions of OCC's consumers and their consumption of OCC's products	RQB4- How consumers' perceptions affect their consumption behaviour regarding Onassis Stegi's products?	CB4- The pricing strategies of the organisation boost consumers' consumption of Stegi's cultural products. The place of the organisation plays a neutral role in their cultural consumption. On the one hand, the perceptions of consumers about Stegi's products (quality, diversity, innovation, etc.), combined with massive media coverage, strengthen the cultural consumption. On the other hand, the unmet expectations of the attendees, in combination with the difficult or unclear messages of the communication messages, weaken the consumption. Nevertheless, consumers keep trusting and giving second chances to Stegi's products, and the short life-cycle, as well as the variety of its products help on that.

	B5- Explore the opinion of stakeholders regarding Onassis Stegi's cultural product and communication strategies, and link it to consumers' opinion	RQB5a- How the product of Onassis Stegi is perceived by stakeholders?	<p>CB5- Stakeholders approve and appreciate Stegi's product, emphasising on its international character, as well as on the fact it fills the gaps of the Greek cultural market. They seem to hold a more open-minded perspective than consumers. Additionally, they consider Stegi has built robust communication strategies during its years of function and a strong branding; they describe its communication aggressive, with advertising that outperforms other cultural organizations in national level. Both consumers and stakeholders agree on the cases where Stegi's communication messages are misleading, creating false expectations.</p> <p>Both groups believe Stegi is pioneer, innovative, and diverse, and theatre is its prevailing art genre. They also perceive the content of Stegi's cultural agenda in a similar way. Nevertheless, contrary to stakeholders, consumers use also few negative words about it (e.g. disappointing, incomprehensible), as well as about Stegi's website. Both groups move on the same line, considering Stegi's communication strategies successful, aggressive, with high aesthetics, clear identity and impressive graphics; attributing though a double meaning to words like "aggressive". Finally, both groups give positive feedback on the quantity and accuracy of information Stegi provides to audiences. Overall, stakeholders notice and mention details that consumers do not.</p>
		RQB5b- How the communication strategies of OCC are perceived by stakeholders?	
		RQB5c- What are the similarities and differences between consumers' and stakeholders' perceptions on Stegi's products and communication strategies?	

Table 47. Research Objectives and Conclusions

## 9.2. Consumers' motivations

Part of the results of this research confirms some of the basic needs that lead to consumption. These are the need for pleasure, companionship, the need for information, for variety, the need to possess (knowledge in this case), plus safety and physiological needs which are though secondary. The main reason why most of the times is to get stimuli, socialise or entertain themselves, while the deciding factors (need priorities) can be the performance's content, the performance's contributors or the cultural organisation. We can obviously note though a motivational conflict and multiple motivations at the same time (Slater, 2007), as well as that cultural consumption can cover more than one needs. Based on participants' motivations for cultural consumption, this research resulted in the following groups of consumers: Stimuli Seekers, Socialisers, Art Seekers, Entertainers, Fans (Groupies), Education Seekers (Chapter 7.1). The group to which a consumer belongs can be distinguished by the hierarchy of motivations of each consumer, and their choice of the salient and determinant attributes of cultural products and brands. I would claim that the cultural consumption with increased quality is usually attributed to art seekers and lonely escapists.

Additionally, distorted or unconscious motivations were noticed, as well as that motives are not stagnant (Blackwell et al., 2001; McGuire, 1976). In the context of unconscious and multiple motivations, I would claim that consumers are seeking for experiences, and according to Pine and

Gilmore (1999), the experience is met where the realms of aesthetics, escapism, education and entertainment overlap.

The principle motivations of Cooper and Tower (1992) are also confirmed: self-actualisation, psychological needs, personal development, social needs and stimulation. Nevertheless, fieldwork slightly conflicts with the literature review, where is mentioned that needs for arts consumption are not related or little related to arts. This research's results show that some participants have needs related to arts; these are the discerning connoisseurs and not the majority of attenders that looks for temporary entertainment. The results though reassure also needs which are not related to arts like entertainment, self-improving, trendsetters, lonely escapists, inspiration/sensation, and social attenders.

The bibliography on theatre and performing arts which mentions as motivations: escapism and entertainment, edutainment, personal enrichment, social hedonism, satisfaction of deep-set values, value for money and time, and service-related elements, as well as the literature on other art forms which mentions as motivations the shared experience and the quality time with friends and family, are also confirmed.

This research agrees to a certain extent with Walmsley's (2010) research that mentions as the main motivations for theatre attendance the pursuit of emotional experiences and impact, which is unbreakable connected to escapism, and the need for edutainment. Other research until 2010 had prioritised escapism, learning, enhanced socialisation and fun, but Walmsley's (2010) results clash with them.

This research agrees with Botti (2000) that, unlike other forms of consumption, art consumption is based more on emotional aspects, and disagrees partly with Ciceo (2012), who claims that social and esteem needs are the main reasons for attending live performing arts.

Finally, according to Manolika's et al. (2015) literature review, the core motives for cultural consumption are socialisation, family togetherness, escape and novelty. Not in the same order and not with the same intensity, but on the same central axis, the cultural audience that was investigated in focus groups for the execution of this research, mentions as motivations for cultural consumption the stimuli, which can be connected to the novelty, the socialisation, the entertainment that might come from family togetherness, which in its turn co-exists with socialisation; finally, escapism is mentioned as a motive from the participants.

Therefore, cultural organisations should always listen to their consumers' needs and motives. This can be achieved/accomplished through market research; this thesis includes parts of market research and can be considered or used as a handbook/manual for cultural consumers' motivations. After the

awareness, the handling of marketing strategies comes. It should be done in a way that respects consumers' needs and motives, the organisation's missions, objectives, and financial capacity/resources. Arts organisations should create a trusted brand image, based on the intention, but also the execution, to offer their audiences quality spectacles, as well as services. The intention pre-exists the execution, but implementation covers the intention. This means that if the cultural product and/or the cultural experience that will satisfy the needs and motives of consumers does not exist, an attempt to achieve successful marketing will fail. It seems that Onassis Stegi has found the balance between the experiences it offers and the marketing strategies it uses (Product, Price, Place, Promotion). To offer a good/fair experience doesn't mean that all parts should be excellent; it means that overall the consumer is satisfied, even if there were deficiencies in some of the points, and the arts organisation convinces her/him that is committed to striving to improve, respecting audiences' needs.

### 9.3. Marketing Strategies

While the previous section comments mainly on the secondary objective B1: *Comprehend the motivations of Onassis Stegi's consumers to consume culture in general*, this section comments on the rest of this research's objectives in a combined way. After having understood the motives for cultural consumption, here I discuss Onassis Stegi's audiences' perceptions about the marketing strategies of the specific cultural organisation and not only, and the effect of these perceptions on consumers' cultural consumption. In the meantime, the crosscut of some research questions that the researcher considers interesting to crosscut will be applied.

As a part of the focus group, all the participants of this research, consumers and stakeholders, were asked what is the first word that comes to their mind when they hear the word "Stegi". In chapter 7, I clustered in a table all the concepts mentioned by the consumers, while in chapter 8, I mentioned in the body text all the words and concepts used by the stakeholders. Below, we can check the comparison table between consumers and stakeholders.

How do consumers identify Stegi?	How do stakeholders identify Stegi?
Pioneer	Pioneer, Avant-garde
Innovative	Innovative
Modern, contemporary	Foreign productions
Diverse, variety	Diversity
Theatre, dance	Inclusion
Sophisticated, modernist spectacles	Elitist
Multi-use art space	Large, impressive theatrical stage



Onassis	Money
Quality	A huge building on Syggrou Avenue
Pluralism	Trademark: ALL WE HAVE IS WORDS, ALL WE HAVE IS WORLDS
Alternative, non-conventional	Impersonal
	Shiny
	Stylised

Table 48. Comparison Table 1

The words in yellow are the only ones in common. This happens mainly because stakeholders are more detailed and descriptive. When they hear the word “Stegi”, through memories, they create whole images in their minds. It seems like they depict physically the organisation, while consumers seem to focus on memories related to the idea of Onassis Stegi.

### 9.3.1. Product

As mentioned in the focus groups’ analysis, the cultural product plays the most important role in the decision-making of participants for cultural consumption. According to theory, the cultural product is composed of the artistic product, the related services, the spin-off products and the consumer’s experience of the product, which includes also the value the consumers will attribute to it. In arts, the artistic work is the central product and the other three aspects revolve around it. For the consumers of this research, the product is translated to the content of the performance and the performance’s contributors (actors and directors). In decision-making, the product is followed by the specific need of the consumer, at a specific time. Colbert (2012) points out that some people may attend a performance for the central product (artistic show) and others for the experience, while Kotler & Scheff (1997) mention that in performing arts organisations, consumers seek experiences. I believe in the case of Onassis Stegi’s audiences, the majority are seeking experiences. In this way we can also explain, why although some of them were disappointed with some spectacles at Stegi, they keep visiting it, believing that even if they don’t like at the end the core product, they always have to take several positive things from attendance at Stegi. Moreover, Stegi is always offering the augmented product (e.g. post-performance lectures), especially to loyal customers, and this enhances the experience (Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

This research showed that the relationship of consumers with Stegi derives mainly from the particular experiences the organisation offers through its product. In the results section (Chapter 7) I likened this relationship to a solar spectrum, with the ends being haters and lovers, and the in-betweens explorers and waverers/indecisive. To start with, as Stegi is by default a risky and edgy cultural organisation, with an absolute focus on contemporary art, these mixed feelings from consumers’ side are not a

surprise. Furthermore, one could even claim that these mixed feelings are the initial objective of Stegi. In *Lovers* belongs someone who appreciates Stegi's cultural agenda. *Waverer* is the person who has not decided yet if Stegi's cultural agenda is worthy or not, but still give it a chance. *Explorers* are those who know Stegi's agenda doesn't suit them, but the diversity it offers, as well as Stegi's passion for experimentation suit them. Finally, *Haters* can be called someone who usually disapproves of Stegi's cultural agenda, due to past disappointing experiences. Therefore, Stegi should pay special attention firstly to the group of haters that seems to have lost faith in Stegi's cultural product. May the initial objective of the organisation is to be provocative through its cultural choices, but in this case, it has lost control over this group of people, the haters. Additionally, Stegi's consumers support that the organisation's cultural agenda tackles important social issues, but the organisation itself is not really affected by these issues. Hence, Stegi should handle the accusation of hypocrisy by its consumers.

Cultural product is intangible, perishable, inseparable from its producer and variable in its characteristics (circumstantial dimension); hence, cultural organisations provide credence or experience goods, and the audience invests emotionally in these goods (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012; Coleman et al., 2019; Kirchner et al., 2007; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Pedersen et al., 2017; Rentschler et al., 2002; Simkin, 2000). It is obvious that the marketing and communication department of Stegi tackles the intangibility and perishability of cultural products by referring to concrete symbols of quality, having the quality of brochures, a character of facilities ("atmospherics") and the like, using advance publicity, and promoting subscription. Moreover, Stegi, to control the inseparability of products from their producers, tries to improve the experience by focusing on customer service (customer-oriented marketing) which is something more stable and can counterbalance a not-so-good day of the performance. Variability of cultural products can be faced again through well-trained personnel. All consumers seem to be very satisfied with Stegi's customer service. Add-on variability is customer involvement and expectations, which can also affect drastically the experience. To minimize this, marketers should either educate and inform the consumers or make their expectations more realistic (market more accurately the plays and the services) or target better (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). It seems that Stegi tries to educate and inform consumers about its products, but many times it creates high expectations for audiences, as the latter mention.

The product adoption process is linked to the five adopter profiles: early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (or else: innovators, early adaptors, deliberate, sceptical, laggards) (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). These categories can be also connected to the product's life cycle (introduction, growth, maturity, and decline), as for example during the introduction phase, the early adopters might be the only purchasers, or during the decline phase, the laggards will be the only

ones to consume (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Francois Colbert, 2012; Gordon, 2011; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997). The five classifications of people regarding innovation that were mentioned above reflect the tendency of social segments to adopt new ideas or products (Hill et al., 1995). For example, Blackwell et al. (2001) mention that “highly innovative consumers attach more importance to stimulation, creativity, and curiosity” (p.37). The innovators but also the early adaptors can function as intermediaries and replace the arts organisation in the exchange with the customer, through viral marketing; of course, these people might be also the ones that possess Bourdieu’s cultural capital (opinion leaders). Hill et al. (1995) support that innovation is at the heart of the arts, and consider as a mission of arts organisations to always try to involve their audiences in new areas and art products (p.132). Onassis Stegi manages cleverly the life cycle of its products, which are prototypical and of limited duration. Hence, the product passes through introduction and growth, but there is no time to reach maturity and decline. Consumers are aware of this short life cycle and hurry to attend Stegi’s spectacles. Although some consumers may complain about the short duration of cultural products, as they need to rush to find tickets -if they finally manage to, in terms of strategy, more people attend the spectacles, which are usually sold out, and consumers have always something new to attend at the organisation, so they become repeaters or loyal customers (e.g. OCC Friends). In this way, the early adopters and the early majority are usually the consumers, while the late majority might be the people who complain they cannot find tickets, and laggards will probably never attend Stegi’s performances, as the products do not reach the decline phase. Hence, although there are some complaints from consumers, it is positive that Onassis Stegi follows a clear strategy and insists on it, supporting products with short life-cycle, and targeting people who are keen on constantly discovering new concepts and ideas through the prism of cultural products; nevertheless, they target only the highly innovative consumers, ‘ignoring’ the rest. Stakeholders agree on that, supporting that short life-cycle is part of Stegi’s strategy and creates excitement and anticipation. I would add here that bombarding and long-in-advance advertising of the products is also something that creates anticipation in audiences, plus it is a way to awaken the late majority. Besides, the duration of the performances at Stegi derives from and is in perfect harmony with the mission of the organisation, to form a cultural landscape for Greeks, to present as more projects as possible, to raise as more issues as possible, and give new perspectives, instead of acting as a for-profit organisation and host one of two block-busters all year round (Demetres Drivas, personal interview, 08/03/2019).

Although Onassis Stegi is dealing with a wide range of cultural fields, performing arts is the focus of this research, and regarding that, the organisation is devoted to contemporary dramaturgy, with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and experimental creations. It is interesting that Stegi is correlated to consumers’ minds primarily to its product and almost all consumers and all stakeholders identify the

cultural agenda of Stegi with theatre, disregarding or putting in second place the other actions of Stegi, with many even ignoring the existence of Stegi's festivals (5 per year). In general, Stegi's product is characterised by audiences, consumers and stakeholders, as diverse, innovative, modern and post-modern, something that comes in accordance with Stegi's intentions. Stakeholders identify Stegi with quality. Consumers though consider it also as difficult and risky, with some stakeholders agreeing, and many have attended spectacles they didn't like. In contrast to stakeholders, consumers have used a strong, negative word, "disappointing", as well as the term "incomprehensible". Stakeholders were limited to the words "difficult", which cannot be considered necessarily negative, and "relentlessly"; the latter concerns the attempt of Stegi to impress its audiences and can be combined with the adjectives "extreme, challenging, sensational", which again are not considered necessarily negative. Therefore, the organisation's product is mainly considered risky/edgy, extreme/incomprehensible, and too modern/contemporary.

As theory mentions, the cultural product is a complex product in terms of whether the consumer will have the knowledge and the ability to appreciate it, such as an avant-garde production (Francois Colbert, 2012). They all come back though in one way or another, as Stegi has variety and always something new to offer. It is very important to say that the financial source of a cultural organisation plays a crucial role in the range, quality and origin of the cultural product the organisation can support. This means that the financial source is linked to the risks the organisation can take in relation to its cultural agenda. Beyond that stage though, the right execution of strategies can reduce or control the risk and lead to success, as repeated failures will lead to failure and quality products will build the reputation of the organisation. In repeated failures, the strong financial ability, like in Onassis Stegi's case, cannot prevent the failure of the organisation in the audiences' consciousness/mind, or at least, it cannot prevent it in long term. Arts organisations, to survive, should find the balance between satisfying their audiences and serving artistic vision (Cacovean et al., 2021; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Voss & Voss, 2000).

All audiences that are in the scope of this research (consumers and stakeholders) agree that Stegi offers people different perspectives and international products they do not have the chance to attend anywhere else. As stakeholders mention, Stegi discovers the gaps in the Greek cultural market and tries to fill them in. All participants in this research seem to appreciate this point, which derives from the fact that the artistic criteria are a priority for the shaping of the artistic agenda, as the Performing Arts Curator mentions (Katia Arfara, personal interview, 6/03/2019), plus, to offer another perspective is always the goal. Nevertheless, another important point that is brought up by few, is that through its cultural product-but obviously also through its communication-, few consumers and stakeholders characterise Stegi as an impersonal and distanced organisation. In fact, consumers are way stricter,

calling it disconnected from reality, and mentioning it pretends to care about social issues it deals with through its cultural products, but in reality, it does not. Nevertheless, the organisation claims that Stegi is “the stage on which the boundaries between science, art, society, education, learning and politics are renegotiated” (Onassis Stegi, 2019); the stage where “begins the conversation about what’s happening, what should be happening, what we’d like to see happening all over the world” (Onassis Stegi, 2019). Stegi states that through its cultural programming, it “speaks up, disagrees, advocates and takes a position regarding anything that stands in the way of freedom, democracy, life” (Onassis Stegi, 2019). Stegi enriches its artistic programming, hosting parallel or not activities such as educational workshops, conferences, presentations, conversations, and lectures; hence it tries to support what it stands for. But consumers are not convinced. I believe that in the first place, consumers' opinion is based on a prejudice regarding Stegi and its financial background that is connected to capitalism in consumers' mind, and can be solved, if Stegi considers it as a problem only through communication; it can be related to the cultural product only at the extend of niche and elitist products, but still, this is counterbalanced through a massive/broad communication.

Finally, the theory supports that the choice of the cultural products to be presented is usually done by the Artistic directors and the related key personnel, as audiences do not have the ‘skills’ (e.g. creativity, knowledge, etc.) to choose cultural products; additionally, they are usually trusting organisations for their choices (Voss & Voss, 2000). And indeed Stegi applies that, as the selection criteria of its artistic programming do not concern the preferences of the audiences. Nevertheless, Stegi’s audiences, which have been gradually shaped over the years, trust and support the organisation’s choices, and share with it the same curiosity. We can add here and combine it with the financial status of the organisation that the Campaign Manager of Onassis Stegi (Haris Giakoumakis) supports, contrary to the majority of cultural events in Greece that are more commercially oriented, Stegi’s products are educationally or culturally oriented (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 12/12/2018).

In chapters 7 and 8 we clustered in tables, all the key concepts consumers and stakeholders used about Stegi’s cultural agenda content, as well as about the duration of spectacles within the context of the agenda. Here, we will compare all these concepts.

To start with, both categories of research’s participants, consumers and stakeholders, consider theatre as the prevailing art genre that Stegi deals with. Thereafter, we notice many similarities in the way they perceive the content of its cultural agenda, a fact that I could say indicates how much clear Stegi is in the communication messages it sends out. Additionally, it has built up a character and it is consistent in it. In the below table (Table 49), the common key concepts that consumers and

stakeholders use for Stegi’s cultural agenda are highlighted in yellow. While in red, are highlighted the negative words each group used for the agenda.

Comparison Table of Key Concepts About Stegi’s Cultural Agenda	
Consumers	Stakeholders
Risky	Risky
Complicated	Difficult
Too modern/Too contemporary	Modern/Post-modern/Hypermodern
Diverse	Diverse
Different	Presents the different perspective
International	International
Elitist	Elitist, avant-garde
Alternative/Non-conventional	Alternative/Non-mainstream
Particular	Non-commercial
Remarkable	Quality content
Experimental	Extreme
Wide/broad	Fill in gaps in the Greek cultural market
Interesting	Challenging
Incomprehensible	Educational
Disappointing	Tries to relentlessly impress the audiences
	Progressive/Extremely innovative
	Sensational
	Respectful towards the spectator
	Quite massive spectacles

Table 49. Comparison Table 2

We observe firstly that, in contrast with stakeholders, consumers have used a strong, negative word, “disappointing”. Additionally, they have used the term “incomprehensible”. Stakeholders were limited to the words “difficult”, which cannot be considered necessarily negative, and “relentlessly”; the latter concerns the attempt of Stegi to impress its audiences and can be combined with the adjectives “extreme, challenging, sensational”, which again are not considered necessarily negative. Hence, the consumers are much stricter, while the stakeholders try to decode Stegi’s intentions. Furthermore, we notice that both groups consider Onassis Stegi’s cultural agenda as risky, complicated/difficult, too modern/too contemporary/modern/post-modern/hypermodern, diverse, different/presents different perspectives, international, elitist/ avant-garde, alternative/non-conventional/ non-mainstream.

Duration of spectacles for Consumers	Duration of spectacles for Stakeholders
short	Too fast show rotation
Fast-alteration	Exciting
annoying	Creates anticipation
stressful	Delicatessen of art
interesting	
Very satisfactory	

Table 50. Comparison Table 3

Regarding the duration of the spectacles, it seems again that the viewpoints do not differ. Above, a table that concentrates on words and phrases stakeholders and consumers use for the duration of Stegi's spectacles is presented (Table 50). Nevertheless, the stakeholders analyse Stegi's strategy and find the reasons that drive it, in an effort to justify and understand it. The consumers though react more spontaneously and they express their very personal perspectives (e.g. I like it or I don't). The interesting point is that some participants from both sides judge/find the policy or the fast alteration of spectacles as repulsive; this stems from the fact there is no time for audiences to attend some interesting spectacles Stegi hosts, plus it is very hard to find tickets, as many performances are sold out because of their short duration. Additionally, some people consider it stressful. Nevertheless, some have no issues with the short duration, in contrast, they are excited with it and they enjoy the frequent alternation of the shows, as it offers diversity and the option to visit Stegi very often, for different spectacles.

Finally, to comment on the overall marketing orientation of Onassis Stegi, we need to repeat that fiscal viability, therefore firm's performance will come from customer orientation, instead of product orientation that is mainly addressed to high-culture audiences (Andreasen, 1982; Holbrook & Robert, 1985; Voss & Voss, 2000). Stegi seems to follow the product orientation at some point, especially on performing arts; hence it is mainly addressed to high-culture audiences. It chooses subjects that matter the Greek and European society, but the artistic products presented are chosen mainly for their artistic content. It is not willing to change its agenda, but it chooses an audience that is keen on the selected art content and tries to satisfy its needs and wants on all other levels. This audience is usually the frequent theatregoers, who mostly represent the innovators, early adopters and opinion leaders. They are looking for creative new products and they trust the expertise of the organisation to choose the best and keep them current. Nevertheless, concerning some of Stegi's other products (e.g. lectures, seminars), these might be more customer oriented, in the sense that their content concern the audiences directly. Although Stegi is more toward the direction of an elitist or eclectic organisation, aspects of its marketing many times are more massive or they address a wide range of

audiences, which however is difficult to attract, due to its communication or product sophisticated content.

### 9.3.2. Price

According to theory, price includes the peripheral expenses, the effort to purchase a product (from the effort to buy it online, up to the physical effort of travelling to attend a performance or to find parking), the invested leisure time, the risk that needs or expectations will not be met (Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Kim & Tucker, 2016). Nevertheless, the effort to purchase a product overlap with the Place; in detail, the commercial location is linked to the physical effort of travelling to attend a performance or to find parking, and the distribution channels are linked to the convenience to buy the tickets (also online). Hence, the conclusions about the effort to purchase the product will be included in the Place conclusions. The majority of consumers identify price more with the ticket price itself, without considering the peripheral expenses, the invested leisure time and the risk of unmet needs and expectations. Therefore, the conclusions concern the sheer number of the ticket price. The fieldwork and its analysis showed that the ticket price of cultural events in general affects the decision-making of cultural consumption only when the cultural consumption is high and/or when the consumers are younger than 45 years old. When both variables are involved, then the ticket price impact index is highly increased. In the case of high cultural consumption, the risk of unmet expectations is involved and linked to product quality. The brand building definitely reduces the feeling of risk in making choices or taking decisions (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019)<sup>184</sup>.

Consumers' analysis confirms the theory of perceived value, which is "the uniqueness, fame, and symbolic value of an object may increase the price consumers are willing to pay" (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 20). In general, the price consumers are prepared to pay for a casual spectacle does not exceed 20 euros. Younger participants are also asking for student tickets. Additionally, participants of focus groups link the ticket price to the quality of the seating view. Consumers, to deal with the ticket price, choose to use the early bird offers, sacrifice or not the seating view, skip a cultural event, and/or evaluate alternatives based on price. Nevertheless, for special or unique experiences, price does not matter for the majority of participants. The peripheral expenses are considered only by a few younger consumers.

Onassis Stegi doesn't have a monotonous pricing policy, like many other organisations in Athens, but an enriched one. It has 7 categories of tickets, which contain many options for reduced tickets for

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<sup>184</sup> Some authors (Bernstein, 2007; Martinez et al., 2018) suggest to see even the venue as a brand, highlighting what makes it special or unique, or even what is its symbolic meaning.



several types of groups. Hence, the organisation chooses the dynamic pricing policy, which allows them to set different prices for the same product, depending on the consumers' segment in this case (Brida et al., 2013; Francois Colbert, 2012; Rentschler, 1998). The price objective in this case though is not revenue maximisation (dynamic pricing policy is usually suggested to maximise profits or surplus) but audience size maximisation, according to Andreassen & Kotler (2008) categorisation; Onassis Stegi succeeds in this, as its performances are usually sold-out. Colbert (2012) mentions the corporate image as one of the price objectives, where the biggest and most prestigious organization sets the highest price. Onassis Stegi seems not to bother about this aspect, as it keeps low prices building customer loyalty, and it is still considered a prestigious organisation by audiences. The price strategy they follow shows they want to open up the organisation and approach wider targets and project the image of an accessible organisation. Stegi considers the price the consumer is willing to pay, the competition- although it gives options of very cheap tickets, daring to be very competitive-, but it doesn't consider the cost of production, as usually its productions are very expensive and are funded by Onassis Foundation. Hence, the source of funding affects the pricing policy an organisation can choose to apply. Nevertheless, for all arts organisations, the gap between productivity and costs is ever-widening, and their total earned income covers about 50 or 60 per cent of the expenses, while several non-profit arts organisations "have historically charged less than their costs" (Andreassen & Kotler, 2008, p. 242). The money to cover all the costs and reach the break-even point will come from the sold tickets to the cashier (10-20% of income), the government, the private sector, and the partners (grants or subsidies) (Andreassen & Kotler, 2008; Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Weir, 2015; Zaharie, 2014). In Stegi's case, Onassis Foundation is usually playing simultaneously the roles of government, private sector and partners.

This strategy seems to be appreciated by consumers, who are in general satisfied by Stegi's pricing and approve of the fact it makes art accessible to everybody. Stegi's tickets have prices that consumers are willing to pay, which is why they characterise them as "fair, reasonable, affordable, and cheap". Although at the same time, they consider Stegi prestigious, with expensive productions. Additionally, consumers believe Stegi offers many options for discounted tickets, a policy that seems to encourage frequent cultural consumption. Consumers acknowledge that an important role in why Stegi can afford to keep the ticket prices low plays the fact it is a public benefit organisation, fully funded by Onassis Foundation.

### 9.3.3. Place

Kotler & Scheff (1997) describe Place as "the channels or access points through which the product is made available to the public", and they refer to variations in performing venues, ticket distribution and creative distribution concepts. For Colbert (2012) place includes several elements, with the main

ones the “distribution channels, physical distribution, and commercial location” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 22).

Physical constraints (or even perceived risks) such as hard seats, poor ventilation, etc. might disturb people’s comfort zone (Cooper & Tower, 1992; Kim & Tucker, 2016; Martinez et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the results of this research showed that the physical setting of cultural organisations’ venues can affect up to a certain degree the decision-making process of cultural consumption, but performance (product) prevails in this process. Younger consumers consider location as a deterrent when it is connected to pricing and peripheral expenses (e.g. taxi expenses to reach the venue); the age of these consumers is connected to their financial status.

Stegi works as a producer, intermediary and distributor, and this according to theory, affects also the variable of price and promotion (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Francois Colbert, 2012). The ticket distribution strategy of Stegi is selective, selected outlets are chosen to sell tickets (Kotler & Scheff, 1997), nevertheless, the majority of the consumers are not aware of the selected outlets, Public<sup>185</sup> and Ianos, and they use Stegi’s channels (cash desks, phone booking, website). It is obvious that the ticket purchase is mainly online, and in a few cases over the phone. In selective ticket distribution, the prospect will undertake some effort to find the cultural product or service and evaluate it (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008). Indeed, it seems some consumers complain about this effort, as the website from where they mainly book the tickets is complex, plus it asks to sign up in order to book a ticket; it is time-consuming for them, but Stegi seems to be determined regarding its strategy. Apart from the usability of online sales, consumers complain also about the sold-out tickets, which stems from the short duration (calendar-wise) of its products. It is worth mentioning here that 2-3 young participants note also that Stegi makes it hard to book a ticket for those who do not hold a credit card. Many Greek theatres in Athens, give the spectators the option to call and make a reservation without the need for pre-payment, but Stegi doesn’t offer that. According to me, this is reasonable, because it is a big organisation that needs to handle many spectacles at the same time, compared to a small Greek theatre, which has to deal only with one performance for the whole season.

Consumers in this research express opinions mainly about the commercial location, “the physical site where the product is bought or consumed” (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 216). Actually, the consumers focus on the site where the product is consumed, as the ticket purchase is mainly online. The physical

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<sup>185</sup> As mentioned in the analysis of Onassis Stegi, Public stores is the largest Greek chain of stores for technology and entertainment products, and I consider this collaboration as a good strategy, as many consumers find convenient the big stores from which they can buy different types of products (Blackwell et al, 2001). Nevertheless, it is obvious from consumers’ analysis that it is not well communicated by the organisation. This might happen because the main reason why Stegi collaborates with Public is because its provider (Ticketmaster) does since 2018, and not because there was ever personal interest in this collaboration from Stegi’s side.

setting where the experience takes place, or else the performance of the facility, affects the satisfaction levels of attendees, as it creates functional and emotional value for them; in other words, it affects significantly the cultural experience (Blackwell et al., 2001; Cooper & Tower, 1992; Kim & Tucker, 2016; Martinez et al., 2018). Regarding Stegi's physical setting, participants are divided on whether it is central, comfy, and advantageous or not. It seems to affect negatively the satisfaction levels of some attendees, as it creates the feeling of chaos and noise; this is because Stegi is located on a busy avenue. Nevertheless, they all appreciate and declare themselves satisfied by the ambient conditions, the space and its functionality, such as the venue size, the sound quality, the seating facilities and the view of the performance, describing Stegi as comfortable overall. Parking facilities are though a controversial issue, as some consider a parking facility the paid parking that Stegi offers (which costs by the way 5 euros for 3 hours and can be booked also online), while some others consider there is no parking facility, as the place around the organisation is crowded and they cannot find easy free parking. Consumers also talk about the relatively easy access to Stegi by public transportation (geographic proximity), although the majority access it by car. It is worth mentioning again here, that Stegi, occasionally, depending on the event, might charter minivans to transfer the public from the closest subway station. Additionally, some mention that the area where the organisation is located has no options for outings and is far from the trunk of the city (Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Kotler & Scheff, 1997). As many groups of consumers as there are, as many opinions there are. For instance, considering the consumers' groups based on motivations, we realise that entertainers and socialisers would ideally prefer cultural organisations with proximity to areas with vibrant nightlife, something that leaves indifferent the group of stimuli seekers. This will happen if we isolate the needs of each group, and do not involve the possibility of multiple motives at the same time.

On the contrary, Stegi's personnel believes that the organisation has been built on a strategic location and has created a cultural hub around it, something that is not perceived or appreciated the same by the consumers; the latter do not consider Stegi's location as a key one. Nevertheless, in my opinion, Stegi's commercial location has much potential and it is extremely hard if not impossible to change. Some consumers are not dissatisfied, but just not satisfied by it, but the rest features of the organisation help to overcome this. One of them is that Onassis Stegi hosts unique and rare events, hence the competition levels are very low. Therefore, location in this case cannot determine the success of the organisation. Additionally, as mentioned in OCC's analysis, Onassis Stegi always wanted and wants to be something different that stands out of the crowd and this location fits this philosophy.

Finally, touring is part of the commercial location and adds extra prestige to the organisation, according to theory. Nevertheless, only very few Athenian consumers are aware of the touring aspects of Stegi.

#### 9.3.4. Communication

Although Marketing and PR schools disagree on many points, they agree on how arts organisations, can be successful, by understanding what people are thinking and how they are making decisions (Batra & Keller, 2016; Gordon, 2011; Hill et al., 1995). The decision-making process for cultural consumption is affected by marketing strategies in general; by extension, part of the process is affected by communication strategies. This process consists of five stages: Problem recognition, Information search, Evaluation of alternatives, Purchase, and Post-Purchase Evaluation. We spoke above about the conclusions of this research concerning consumers' motivations, corresponding to the first stage of this process, problem recognition.

From this research emerged that when consumers are asked, via filling ranking sheets, if communication, and by extension advertising, messages of cultural organisations affect their decision-making to consume culture, they reply they are of less importance or at best somehow important. Nevertheless, their answers during the whole procedure of focus groups show they are affected by these messages but probably unconsciously. They create an opinion about an organisation or a spectacle through these messages and their decision-making process is affected. Moreover, many of them admit that ads act as reminders and that the content is more important than the medium. Nevertheless, the most important conclusion here is that the effect of advertising on consumers is related to the frequency/intensity of their cultural consumption. It is worth reminding here that according to a study conducted in Greece in 2016, "the higher the educational attainment of the public" (Avdikos et al., 2016, p. 28), the higher the frequency of cultural consumption (e.g. visiting cultural sites, cinemas, attending plays and concerts, reading books). Additionally, according to research conducted on behalf of Onassis Stegi (MRB, 2015), the audiences of the case study organisation do not deviate from the aforesaid attendance patterns.<sup>186</sup> Nevertheless, according to the literature review, one of the reasons why contemporary culture is special is attributed to the increasing undermining and destabilisation of the boundaries that sustain elite or high culture (Chaney, 2002; François Colbert, 2009; Gürel & Nielsen, 2019; Hand, 2011; Myer, 2009).

It is interesting to note here the above-mentioned attitude of participants, which shows an inconsistency between the answers on the ranking sheets and the discussion that followed in focus groups. This attitude confirms the characteristics of the focus group methodology that were

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<sup>186</sup> Specifically, 75% of Stegi's audiences have higher education level (MRB, 2015).

mentioned in the homonym chapter (chapter 5). The chosen methodology goes beyond simple answers that can be given in a survey, where participants do not think too much. On the contrary, in focus groups they have time to think about what they believe; their thoughts are shaped by the discussion and the interaction with other participants. In other words, the results we get from focus groups are more realistic, or much closer to participants' truth.

To come back to this research's participants, people with intense cultural consumption are usually active searchers, interested in newsletters or other communication messages, but they are not affected much or at all by advertisement. People with less cultural consumption are usually passive searchers, they perceive ads as reminders, triggers and causes for extra search, while usually are not subscribed to newsletters. This group is much affected by advertising. Therefore, the effect of communication strategies is different for different groups of people, and in this research analysis, the difference lies in the intensity of cultural consumption, which implies a difference at first in the information search stage. People with intense cultural consumption are mainly affected by communication messages that are included in newsletters, in the organisations' websites, and in any (communication) material that precedes the advertisement or exists simultaneously with advertising but is not advertising.

According to Bernstein (2007) word-of-mouth marketing (WOM) "addresses the problem of the distracting 'noise' in the media" (p. 112) and the scepticism of the audiences about advertising; it is "the most influential factor in most people's ticket purchasing decisions" (Bernstein, 2007, p. 112). WOM conversations or recommendations can affect tremendously arts consumption (Carrasco-Santos & Padilla-Meléndez, 2016; Chieffi et al., 2022). All the consumers in this research consider important in their decision-making, opinion leaders and word of mouth, and by extension recommendations of their personal network (online-social media- and/or offline) and links shared by friends and family in social networks influence them more effectively (Bernstein, 2007; Chieffi et al., 2021, 2022; Hausmann, 2012; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Perez Dasilva et al., 2013; The Nielsen Company, 2009); hence they agree that a combination of communication messages and opinion leaders affect their decision making about the cultural spectacles they attend. Should be noted here that Greek culture is a collectivist one (Giousmpasoglou, 2014), and "collectivist cultures tend to rely on online word-of-mouth opinions more than consumers from individualistic cultures" (Lin et al., 2017, p. 8).

Moving on to Onassis Stegi's communication strategies, the organisation uses Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), sending coherent and consistent messages to its audiences, coordinating and integrating all the elements of the communication mix (Batra & Keller, 2016; Bernstein, 2007; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Pedersen et al., 2017). Traditional (offline) and newer (online) media need to be

mixed and matched and interact for better results, depending on the stage of the consumer’s decision journey (Batra & Keller, 2016; Coleman et al., 2019; Pedersen et al., 2017). Stegi uses offline and online communication and aims to target audiences and those who might influence them, and get the best achievable target response.

In the theoretical framework (Chapter 2.1) the (below) Arts communication model (Figure 54), based on Pedersen et al. (2017) sports communication model, was introduced. As mentioned in theory, to apply the arts communication model, a cultural organisation should previously set the objectives of the organisation, set the target segments to be reached, decide the kind of messages to be sent, and have deep knowledge of its cultural product (e.g. assets, disadvantages, differentiation points, etc.) (Francois Colbert, 2012; Martinez et al., 2018; Zaharie, 2014).

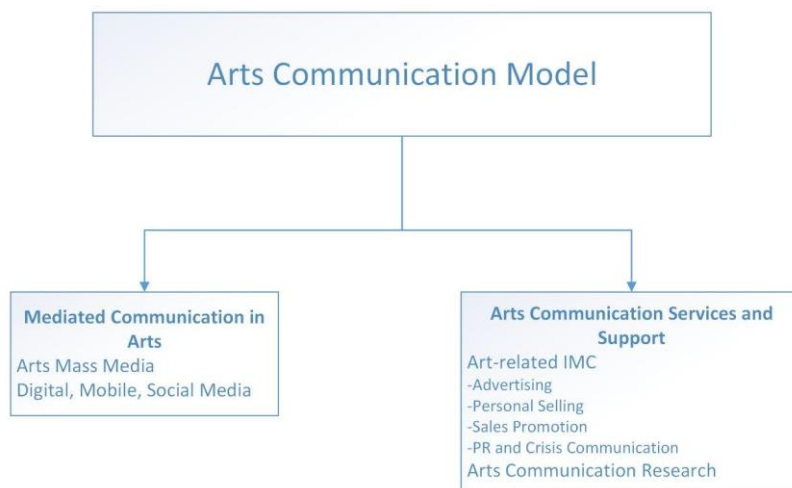


Figure 54. Arts Communication Model (Adapted by Pedersen et al.,2017)

Stegi’s personnel supports that the organisation works towards the direction of sold-out projects or full auditoria, but not with a profitable objective, with the objective that society will meet the culture it presents and the objective to educate people. The objective is to present contemporary art to a broader audience, to make it accessible to everybody, and through art, and not only, to talk about issues it considers fundamental, issues that concern society at a given time, but also issues that society forgets while it should not, sparking up a conversation, firing the curiosity of the public and questioning the stereotypes (Onassis Foundation, 2019). Their core target audiences are people keen on culture, that generally consume culture, mostly highbrow or a culture that makes you a better person or the non-commercial culture<sup>187</sup>.

<sup>187</sup> The director of the Communication department added the quality dimension of the consumed culture (Demetres Drivas, group interview, 12/12/2018).

Above, in conclusions related to the product, the product adoption process was explained and combined with Stegi's products' life-cycle. The conclusion was that the organisation's main target groups are the social segments who adopt easily new ideas or products. Based on the five classifications of people according to their level of innovativeness: early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (Francois Colbert, 2012; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997), these social segments correspond mainly to early adopters and the early majority. This is because Stegi has decided on the short life-cycle of its products<sup>188</sup>, therefore, people with low or lower levels of innovativeness are those participants of focus groups who complain about the short life-cycle of Stegi's products, as they don't manage to find tickets, facing early sold-outs, as mentioned above in Place related conclusions. But I will elaborate on this later on, in communication crisis conclusions. Stegi's team is mainly concerned with highly innovative consumers. It seeks to meet consumers' needs for stimulation, creativity and curiosity, and "highly innovative consumers attach more importance to stimulation, creativity, and curiosity" (Blackwell et al., 2001, p. 37). For the purposes of this research, I define highly innovative consumers as those who adopt early, therefore they are curious, they actively search or they actively listen, they might be frequent physical or virtual travellers abroad, hence they are in touch with/they have experience from other cultures, they have visited websites of other European or not cultural organisations, they adopt innovative payment methods<sup>189</sup>, and they are determined to spend extra time to get something they want. Stegi is targeting people who will make the effort to purchase the product, trying at the same time to build loyalty, and customised communication messages (for instance, newsletters are sent to consumers according to their preferences and previous purchases)<sup>190</sup>.

Stegi is interested in many cases in consumers that possess Bourdieu's cultural capital. The latter is possessed by experts -who are also opinion leaders- whose knowledge comes not only from education but mainly from lifelong exposure to arts due to "their family history and social origins" (Botti, 2000, p. 22). Cultural capital is the "socially acknowledged ability" (Botti, 2000, p. 22) of someone to recognise if something is 'art' or 'non-art', and it is mostly an 'inherited' artistic taste, "closely

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<sup>188</sup> During the introduction phase, the early adopters might be the only purchasers, or during the decline phase the laggards will be the only ones to consume (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Francois Colbert, 2012; Gordon, 2011; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997).

<sup>189</sup> Although credit or debit cards are not considered innovative anymore, there are still people in Greece, who do not hold one.

<sup>190</sup> From the consumer's perspective, even if a product is free there is always a price to pay for it, as the price includes the peripheral expenses related to product's consumption, the effort to purchase a product (from the effort to buy it online, up to the physical effort of travelling to attend a performance or to find parking), the invested leisure time, the risk that needs or expectations will not be met (Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Blackwell et al., 2001; Francois Colbert, 2012; Kim & Tucker, 2016). Regarding the effort to buy it online, there were participants complaining about the process of online registration in order to book tickets online, a tactic that is very useful for Stegi's marketing and communication department, as, apart from other purposes, serves the purpose of recording purchases (frequency, etc.) and preferences.

predicted by social origins” (Scriven et al., 2015, p. 2). Nevertheless, Stegi is also interested in Peterson’s omnivores- in terms of cultural consumption-, or in Lahire’s subjects and the coexistence of diverse cultural habits, due to the upward or downward mobility (Emmanuel et al., 2015; Gürel & Nielsen, 2019; Lahire, 2008; Richard A. Peterson, 2005).

A critical point of what was mentioned above is what Blackwell et al. (2001) mention, that “highly innovative consumers attach more importance to stimulation, creativity, and curiosity” (p.37). We should keep this in mind moving forward. The results of this research showed focus group participants’ main motivation to attend cultural events is to get stimuli<sup>191</sup>. The definition of the “Get stimuli” group is the below: *This group, via cultural consumption, discovers different perspectives, gets inspiration for (and/or from) creativity, decodes artists’ way of thinking, and/or watches their own thoughts successfully captured or verbally expressed on stage.* Additionally, in the analysis chapter, I introduced some terms to describe the relationship of some consumers with Stegi (Lover, Waverer/Indecisive, Explorer, Hater). From these categories, we could say that lovers are curious consumers (highly innovative). The definition that was given to them is the below: *Lovers are so open to diversity and experimentation that they get something positive from every single experience with Stegi. They have great familiarity with arts or they are connoisseurs of arts. They are contemporary art lovers or modern art lovers, in a sense, they associate these terms with (endless) experimentation.* Furthermore, according to the analysis, the explorers are Stegi’s consumers, who know Stegi’s cultural agenda doesn’t suit them, but the diversity it offers, as well as the passion for experimentation, suit them. To sum up, people who belong in the motivations category of “Get stimuli”, or the relationship with Stegi category of “Lover” and “Explorer”, seem to be Stegi’s core target group.

	Early adaptors	early majority	Late majority	Laggards	High educational level <sup>192</sup>	Frequent cultural consumers	Non-frequent cultural consumers	Curious	Looking for diversity, creativity, stimulation	Daring	Open-minded	Receptive to new ideas & experiences
People in which Stegi is interested	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X
People that Stegi would not mind approach		X	X				X					
People whom Stegi does				X			X					

<sup>191</sup> As mentioned in the focus group analysis, there is a motivational conflict and multiple motivations at the same time. Hence, the second prevailing motivation is an alternative outing and socialising, which are considered as the same category by participants.

<sup>192</sup> In this case study, university students and graduates.



not really care to reach												
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Table 51. Stegi's Target Audiences

In other words, the profile of consumers, in which Stegi is interested, is the below: early adopters, early majority, with high educational level, frequent and non-frequent cultural consumers, curious, daring, open-minded, receptive to new ideas and experiences, looking for diversity, creativity and stimulation. We can add here that these people are usually determined to spend energy and time purchasing (e.g. customised web experience). The profile of potential consumers that Stegi would not mind approaching matches with an early and late majority that consumes culture non-frequently, while the people that Stegi does not really care to reach or has a minimum interest in, are the laggards, who are at the same time, non-frequent cultural consumers.

My conclusion from Stegi's analysis is that the organisation's communication objectives focus more on increasing awareness, with an ulterior purpose to modify the consumer's preference that stems from their objective to educate the Athenian audience in new ways of conceiving/understanding culture. Of course, in some cases, they want/target to maintain or increase the current rate of intention to buy, but without considering the market share or sales volume in sheer numbers but targeting a bigger reach. Stegi functions in accordance with theory to implement its objectives and it succeeds. Nevertheless, there is a slight contradiction between its objective to educate people and the target segment of an elitist audience. It ostensibly supports the disappearance of distinctions produced by elitism back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the shift of emphasis from high culture to more popular culture (Botti, 2000; Mencarelli et al., 2010; Scriven et al., 2015); the intention might be the education of people on culture, but frankly speaking, the pre-decided target groups prevail. The whole set-up of the organisation is pointing towards these segments. Substantially, although Stegi supports it wants to introduce to Athenian audiences an unknown to them culture, it wants to introduce it mainly to its target segments. Stegi has a very strong communication team and according to me, it could easily direct the desired results of its communication strategy. Therefore, asking the question of if the image they project is the right one, the answer seems easy. It is the right one but with way less focus on the education of people who are not familiar with culture. They could easily change points of their strategies to reach the diverse segments, but my opinion is that Stegi has no intention to do it, because currently does not want to change anything. They play it safe, as they do draft a budget, but Stegi's budget, in reality, has no limit. Its funding is stable and continuous by Onassis Foundation. Indeed, Stegi's team is very capable and good at designing, implementing and monitoring strategies (concepts and tools), but the organisation has this team because it has the financial ability to hire it. Interestingly, Stegi's financial status is criticised by audiences, or to be more accurate,

because the audiences know about its high budget/Stegi's finance, they are stricter when they criticise/judge the organisation. Stakeholders mention the high budget available for communication - derives from Onassis Foundation-, something that was implied also by consumers but was not clearly stated by many. The majority of consumers did not give weight to it and they judged the communication strategy individually, regardless of the organisation's financial ability.

Before we move to the detailed conclusions on Stegi's communication strategies, it is necessary to talk about Stegi's positioning. Positioning is how to best differentiate each brand from competitive brands, whereas competitors can be considered any leisure industry<sup>193</sup>, under certain circumstances (Martinez et al., 2018; Zaharie, 2014). Branding is one of the ways for effective positioning and brand building influences the decision-making process of consumers of cultural products and not only (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Hand, 2011; Scriven et al., 2015). And although in the non-profit sector, they are still learning how to use branding, Stegi seems to have mastered it. Onassis Stegi achieves differentiation, building on the reputation and the image of the organisation. The image and the reputation of the organisation though have been built on Stegi's products and choices throughout the years. The attributes of the products that are highlighted in its campaigns are associated with the organisation and individual productions. Onassis Stegi, as a cultural conglomerate, uses as a positioning strategy the diversification one that focuses on the needs of two or more segments, and the positioning is done for each of the products.

The successful brand must have distinctiveness, in other words, be unique and have a personality, and it is obvious from participants' replies that Stegi does this. Consumers characterise its campaigns as recognisable, with a clear identity, unique character, and remarkable communication style, and they even notice small details like its distinct font and design. Stegi seems to be a successful brand overall. Everything is under the umbrella of Stegi's brand and this is what stays in consumers' minds. Brand building influences the decision-making process of consumers of cultural products (Bronner & de Hoog, 2019) and Stegi seems to do this, as its spectacles are usually sold-out. Additionally, the participants of this research comment on the communication campaigns of the organisation, pointing out their nice aesthetics, clever messages, clear identity and distinctiveness, confirming that Stegi achieves differentiation with its positioning, maintaining a strong and successful branding. They give positive feedback for the quantity or even the accuracy of information Onassis Stegi's communication department shares with audiences, although few participants refer to its bombarding advertising. The most interesting comment on the information that Stegi shares, comes from one stakeholder. The word "disruptive" catches the attention. He basically finds the right word to define a condition that

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<sup>193</sup> Cultural facilities and festivals have been increased in recent years, without an automatic increase in the demand (Martinez et al., 2018; Zaharie, 2014).

many consumers report, but more descriptively. His exact words: “The information I get from Stegi’s campaigns is often disruptive, like the products it chooses to present”.

Apart from the aesthetics of Stegi’s communication campaigns, which get only positive comments from audiences, people comment also on the content. The conclusion for the messages Stegi sends through campaigns is that they are many times misleading, creating expectations that do not come true, or they are difficult to be decoded. It is clear that Stegi through its campaigns has as a priority to arouse the curiosity or interest of audiences, but it should maybe focus on clearer messages, not to create wrong expectations for consumers, as this can link the organisation with high-risk or unmet expectations. Moreover, during the decision-making process, in the stage of post-purchase evaluation, the most important criteria for the evaluation of arts events are the expectations of the event (Blackwell et al., 2001; Hill et al., 1995; Kim & Tucker, 2016; Martinez et al., 2018; Mencarelli et al., 2010). Consumers’ satisfaction (usually through a memorable experience) is extremely important as it influences repeat buying, can lead to engagement/retention/return and even loyalty, it shapes word-of-mouth communication, while positive viral marketing is reducing the perceived risk (money, time, etc.) or in other words, the uncertainty the consumer feels before making a decision (Martinez et al., 2018). On the other hand, dissatisfaction leads to complaints (Blackwell et al., 2001; Chieffi et al., 2022; Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012; Kim & Tucker, 2016). Consumers’ expectations derive from previous experiences -correlation between satisfaction and repurchase intentions (Kim & Tucker, 2016)-, but also from the organisation’s branding (perceived prestige), and the expectations it creates through communication messages. Stegi does not seem efficient in the creation of the right expectations for consumers as many complain about it and feel disappointed by spectacles, as they had higher/false expectations.

Additionally, commenting on the fact that some participants consider the messages of its communication campaigns as difficult to be decoded, communication and by extension, advertisement messages should not prevent audiences from attending specific spectacles at specific organisations but encourage them. Although the majority of consumers are positive towards Stegi’s overall communication style, for the part of the audience that considers its messages are incomprehensible, misleading and create false expectations, Stegi is recommended to use clearer and simpler communication messages and by extension advertising content. We also observe a small group of participants who do not encounter Stegi’s communication messages or do not pay attention or do not remember them. I believe this is situational and it may be due to the habits of certain people (habits that affect the use of specific media, the use of public transportation or not, their walking habits, their residency etc.) or their short-term memory.

Going back to the Arts communication model (Figure 55), which is based on Pedersen et al. (2017) sports communication model (Chapter 2.1), and based on it, Arts Mass Media is defined as mass media at the service of arts communication; it is not limited to media specialised in arts, but in media that communicate arts.

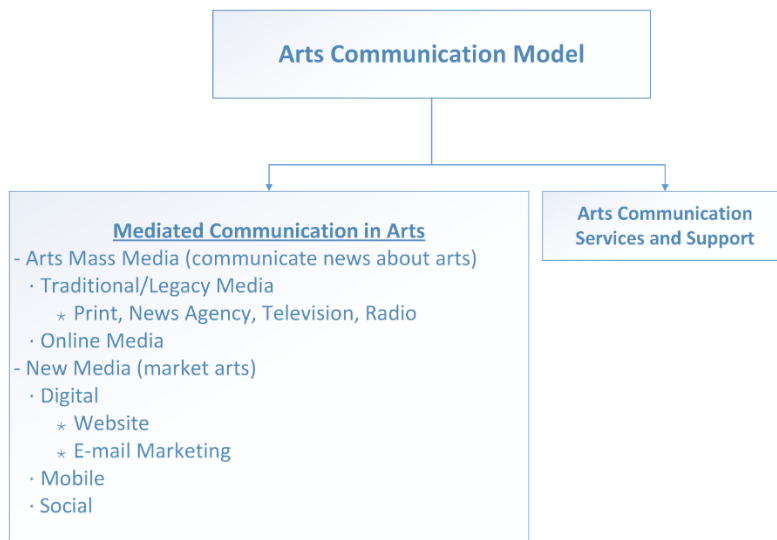


Figure 55. Arts Communication model-Mediated Communication in Arts (Adapted by Pedersen et al.,2017)

After the analysis of Onassis Stegi, through interviews with Onassis Stegi’s personnel, content analysis, the focus groups with consumers and the interviews with stakeholders, we conclude that although Stegi, in one or another way, is using all the traditional/legacy mass media, based on the characteristics of each medium, the objective of each performance or the objective of the organisation through the performance, its strongest points are the outdoor campaigns and the radio spots and this is completely noticeable by the consumers and the stakeholders. The audiences are referring to the plethora of Stegi’s radio spots, the successful radio campaigns, long-lasting ones that catch their attention, with nice aesthetics, clever messages, interesting and not tiring, with a clear identity, good timing and frequency and integrated with the rest of its communication messages. This did not happen accidentally, but Stegi planned it. Regarding radio, the latter is indeed one of Stegi’s favourite mediums and Stegi’s team considers it offers repetition and is appropriate when they want to pass a message or to sell. Apart from ads, they use also influencers, and radio producers that the audiences trust. The texts for the radio productions are created internally by the team of Onassis Stegi. With radio, the organisation has both commercial and sponsorship relationships, separately or combined (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017). According to participants Stegi’s radio spots have a strong identity, are repetitive and intrigue them to search further for a specific event. Every medium is used for specific targets, hence it is not strange the fact that only two of the participant (one consumer and one stakeholder) have never heard Stegi’s advertisement on the radio and or they have

never paid attention to it. Additionally, it is a minority stakeholder's opinion who finds the fact that the radio is flooded by Stegi's communication messages annoying.

Although Onassis Stegi is using very rarely- usually not more than once per year- the advertising or communication (interviews of key personnel) in TV, as the moving picture is not just a TV privilege anymore (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 10/10/2017), many consumers remember Stegi's TV spots, as they mention. Nevertheless, either the consumers got confused replying to the respective questions or the very few TV spots of Stegi have been imprinted in their minds. In contrast with consumers, stakeholders notice little details, such as the paper/printed communication of Stegi, like the booklets, and the well-designed editions. They refer to these details because, despite the fact Onassis Stegi is by default a contemporary organisation, it tries simultaneously to preserve traditions.

Regarding the new media that market arts (digital, mobile, social), we developed them all in Stegi's analysis (Chapter 6). We mentioned that the organisation decided to launch a new website in February 2019, as a corollary/outgrowth of some internal changes regarding the communication of the Onassis Foundation (including a complete English version that stamps its international character). This new website [www.onassis.org](http://www.onassis.org), following modern aesthetics, includes all the activities of the Onassis Foundation, part of which is Onassis Stegi, with an ulterior purpose to raise awareness of the overall work of the foundation. This is linked also to the fact that the Communication and Marketing department represents the whole Foundation and its activities. Hence, the old simple and basic website ([www.sgt.com](http://www.sgt.com)) was replaced by a complex and modern new one and I characterise it as complex because indeed complex or complicated are words the consumers use to characterise Stegi's website. Despite this fact, the participants like this new website. They consider it is influenced by alternative European aesthetics, well designed, user friendly and responsive-even through mobiles, with substantial and sufficient content. Stakeholders' views are in the same positive direction. My personal point of view is that Stegi's website is very well designed, very particular for the Greek standards, with special aesthetics and the appreciation and familiarity of the users are inevitable in long term. Besides, as Stegi's Commercial Director had said in one of our interviews (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019), people need time to get used to it and Stegi decided to give plenty of it, when it jumped from the old version to the new one; the pandemic did not help many users to familiarise with the website, as all the cultural activities were frozen during these years, therefore, although it has been already four years since the launch of the new website, time did not flow under normal conditions. Stegi's website promotes the organisation in a creative and complex way, reflecting the experience of being there, and not just communicating mere facts. Exploring its website is an experience in itself. I understand why Stegi chose to change the website and introduce a more complex one that is basically under the umbrella of the Onassis Foundation, it was part of an effort of

rebranding the foundation and by extension make it clearer that Stegi is an integral part of the foundation. It is a beneficiary organisation, and even informally competes with the other big foundation of Greece, Stavros Niarchos (check chapter 5.4.2). Besides, Stegi’s personnel realise the difficulty of people getting used to the new website, but at the same time, they know it is an upgrade that will be appreciated by audiences in due course/long term, while the website will keep improving. There is no point to welcome or not this change, time will show. The old website needed definitely an upgrade, but maybe it was an abrupt change with a lot of information.

The majority of participants (consumers and stakeholders) believe that the website is user-friendly, and responsive, corresponds to Stegi’s identity and gives the information visitors need. Nevertheless, some consumers comment it is non-user-friendly, elitist, confusing, with more than enough information, not addressing the average Greek consumer. As we talked above about Stegi’s target segments, I could claim here that the core target groups do not complain about the website. The few comments or complaints come from the groups that I would call secondary to Stegi’s team. Unlike consumers, stakeholders use only positive comments about Stegi’s website. They definitely talk as professionals but also as individuals. They consider the website quite informative, with a clear identity, very specific, and it follows the aesthetics of the organisation’s communication policy; these aesthetics express intensity and are imprinted on receivers. We can notice some similarities with positive words and phrases that consumers used about Stegi’s website; nevertheless, consumers mentioned also disadvantages. Below, a comparison table of positive comments on Stegi’s website is presented (Table 52). The key concepts in common between stakeholders and consumers are marked in yellow.

Positive key concepts used for Stegi’s website by stakeholders	Positive key concepts used for Stegi’s website by consumers
Informative	Provides detailed information
Aligned with the organisation’s communication policy	Corresponds to Stegi’s identity and
Very specific	gives the information visitors need
Nice aesthetics	Nice aesthetics, minimal aesthetics
Imprinted	It is differentiated/It makes the difference
Very intense	Contemporary, modernist
	Attention to details
	The use of slung makes it more modern
	Responsive
	Non-conventional
	User-friendly

Table 52. Comparison Table 4

The philosophy of OCC is ruled by the motto “easy access”. Easy access to culture by everybody, easy access to the building, easy access to the website and so on. Hence, they try to make access easy to all potential visitors, such as random users, first-timers or old users, users of different age groups or with different backgrounds and so on. But access in the case of a website might mean content, design, performance and usability. The organisation has multiple URL addresses that drive to the same site, so it will be easier for visitors to find the organisation, especially after the transition from the old website to the new one; users, even if they type [www.sgt.gr](http://www.sgt.gr) will be redirected to <https://www.onassis.org/initiatives/onassis-stegi/>. The new website is still a work in progress. It will be improved and enriched, giving also some time to the audiences to familiarise themselves with it, as Stegi’s personnel believes<sup>194</sup>. The design of the new website aims at grasping the attention and providing the information the visitor is looking for; it has way more information compared to the old one, but it is a website that follows the trends. I would even dare to call it groundbreaking/pioneer overall for Greek standards, a word/description that suits Stegi’s identity. It is developed as a grid and by default, this kind of website is more difficult to navigate. Stegi’s website performs to all browsers and it is fast responsive with a personal computer, laptop or mobile device.

Other websites present Onassis Stegi’s actions, usually under commercial or sponsorship agreements. Consumers though, to get information about cultural spectacles, choose the only city guide in Athens- Athinorama- and cultural websites. Very few mention pop culture websites, and almost none news sites.

Talking about digital media, Onassis Stegi has built and maintained its own e-mail lists, categorising consumers according to loyalty levels or interests; this way, it can contact them by sending relevant, timely and personal updates and offering some privileges, such as advance notice of performances. According to the consumers enrolled in these lists, this strategy works very well, as they consider the newsletters ‘to the point’, concise, attractive, and with the right periodicity. Stegi’s newsletters are much appreciated by loyal consumers and frequent cultural consumers who are active searchers. Based on the whole research, I would say that Stegi has a minimum interest in other targets.

Moving on to mobile media, Stegi’s website is compatible with mobile use (or else, mobile responsive), but Onassis Stegi is not doing mobile marketing and it does not have an application as an organisation. It has used though in the past some applications, in the context of some projects. Nevertheless, at the moment there is an internal debate about whether the organisation should design an app, or make its website fully responsive. The latter means not just mobile responsive but means that the users can

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<sup>194</sup> The Commercial director had mentioned that the evaluation of the website showed a difficulty in navigation as there is a big bounce rate (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).

log in and get a “customised website” without needing the app<sup>195</sup>. Even on this point, Stegi is a pioneer, and plans ahead each step carefully. I will repeat at this point that Stegi plans for target segments that will spend energy and time on exploring Stegi’s cultural programming and purchasing tickets.

Although there is not yet much evidence “on the use and effectiveness of Social media” (Coleman et al., 2019, p. 24) for marketing the arts, many consumers prefer the communication messages in social media, as they give the audio-visual option, and Stegi is very active on social as consumers mention. According to them, it produces interesting posts with good periodicity. Stegi’s personnel supports that social media is the flagship of the organisation’s communication (Haris Giakoumakis, personal interview, 12/12/2018), meaning that on social media the organisation will create organic posts for all of their projects, although for some of them no paid online or offline campaign will be developed. Indeed, according to theory, social media can facilitate viral marketing (Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012). Social media campaigns have the potential to reach a large number of people and are considered a powerful marketing communication tool, due to their efficiency in diffusing information –instantly, boundary-free and with a broad reach- and the value for money if one considers the high level of awareness they offer; especially for arts sector that usually faces financial strains and offers intangible services it is an important tool (Bernstein, 2007; Chieffi et al., 2022; Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Perez Dasilva et al., 2013; Van der Lans et al., 2010).

It is a tool through which they can communicate more frankly with audiences. They also express the organisation’s political and social position through it; organisations though do not have positions, but the people who work for them have. The popularity of social media posts can impact consumers’ perceptions of the brand, as well as purchase behaviours (Lin et al., 2017). Stegi’s consumers in this research appreciate the organisation’s presence on social media, and approve of the frequency, content and style of its posts, which intrigue the social media users. According to Lin et al. (2017), for less long-term oriented cultures, to make posts interesting, one should target personalisation acknowledging “the consumers’ history as uniquely important and connect with them on this basis” (p. 10); and this is what Onassis Stegi does. Greece, as a case study, is a high-context and collectivistic culture, but it is also “open to showing one’s emotion like low-context cultures” (Hagan, 2013, p. 11); besides, no culture is completely high-context or low-context (Giousmpasoglou, 2014; Hagan, 2013; Hofstede Insights, n.d.; Study.com, 2015). I consider that what literature suggests for high-context consumers, is exactly what Stegi applies: it is “less direct and provides more information through visual

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<sup>195</sup> As the commercial director mentions, this kind of customised website is the new trend, instead of a closed environment app that the organisation should feed constantly with separate content (Nikos Rossolatos, personal interview, 05/03/2019).



cues and contextual signs. This could include: conveying messages through subtle mannerisms, hints, and contextual cues; less direct personalisation attempts; and the incorporation of context such as video, voice, or emoticons” (Hagan, 2013, p. 11). Simultaneously, it shows emotion or takes a stand on social issues when it is needed. Nevertheless, the points of view it presents on social and political issues through social media, create controversy between consumers and stakeholders. Some consider it important for such a big cultural organisation to dare to have and express an opinion, but others consider it inappropriate. Indeed, concerning Greek standards, this practice is particular, and it is the first organization that wants to have a voice in social issues. On the other hand, as mentioned above, behind the organisation there are people, who are basically expressing their opinion about the coverage of the organisation. For some consumers, it is considered a private cultural organisation that does politics, and this does not match with the arts. Stakeholders seem to embrace this courageous practice, probably considering critical thinking as a tool to separate arts from politics, or not, and as a tool for fruitful dialogue in society. It is interesting to mention here there were many participants, who, in the reflection section of focus groups, mentioned they were not aware either of the position of Stegi on certain social issues, or about the expression of it on social media or the facet of its building. The goals of Stegi’s social media are identical though to the goals of the organisation itself and its mission. In social media platforms, Stegi does not present only the cultural programming of the organisation, but it also expresses opinions and its position on various issues, following the mission of the organisation which is to bring up and defend core values and moral issues and freely express its opinion, defending also the right to freedom of opinion and expression. It is important to mention at this point that, when Stegi’s posts are addressed to a general audience, in a global network, the organisation embraces a global perspective for managing brand posts. In general terms, Stegi has a global perspective and aims at global markets, and as mentioned in theory, the global perspective is also valuable to be used “within domestic markets as trends of immigration and cultural clustering increase” (Lin et al., 2017, p. 11).

As mentioned again, participants consider important in their decision-making, opinion leaders and word of mouth, and by extension recommendations in social media. Stegi has a channel on YouTube and it has also profiles on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Issuu, and uploads respective content on each platform or the same content in the respective format. Nevertheless, users attend occasionally its YouTube channel and follow it mostly on Facebook and Instagram. Hence, in general, Stegi’s digital and social media strategies are well-executed and well-perceived by consumers.

Regarding arts communication services and support (Figure 56), Stegi does use Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), which is much appreciated by all participants. Consumers and stakeholders

point out the clear identity and cohesion of Stegi in all of its communication messages, offline and online. Participants agree that one of the strong points of the organisation is the outdoor campaigns.

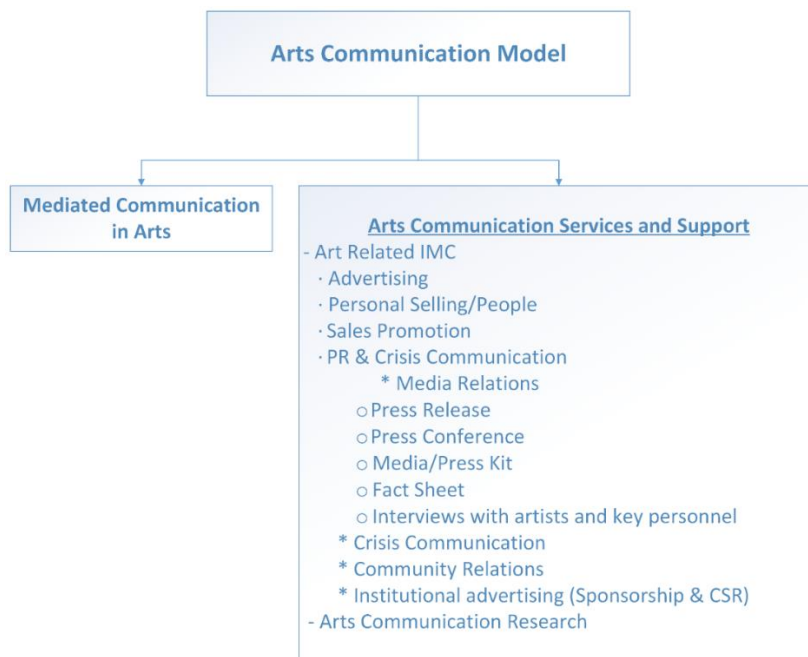


Figure 56. Arts Communication Model-Arts Communication Services and Support (Adapted by Pedersen et al.,2017)

They support that they come across Stegi’s outdoor campaigns very often, in the streets, at bus stops and on public transportation. Their comments indicate successful outdoor campaigns, long-lasting ones that catch their attention, nice aesthetics, interesting, clear identity, and integrated with the rest of its communication messages.

As mentioned in theory, the performance of the employees of cultural organisations, or else people, ‘the 5th P’, along with other elements, such as the performance of the facility, the show quality, etc., and depending on the priorities and needs of each consumer, affect consumers’ experience; by extension, the staff is a piece of the puzzle of ‘patrons’ satisfaction’ (Blackwell et al., 2001; Kim & Tucker, 2016). Hence, it is not only the performance itself that can create a positive experience, but maybe for some consumers is the most important. For those who consider performance as a priority, a good one can make them ignore or overlook some other negative points. All participants of this research seem to be very satisfied with Stegi’s customer service and well-trained personnel.

The loyalty programs of Stegi (detailed description in chapter 6.5.4) are very much appreciated by Onassis Stegi’s Friends, who consider the package and the services offered to them extremely advantageous. They add that all the activities they attend as part of these loyalty programs offer them additional strong and good experiences and enhance their relationship with the organisation and their attendance frequency. Nevertheless, none of the Non-Friends is fully aware of the loyalty programs or is not thinking to subscribe. This might mean that if Stegi wants to maximise OCC’s Friends, needs

probably to communicate better the incentives. Onassis Stegi is very much interested in this audience, as it considers Friends the people who support the productions and they become ambassadors of what they attended (Daniel Vergiadis, personal interview, 17/12/2018). This is linked to the fact that all consumers agree that a combination of communication messages and opinion leaders affect their decision-making about the cultural spectacles they attend. Many follow recommendations of their personal network (online or offline) and they consider word of mouth important.

Community relations that Stegi does, seem to be appreciated by consumers, as many have attended free events in the neighbourhood, they are satisfied by them and still remember them. Regarding media relations, stakeholders, compared to consumers, refer more to Stegi's media office operation. As they support, they get satisfactory information for all of Stegi's products and actions through its advertising and communication in general. They describe the press releases as well-composed and the media relations as good, commenting on the fact that third-party websites present a clear picture of the organisation and its products. Stakeholders, from their professional perspective, claim that Stegi's media office is easily accessible and provides quite good information. From their side, consumers comment on Stegi's good media relations, as one can find information about the organisation on plenty of third-party websites. About the media office's operation, they mention the well-written press releases that media re-produce without much effort, without having to interfere with the texts. This is linked to the fact that many times the content of Stegi's press releases is published by media in its original form (Media office, personal interview, 11/10/2017). Hence, consumers and stakeholders agree that the media office does a good job that is having a positive impact on all audiences.

In the results of the focus group, there was a related finding regarding the communication crisis. The fact that Stegi's performances are very often sold out creates consumers' anger. They state irritated by this repetitive situation and many do not want to retry to get tickets for Stegi's events. Nevertheless, research does not show that this is something considered a crisis by Stegi's team. On the contrary, each cultural organisation aims to sold-out. If this was a problematic situation for Stegi, the latter could improve the content plan. But Stegi's policies regarding the short life-cycle of its products are not affected by audiences' opinions, as they come from specific missions. It is inevitable to repeat here that Stegi addresses proactive audiences, while the rest of the audiences are not its priority.

Onassis Culture subsidises artistic research and it seems that this is well communicated to audiences, in contrast with the social responsibility actions that Stegi takes. For instance, almost none of the participants are aware of Stegi's effort to reduce the emission of pollutants and energy consumption, using renewable energy sources or trying to reduce printed communication. But Stegi's team is aware of this fact, as until now has not communicated its sustainability practices and the effort it makes to

be eco-friendly, but it is working on it. The team has already planned to add a tab for 'sustainability' on the newly launched website, and it is also thinking of probably publishing a booklet that will include the organisation's mission on sustainability and the actions it takes<sup>196</sup>.

We will sum up the conclusions regarding Stegi's communication strategies through the perceptions of audiences that participated in this research, consumers and stakeholders, and mainly through the points on which they focused. Compared to consumers, stakeholders are more detailed in their descriptions and comment in depth on communication strategies, as they observe things from a more professional perspective, led by their professional experience. They claim the organisation outperforms other cultural organizations in terms of advertising and its communication is aggressive. Consumers who are positive towards Stegi's overall communication style agree on the aggressiveness, and imply the outperformance, as they point out the high aesthetics, the clear identity of communication messages, the impressive graphics, etc. As important as it is to hear from consumers about the outperformance, it is just as important to hear it from the stakeholders, who are professionals that generously connect Stegi to a very strong advertising policy, and use phrasal verbs like "stand out" and adjectives like "successful", "effective", "pioneer", "impressive". Nevertheless, aggressiveness might have a double meaning, positive (especially for a cultural organisation) and negative; expressions like "they are bombarding", "they are everywhere", "its campaigns shout", or "its campaigns are noisy"-in a sense of bombarding- can end up with comments like: "gives no room to others to exist" or "it creates an annoying add storm". There is a part of consumers that agrees with this part of stakeholders. Overall though, stakeholders hold the opinion that through Stegi's campaigns, the message is transmitted; they talk about innovative campaigns that attract attention and are memorable. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the financial source of the organisation is inseparably connected with its ability to advertise its products and actions. It is useful to repeat here that in terms of cost, traditional marketing media is the most expensive (Coleman et al., 2019).

Asking all participants of this research-consumers and stakeholders- about Stegi's campaigns on several mediums, each one seems to have a favourite medium where he or she encounters Stegi's communications messages. Stakeholders consider that outdoor and radio Stegi's campaigns prevail, and the consumers agree; as they also agree that its campaigns are very present in public transportation. The mediums we hear them mention are the following: outdoor campaigns (including campaigns in public transportation), radio campaigns, TV campaigns, and online ads (ads in text form in online magazines, newspapers and other websites, web banners, and social media). But, it is very

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<sup>196</sup> Both actions recently took place. The tab on the website is called "Stegi goes green", and the green handbook is presented there.

important to mention that participants in both categories point out the fact that the organisation communicates also through its attitude (statements/position on social issues).

In general, consumers give positive feedback for the quantity or even the accuracy of information Onassis Stegi's communication and marketing department shares with audiences. The same opinion is held by stakeholders. The latter, seem to agree with each other on many points regarding Stegi's communication strategies. They all think its policy aligns with its identity and missions, in one or another way.

The difference between consumers and stakeholders is that we can divide the first into groups<sup>197</sup>, as mentioned above in the analysis of consumers and their perceptions regarding Stegi's communication strategies. But, we cannot divide the stakeholders. We could say that they provide a multifaceted analysis of the communication strategies of the organisation, without necessarily categorizing themselves. Overall, they are very positive towards Stegi's communication campaigns, claiming that its campaigns excite the imagination and can be considered art. In detail, they mention campaigns' touching language and style, their contemporary youth style, the fact that they never sacrifice poetry, and that they have quality, and aesthetic value. Nevertheless, they express a dichotomy regarding the messages of the campaigns. They consider them successful, attractive, effective, innovative, and memorable, but sometimes fuzzy or confusing for the average audience and not only, or creating high expectations that border on misleading. This approach reminds the group of consumers that consider Stegi's messages difficult, unclear, and misleading. We observe here the elitist communication versus inclusive communication (or in other words non-elitist- does not exclude anybody). Regarding branding and campaigns stakeholders are divided into two groups. The first holds the opinion that Stegi promotes the brand through product campaigns. The second believes that the brand Onassis Stegi prevails in any product or action campaign.

It is worth keeping two words that stakeholders used about Stegi, with which consumers, who are positive towards Stegi's overall communication style, agree. These are: resounding and multifarious. I consider them as concepts that encompass all the characteristics of the specific cultural organisation.

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<sup>197</sup> Groups: 1) Positive towards Stegi's overall communication style, 2) Consider Stegi's messages difficult, unclear, misleading, 3) Do not encounter Stegi's communication messages, 4) Do not pay attention to Stegi's communication messages/Do not remember them

#### 9.4. Perspectives Beyond

Although, “Athens hosts almost 168 theatres”<sup>198</sup> (Avdikos, 2014, p. 121), much more than other European countries (Avdikos, 2014), there is no public body that researches and reports Athenian audiences’ cultural behaviour in consuming performing arts or any other private organisation that investigates cultural consumption of performing arts. Occasionally, little research has been done, on public or private initiatives<sup>199</sup>, but it seems that the focus between them differs. However, research on the audiences of other Cultural and Creative Industries (hereinafter CCI) exists and sometimes also through a public body. These concern mainly museums’ audiences<sup>200</sup>. This research practically covered part of this gap and enriched the bibliography related to Athenian audiences’ consumption of performing arts.

Additionally, as mentioned also in the introduction of this thesis, the cultural organizations in Greece are hidden, in a sense, they do not wish to participate in any research not to reveal their bad or good box office numbers, their successful or unsuccessful strategies and so on. The ministry of culture or any other related ministry does not take action to create structures and bodies in order to force the cultural organizations to go through an audit, share data, and categorise its public (according to demographics, social criteria and so on). This research is a good start to prove there is still hope for cultural organisations to open their cards, contribute to a system of transparency, by pointing out to the competent bodies the need for it, and prove (de facto) what people in the artistic field rehash that in culture there is no competition but only fair play/noble rivalry.

The target of this research was to investigate the marketing strategies and mainly the communication strategies of a cultural organization and cultural consumption. Specifically, it approached this subject using the case study of OCC in Athens, investigating the organisation’s marketing strategies and the consumption of its cultural products by its audiences, as well as the perceptions of its audiences regarding its marketing strategies. The research composes the big picture of the connection of these two “variables” and their application in the specific case study of OCC. The results of the study may also have practical applications in real life. All "parties concerned" will take advantage of the research. This means that OCC, knowing the strengths or weaknesses of its communication strategies to affect audiences’ attendance, will act accordingly, formulating corresponding strategies. Respectively, the Athenian audience will have access to a study that shows how its cultural consumption is affected by

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<sup>198</sup> Translated from the original file in Greek.

<sup>199</sup> One public research that can be mentioned is the one from National Centre for Social Research (Εθνικό Κέντρο Κοινωνικών Ερευνών-ΕΚΚΕ) in 2015 with the title “*Socioeconomic Class, Social Status and Consumption: Stratification, Mobility and Urban Consumption in Athens (Κοινωνικο-Οικονομική Τάξη, Κοινωνική Θέση και Κατανάλωση: Διαστρωμάτωση, Κινητικότητα και Αστική Κατανάλωση στην Αθήνα)*”. The private research was conducted by MRB on behalf of OCC in 2015. Its title was “Exit survey for OCC”.

<sup>200</sup> Such as <http://www.statistics.gr/el/home>.

communication strategies; it will be more aware of its cultural behaviour. Moreover, other cultural industries will be exemplified by successful or unsuccessful marketing strategies applied by OCC. The cultural organisations in Athens could adopt the successful marketing strategies of Onassis Stegi, adjusting them to their specific budgets. This way, Athens will have more successful cultural organisations, Stegi will have more competitors in the Athenian cultural market, and audiences will be offered more options.

This study refreshes the research that has been done in the scientific field of arts marketing, communication, and audience behaviour in cultural consumption, adding extra evidence. Apart from the enriched data about the cultural consumption models in Athens, it also offers enriched data regarding consumers' motivations for cultural consumption, data that confirms existing research (Blackwell et al., 2001; Botti, 2000; Ciceo, 2012; Cooper & Tower, 1992; Gordon, 2011; Hill et al., 1995; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Manolika et al., 2015; McGuire, 1976; Slater, 2007; Walmsley, 2011; Wilcox & Nolte, 1995), but also contradicts it. In detail, it slightly conflicts with existing research, where is mentioned that needs for arts consumption are not related or little related to arts (Hill et al., 1995). This research's results show that some participants have needs related to arts; these are the discerning connoisseurs and not the majority of attenders. The results though reassure also needs that are not related to arts (Bergadaa & Nyeck, 1995; Botti, 2000; Cooper & Tower, 1992; Hume, Mort, & Winzar, 2007; Manolika et al., 2015; Walmsley, 2011). The research confirms that, unlike other forms of consumption, art consumption is based more on emotional aspects Botti (2000). Additionally, it is partly in contrast with the claim that social and esteem needs are the main reasons for attending live performing arts Ciceo (2012).

Important factors for consumers in their decision-making for cultural consumption are confirmed (combination of communication messages and opinion leaders, online and offline) (Bernstein, 2007; Chieffi et al., 2021, 2022; Giousmpasoglou, 2014; Hausmann, 2012; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Lin et al., 2017; Perez Dasilva et al., 2013; The Nielsen Company, 2009). Furthermore, the research confirms the nature of arts organisations (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Francois Colbert, 2012; Kirchner et al., 2007; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; McDonald & Harrison, 2002; Rentschler, 1998; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Voss & Voss, 2000; Weir, 2015; Zaharie, 2014), the nature of cultural activities (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Botti, 2000; Francois Colbert, 2012; Coleman et al., 2019; Fillis, 2011; Grant, 2002; Hausmann, 2012; Kim & Tucker, 2016; Kirchner et al., 2007; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Pedersen et al., 2017; Rentschler et al., 2002; Simkin, 2000; Voss & Voss, 2000; Zaharie, 2014), and especially of live performances that "are aesthetic experiences due to the rich sensory input needed" (Kim & Tucker, 2016, p. 113).

Additionally, consumers and case study analysis prove theories such as that of the perceived value (Francois Colbert, 2012, p. 20), or concepts such as the augmented product (Kotler & Scheff, 1997). Furthermore, this research, to establish theory, investigated and confirmed audience behaviour patterns, and marketing and communication strategies that authors suggest for a successful cultural organisation (Andreasen & Kotler, 2008; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Batra & Keller, 2016; Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Bernstein, 2007; Blackwell et al., 2001; Brida et al., 2013; Bronner & de Hoog, 2019; Cacovean et al., 2021; Francois Colbert, 2012; Cooper & Tower, 1992; Gordon, 2011; Hill et al., 1995; Kim & Tucker, 2016; P. Kotler & Scheff, 1997; Martinez et al., 2018; Rentschler, 1998; Scheff & Kotler, 1996; Voss & Voss, 2000).

This research analysis is on the side of literature that supports that WOM conversations or recommendations can affect tremendously arts consumption (Bernstein, 2007; Carrasco-Santos & Padilla-Meléndez, 2016; Chieffi et al., 2022; Francois Colbert, 2012; Coleman et al., 2019; Hausmann, 2012; Lambin & Schuiling, 2012; Martinez et al., 2018; Perez Dasilva et al., 2013; Van der Lans et al., 2010; Zaharie, 2014). Finally, it ascertains the high-context and collectivist characteristics of Greek culture (Giousmpasoglou, 2014, p. 53; Lin et al., 2017), but also the fact that no culture is completely high-context or low-context (Giousmpasoglou, 2014; Hagan, 2013; Hofstede Insights, n.d.; Study.com, 2015).

This research project contributes considerably on a practical level. Cultural organisations in Athens could adopt the successful marketing strategies of Onassis Stegi, adjusting them to their specific budgets. This way, Athens will have more successful cultural organisations, Stegi will have more competitors in the Athenian cultural market, the quality of the offered product will be continuously increased, and all these might drive even the increase of cultural consumption. Furthermore, through this research, Onassis Stegi can recognise the unsuccessful marketing strategies or the problematic points of these strategies and improve.

This study will contribute to future research, as its results are henceforth available to be compared with previous or next studies. The comparative analysis from future researchers could contribute to further knowledge in the field of sociology, possibly observing the changes in the causal connection between communication strategies and cultural consumption, under different conditions. Additionally, using the findings of this study, and the findings of studies that investigate the strategies and the audiences of other cultural organisations, future researchers can use quantitative methods to generalise their own findings. Moreover, future research may deal with more in-depth research on the preferences of Athenian cultural audiences



In a European level, CCI are considered more and more an important source of national income (Avdikos, 2014); it was very interesting but also useful to investigate a cultural industry and the audience of a country that experiences a financial crisis, and all that this causes. The findings of this research might help future researchers give solutions on how the audiences can be more engaged in culture. Consequently, this can open a research agenda on how culture can be placed in the centre of the national economy. Besides, the turnover of cultural industries is important for the GDP of their countries (Avdikos et al., 2016; Badimaroudis, 2011; David Hesmondhalgh, 2008), and their contribution to the national economies is very well combined with the tourism industry. Worthy to remind at this point that although Greek culture contributes to the GDP of Greece, the share of culture in central government and local public budgets is not high (Inkei, 2019)<sup>201</sup>. In addition, culture, except for the economic development that might bring, educates. Such research might provide the background for future researchers to search for the right tools and knowledge for the improvement of CCI's communication strategies, hence bigger audiences will be attracted (increased cultural consumption), the economy will be improved and the educational level of people will be better, after their closer contact with culture.

As mentioned already, this is a single case study, which investigates the marketing strategies of Onassis Stegi, how they are perceived by its audiences, and how audiences' perceptions affect their cultural consumption; hence, I will not be able to make generalisations from my evidence. Nevertheless, new data about the cultural consumption models in Athens will be added to the research literature and cultural organisations (and not only) will benefit from this analysis. This line of research allows continuing with the analysis of the marketing strategies of other cultural organisations in Athens, as well as the analysis of their audiences' perceptions giving suggestions for the improvement or enrichment of organisations' strategies. The more cultural organisations and audiences that consume culture are investigated, the better insights will be formed about the cultural consumption models in Athens.

As a PhD candidate, I consider more important the journey of investigation instead of the solid conclusions/outcomes. I consider more important all the stages I passed through during the years that my research lasted. I needed loads of self-discipline, analytical thought, organizational skills, endurance and optimism. With this research, I contributed to the confirmation of existing theories, and I produced some data that might lead, in many years, through numerous associated projects, to new concepts, with an impact in the outer world. I consider through this research, I offered a better understanding of the cultural consumption in Athens, and specifically the perceptions of consumers

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<sup>201</sup> For the period 2015-2017, statistics of Eurostat show that in the central government budgets of Greece the share is less than 0.25%, while in local public budgets less than 2% (Inkei, 2019).

about Onassis Stegi's communication strategies; if future studies elaborate on the perceptions of consumers in the context of different case studies/of different cultural organisations, a quantitative analysis of many similar studies can enrich the incomplete to the non-existent research field of cultural consumption in Greece, the decision-making process of the consumers, and their perceptions regarding arts marketing strategies.

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### ***Onassis Stegi Material***

#### *Booklets- Brochures*

- Onassis Stegi, Annual Cultural Programming, 2018-2019
- Onassis Foundation, Educational Programs for schools 2018-2019, 2018-2019
- Onassis Foundation, Educational Programs 2018-2019, 2018-2019
- Onassis Stegi Brochure, 2018-2019

#### *Surveys*

MRB HELLAS S.A., Nov 2015, Audience Survey for Onassis Foundation.



## Appendix 1

### *Interview Guide with Onassis Stegi's Personnel*

The interview guide is divided into four major categories, general communication and marketing questions, commercially oriented questions, media relations, and cultural product oriented.

Follow-up questions were designed during the interviews, in those situations, it was required.

#### *Communication and Marketing Department (General)*

- Do you consider the Communication Department as part of the Marketing or they are two different departments?
- In terms of numbers, how many people consist your team?
- Which tools of promotion/communication mix do you choose? Advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations? And how?
- Which procedure you are following for the creation of your marketing and communication plan?
- What are your target audiences and which strategies you are using to approach them?
- Are you using informal market tests, such as pre-performance audience surveys, pre-test of campaign messages, etc.?
- Are you using with your products the full procedure of product development? (i.e. Identify the audience, identify and enhance the selling points, differentiate from competitors, package the product effectively, pricing, distribution, etc.)
- Are you evaluating your marketing plan and how?
- How do you count the success of your strategy and its effect on your potential customers?
- What is the role of influencers in your communication strategy?
- Are you branding Onassis Stegi itself?
- Do you have a customer database?
- How do you get your mailing lists? Are the lists exchanged with other organisations or purchased from mailing list brokers?
- How do you act in case one of the events you are hosting has low traffic/is not popular?
- Would you consider Onassis Stegi as a consumer-oriented or market-oriented organisation?
- How do you react in a communication crisis? Can you give me a few examples?
- How are you handling negative reviews?
- How are you handling community relations?
- How you approach different communities through your content

- To whom do you address the events you organise?
- What does your website management include?
- Do you have a system to analyse your website traffic and users' engagement?
- How are you using social media and e-mail to communicate with your audiences?
- Are you using mobile marketing?
- How do you decide about the content of your communication and marketing campaigns?
- Who is managing the content?
- How do you manage to have a social impact through your content?
- Which social media platforms are your favourite ones?
- What are the strategies you are using in social media to promote Onassis Stegi's cultural products and Onassis Stegi itself?
- How are you handling community management?
- How do you interact and engage with your audiences?

#### *Commercial department*

- How do you handle advertising in different media?
- How do you decide the message of an ad?
- Do you have a creative department that designs it?
- How are you choosing the media you use for advertisement?
- Do you use: "Prints & broadcast ads, packaging, mailings, catalogues, newsletters, brochures and booklets, posters and leaflets, directories, reprints of ads, billboards, and display signs, point of purchase displays, audio-visual materials, symbols and logos" (Kotler & Scheff, 1997, p. 303)?
- What are your tools for online advertisement?
- How are you handling the newsletters (audience targeting, opening rates etc. ?)
- Are you using personal selling and sales promotion, and how (media sponsorship included)?
- Are you using giveaways?
- Are you using sponsors or sponsorships?
- Could you describe in detail your ticketing policy?
- Is your communication/promotion budget always similar for all your actions/performances?
- What the budget depends on each time?

- Has your budget remained stable over the last few years? Did the economic crisis affect it? Did any social factors affect it?
- Where do you find data for your market share or sales in comparison to other cultural organisations in Athens?
- What is your pricing policy and how do you decide it?
- Tell me about your distribution policy (online distribution, sales points, box office).
- What is your budget for advertising?
- How do you decide the message of an ad and where to be shown (i.e. online)

### *Media Relations*

- How do you approach media? Are you sending customised press releases, depending on the style/type of each media?
- Are you in touch with specific persons? If yes, what is the role of PR? (This question regards all media)
- Are you organising any special events for journalists or do you invite them to the premiers/performances?
- What is the strategy you are following for newspapers, free-of-charge press, magazines, online media (newspapers' websites, magazines, social media), local media (neighbourhood's media: ex. a) There is a university opposite OCC that has its own newspaper and radio. b) There is also an area nearby that is trendy for outings and the people who live there are considered -according to me -alternative/artistic etc.-I want to know if they approach the above media in a specific way, if they find a local angle of interest, trying to combine/present a subject that interests the university community or doing a site-specific action that will be related to the area in close proximity).
- How many they are? Which of them suits you and why? Where do you find data for their circulation?
- Who is the representative of OCC that gives interviews to the media? Is it a specific person?
- What about bloggers? Do they exist? Are you interested in them?
- How are you conducting the research for the cultural sites that exist? How many they are, and where do you find this data? Where do you find their traffic rate? Are you searching

for their traffic rate and then you decide which of them you will approach? (This question can also apply to all media).

- Do you research the preferences of their readers/viewers/listeners and if yes, how?
- Do they match the profile of your target groups?
- What are the steps you are following in the context of Media Relations
- What is the content of your press releases, what is their frequency and why?
- Many of your cultural products travel abroad. How you are approaching foreign media?

### *Cultural product*

- How do you decide about the cultural programming of the organisation?
- How are you choosing the national and international performances Onassis Stegi will host?
- What is the maximum duration of the events you are hosting?
- What do your educational products consist of?
- How do you decide which of your performances will travel abroad?
- How do you choose the countries your cultural product will travel to?
- What is the touring department doing in detail?

## Appendix 2

### ***Focus Groups Guide***

#### **Welcome and Introduction**

I thanked the participants for coming, I explained a bit about myself and my PhD thesis for those who were not aware. For the OCC Friends, I mentioned also my case study.

I informed them that we would talk about their own experiences on communication strategies and cultural consumption –positive or negative-, their habits, as well as the way they would like things to function (e.g. communication of cultural organisations, quality of spectacles). The cultural consumption habits focused on the season 2019-2020.

I also made clear that the research is anonymous and I can forward them a copy of the report once it is published if they are interested. I asked them though to keep the content of the focus group confidential.

I reminded them why they were selected for this group. Some of the participants were selected because they belong to a group of people who consume culture regularly; some of them have a good level of familiarity with OCC, while some others were selected because they are OCC Friends.

Moreover, I reminded them that the focus groups would be audio recorded, as the researcher would not be able to take notes during the whole discussion, so the recording will help in the analysis and will help not to miss any of the comments (Krueger, 2015; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

#### **Opening question**

I asked the participants to recall which cultural organisations they visited during the season 2019-2020 and share the first 2-3 titles that pop into their minds of performances they attended.

#### **Main Body**

Below, a general guide is presented. Nevertheless, during the conversation, the answers to some questions naturally emerged.

#### **Questions on the decision-making process**

- Need recognition

-Why you are usually attending? (Which need leads you there?) (E.g. The art itself, the need for socialising, escapism, self-esteem, and self-confidence, keep me updated for many reasons: e.g. to be able to participate in discussions in my broader social circle or my working environment)

- Information search (Internal)

-Are you trying to recall memories from cultural experiences?

-Are you visiting cultural spaces that have left you positive memories and reject places linked to negative memories?

-Are you identifying the cultural organisation/venue with the successful or unsuccessful productions it hosts?

-Note down the cultural organisation that first comes to your mind when you are looking for successful performances and when you are looking for quality performances.

-With what kind of performances do you identify Stegi?

-Do the atmospherics of a cultural place play an important role in your memories?

-What do you think about Onassis Stegi Atmospherics?

-Does your contact with key personnel during the performance experience affect your opinion about an organisation? Do you recall this as a memory?

-What is your opinion about Stegi's personnel? (How does it make you feel? What kind of energy does it send out? Positive? Courtesy? Humble? Distant? Arrogant?)

- (Overall experience) Ask them to tell about a negative experience with Stegi or with another organisation or an experience where the expectations did not meet.

*-Perceptions*

*Stegi as a brand, compared to other brands*

-Mention 5 negative and 5 positive points about OCC-Give them a piece of paper and 5'

-What's the first word that comes to your mind when I am saying "Stegi"?

-What's the first word that comes to your mind when I am saying SNFCC or National Theatre?

-If you had to describe Stegi with one word which would this be?

-What is a successful cultural organisation like for you?

*Perceptions of audiences about marketing and communication strategies of OCC*

How the cultural management/marketing strategies of OCC are perceived by the audiences?

Product

-What a good performance is like for you?

-What do you think about its cultural programming/agenda?

-How do you feel? Does it suit you?

-With which words you would describe it?

-What is your opinion about the duration of the cultural products?

-Do you consider the peripheral expenses? (Those related to product consumption, such as transportation expenses, babysitter expenses, the effort to buy the tickets online or offline, effort or expenses for parking, the invested leisure time, and the risk that needs or expectations will not be met.)

-How do you handle the expectations you have for a performance? What happens when the expectations are met and what when the spectacle disappoints you?

#### Pricing policy

-Is pricing playing a role in your cultural attendance/consumption?

-What do you think about the pricing policy of OCC?<sup>202</sup>

-What is the price you are prepared to pay?

#### Place/Distribution

-Are you satisfied with the distribution/sales points of Stegi? And why?

-Are you satisfied with the online distribution of tickets?

- Information search (External)

-Are you doing an active search regarding the cultural events you will consume or you are receptive to the information around you (passive search) (e.g. what a friend will recommend, what the poster in the tube advertises)?

-Where are you checking information about cultural events offline?

-Where are you checking information about cultural events online?

-Is Stegi active on social media?

-Do you usually check the website of the organisation you want/plan to visit?

-What do you think about this website? Is Stegi's website user-friendly? Ask them to navigate to the websites (using their mobiles or the tablets/laptops I provide them).

-Who are you trusting more, and who are your influencers (e.g. reviews, audiences, friends, colleagues)? Through which medium (e.g. social media, online reviews, face-to-face discussion)?

-Have you come across the advertising that OCC is doing? Where (e.g. radio, in the city, on the tube, on TV, online, newspapers)?

-How often do you come across OCC advertising?

-Do you pay attention? Why?

-Is the information (advertising, articles, website) you have about OCC products enough?

-Are you subscribed to newsletters and why yes or not?<sup>203</sup>

-If yes, do you receive e-mails? What do you think about these emails/their content? (e.g. Are they too many? Are they to the point? Are they boring/tiring? Do you read them?)

-Now that we all understand the difference between internal and external, where would/do you search first for information?

-Internally?

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<sup>202</sup> Colbert (2012) claims that consumers will consider a price as fair, only if it is the one they are prepared to pay.

<sup>203</sup> I do not ask this question OCC Friends because they are subscribed by default.

-Externally?

- Evaluation of Alternatives

-With which criteria do you choose performances? (Is where, what, who, when, how and how much, important for them?)

-What is your most important criterion for the evaluation (determinant-salient attribute)? (Extended question: What is your most important communication criterion for the evaluation?)

I provided them with rating sheets<sup>204</sup> (Table 51-Table 55) asking what is more important for them, and what can convince them better to attend a performance.

*Elements for evaluation: Actors & Contributors, Play, Cultural Organisation, Location, My specific need at that time, Ticket Price, Advertising, Communication Messages of the Cultural Organisation*

- Consumption

-Which day do you usually attend cultural events?

-What do you mostly attend at Stegi?

-Why you are OCC Friend? Why not? Why not, If you attend often?

### **Briefing-Concluding**

Recap what has been said during the whole session. Ask them if I missed anything or if they want to add something.

### **Reflection**

From what has been said here today, what was the most important for you? Something you learned, an opinion you found very interesting or something that made you think differently?

<b>Focus Group 1 _Age: 18-25</b>	F21	F24	F22	F23
<b>Actors</b>	3	5	5	3
<b>Performance's content</b>	4	5	5	5
<b>Cultural space</b>	2	3	3	2
<b>Location</b>	4	3	3	2
<b>Ticket price</b>	4	3	4	5
<b>Advertisement</b>	2	2	1	2
<b>My specific need at a specific time</b>	5	1	4	4
<b>Communication messages of the organisation (send out)</b>	3	2	3	2

<sup>204</sup> Ranking scale (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 92).



<b>Director</b>	4	5	5	4
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Table 53. Product Rating Sheets FG1

<b>Focus Group 2 _Age: 26-35</b>	F34	M33	F27	M34
<b>Actors</b>	5	4	2	4
<b>Performance's content</b>	-	5	5	3
<b>Cultural space</b>	3	4	3	2
<b>Location</b>	2	3	3	1
<b>Ticket price</b>	3	3	3	2
<b>Advertisement</b>	2	4	2	3
<b>My specific need at a specific time</b>	4	5	5	4
<b>Communication messages of the organisation (send out)</b>	2	3	2	2
<b>Director</b>	5	4	2	4

Table 54. Product Rating Sheets FG2

<b>Focus Group 3 _Age: 36-45</b>	M42	F36	F42	F35
<b>Actors</b>	3	4	5	3
<b>Performance's content</b>	5	5	4	5
<b>Cultural space</b>	3	3	5	2
<b>Location</b>	3	2	3	2
<b>Ticket price</b>	3	3	3	3
<b>Advertisement</b>	2	3	2	3
<b>My specific need at a specific time</b>	3	5	5	5
<b>Communication messages of the organisation (send out)</b>	2	4	2	2
<b>Director</b>	4	4	5	3

Table 55. Product Rating Sheets FG3

<b>Focus Group 4 _Age: 45+</b>	F62	M50	F59	M64
<b>Actors</b>	3	5	3	4
<b>Performance's content</b>	5	5	5	4
<b>Cultural space</b>	1	4	4	4
<b>Location</b>	1	1	3	3

<b>Ticket price</b>	1	3	3	3
<b>Advertisement</b>	2	1	1	4
<b>My specific need at a specific time</b>	1	4	2	4
<b>Communication messages of the organisation (send out)</b>	1	1	1	3
<b>Director</b>	3	5	3	4

Table 56. Product Rating Sheets FG4

<b>Focus Group 5 _OCC Friends_Age: 35-44</b>	<b>SF40</b>	<b>SF35</b>	<b>SF36</b>	<b>SF41</b>
<b>Actors</b>	5	5	5	5
<b>Performance's content</b>	5	5	4	5
<b>Cultural space</b>	4	3	4	4
<b>Location</b>	2	3	2	1
<b>Ticket price</b>	2	2	1	2
<b>Advertisement</b>	1	1	1	1
<b>My specific need at a specific time</b>	2	4	3	2
<b>Communication messages of the organisation (send out)</b>	2	3	2	2
<b>Director</b>	5	5	5	5
<b>Extra elements</b>		Friend's suggestion-4/5		Cultural consumption-4/5

Table 57. Product Rating Sheets FG5

## Appendix 3

### Interview Guide for Stakeholders

#### Introduction questions

- Profession
- Any professional connection with OCC

#### Communication strategies about the brand itself

- Do you have the full picture of where Stegi belongs and what is its job?
- What's the first word that comes to your mind when I am saying "Stegi"? (If you had to describe Stegi with one word which would this be?)

#### Communication Strategies about the products

- What do you feel/think about its cultural programming/agenda? Do you like it or not?
- With which words you would describe it?
- What is your opinion about the duration of the cultural products?
- Are you aware of Onassis Stegi advertising campaigns?
- Do you often encounter these advertising campaigns?
- If yes, how often and where? (e.g. Online, Offline, on the streets, on the tube, on websites as ads, on radio programs?)
- As a professional, do you consider that the information you get from Stegi through advertising is satisfactory? Do you feel sufficiently informed about the organisation and its products?
- If the stakeholders are professors:
  - Have you used Stegi as a case study in any research?
  - if yes, how was your professional collaboration with Stegi's key personnel?
- If the stakeholders are journalists/radio producers:
  - Would you comment negatively on any of Stegi's products, although the media you represent is sponsoring Stegi or has with it any commercial agreement?
  - Are you satisfied with the info you receive from OCC?
- Which organisation you would consider as Stegi's competitor?

#### General

-Do you believe there is room for improvement for the Onassis Stegi brand, its communication strategies, and its cultural programming (so, room for improvement in general)?