



Banners Cultural Series

#3 Plan cycle - 3
Plan cycle 2019/2020
7/1/19 - 6/30/20

Performance Objective 1 Expand corporate sponsor support of Rouge et Blanc and Banners.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Assessment: Track sponsor lists to identify new sponsor members.

Benchmark: Increase financial and in-kind contributions from corporate sponsors by 10% over the previous year.

1.1 Data

Fiscal Year	Financial Contributions	In-Kind Contributions	Total Contributions	% change
2017-2018	157,350	73,500	230,850	N/A
2018-2019	155,258	136,180	291,438	26.24%
2019-2020	148,500	78,165	226,665	-22.22%

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2018-2019:

Our goal for this fiscal year was to raise corporate sponsor support by ten percent. We were able to meet and exceed this goal. Our main success was due to acquisition of a \$35,000 in-kind sponsorship from KPLC. This sponsorship handsomely increased our media coverage which in turn helped to raise our membership pool and increase ticket sales for our 2019 Cultural Season.

Additionally, Lake Charles Toyota came on as a new \$5,000 cash sponsor, the Stream Family returned to the sponsor list with a \$5,000 donation from Stream Wetlands. Also, Phillips 66, who was solely a \$5,000 cultural season sponsor last year, doubled their contribution by also becoming a \$5,000 Rouge Sponsor, a total sponsorship of \$10,000.

Assessment of this data led to the discovery that we currently do not have figures for value of our Paradise Florist in-kind sponsorship, our Southwest Beverage in-kind sponsorship, our Frame House Sponsorship, or our Sweets and Treats Sponsorship. Moving forward, it is necessary that we partner with these organizations to get trade value so that these numbers are in place by next year.

I feel that it is appropriate to leave the 10% goal in place for the coming year but dedicate a special focus to bringing on new cash donors.

2019-2020:

COVID-19 cut us off from achieving our benchmark of growth for this particular performance objective.

One loss centers around Lake Charles Toyota. They agreed to come on as a \$5,000 Cultural Season sponsor but asked for an extension on payment to March because their management personnel was changing. Our season was then prematurely cut short by COVID-19 in March and all sponsor perks stalled. No check was delivered.

Unrelated to COVID, we also lost Cal-Cam Hospital. They had been receiving inflated sponsor perks for over ten years under an agreement with our Banners Founder. They were scheduled to discuss raising support to the level of their benefits but the hospital instead cut back their general sponsorship budget and Banners was let go. Of the \$148,500 in financial contributions, \$36,000 is projected including a CVB grant which has yet to be allocated and the annual KMI contribution. We have no information to lead us to believe either of these payments are in jeopardy.

Our dip in in-kind support stems largely from the loss in corporate and individual volunteer hours. We only completed seven days of our season, so the majority of donated hours were lost when the state mandated that we had to shut down production. This also cut short a sizable portion of the in-kind lighting, sound and staging services that would normally have been provided by Deep South Productions.

Next year, we will be poised to gather information regarding value of donated product which is supplied predominantly through our Rouge et Blanc fundraiser from Glazers as well as, to a lesser degree, donated product from Southwest Beverages which is supplied for our cultural season events and receptions.

It is difficult to predict how COVID will effect our coming season. I am cautiously optimistic enough to believe that it is feasibly reasonable to keep our assessment and benchmark the same for this particular plan. If reopening phases do not allow for full participation in Rouge and our coming cultural season, and if corporate sponsors are forced to pull back on funding, we will shift this for our next annual assessment.

Performance Objective 2 Expand number of schools and individuals served by outreach programs.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Assessment: Compare list of member schools and organizations and track retention and development.

Benchmark: Increase Banners Engages/Outreach participant schools/groups by two more than served the previous year.

1.1 Data

Season Year	Number of Schools Reached	Number of Home Schools Reached	Total Number of Schools Served	Growth in Number of Schools Served from Year Prior
2017-2018	14	48	62	N/A
2018-2019	29	51	80	18
2019-2020	21	23	44	-36

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2018-2019:

In the 2017-2018 season, through Banners Engages, we were able to expand our outreach by creating a new partnership with South Beauregard Elementary School and by partnering with the students and instructors of the newly established "It Takes Two" dance studio, also located in Beauregard Parish. In this sense, we did reach our goal of expanding to new schools and organizations. However, the number of individuals served by our outreach program was lower than desired. The reason for this dip in numbers was largely due to the fact that circumstances outside our control caused us to have to cancel our largest outreach event.

As our numbers indicate, in 2018-2019, we were able to serve a far greater number of schools including Our Lady Queen of Heaven, Nelson Elementary, Westwood Elementary, Immaculate Conception Cathedral School, and Southwest Louisiana Charter Academy.

Part of the reason for the increase was that our previous year family show, Peter Gros of Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom, was cancelled and re-routed for this season. We also broke a record for attendance with our Magic School Bus show which offered two outreach bus-in shows in addition to our evening public performance.

It should be noted that this year marked the pioneer year for our "Banners Gives" initiative, which approached outreach from a philanthropist angle. 1,000 seats were made available for area educators, teachers, principals, and counselors. In addition to giving back to the community, this initiative also serves the purpose of exposing a larger number of outreach facilitators to our programming in the aim of expanding our "reached" schools for the coming season.

With our incoming outreach coordinator, we will restructure our outreach program to bring in more under-served schools and increase our outreach programming to include facilitation of theatre workshops for local high schools, which will carry an internal mission to serve as recruitment opportunities for MSU.

2019-2020:

We were poised to blow our benchmark out of the water and were prepared to set a new loftier benchmark for the coming assessment. The pandemic shut-down of the season, however, caused us to fail to meet these goals.

Banners doubled outreach programming for the 2020 Cultural Season. In addition, we launched a new in-school Banners Engages initiative which debuted with Prien Lake's Honors magnet and featured free Banners staff theatre and improv workshops. This was to be the maiden voyage of a program which would have made year-round programming available at no cost for pre-K through college aged students.

Also, we were scheduled to do "Rock and Roll Science Guy", a sponsor-serving STEAM-based science bus-in show in Bulber as well as a touring hybrid lecture/performance engages production by Brian Fox-Ellis. All of these new efforts would have brought us to growth of well over double this performance objective benchmark.

When all schools shut down, so did all of these efforts. We are closely monitoring the governor and the parish mandates related to school operations so that we may plan accordingly. We are also looking at meaningful ways to transfer outreach efforts to digital platforms if necessary.

Whether we must turn to streaming or are able to return to normal operations, I remain guardedly in favor of keeping the assessment/benchmark as is.

Performance Objective 3 Improve operational efficiency.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Assessment: Use Vendini reporting to track and organize all new patrons into market-focus tag groups.

Benchmark: Transition previous ticket-buying patrons into genre-based tags by the first of the year, annually.

1.1 Data

2018-2019:

Vendini Import Tags	# of Patrons
Patron List Import	2194
Volunteer Import	173
Rouge Volunteer Import	172
Handwritten Membership Letter Patron List	80
MSU Import	28
Press Import List	42
Jazz Patron Import	39
Celtic Patron Import	20
Dance Import	32
Family Entertainment Import	160
Rouge Import	502
Inactive Member Import	127

2019-2020:

Vendini Import Tags	# of Patrons
Patron List Tagged	2414
Volunteer Tagged	219

Rouge Volunteer Tagged	212
Handwritten Membership Letter Patron List	NA
Engages Tagged (Replaces MSU Import)	320
Press Import List	45
Jazz Patron Tagged	74
World Music Tagged (Replaces Celtic)	100
Dance Tagged	30
Family Entertainment Tagged	409
Rouge Tagged	825
Performer/Presenter (To replace Inactive)	6
Sponsors (All)	54
Classical Tagged	24
Theatre Tagged	200
Lecture Tagged	95
Film	29

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2018-2019:

All of our patrons were successfully migrated to the Vendini tracking system before our computers were lost. The loss of the computers solidified the importance of getting all data moved to drive docs and cloud systems like Vendini.

Patrons have been additionally tagged into groups that allow us to reach and communicate with our various focus groups. Further development plans include running reports to track ticket sales for each patron so that we may create fully-functioning tag groups for the following:

- Theatre Patrons
- Jazz Patrons
- Classical Music Patrons
- World Music Patrons
- Lecture Patrons
- Film Patrons
- Dance Patrons
- Out of Town Patrons
- Out of State Patrons

This will help us to market directly to individuals based on their attendance history and also helps us easily track how many people Banners and Rouge brings into town, which in turn helps us in our grant appeals.

2019-2020:

We met our benchmark for updating all tags. As this is an ever-expanding process, I feel it appropriate to keep the assessment and benchmark in place.

We are currently refining our tagging system and expanding it to include tracking tags for all columns of individuals who impact our operations on a major scale. Specifically, we have added all sponsors to this management system. This gives us access to our personal reps for each and every financial and in-kind sponsor organization at the touch of a button.

We are removing the MSU tag as the University already has staff/faculty lists available. In this column, we have instead created an Engages tag. This tracks three tiers of outreach individuals including home-school admins, area educators and school board contacts. This stream-lines our efforts to promote bus-in shows,

workshops and touring entertainment/educators.

Out of state and out of town reporting would need to be done per event to track in any meaningful way and so these tags will be removed from this particular data document. We are researching to see if this information can be built into the event-build pages for the future, however. If so, we can run reports easily to find this info for all future events. We met all goals concerning addition of theatre, jazz, classical, film and dance patrons.

Finally, we are in the infant stages of creating Performer/Presenter tags. These will be delineated by local versus out of town performers. This will allow us to easily stay in contact with past performers which will help us to expand our network for prospective future season hires and will be invaluable in helping us design local outreach prospects for in-school Banners Engages offerings. Performer tagging/management is the next step in expansion of this extremely successful initiative.

Performance Objective 4 Increase Banners membership.

1 Assessment and Benchmark

Assessment: Track number of overall cultural season memberships purchased, including student, single Pass Holder, Friend, Patron, Flex-Two, Flex-Four, and Flex-Six memberships. Also assess number of Imbiber and Imperial Imbiber Rouge et Blanc Members.

Benchmark: Grow cultural season memberships and Rouge Imbiber/Imperial Imbiber patron groups by 5% annually, collectively.

1.1 Data

Season Year	Cultural Season Members		Imbibers		Imperial Imbibers	
	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change
2017-2018	190	N/A	292	N/A	78	N/A
2018-2019	214	12.63%	142	-51.36%	48	-38.46%
2019-2020	191	-10.74%	132	-7.04	56	16.66%

1.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2018-2019:

Rouge et Blanc

The numbers show a large drop in Imbibers and Imperial Imbibers, which indicates that, though Rouge et Blanc sold out, patrons were not purchasing wine at the \$250 and \$500 and up levels to the extent that they did the year previously. We are implementing a number of changes to the event to help reverse this. Patron surveys and supplier/vendor post-morts reveal that our customers want more diversity in the wine offerings. It has been perceived that Glazers has been stale in their wine choices, offering the same wines that they have been offering for the past few years. We are working with Glazers to refresh the wine booklet so that return patrons are able to experience new product. We are also looking into enticing Republic back to the event, as a Glazers monopoly, by nature, limits what we can give patrons.

Another change we are making is the addition of an Imperial Imbiber tour perk. Saveur du Lac has traditionally been the main perk for patrons who purchase at a \$500 and up level. This private event has been held an hour prior to the main event and featured higher level wines than offered to the general public. We are looking to raise the quality of these wines and we are adding a tour at the culmination of Saveur that will take patrons into four participating restaurants including The Villa, Luna's, 1910, and Panorama Room where they will be treated to two additional wines and food pairings at each of the stops. They will then be given entrance to the main event prior to the general opening. These changes are designed to help add strong value to Imperial Imbiber membership.

A different way we can work to meet our goal this year is to mindfully cultivate a strong presence of satellite wine dinners. Pioneer Club, 1910, and similar restaurants across Lake Charles have traditionally held pre-

event wine dinners where wine sales could count towards the Imbiber/Imperial Imbiber purchases. The necessity of creating this event last year with no institutional knowledge and a bare-bones staff caused those events to get little attention. This year we are poised to strengthen and expand our satellite events.

A return to the downtown location for the event also offers a fresh opportunity to reinvent the fundraiser as well, though it would be conjecture to determine how this can directly affect wine sales. One idea discussed with the wine reps is to make signage or stations that will promote selling as opposed to just tasting.

Though this Banners team only has the benefit of having experienced one Rouge, it seems obvious that one large hole in the success of this event stems from the fact that though this is a fundraiser for Banners, patrons largely seem to experience the event solely as a food and wine tasting as opposed to being aware that they are supporting a massive outreach program and a stellar lineup of high quality cultural performances and events that make a profound impact to our partners in education and our large and diverse audience base. Banners has been invisible within the Rouge framework. We will fix this for Rouge 2019 by redesigning the ticket line entrances to feature student performers who will entertain as well as thank patrons for making Banners possible. We will create a red carpet runway where signage will be placed to let Rouge patrons know about our outreach and our season successes in a way that places focus on gratitude to our Rouge patrons for helping to make these successes possible.

"Party with a Purpose" and "Revel for a Reason" are the two tag lines we will brand the event with moving forward. Our vision and mission for Rouge is to refocus our efforts to revive Rouge as a fundraiser. If we are successful, our Imbiber and Imperial Imbiber numbers will grow by a minimum of 5%.

Banners Cultural Season

Cultural season memberships grew by 11.21%. This met and exceeded our goal of a 5% growth margin. This was accomplished by a massive multi-tiered initiative including the creation of a committee of founding members who convened to hand-edit the patron list which was then divided individual by individual into groups each committee member had personal ties to. Each member then created handwritten letters for each patron asking them to re-commit. After letters were sent, a new Vendini report was created to list patrons who still had not subscribed. The Banners director then made personal phone calls to those on that list. The response was extremely successful.

Additionally, membership was advertised through our newly acquired KBYS sponsorship, all press outlets, through a dedicated social media campaign, development of a University-wide mail-out, a mass public mail-out and personally through talks given at dozens of Kiwanis, Rotary, and local cultural organization meetings.

2019-2020:

We did not meet the benchmark of growing our Rouge and Cultural Season membership by a collective 5%. We went down collectively by 1.12%.

While this is a loss, it is not as dramatic as it could have been given the fact that we historically gain cultural season memberships with momentum from our first month season events as a catalyst. Our season was terminated just seven days after our opening show due to the pandemic, so the memberships we usually earn as a result of our productions went immediately to zero.

Rouge et Blanc

Rouge was held downtown this year which offered a smaller footprint for the physical layout, resultant in a smaller number of tickets to sell. Even though, our Imperial Imbiber membership grew by 16.66% which indicates that our efforts to bring in new and exciting higher-end wine was a success. This number of patrons purchasing a minimum of \$500 in product jumped.

We intend to expand on this growth in the coming year by partnering with wine suppliers to bolster efforts to keep variety and quality at the core of our wine-list build. We are also looking at recreating our Saveur du Lac VIP pre-tasting as a tour of downtown businesses who hosted food/wine pairings. This fresh approach seems to have also contributed to the hike in Imperial Imbibers. Because Rouge will be on campus this

year, we will move Saveur to the evening prior to Rouge so that it can still follow the downtown model. Feedback from Imbibers has shown that this move will also be beneficial in that Saveur patrons will not exhaust their desire to taste prior to opening of the main tasting.

Though we toiled to meet our goal this year of mindfully cultivating a strong presence of satellite wine dinners, restaurants were not cooperative in creating such events. The consistent message we got from various establishments was that Lake Charles was struggling in terms of having enough restaurant staff to staff normal operations much less to also cover additional events. We intend to try again this coming year to create pre-events and are considering the creation of a Banners sub-committee to take this on and provide additional manpower.

The overall patron and vendor feedback from Rouge was extremely positive. Patrons loved the fresh venue, they acknowledged the improvement in variety and quality of wines and they celebrated the new Saveur model. We anticipate another sell-out event.

Banners Cultural Season

Only the first seven days of our nine week cultural season happened before the global pandemic shut us down. The first week happened in the shadow of the looming outbreak.

It is impossible to predict what the outcome of our efforts would have been had COVID-19 not been the deciding factor in our survival.

Moving forward we are strictly following all state and federal guidelines for event planning and are aligned with all university policies in totality.

We are considering plans for a "Bring Banners Back" member and funding push which we would like to plan in tandem with a rescheduled performance by our defunct season's headliner, blues legend Taj Mahal. This cannot be implemented until we are given green-light to host large-scale events.

In the interim, we are taking cues from the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts, the Southwest Presenters Association, McNeese State University, the City of Lake Charles and the LDOA.

As COVID-19 has temporarily stalled our event production entirely, and as our state has not yet entered a reopening Phase that would allow us to host our annual Rouge fundraiser, I feel it would be irresponsible to expect a collective 5% growth in Rouge and Cultural Season memberships for the coming year. The benchmark, however, will remain the same for 2020-2021.